The Demographic Factors and Elements of the Retail Marketing Mix that Most Influence Consumers to Shop at Mom and Pop Shops or 7-Eleven Outlets in the Radburana District of Bangkok

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

SOPIDA KESORNBUA

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication

at Srinakharinwirot University

April 2010

The Demographic Factors and Elements of the Retail Marketing Mix that Most Influence Consumers to Shop at Mom and Pop Shops or 7-Eleven Outlets in the Radburana District of Bangkok

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

SOPIDA KESORNBUA

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication

at Srinakharinwirot University

April 2010

The Demographic Factors and Elements of the Retail Marketing Mix that Most Influence Consumers to Shop at Mom and Pop Shops or 7-Eleven Outlets in the Radburana District of Bangkok

AN ABSTRACT

BY

SOPIDA KESORNBUA

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication

at Srinakharinwirot University

April 2010

Sopida Kesornbua. (2010). *The Demographic Factors and Elements of the Retail Marketing Mix that Most Influence Consumers to Shop at Mom and Pop Shop or 7-Eleven Outlets in the Radburana District of Bangkok*. Master's Project, M.A. (Business English for International Communication). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Advisor: Mr. Leroy A. Quick.

The purposes of this study were to determine which of the five demographic factors considered in this study, i.e. gender, age, education, occupation and income, best identified consumers that shopped at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets and which of the six elements of the retail marketing mix, i.e. product quality and assortment, store location, promotions, price and terms of payment, store personnel, store appearance and atmosphere, most influenced consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets. A questionnaire was employed to survey 80 respondents who shopped at two Mom and Pop shops or two 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok. Twenty respondents at each of two selected Mom and Pop shops and two selected 7-eleven outlets were included in the study.

The findings showed that all of the afore mentioned five demographic factors identified the consumers who shopped at one or the other convenience retail store, and all six elements of the retail marketing mix positively influenced respondents to shop at 7-eleven outlets while only four elements had a similar influence on respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops. Promotions and store appearance and atmosphere had a negative influence on Mom and Pop shop customers. The majority of respondents preferred shopping at 7-eleven outlets.

ปัจจัยทางประชากรศาสตร์ของผู้บริโภคและส่วนประสมทางการตลาดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อ
สินค้าที่ร้านขายของชำแบบดั้งเดิมหรือร้านสะดวกซื้อ (เซเว่น อีเลเว่น)
ของประชากรในเขตราษฎร์บูรณะ กรุงเทพมหานคร

บทคัดย่อ
ของ
โสภิดา เกษรบัว

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตาม
หลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจเพื่อการสื่อสารนานาชาติ
เมษายน 2010

โสภิดา เกษรบัว. (2553). *ปัจจัยทางประชากรศาสตร์ของผู้บริโภคและส่วนประสมทางการตลาดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อสินค้าที่ร้านขายของชำแบบดั้งเดิมหรือร้านสะดวกซื้อ (เซเว่น อีเลเว่น) ของประชากรในเขตราษฎร์บูรณะ กรุงเทพมหานคร.* สารนิพนธ์ ศศ.ม. (ภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจเพื่อการสื่อสารนานาชาติ). กรุงเทพฯ: บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ. อาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาสารนิพนธ์: มิสเตอร์ลีรอย เอ. ควิก

การศึกษาครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อประเมินความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างปัจจัยทางประชากรศาสตร์ ซึ่งได้แก่ เพศ อายุ การศึกษา อาชีพและรายได้ กับลักษณะของกลุ่มผู้บริโภคที่ใช้บริการซื้อสินค้าจากร้านขายของชำแบบดั้งเดิมหรือร้านสะดวกซื้อ (เซเว่น อีเลเว่น) ของประชากรในเขตราษฎร์บูรณะ กรุงเทพมหานคร และเพื่อประเมินส่วนประสมทางการตลาด 6 ปัจจัย ซึ่งได้แก่ คุณภาพและความหลากหลายของสินค้า ทำเลที่ตั้งของร้านค้า รายการส่งเสริมการขาย ราคาและวิธีการชำระเงินค่าสินค้า พนักงานร้านค้า การจัดร้านและบรรยากาศภายในร้านค้า ที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจเลือกใช้บริการซื้อสินค้าที่ร้านขายของชำแบบดั้งเดิมหรือร้านสะดวกซื้อ (เซเว่น อีเลเว่น) การศึกษาครั้งนี้ได้ใช้แบบสอบถามจำนวน 80 ชุด ในการเก็บข้อมูลจากผู้บริโภคที่ใช้บริการซื้อสินค้าจากร้านขายของชำแบบดั้งเดิม 2 แห่ง และร้านสะดวกซื้อ (เซเว่น อีเลเว่น) 2 แห่งในเขตราษฎร์บูรณะ กรุงเทพมหานคร

การศึกษาครั้งนี้สามารถสรุปได้ว่าปัจจัยทางประชากรศาสตร์ทั้ง 5 ปัจจัย ได้แก่ เพศ อายุ การศึกษา อาชีพและรายได้ มีความสัมพันธ์กับลักษณะของกลุ่มผู้บริโภคที่ใช้บริการซื้อสินค้าจากร้านขายของชำแบบดั้งเดิมหรือร้านสะดวกซื้อ (เซเว่น อีเลเว่น) ส่วนประสมทางการตลาดทั้ง 6 ปัจจัย ซึ่งได้แก่ คุณภาพและความหลากหลายของสินค้า ทำเลที่ตั้งของร้านค้า รายการส่งเสริมการขาย ราคาและวิธีการชำระเงินค่าสินค้า พนักงานร้านค้า การจัดร้านและบรรยากาศภายในร้านค้า มีอิทธิพลต่อผู้บริโภคให้เลือกใช้บริการซื้อสินค้าจากร้านสะดวกซื้อ (เซเว่น อีเลเว่น) ในขณะที่ส่วนประสมทางการตลาดเพียง 4 ปัจจัย ได้แก่ ทำเลที่ตั้งของร้านค้า พนักงานร้านค้า คุณภาพและความ

หลากหลายของสินค้า ราคาและวิธีการชำระเงินค่าสินค้า มีอิทธิพลต่อผู้บริโภคให้เลือกใช้บริการซื้อสินค้าจากร้านขายของชำแบบดั้งเดิม ผลการศึกษายังพบว่า ผู้บริโภคส่วนมากในเขตราษฎร์บูรณะ กรุงเทพมหานคร เลือกใช้บริการซื้อสินค้าจากร้านสะดวกซื้อ (เซเว่น อีเลเว่น)

The Master's Project Advisor, Chair of Business English for International Communication Program and Oral Defense Committee have approved this Master's Project, *The Demographic Factors and Elements of the Retail Marketing Mix that Most Influence Consumers to Shop at Mom and Pop Shop or 7-Eleven Outlets in the Radburana District of Bangkok*, by Ms. Sopida Kesornbua, as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication at Srinakharinwirot University.

Project Advisor

…………………………………………………………………………………..

(Mr. Leroy A. Quick)

Chair of the Business English for International Communication Program

………………………………………………………………………………………

(Assistant Professor Sirinna Boonyasanguan)

Oral Defense Committee

………………………………………………………………… Chair

(Dr. Prapaipan Aimchoo)

………………………………………………………………… Committee Member

(Assistant Professor Sirinna Boonyasanguan)

…………………………………………………………………. Committee Member

(Mr. Leroy A. Quick)

This Master's Project has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication at Srinakharinwirot University.

……………………………………………….. Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

(Associate Professor Akkara Buntip)

April……., 2010

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my profound gratitude to my Master's Project Advisor, Mr. Leroy A. Quick, for his valuable guidance, comments, and encouragement. Sincere thanks and appreciation are also extended to all my defense committee members, Dr. Prapaipan Aimchoo, Dr. Saengchan Hemchua, Assist. Prof. Sirinna Boonyasanguan and Ajarn Sopin Chantakloi, for their kindness and excellent comments to improve this work.

My wholehearted thankful appreciation is also given to my mother and sister: Mrs. Wantana Phonkasem and Ms. Sarunya Kesornbua who always supported me and were my inspiration.

Lastly, I am indebted to my husband, Mr. Wasan Klinchan, for his love and patience during my study.

Sopida Kesornbua

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter Page

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Traditional Thai neighborhood retail shops are called Chow Huay (โชห่วย). In the Ayudhaya period from the 13^{th} to 17^{th} centuries, the Chinese who migrated to Thailand established these small businesses selling dry goods in their local communities (Sudsanguan, 2001). As these businesses operated primarily from homes, many of the business expenses were shared with the home costs, making the businesses more viable. The homeowners were also the business operators. The “shop house” became the center of the extended family and the base for the family business. For this reason, and others noted below, these small retail businesses will hereinafter be referred to with the common English term “Mom and Pop shops”.

Sudsanguan (2001) observed that Mom and Pop shops became part of Thai communities and a traditional part of Thai culture. They began to serve as social centers of communities as their locations were close to customers’ homes and the customers were familiar with their shops, their goods and their owners/operators. Apart from shopping at local fresh markets, community members, especially housewives, visited Mom and Pop shops to purchase needed consumer goods as well as socialize and share local news. Mom and Pop shops began to reflect the identities of the local communities in which they operated. Intimacy and warm relationships among local customers and shop owners/operators became the norm. Many Mom and Pop shops continue to provide tables, chairs or benches to encourage this practice.

By the end of the 20th century, Mom and Pop shops typically were selling basic items required for day-to-day living. Phupoksakul (2003) noted that the standard items found in these shops include: rice, cooking oil, sugar, eggs, soda, drinking water, beer, liquor, cigarettes, snack food, canned goods, sanitary napkins, tissue paper, candies and candles. Most of the shops also carry some basic medications such as painkillers, cold pills, stomach-upset pills, and bandages although they do not have a license to sell pharmaceutical products. There are no price tags on products. Most Mom and Pop shops operate out of shop houses and do not use electronic data processing in any of their management procedures. The shops are generally not air-conditioned and use "L steel bar" racks as display shelves. They also keep minimum stocks on hand, and limited or no warehousing of spare items. Logistically, sales teams from suppliers/manufactures visit these stores on a regular basis to replenish the shelves and/or offer new products. Business transactions are conducted primarily in cash; both purchases and sales.

Mom and Pop shops reflect their communities not only by the products they sell, but also by the services they provide to their communities: flexibility in making purchases of non-standard volumes, e.g. one cigarette or three eggs; credit purchases; and, because of their place in, and knowledge of, their communities, they provide advice on, and assistance with day-to-day difficulties. The heightened social role of these shops is a second reason for referring to them as Mom and Pop shops.

Cheugsuvadee (2006) stated that, generally, Mom and Pop shop owners/operators operated their businesses in traditional ways serving their local communities without the benefits of modern management practices: stock management, competitive pricing, distribution and merchandizing, or promotion. This is the third reason for referring to these small businesses as Mom and Pop shops; the connotation of dated (old-fashioned) management practices.

The traditional business model (shop house family business) and social role in communities served Mom and Pop shops well, but changes in demographics, consumer behavior and the arrival of strong competitors with more competitive business models and management expertise have presented Mom and Pop shops with new challenges. Mom and Pop shops have long been traditional Thai grocers that survived because they functioned with low operating costs, but since no professional managers were hired, efficiency suffered. Setting goals, targets and strategic planning are crucial practices for growth and survival in a competitive retail environment. Mom and Pop shop management weaknesses have centered on tax problems and the absence of proper inventory and logistic management (Wiboonpongse & Sriboonchitta, 2004).

Cheugsuvadee (2006) noted that, as the population in Bangkok expanded in the 1960s, Thai shoppers began to appreciate the advantages of the western one-stop shopping model. The 1980s was a period of economic boom in Thailand. Thais had increased purchasing power, particularly people in Bangkok, since they were better educated and earned higher incomes. The rising incomes and changing lifestyles of people in Bangkok stimulated the development of the modern retail trade. Thai consumers began to prefer to shop in Western-style supermarkets and in department stores given the convenience of parking space, a broad range of local and imported products in one facility, and a clean, bright environment, none of which facilities Mom and Pop shops provided (Dana, 1999).

Supermarkets were first introduced in Thailand during the Vietnam War in the 1960s (Mandhacitara, 2000). Wigglesworth and Brotan (1966) defined supermarkets as being self-service stores, complete with shopping carts, plastic wrapped meats and vegetables and a wide assortment of imported food. Thai consumers accepted the addition of supermarkets to the Thai retail market. No popular protest against their appearance is recorded.

PriceWaterHouseCoopers (2006) reported the 7-eleven chain of convenience stores, a U.S. based company, entered Thailand in 1988 with a franchise granted to the Charoen Pokphand Group (CP Group), Thailand's largest agribusiness conglomerate, which in turn grants franchises to local operators. 7-eleven outlets sell 2,500-3,000 products, which can be categorized into food and beverage and non-food products, representing 47% and 53% of sales respectively. The 7-eleven chain outlets meet consumer's demand by providing a broad selection of reliable products and services, easily found near bus stops on main streets and located in neighborhoods. 7-elven outlets are brightly lit, air conditioned, clean and offer friendly, 24-hour service. By 2002, the 7-eleven chain outlets had grown to a network of over 2,050 stores in 76 provinces across Thailand, the largest convenience store chain in the country. In 2006, Thailand became the country with the fifth largest 7-eleven chain in the world after the USA, Canada, Japan and Taiwan (Cheungsuvadee, 2006). No protest against the 7-eleven chain in Thailand can be found.

Following the introduction and development of supermarket and convenience store competitors to Mom and Pop shops, another competitor appeared in the 1990s.

Foreign retailers, such as Tesco, Big C, Siam Makro and Carrefour, entered the Thai retail market (Mandhachitara, 2000). They introduced the successful western "hypermarket" model characterized by vast parking and shopping areas, a wide range of low price products on offer including dry and fresh goods, clothing, home and garden goods, automotive supply, toys and entertainment goods, all housed in modern, attractive and comfortable facilities that offered space for other service providers: pharmacies, book stores, specialty stores, banks, restaurants and fast food outlets. Hypermarkets employ the latest retail technology, international suppliers and modern management practices.

Tesco Lotus was established in 1998, when Tesco UK purchased the Lotus chain from the CP Group. By 2006, Tesco Lotus had 91 hypermarkets and 200 Lotus Express stores (Manager online, 2007). By 2006, Tesco Lotus was the major player in the hypermarket business in Thailand with the highest sales volume (PriceWaterHouseCooper, 2006).

The growth in the number of Tesco Lotus outlets attests to the popularity of hypermarkets with Thai consumers. However, unlike supermarkets and convenience stores, the rapid growth of hypermarket retailers in Thailand led to protests. For example, more than 100 small retailers in Nakhon Pathom blocked Malaiman road, which links the province with Suphan Buri, and protested against the building of a Tesco Lotus hypermarket. The protest disrupted traffic for more than four hours. A small child protested on the road, requesting the giant store not be built because it could ruin business at her mother's shop (Pumas, 2007). Another example was a crowd of over one thousand Pranburi residents who blocked the main roads in Pranburi, Petchakasem Road and the Pranburi bypass road, protesting against the construction of Tesco Lotus and Makro hypermarkets in Pranburi.

The protesters claimed that both hypermarkets would make local Mom and Pop shop operators bankrupt (Satyaem, 2007).

The protest against hypermarkets quickly subsided as consumers began to recognize the advantages of hypermarket shopping and accepted it as part of their changing lifestyles, as they had accepted supermarkets and chain convenience stores before. However, the increased competition in the Thai retail market has had a negative impact on Mom and Pop shops. Siamwalla and Poapongsakorn (2003) reported that 8.5% of Mom and Pop shops have shut down annually since 1997. Phupoksakul noted that there were approximately 300,000 Mom and Pop shops in Thailand in 2001 (Phupoksakul, 2003). AC Nielsen (2004) reported that the number of Mom and Pop shops in 2002 was 283,009, and this number decreased to 273,314 in 2003. The International Retail and Franchise Business R&D Center (IRF) reported that the number of Mom and Pop shops declined to 170,000 in 2007 (International Retail and Franchise Business R&D Center, 2007).

The growth of supermarkets, chain convenience stores and hypermarkets has clearly impacted on the customer base of traditional Mom and Pop shops. A logical concern of Mom and Pop shop owners/operators and many consumers might be whether or not Mom and Pop shops can survive the competition. This is a compelling issue because of the traditional roles Mom and Pop shops have played in Thai communities and their continuing, if declining, economic importance.

But in a free market, where the buyers and sellers are solely responsible for the choices they make, it is the consumers who ultimately decide which products and product providers will survive in the market. It is, then, interesting to identify the demographic factors that define the consumers who may shop at Mom and Pop shops or at their competitors' stores. In parallel, it is important to identify the elements of the retail marketing mix that influence different groups of consumers to purchase products at Mom and Pop shops or at their competitors' outlets.

Demographic factors refer to the vital and measurable statistics of a population. Demographic segmentation includes such factors as gender, age, education, occupation and income (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

According to Solomon (1999), purchasing behaviors can be defined as "the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires" (p. 5). Consumer purchasing behaviors are complicated, including mental and social processes that precede and follow purchasing actions. Behind the visible act of making a purchase lies an important decision making process.

Determining a target market (the consumers one intends to persuade to purchase goods) in retailing is a prerequisite to creating the retail marketing mix (the elements retailers use to influence target consumers to purchase goods). The retail marketing mix is a combination of the classic four Ps of the marketing mix (product, place, promotion and price), plus personnel and presentation (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2000).

The future of the Thai retail market is of vital interest to local small business owners/operators as well as to domestic and international enterprises, Thai consumers and the Thai government. The issue is both broad and deep. The researcher does not have the means to address the entire issue, but wishes to make a small contribution to understanding. For this reason, this research project focuses specifically on the five afore mentioned demographic factors and the six elements of retail marketing mix that influence consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok, the residence of the researcher and the location of her family's Mom and Pop shop.

Research Questions

Because of the above, and with specific regard to the Radburana district of Bangkok, the research questions proposed for this study were:

1. Which demographic factors best identified consumers that shopped at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets?
2. Which elements of the retail marketing mix most influenced consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be beneficial not only for Thai Mom and Pop shop owners/operators but also for other small local retailers seeking to develop their marketing strategies. This study also will provide deeper insights into the demographic factors and elements of the retail marketing mix that most influence consumers in the Radburana district of Bangkok and therefore will be of interest to researchers in various social domains and marketing.

Scope of the Study

The participants in this study consisted of 80 consumers who had experience shopping in both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets and who had just completed their shopping at one of four selected Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven retail stores in the Radburana district of Bangkok. The study focuses on five demographic factors and the six elements of the retail marketing mix.

Methodology of the Study

The primary data were collected by means of a questionnaire between March 30 and April 7, 2009. The research procedure was divided into four steps.

First, the researcher selected two Mom and Pop shops and two 7-eleven outlets in proximity in the Radburana district of Bangkok. In this way, consumers shopping at both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets were most likely to spread their purchases between the identified stores.

Second, a questionnaire was designed to identify the demographic factors of the respondents and the elements of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents' purchasing behaviors. The questionnaire was prepared in Thai for use with the survey respondents. This questionnaire was given a preliminary trial on ten Radburana residents in March 2009 to verify its clarity to respondents and the accuracy and reliability of their responses. (See Appendix A.) The questionnaire then was translated into English to satisfy university graduate school requirements. The translation was reviewed by one native Thai speaking and one native English speaking member of the researcher's proposal defense committee. (See Appendix B.)

Third, the convenience method was employed to select 80 consumers who bought goods from Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok. The questionnaires were completed by twenty consumers in the order of their exits after shopping at each of the two selected Mom and Pop shops and two selected 7-eleven outlets for a total of 80 respondent questionnaires.

Finally, the data were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics (percentages and means). The findings are presented, conclusions drawn and discussed, recommendations for further study made and limitations of the study noted in Chapters 4 and 5 hereinafter.

Definition of Terms

Mom and Pop Shops: Traditional Thai neighborhood retail shops which are most commonly operated in shop houses and sell a limited range of consumer products and dry goods, use dated management practices, and traditionally serve as social centers of the communities in which the shops operate

Chain Convenience Stores: 7-eleven outlets which provide a broad selection of products, which can be categorized into food and beverage and non-food products, offer 24-hour service in modern, attractive facilities at convenient locations, and employ modern management practices and technology

Consumers: Eighty people who bought goods from Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok during the study period

Demographic Factors: Five vital and measurable statistics of a population: gender, age, education, occupation and income

Consumer Purchasing Behaviors: The processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires

Retail Marketing Mix: The six Ps: the classic four Ps of the marketing mix (product, place, promotion, and price) plus personnel and presentation

CHAPTER 2

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

Related literature has been reviewed in order to established basic concepts which underlie this study. These are divided into five sections:

1. Purchasing Behaviors
2. Demographic Factors
3. Major Types of Retailers
4. The Retail Marketing Mix
5. Related Previous Research

Purchasing Behaviors

Solomon (1999) explained that purchasing behaviors can be defined as the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires. For example, a female university student who wants to acquire a laptop computer has a number of brand choices such as, Acer, Sony or Compaq. She may get information from surfing the Internet, studying brochures or communicating her needs to friends who have laptop computers. She will get a great deal of information, as well as recommendations on how to use, choose or avoid particular brands.

According to Kotler (1991), a buyer's purchasing behaviors are highly influenced by internal and external factors. These factors are elaborated in Figure 1 below.

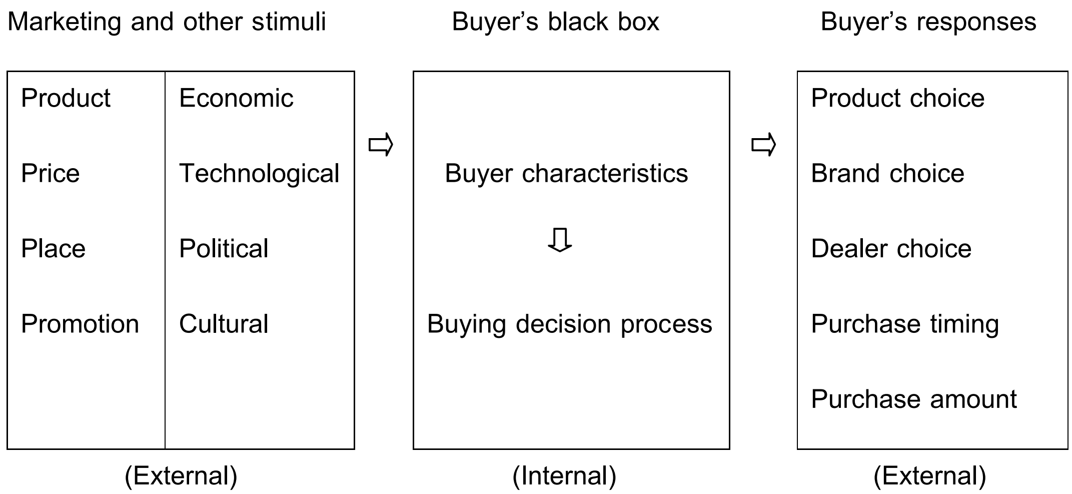

Figure 1 Model of buyer behavior (Kotler, 1991)

The starting point of Kotler’s stimulus response model is the marketing stimuli consisting of the classic four Ps of the marketing mix, which are product, price, place, and promotion. Other stimuli consist of major forces and events in the environment, which are beyond the buyer’s control. These can be identified as economic, technological, political, and cultural stimuli. Economic stimuli include both the buyer’s perceptions of his or her financial situation and the state of the economy in general. Technological stimuli refer primarily to the availability of a particular technology in a particular market; high definition television may be available in some markets and not in others, 3G phone services and GPS are other technologies not universally available. Political stimuli refer to the political influence in the buyer’s country; the type of political system reflects on the limitation of brands and product choices; countries with centrally controlled economies may discourage, or block, imported brands or products and even open economies may seek to protect local brands and products in their countries. Cultural stimuli refer to the effect of the buyer’s culture on forming a set of values, perceptions, preferences and behaviors; a special discount for mothers and fathers is an important marketing tool for many restaurants on Mother’s Day or Father’s Day in Thailand where people are brought up to show gratitude and respect for elders. All these stimuli pass through the buyer’s black box.

A buyer’s black box is an assumed and unobservable part of a buyer’s mind. It is in this black box that the external stimuli meet and are interpreted by an individual’s personal characteristics and personal decision making process.

A buyer’s personal characteristics influence how he or she perceives and reacts to the external stimuli. These include cultural, social, personal and psychological characteristics. Culture is a fundamental determinant of a person’s wants and behaviors. For example, in Thailand, “Krengjai”, or consideration of others, is a dominant cultural trait. As an individual growing up, a child learns to be part of his or her culture through interaction with his or her family, friends and social group. Throughout life, a Thai will exhibit cultural traits that will distinguish him or her from members of other cultures. Thais will tend to prefer eating rice and a wide range of vegetables. Americans will tend toward potatoes and a more narrow range of vegetables. An individual’s social characteristics are also formed through contact with family, friends and social group, but define the individual and his or her behaviors more narrowly: in terms of his or her social group, southern Thais will show a preference for steamed white rice and curries, northeastern Thais will tend to opt for sticky rice accompanied by fried or grilled dishes. Personal characteristics include demographic factors such as age, gender, income, occupation and education. An executive of a large corporation will tend to purchase a luxury car, while a factory worker may aspire to own a small used car. Psychological characteristics include perceptions, motivations, beliefs and attitudes. Thai women use skin whitening products because they believe whiter skin brings happiness and success in love and foreign products are better than domestic products.

A buyer's personal decision process also affects his or her buying behaviors. Each individual develops his or her own buying decision making process. The decision making process involves the following steps: stimulus and problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and postpurchase behavior.

The buying decision making process starts when the buyer recognizes a problem or need. For example, a person will recognize a need for a new DVD player when his or her old one stops working. The next step is to search for information on DVD player in the market. Sources of information could include family, friends, advertisements and sales people. The person who needs the new DVD player may visit many showrooms, have discussions with sales persons and others, before making a decision. After the potential buyer has acquired sufficient information, he or she will evaluate the alternative DVD player solutions. He or she will develop a set of brand beliefs about each brand. The set of brand beliefs make up the brand image. For example, the sound may be better on the Sony DVD player but the picture may be of higher quality on the Toshiba. Consumers usually have developed a brand preference for brands which they have had good experiences. At the end of the evaluation process, each consumer will reach his or her final purchase decision. Consumers tend to form their intentions to buy the brands they most prefer. After deciding which product and brand to buy, the potential buyer must then decide where, when, and how to buy the product. In Kotler's model, consumers are influenced by external stimuli differently, each buyer's personal characteristics are different and each buyer's personal decision making process is unique, but all purchasing decisions are made through an interplay of the above mentioned elements.

The buyer's black box produces the set of observable buyer responses: product choice (which product or model the consumer buys), brand choice (which brand the consumer chooses), dealer choice (where the consumer buys the product), purchase timing (when the consumer buys the product) and purchase amount (how much the consumer pays and how the sum is paid: cash, credit or check (Kotler, 1991).

After purchasing the product, consumers will experience some level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. These feelings will influence whether or not the customer will buy the product or brand again, and whether the buyer will talk favorably or unfavorably about the purchase to others. This word-of-mouth will influence future buyers and the companies that produce the products offered for sale.

As outlined above, consumer purchasing behavior is an ongoing process, not just what happens at the moment of a purchase of a good or service. Consumers are influenced by external and internal factors. These factors combine to form purchasing behaviors that determine not only which products are bought, but also where and when they are bought and how and how much consumers are willing to pay for products and services.

Demographic Factors

Schiffman & Kanuk (2000, pp. 38-39) explained that demography refers to “the vital and measurable statistics of a population”. They added that demographic segmentation includes such factors as gender, age, and social class.

According to Schiffman & Kanuk (2000), gender is a distinguishing segmentation variable in many product categories (clothing and shoes, cosmetics, issue-focused magazines). They note however that, sex roles have blurred, and gender is no longer an accurate way to distinguish consumers in some product categories. For example, men have become significant users of skin care and hair products. Much of the change in gender roles has occurred because of the impact of dual-income households. Solomon (1999) pointed out that, in the past, most marketers assumed that men were the primary decision makers for automobile purchases, but in the late 1990s more than six out of ten new car buyers under the age of 50 were women. Even with gender blurring, the gender demographic needs to be considered carefully in the study of consumer purchasing behaviors.

With regard to the age factor, Schiffman & Kanuk (2000) indicated that needs and interests often vary with consumers’ ages. For instance, toy manufacturers design different toys for babies as they move through various stages from three months to one year. Consumers of different age groups have very different needs and wants. Solomon (1999) argued that as consumers grow older, their needs and preferences change, often in concert with others who are close to their own age. For this reason, younger consumers tend to spend more of their income on “fast food” with a limited health consciousness, while older consumers spend larger amounts on balanced diets, dietary supplements and other health related products and services.

A consumer's social class also has a profound impact on what he or she does with money and on how consumption choices reflect his or her place in society.

Social class categories usually are ranked in a hierarchy, ranging from low to high status. Thus, members of a specific social class perceive members of other social classes as having more or less status than they do (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

According to Solomon (1999), social class is determined by a complex set of variables. Two major variables are income, and education. A third important factor is occupation, which is related to income and education. Social class is not determined by a single factor such as income, but is measured as a combination of income, education and occupation. Income, education, and occupation tend to be closely correlated in almost a cause-and-effect relationship. It is for this reason that, in general, high-level occupations that produce high incomes usually require advanced education and/or training.

To examine the demographic factors of consumers that shop at Mom and Pop shops and/or 7-eleven outlets, this research focuses on consumer characteristics in term of gender, age, and social class, including income, education, and occupation, because these factors are easily measurable and accessible.

Major Types of Retailers

Kotler (1991) described retailing as all activities involved in selling goods or services directly to final consumers for their personal, non-business use. Retail stores come in all shapes and sizes and can be classified by the length and breadth of their product assortments. The major types of retailers, as defined by Kotler (1991), are presented below.

Department stores carry several product lines, typically clothing, home furnishings, and household goods. Each line is operated as a separate department managed by merchandisers or buyers of the products being sold in the department. Department stores seek to enhance customer service and satisfaction in order to shift the focus away from price. Examples of department stores in Bangkok are Central Department Store, Robinson Department Store and The Mall Department Store.

Specialty stores carry a narrow product line with a deep assortment within that line for specific target markets. Specialty stores are not only types of stores, but also a method of retail operation specializing in a given type of merchandise. Examples of specialty stores in Thailand are Oriental Princess (cosmetics), Power Buy (electricity and home appliances) and Super Sports (sporting goods).

Discount stores are large-scale retailing institutions that have a broad but shallow product assortment, and offer low prices and few customer services. Discount stores regularly sell their merchandise at lower prices by accepting lower margins and selling at higher volumes. Examples of discount stores are Wal-Mart and Kmart in the United State and Makro in Thailand.

Supermarkets are relatively large, low-cost, low-margin, high-volume, self-service operations designed to satisfy consumers' needs for food, laundry, and household-maintenance products. Modern supermarkets are planned for maximum efficiency for both retailers and shoppers. Examples of supermarkets in Bangkok are Tops, Foodland and Home Fresh Mart.

Hypermarkets are very large stores that combine supermarket and discount retailing. In addition to food, hypermarkets carry furniture, appliances, clothing, and other products. Examples of hypermarkets in Bangkok are Tesco Lotus, Big C and Carrefour.

Convenience stores are small self-service stores that carry a selection of the most commonly needed household products. Typically, convenience stores are located in residential areas and are open many hours each day and usually seven days a week. These stores must charge relatively high prices to make up for higher operating costs. Consumers use convenience stores for fill-in purchases at off hours or when time is short and they are willing to pay for the convenience. Convenience stores in Bangkok include the Family Mart, 7-eleven chains and Mom and Pop shops.

In summary, retailers are varied in terms of their product assortments, types of services offered and price levels. This research focuses on convenience store retailers, and in particular on 7-eleven and Mom and Pop shops. Both convenience stores provide basic items required for day-to-day living and are located in residential areas.

The Retail Marketing Mix

According to Lamb et al. (2000), retailers must develop marketing strategies based on overall goals and strategic plans. Retailing goals might include more consumer traffic in the store, higher sales of a specific item, a more upscale image, or heightened public awareness of the retail operation. The strategies that retailers use to obtain their goals might include sales, distinctive décors, or advertising.

The first and foremost task in developing a retail strategy is to define the target market. Determining a target market is a prerequisite to creating a retailing strategy (Lamb et al., 2000). Once the market (the group of expected customers) has been well defined, the next step is to design a mix of strategies that will successfully persuade the target customers to purchase the products offered in the retail outlet. The mixture of these strategies is called the retail marketing mix.

Lamb et al. (2000) indicated that the retail marketing mix consists of six Ps: the classic four Ps of the marketing mix (product, place, promotion, and price) plus personnel and presentation. Their definition of the retail marketing mix is presented below.

Retailers decide which products to sell on the basis of what their target market wants to buy. Developing a product offering is essentially a question of width and depth of the product assortment. Width refers to the assortment of products offered. Depth refers to the number of different brands offered within each assortment. Convenience stores such as 7-eleven and Mom and Pop shops, carry a limited assortment of products from basic items required for day-to-day living to basic medications, while hypermarkets, such as Tesco Lotus, Big C and Carrefour, offer a large number of brand choices within each product line.

Place, or location, is a key to success in retailing since customers primarily choose the most convenient location for shopping. Retailers can locate their stores in the central business district, a regional shopping center, a community shopping center or within a larger store. For example, Wal-Mart became the largest retailer in the United States by locating in underserved small towns, offering such services as hair salons, mail centers, and travel agencies. 7-eleven became the largest convenience store chain in Thailand because they located their outlets conveniently near bus stops, on main streets and in neighborhoods. Mom and Pop shops are located primarily in the residences of the shop owners/operators.

The retail promotion strategy includes advertising, public relations, publicity and sales promotion. The goal is to help position the store in consumers' minds. For example, Tesco Lotus's national advertising seeks to position the retailer as the low price shopping center. 7-eleven's national advertising promotes the retailer as the convenience place customers can visit any time they want to satisfy their needs. Mom and Pop shops have no apparent promotion strategy.

Price is also a key positioning factor and must be decided in relation to the target market, product offering and competition. Higher prices often indicate a level of quality and help reinforce the prestigious image of retailers such as for The Emporium and The Paragon. On the other hand, hypermarkets, such as Tesco Lotus, offer good value for money. Convenience stores, such as 7-eleven, charge higher prices but consumers are willing to pay for the convenience. Mom and Pop shops charge high prices but provide credit purchases. Mom and Pop shops also offer flexibility in making odd number unit sales (one cigarette or three eggs).

The two additional Ps in the retail marketing mix are personnel and presentation.

The personnel, or the staff providing the customer service, are a unique aspect of retailing. Most retail sales involve a customer-salesperson relationship. Retail salespeople serve as an important selling function, which is to persuade shoppers to buy the products in which they are interested, and broaden the customers' original purchases with related items. This is most easily observed at department stores. Customers in convenience stores, who enjoy helping themselves as long as they can find what they need, may prefer to shop at 7-eleven outlets, while convenience store customers, who want personal one-to-one attention, may prefer to shop at Mom and Pop shops. 7-eleven staff greet shoppers with a smiling "Sawasdee". Mom and Pop shop operators may not be so welcoming.

The main element of a store's presentation is its atmosphere, the overall impression conveyed by a store's physical layout, décor, and surroundings. The store must embody a planned atmosphere that suits the target market and draws consumers toward purchases. Supermarkets have found that varying the tempo of music increases average expenditures. The layout of retail stores is an especially key factor in their success. Layout is planned to ensure the customer's shopping ease and convenience. Moreover, layout has an influence on consumer traffic patterns and purchasing behaviors. For example, in order to encourage last-minute, impulse purchase, many types of retail outlets display promotion priced items at the checkout counter. All 7-eleven outlets are clean, brightly lit with modern dry and cold product displays arranged in convenient aisles. Most Mom and Pop shops display few of these characteristics.

In summary the key tasks in strategic retailing are defining a target market and developing the six variables of the retail marketing mix: (product, place, promotion, price, personnel, and presentation) to effectively persuade customers to make their purchases at the intended retail outlet. Although these factors should be taken into account in order to attract and hold retail customers, not many studies indicate which of the retail marketing mix elements most influence Thai consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets. This study seeks to make a small contribution to that understanding, at least in the case of retail customers at convenience stores in the Radburana district of Bangkok.

Related Previous Research

Below is a brief selection of research done on the influence of demographic factors and the retail marketing mix on consumers at retail outlets in Thailand.

Juwattanasamran (2006) conducted a research entitled, “A Comparative Study of Buying Decision Behavior between Convenience Stores and Traditional Retail Stores in Khon Kaen Municipality”. The research studied behaviors of 385 consumers 15 years of age and above who bought goods from both convenience stores and traditional retail stores in Khon Kaen. The survey was taken by means of a questionnaire. The research found that gender affected different purchasing behaviors in terms of time spent at both convenience stores and traditional retail stores. The research also revealed that income and education influenced purchasing behaviors in terms of the purchasing amount, and that consumers’ attitudes toward the retail marketing mix of convenience stores in the areas of product and place were at a good level.

A study by Kasemkosin (2002) was entitled, “The Locational Impact of Modern Convenience Store on Small Grocery Stores: A Central Place Theoretical Case Study of the Samutprakarn Municipality Area”. Questionnaires were distributed to 300 consumers 15 years of age and above. The study revealed that location, or place, was the most important factor attracting customers. The research also found that income, occupation and education influenced consumers to shop at modern convenience stores or small grocery stores. Consumers with high incomes and education levels preferred to shop at modern convenience stores because of product assortment and product quality.

Chotithummaporn and Bowornchokchai (2005) conducted “The Study of the Attitudes and Behaviors of People to Use the Convenience Store Service in Din-Dang Area”. Four hundred respondents were surveyed by means of a questionnaire. The study found that place, or location, was the most important factor influencing the respondents in the Din-Dang area to shop at convenience stores. The respondents’ attitudes with regard to customer service and store decoration were at a very good level.

Ouiyamapun (1998) investigated “Consumers’ Attitude and Behavior toward the am/pm Convenience Store in PTT Gas Stations in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area”. Data were collected by questionnaires from 280 consumers who bought goods from am/pm convenience stores in PTT gas stations in Bangkok. The study found that consumer’s attitudes toward am/pm convenience stores in PTT gas stations were at a high level because of the convenient locations, good customer service, and store decoration.

Saubhayana (2003) studied “Comparison Study of Consumer’s Opinion of Traditional Trade with Modern Trade in Bangkok”. The purpose of this study was to determine consumers’ attitudes toward traditional stores and modern convenience stores. A questionnaire was employed as the main tool to gather data from 400 respondents. The study found that the respondents’ attitudes with regard to product quality and assortment, price, presentation and personnel were at a very good level. Respondents preferred to do convenience store shopping at modern convenience stores.

In summary, this chapter has described the basic theory of purchasing behaviors, and the importance of demographic factors and the retail marketing mix. Understanding the combination of the variables therein can assist local retailers improve their performance in the market. This study reveals the demographic factors and the elements of the retail marketing mix that most influence consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok.

The research methodology used in this study, including the survey participants, the research tool and the data collection and analysis procedures are presented in the following Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research method employed in this study and is divided into four parts: participants, research tool, data collection and data analysis.

Participants

The participants in the survey included eighty consumers who had experience shopping in both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets. It was important that all of the participants had experience shopping at both convenience stores, so that their choices for shopping at one or the other would be founded on personal experience. The first ten shoppers exiting each of the survey sites in the Radburana district of Bangkok at the scheduled survey times were invited to participate in the survey. The selection of the survey sites and the survey schedule are presented in “Data Collection” below.

Research Tool

A questionnaire was used as the research tool to collect the primary data for this study. To insure clear communication with the respondents, a Thai questionnaire was employed to survey the respondents. The Thai version of the questionnaire in Appendix A was reviewed by Dr. Sangchan Hemchua, an expert, and was pretested on ten Thai consumers, all experienced shoppers at Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets, in

March, 2009 to verify the clarity of its language, the ease for respondents to respond to it and the reliability of their responses. Following the pre-test, minor changes were made to questionnaire wording. The English translation of the questionnaire, required by university policy, was reviewed for accuracy by Dr. Sangchan Hemchua and was reviewed by the research advisor to verify its accurate reflection of the theories and principles underlying its design; especially Schiffman and Kanuk (2000) and Solomon (1999) with regard to demographic factors, and Lamb et al. (2000) with regard to the retail marketing mix.

The questionnaire is divided into five parts described below.

Part I: Convenience Store Shopping Experience

To determine which demographic factors and elements of the retail marketing mix most influenced the respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok, it was important that all respondents had experience shopping in both types of convenience stores prior to participating in the survey. Part I, item 1 was a pre-qualifying statement insuring that all respondents had the required experience. Items 2a., 2b. and 2c. provided additional data on respondent purchasing behaviors.

Part II: Personal Information

This part of the questionnaire identified the demographic factors that characterized the respondents who shopped at Mom and Pop shops and/or 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok during the period of the study. Based on the works to Schiffman and Kanuk (2000) and Solomon (1999), the following demographic factors were identified for inclusion in the study: gender, age, education, occupation and income.

Part III: Elements that Influence Convenience Store Choices

This part of the questionnaire revealed the elements of the retail marketing mix, as described by Lamb et al. (2000) that influenced the respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets. Space for respondents to offer other influences was also provided.

Part IV: Choice of Convenience Store

This part of the questionnaire required the respondents to make a hypothetic choice between shopping only at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets. Coupled with Part V of the questionnaire, this revealed the elements of the retail marketing mix that most influenced the respondents to shop at one or the other type of convenience store.

Part V: Most Influential Elements of Consumer's Choices

Part five of the questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate the one element of the retail marketing mix that most influenced them to shop at the convenience store of their choice in Part IV of the questionnaire and the one element that most influenced them not to shop at the other convenience store.

Data Collection

Soi Suksawad 38 is a major soi in the Radburana district of Bangkok. The researcher is a resident on that soi. Two 7-eleven outlets are located on opposite sides of the soi approximately 200 meters apart. Four Mom and Pop shops are located along the soi within 250 meters of the 7-eleven outlets. These retail stores are located 800 meters from the beginning of the soi. There are no other convenience stores near the selected survey sites.

The two 7-eleven outlets were selected to serve as survey sites. Two of the four Mom and Pop shops located on the same sides of the soi as the two 7-eleven outlets and located closest to the two 7-eleven outlets also were selected as survey sites. The selection of these two 7-eleven outlets and two Mom and Pop shops in close proximity was made to contribute to the homogeneity of the survey respondents shopping in them.

The survey was conducted on the following schedule:

March 30, 2009, 8.00 am., 7-eleven outlet site 1

March 30, 2009, 12.00 am., 7-eleven outlet site 1

April 6, 2009, 8.00 am., Mom and Pop shop site 1

April 6, 2009, 12.00 am., Mom and Pop shop site 1

March 31, 2009, 4.00 pm., 7-eleven outlet site 2

March 31, 2009, 8.00 pm., 7-eleven outlet site 2

April 7, 2009, 4.00 pm., Mom and Pop shop site 2

April 7, 2009, 8.00 pm., Mom and Pop shop site 2

This survey schedule insured a consistent collection of the primary data: one 7-eleven outlet and one Mom and Pop shop at 8.00 am. and 12.00 am., and one 7-eleven outlet and one Mom and Pop shop at 4.00 pm. and 8.00 pm. on weekdays. These are the times of day that one might reasonably expect to find students and employed people commuting to their engagements and housewives/husbands and others shopping for needed items, i.e. a broad array of the target demographic groups.

The researcher's days off from work are on Mondays and Tuesdays. This schedule facilitated the data collection process. The Mom and Pop shop belonging to the mother of the researcher also was selected as one of the survey sites. This also facilitated data collection.

At the pre-selected survey sites and times, the researcher approached the first shoppers exiting the sites and requested their participation in the study. If the convenience store shoppers agreed to participate in the study and if they had experience shopping at both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets, the researcher marked the questionnaires for them taking care not to influence their responses in any way. This sped the data collection process, encouraged participation, and was convenient for both the researcher and the participants. This process continued until ten questionnaires were collected at each survey site and at each pre-scheduled time.

In this way, ten respondent questionnaires were collected at each survey time for a total of 20 questionnaires/survey site for a total of 80 completed questionnaires.

Data Analysis

The primary data were organized by demographic factors and by elements of the retail marketing mix then analyzed by means of descriptive statistics (percentages and means) to answer the research questions.

The findings are presented in tables followed by brief descriptions in the following Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The findings of this study are presented hereinafter. The details of the findings are divided into five parts as defined by the survey questionnaire.

1. Convenience Store Shopping Experience
2. Personal Information
3. Elements that Influence Convenience Store Choices
4. Choice of Convenience Store
5. Most Influential Elements of Consumers' Choices

Tables are presented to display the findings and a brief description is offered following each table.

Part I: Convenience Store Shopping Experience

Part I of the questionnaire identified the convenience store shopping experience of the respondents. Only individuals who had experience shopping at both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets were included in the study. All of the 80 respondents had shopped and presently shopped at both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets.

Part II: Personal Information

This part of the questionnaire identified the demographic factors that characterized the respondents included in the study.

From the total of 80 respondents, 42 respondents (52.50%) were female and 38 respondents (47.50%) were male.

The other factors of the demographic profile of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Personal Information

Demographic Factors	No.	%
1. Age		
15 or less	3	3.75
16-25	21	26.25
26-35	24	30.00
36-45	14	17.50
46-55	8	10.00
56-65	8	10.00
Over 65	2	2.50
Total	80	100.00
2. Education		
Primary level or equivalent	8	10.00
Secondary level or equivalent	23	28.75
Bachelor's degree	43	53.75
Master's degree or advanced degree	6	7.50
Total	80	100.00
3. Occupation		
Student	17	21.25
Employee	39	48.75
Self-employed	10	12.50
Government employee	4	5.00
Housewife/husband	3	3.75
Other	7	8.75
Total	80	100.00
4. Income		
Less than 5,000 baht/month	12	15.00
5,001-10,000 baht/month	14	17.50
10,001-15,000 baht/month	10	12.50
15,001-20,000 baht/month	18	22.50
20,001-25,000 baht/month	15	18.75
More than 25,001 baht/month	11	13.75
Total	80	100.00

Table 1 shows that 24 respondents (30.00%) were in the age range of 26-35 years old, 21 respondents (26.25%) were in the age range of 16-25 years old, and 14 respondents (17.50%) were between 36 and 45 years old. Forty-three respondents

(53.75%) held bachelor's degrees, and 23 respondents (28.75%) had secondary or equivalent levels of education. Thirty-nine respondents (48.75%) were employees, 17 respondents (21.25%) were students, and 10 respondents (12.50%) were self-employed. The three largest income groups were: 15,001-20,000 baht per month, 18 respondents (22.50%); 20,001-25,001 baht per month, 15 respondents (18.75%); and 5,001-10,000 baht per month, 14 respondents (17.50%). These groups were followed by: less than 5,000 baht per month, 12 respondents (15.00%); more than 25,001 baht per month, 11 respondents (13.75%); and 10,001-15,000 baht per month, 10 respondents (12.50%).

In summary, the profile of the consumers using the services of Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets who participated in this survey was one of middle class Bangkok residents: roughly equal numbers of males and females, largely between the ages of 16 and 45 with secondary or tertiary educations and including a large number of students advancing their educations, the largest group of respondents being employed and earning between 15,000 and 25,000 baht per month.

Part III: Elements that Influence Convenience Store Choices

Part III of the questionnaire asked the 80 respondents in the survey to identify the elements of the retail marketing mix that influenced them to shop or not to shop at Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets. Each respondent was required to indicate whether each of the six elements of the retail marketing mix influenced him/her to shop or not to shop at Mom and Pop shops and again for 7-eleven outlets.

Table 2 presents the findings on the influence of the retail marketing mix elements on shopping or not shopping at Mom and Pop shops.

TABLE 2 The Influence of the Retail Marketing Mix Elements on Shopping at Mom and Pop Shops

Retail Marketing Mix	Influenced to Shop	%	Influenced Not to Shop	%	Total
1. Product quality and assortment	55	68.75	25	31.25	80
2. Store location	67	83.75	13	16.25	80
3. Promotions	30	37.50	50	62.50	80
4. Price and terms of payment	43	53.75	37	46.25	80
5. Store personnel	57	71.25	23	28.75	80
6. Store appearance and atmosphere	39	48.75	41	51.25	80
7. Other	0	0.00	0	0.00	0

Table 2 shows that 67 respondents (83.75%) were influenced to shop at Mom and Pop shops because of the location of the stores, 57 respondents (71.25%) were influenced to shop at Mom and Pop shops by the store personnel, and 55 respondents (68.75%) were influence to shop at Mom and Pop shops because of price and terms of payment considerations.

With regard to the elements of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents not to shop at Mom and Pop shops: 50 respondents (62.50%) were influenced not to shop at Mom and Pop shops by promotions or the lack thereof, 41 respondents (51.25%) were influenced not to shop at Mom and Pop shops by the appearance and atmosphere of the stores, and 37 respondents (46.25%) were influenced not to shop at

Mom and Pop shops by the same price and terms of payment considerations that 43 respondents reported had influenced them to do their convenience store shopping at Mom and Pop shops.

In general, store location was the most important element of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops, closely followed by store personnel, product quality and assortment, and price and terms of payment, while promotions was the most important element of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents not to shop at Mom and Pop shops. This was closely followed by store appearance and atmosphere and price and terms of payment.

Table 3 presents the elements of the retail marketing mix the influenced respondents to shop or not to shop at 7-eleven outlets.

TABLE 3 The Influence of the Retail Marketing Mix Elements on Shopping at 7-eleven Outlets

Retail Marketing Mix	Influenced to Shop	%	Influenced Not to Shop	%	Total
1. Product quality and assortment	73	91.25	7	8.75	80
2. Store location	65	81.25	15	18.75	80
3. Promotions	52	65.00	28	35.00	80
4. Price and terms of payment	57	71.25	23	28.75	80
5. Store personnel	42	52.50	38	47.50	80
6. Store appearance and atmosphere	53	66.25	27	33.75	80
7. Other	0	0.00	0	0.00	0

Table 3 shows that 73 respondents (91.25%) were influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by product quality and assortment, 65 respondents (81.25%) were influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by store locations, 57 respondents (71.25%) were influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by the prices and terms of payment, 53 respondents (66.25%) were influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by store appearance and atmosphere, 52 respondents (65.00%) were influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by promotions, and 42 respondents (52.50%) were influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by store personnel. At least 50% of all respondents reported that each element of the retail marketing mix influenced them to do their convenience store shopping at 7-eleven outlets.

With regard to the elements of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents not to shop at 7-eleven outlets, 38 respondents (47.50%) were influenced not to shop at 7-eleven outlets by the store personnel, 28 respondents (35.00%) were influenced not to shop at 7-eleven outlets by promotions, 27 respondents (33.75%) were influenced not to shop at 7-eleven outlets by the appearance and atmosphere of the stores, and 23 respondents (28.75%) were influenced not to shop at 7-eleven outlets by the prices and terms of payment.

In general, product quality and assortment was the most important element of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents to shop at 7-eleven outlets, closely followed by store location, and price and terms of payment, while store personnel was the most important element of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents not to shop at 7-eleven outlets, closely followed by promotions and store appearance and atmosphere.

Table 4 presents a comparison of the three most important elements of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents to shop or not to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets.

TABLE 4 Comparisons of the Three Most Important Reasons to Shop or Not to Shop at Mom and Pop Shops or 7-Eleven Outlets

Reasons to Shop	No.	Reasons Not to Shop	No.
Mom and Pop Shops		Mom and Pop Shops	
1. Store location	67	1. Promotions	50
2. Store personnel	57	2. Store appearance and atmosphere	41
3. Product quality and assortment	55	3. Price and terms of payment	37
7-Eleven Outlets		7-Eleven Outlets	
1. Product quality and assortment	73	1. Store personnel	38
2. Store location	65	2. Promotions	28
3. Price and terms of payment	57	3. Store appearance and atmosphere	27

When the three most important reasons to shop or not to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets, as reported by all 80 respondents, are compared, the same six retail marketing mix elements appear. Store location was cited as a leading reason to shop at a convenience store by almost equal numbers of respondents: Mom and Pop shops (67 respondents, 1st rank), 7-eleven outlets (65 respondents, 2nd rank). Product quality and assortment ranked as the most important reason for respondents to shop at 7-eleven outlets (73 respondents) and ranked as the third most important reason influencing respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops (55 respondents). Store personnel ranked as the second most important reason influencing consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops (57 respondents), but ranked as the most important reason influencing consumers not to shop at 7-eleven outlets (38 respondents). Price and terms of payment was the third most influential reason for shopping at 7-eleven outlets (57 respondents), and the third most important reason for not shopping at Mom and Pop shops (37 respondents). Fifty respondents cited promotions (or lack thereof) as the most important factor influencing their choice not to shop at Mom and Pop shops, and the second most important reason reported not to shop at 7-eleven outlets. Store appearance and atmosphere was cited as the second most important reason not to shop at Mom and Pop shops (41 respondents), and as the third most important reason not to shop at 7-eleven outlets (27 respondents).

Part IV: Choice of Convenience Store

Part IV of the questionnaire asked the participants to make a hypothetic choice between shopping only at Mom and Pop shops or only at 7-eleven outlets. When faced with this either/or choice, 53 respondents (66.25%) reported they would choose to shop only at 7-eleven outlets, while 27 respondents (33.75%) opted to shop only at Mom and Pop shops.

Part V: Most Influential Elements of Consumers' Choices

Part V of the questionnaire revealed the one element of the retail marketing mix that most influenced each respondent to shop at the type of convenience store of their choice in Part IV of the questionnaire.

Table 5 presents the ranking of the most influential elements of the retail marketing mix as reported by the 27 respondents who chose Mom and Pop shops as their preferred convenience store in Part IV of the questionnaire.

TABLE 5 The Most Influential Retail Marketing Mix Elements for Shopping at Mom and Pop Shops

Retail Marketing Mix Elements	Most Influential Elements	%
1. Product quality and assortment	4	14.81
2. Store location	13	48.15
3. Promotions	0	0.00
4. Price and terms of payment	2	7.41
5. Store personnel	8	29.63
6. Store appearance and atmosphere	0	0.00
7. Other	0	0.00
Total	27	100

Table 5 shows that 13 respondents (48.15%) were most influenced to shop at Mom and Pop shops by the location of the stores, 8 respondents (29.63%) were most influenced to shop at Mom and Pop shops by the store personnel, and 4 respondents (14.81%) were most influenced to shop at Mom and Pop shops by the product quality and assortment.

In brief, store location received the highest overall percentage ranking from the 27 respondents, showing that store location was the most influential element of the retail marketing mix most influencing respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops.

Table 6 presents the ranking of the most influential elements of the retail marketing mix as reported by the 53 respondents who choose 7-eleven outlets as their preferred convenience store in Part IV of the questionnaire.

TABLE 6 The Most Influential Retail Marketing Mix Elements for Shopping at 7-Eleven Outlets

Retail Marketing Mix Elements	Most Influential Elements	%
1. Product quality and assortment	28	52.83
2. Store location	9	16.98
3. Promotions	4	7.55
4. Price and terms of payment	6	11.32
5. Store personnel	2	3.77
6. Store appearance and atmosphere	4	7.55
7. Other	0	0.00
Total	53	100

Table 6 shows that 28 respondents (52.83%) were most influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by product quality and assortment, 9 respondents (16.98%) were most influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by store location, and 6 respondents (11.32%) were most influenced to shop at 7-eleven outlets by price and terms of payment elements.

In brief, product quality and assortment received the highest overall percentage ranking from the 53 respondents, showing that product quality and assortment was the element of the retail marketing mix most influencing respondents to shop at 7-eleven outlets.

The demographic profiles of the respondents, who reported their preferences for shopping at Mom and Pop shops or at 7-eleven outlets, are provided below.

Table 7 presents the demographic profile of the 27 respondents who chose Mom and Pop shops as their preferred convenience store (33.75% of the 80 survey respondents). Of the total of 27 respondents, 15 respondents (55.56%) were male and 12 respondents (44.44%) were female.

TABLE 7 Demographic Profile of the Respondents Who Preferred Mom and Pop Shops

Demographic Factors	No.	%
1. Age		
15 or less	0	0
16-25	6	22.22
26-35	3	11.11
36-45	8	29.63
46-55	3	11.11
56-65	5	18.52
Over 65	2	7.41
Total	27	100.00
2. Education		
Primary level or equivalent	6	22.22
Secondary level or equivalent	7	25.93
Bachelor's degree	12	44.44
Master's degree or advanced degree	2	7.41
Total	27	100.00
5. Occupation		
Student	5	18.52
Employee	8	29.63
Self-employed	6	22.22
Government employee	3	11.11
Housewife/husband	2	7.41
Other	3	11.11
Total	27	100.00
6. Income		
Less than 5,000 baht/month	1	3.70
5,001-10,000 baht/month	8	29.63
10,001-15,000 baht/month	1	3.70
15,001-20,000 baht/month	4	14.82
20,001-25,000 baht/month	9	33.34
More than 25,001 baht/month	4	14.81
Total	27	100.00

Table 7 shows that 8 respondents (29.63%) were in the age range of 36-45 years old, 6 respondents (22.22%) were in the age range of 16-25 years old, and 5 respondents

(18.52%) were in the age range of 56-65 years old. Twelve respondents (44.44%) held bachelor's degrees, 7 respondents (25.93%) had secondary level or equivalent educations, and 6 respondents (22.22%) had primary or equivalent levels of education. Eight respondents (29.62%) were employees, 6 respondents (22.22%) were self-employed, and 5 respondents (18.52%) were students. Nine respondents (33.34%) had incomes between 20,001 and 25,000 baht per month, but were closely followed by a group of 8 respondents (29.63%) who had incomes between 5,001 and 10,000 baht per month.

Table 8 presents the demographic profile of the 53 respondents who chose 7-eleven outlets as their preferred convenience store (66.25% of the 80 survey respondents). Of the total of 53 respondents, 29 respondents (54.71%) were female and 24 respondents (45.28%) were male.

TABLE 8 Demographic Profile of the Respondents Who Preferred 7-Eleven Outlets

Demographic Factors	No.	%
1. Age		
15 or less	3	5.66
16-25	19	35.85
26-35	18	33.97
36-45	5	9.43
46-55	5	9.43
56-65	3	5.66
Over 65	0	0
Total	53	100.00
2. Education		
Primary level or equivalent	2	3.77
Secondary level or equivalent	15	28.30
Bachelor's degree	32	60.38
Master's degree or advanced degree	4	7.55
Total	53	100.00
3. Occupation		
Student	15	28.30
Employee	29	54.72
Self-employed	3	5.66
Government employee	2	3.77
Housewife/husband	1	1.89
Other	3	5.66
Total	53	100.00
4. Income		
Less than 5,000 baht/month	11	20.76
5,001-10,000 baht/month	9	16.99
10,001-15,000 baht/month	7	13.20
15,001-20,000 baht/month	13	24.53
20,001-25,000 baht/month	6	11.32
More than 25,001 baht/month	7	13.20
Total	53	100.00

Table 8 shows that 19 respondents (35.85%) were in the age range of 16-25 years old, and 18 respondents (33.97%) were in the age range of 26-35 years old. Thirty-two respondents (60.38%) held bachelor's degrees, and 15 respondents (28.30%) had secondary or equivalent levels of education. Twenty-nine respondents (54.72%) were employees, 15 respondents (28.30%) were students. The three largest income groups were: 15,001-20,000 baht per month, 13 respondents (24.52%); less than 5,000 baht per month, 11 respondents (20.76%); and 5,001-10,000 baht per month, 9 respondents (16.99%).

In brief, the general profile of consumers who preferred Mom and Pop shops in the Radburana district of Bangkok was mainly males between the ages of 36-45 years old, university graduates, who were employees and earned between 20,001 and 25,000 baht per month. With regard to the profile of consumers who preferred 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok, the consumers were mainly females, between the ages of 16-25 years old, university graduates, who were employees and earned between 15,001 and 20,000 baht per month.

An in-depth analysis of the findings is presented and discussed in Chapter 5 followed by limitations of the study and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study followed by, discussion, limitations of the study and recommendations for further study.

Conclusions

The findings of this study reveal the answers to the two research questions.

The first question was, “Which demographic factors best identify consumers that shop at Mom and Pop shops and/or 7-eleven outlets?”

Each of the demographic factors considered in this study (gender, age, education, occupation and income) contributed to an identifying profile of the consumers who shopped at both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets and expressed a clear preference for shopping at one of the other of these convenience stores.

With regard to gender, of the 80 respondents in the study, 38 (47.50%) were male and 42 (52.50%) were female. This represents a roughly equal gender distribution in the study group. However, a small majority of male respondents (55.56%) preferred convenience shopping at Mom and Pop shops and a similar sized majority of female respondents (54.72%) preferred to do their convenience shopping at 7-eleven outlets.

Age was a clearly identifying demographic factor: 66.67% of the respondents preferring to shop at Mom and Pop shops were above the age of 35 including 7.41% over 65 years of age and 0.00% under the age of 15. Inversely, 75.48% of respondents preferring to do their convenience shopping at 7-eleven outlets were 35 years old or younger including 5.66% 15 year old or less and 0.00% over 65 years of age.

The level of education of the respondents was also a distinguishing demographic factor. A small majority (51.85%) of the respondents preferring to do their convenience shopping at Mom and Pop shops held bachelor's degrees or higher. A larger majority (67.93%) of the respondents preferring to shop at 7-eleven outlets held bachelor's degrees or higher.

The occupation factor reveals that shoppers preferring Mom and Pop shops had a wider range of occupations than respondents preferring 7-eleven outlets. The large majority (83.02%) of respondents preferring 7-eleven outlets described themselves as either students or employees. Only 48.15% of respondents who preferred shopping at Mom and Pop shops identified themselves as students or employees. The majority (51.85%) of these respondents reported other occupations.

With regard to income, 62.97% of the respondents who preferred to shop at Mom and Pop shops earned more than 15,000 baht per month. On the contrary, 50.95% of respondents preferring to do their convenience shopping at 7-eleven outlets earned less than 15,001 baht per month and 75.48% earned 20,000 baht per month or less.

In brief, all of the demographic factors examined in the study contributed to the identification of the consumers shopping at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets. This is summarized in Table 9 below.

TABLE 9 Consumer Demographics

Demographic Factors	Preference for Mom and Pop Shops	Preference for 7-eleven Outlets
1. Gender	55.56% male	54.72 female
2. Age	66.67% over 35	75.48% under 36
3. Education	51.85% bachelor's degrees or higher	67.93% bachelor's degrees or higher
4. Occupation	51.85% self-employed, government employees, housewives/husbands, other	83.02% students, employees
5. Income	62.97% more than 15,000 baht per month	50.95% less than 15,001 baht per month

In summary, the consumers who shopped and preferred shopping at Mom and Pop shops were mainly male, above the age of 35, almost equally divided between university and non-university graduates, not students or company employees, and earned more than 15,000 baht per month. The consumers who shopped and preferred shopping at 7-eleven outlets, were mainly female, under the age of 36, largely university graduates, largely students and employees and earned less than 15,001 baht per month.

The second research question was, "Which elements of the retail marketing mix most influence consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops and/or 7-eleven outlets?"

The element of the retail marketing mix that most influenced the respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops was store location. This was closely followed by store personnel and product quality and assortment. Price and terms of payment was also identified as a reason for shopping at Mom and Pop shops by more than 50.00% of the respondents.

The element of the retail marketing mix that most influenced the respondents to shop at 7-eleven outlets was product quality and assortment followed by store location, price and terms of payment, promotions, and store personnel all being cited by more than 50.00% of the respondents as positive influences on shopping at 7-eleven outlets.

This study not only revealed the elements of the retail marketing mix that most influenced the respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets, but also the elements of the retail marketing mix that most influenced the respondents not to shop at Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets. Promotions was cited as the most important reason for not shopping at Mom and Pop shops followed by store appearance and atmosphere and price and terms of payment. The element of the retail marketing mix that most influenced the respondents not to shop at 7-eleven outlets was store personnel followed by promotions and store appearance and atmosphere.

Discussion

As noted in Chapter 1, the 7-eleven chain of convenience stores has been steadily growing in Thailand since it first opened in 1988 with 2,050 outlets in all 76 provinces by 2002 (PriceWaterHouseCoopers, 2006). At the same time, the number of Mom and Pop shops has dwindled from approximately 300,000 in 2001 to 170,000 in 2007 (International Retail and Franchise Business R&D Center, 2007). No new data is presently available, but consumers and market observers may sense the continuation of the trends. Changes in the retail market and consumer behavior in the convenience store market are of interest to Thai small business owners/operators as well as to domestic and international enterprises.

This study was undertaken in this perspective. Eighty respondents were surveyed in the Radburana district of Bangkok in March and April 2009: 40 at Mom and Pop shops and 40 at 7-eleven outlets. All respondents had experience shopping at both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets.

It is interesting to note, that of the 80 respondents included in the survey, 53 (66.25%) preferred to do their convenience store shopping at 7-eleven outlets and only 27 (33.75%) preferred to shop at Mom and Pop shops. As the survey was conducted only once, the findings are a “photograph in time” of consumer shopping preferences and cannot be interpreted to indicate a trend. However, the finding does reflect a 2-to-1 preference for shopping at 7-eleven outlets over shopping at Mom and Pop shops. This does, at least, support the perception of the ascendance of convenience store shopping at 7-eleven outlets and the decline of convenience store shopping at Mom and Pop shops.

The discussion below follows in this light and focuses on the demographic factors that identify convenience store shoppers at Mom and Pop shops and/or 7-eleven outlets in the Radburana district of Bangkok and the elements of the retail marketing mix that influence convenience store shopping behaviors.

According to Lamb et al. (2000), men desire simple shopping experiences, stores with less variety, and convenience, or have knowledgeable personnel. Women seek reasonable prices, merchandise quality and a low pressure environment. This confirms the findings of this study. Consumers who preferred Mom and Pop shops were mainly males and consumers who preferred 7-eleven outlets were mainly females. Mom and Pop shops give personal one-to-one attention to each consumer. Male consumers have a simple shopping experience, with a limited range of products offered, at Mom and Pop shops and they can tell shop owners/operators what they want and shop owners/operators will get it for them. Female consumers find it convenient to shop at 7-eleven outlets because 7-eleven outlets offer a variety of products with good quality and consumers can enjoy helping themselves to find what they need. Men tend to shop only for themselves with small volume purchases whereas women tend to shop not only for themselves but also for their families. As a result, men tend to spend less in convenience store shopping than women and on a more narrow range of products. In this way, Mom and Pop shops may continue to lose market share in the retail business, if they cannot create interest and desire of female consumers to visit and purchase more products from Mom and Pop shops.

The fact that in this study, the majority of Mom and Pop shop consumers were over 35 years of age implies that the consumers were quite familiar with the Mom and Pop shops in their community and their owners/operators and may have formed loyal convenience store shopping habits. For 7-eleven outlets, the majority of consumers were younger (under 36 years of age). This implies that younger consumers were less set in their purchasing behaviors. Instead of using the services of local Mom and Pop shops as older generations had traditionally done, these younger consumers tended to shop in modern, attractive convenience stores providing a broader selection of quality and trendy products. This may be because younger consumers grew up in a more brand-conscious environment than their parents; an environment in which a broader and more quickly changing range of products are offered. This also implies that, in the future, the number of

Mom and Pop shop consumers will decrease as older consumers die out and younger consumers form loyal shopping habits with preferences for modern convenience stores such as 7-eleven. This will have a negative impact on the number of Mom and Pop shop consumers and therefore on the number of Mom and Pop shops operating.

The findings also showed that the majority of Mom and Pop shops' consumers and 7-eleven outlet consumers were university graduates, but the findings revealed that the number of 7-eleven outlet consumers who had bachelor's degrees or higher education levels was larger than the number of Mom and Pop shop consumers. This finding is understandable since most Mom and Pop shop consumer were over the age of 35 and for the most part had not benefited from the expansion of the Thai education system over the past generation. This link between age and education further points toward a challenging future for Mom and Pop shops.

The study revealed that the large majority of 7-eleven outlet consumers were students and employees who earned less monthly income than did Mom and Pop shop consumers. The fact that Mom and Pop shop consumers earned higher incomes than 7-eleven outlet consumers can be explained by the fact that Mom and Pop shop consumers were older, self-employed, or employed for longer periods of time, and therefore having more experience, seniority and earning higher salaries. The large majority of the 7-eleven outlet consumers were still students or worked as employees in jobs requiring less experience and therefore paying lower salaries. Overtime, Mom and Pop shop consumers will retire, thus reducing their income and purchasing power, and eventually disappear from the consumer market. At the same time 7-eleven outlet consumers will advance in their careers, thus increasing their incomes and purchasing power. If the convenience store shopping behaviors of these two consumer groups remain unchanged, the occupation and income demographic factors should favor the growth of 7-eleven outlets and disfavor the growth of Mom and Pop shops.

In summary, all of the demographic factors considered in this study point to the continuation of the trends toward a decrease in the number of Mom and Pop shops and an increase in the number of 7-eleven outlets.

The influence of the retail marketing mix on consumers also indicates future trends for Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets.

Kotler (1991, p. 546) indicated that "the three keys to success in retailing are location, location and location". This retailing axiom has long emphasized the importance of place, or location, in the retail marketing mix. This confirms the findings of this study because store location was the most influential element of the retail marketing mix most influencing consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops. With regard to 7-eleven outlet consumers, store location was ranked as the second most influential element of the retail marketing mix that influenced them to shop at 7-eleven outlets. The Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets included in this study were both located in a residential area of Bangkok and respondents chose the store most convenient and attractive to them.

Given the decrease in the number of Mom and Pop shops and the increase in the number of 7-eleven outlets, as property values increase in Bangkok and throughout Thailand, location may become an element of success for the growing 7-eleven chain and a critical threat to the future of stand-alone Mom and Pop shops, the success of which for so long was linked to their roles in Thai communities, serving as social centers and sharing intimacy and social relationships with their local customers.

Product quality and assortment ranked as the most influential element of the retail marketing mix that influenced consumers to shop at 7-eleven outlets. This appears to be more important to women and young consumers, and suggests that Mom and Pop shops should consider the variety of their product offerings in order to be more attractive to the women and young consumer demographic groups, both of which expressed their preference for shopping at 7-eleven outlets in this study.

Another interesting fact revealed by this research was that promotions (or lack thereof) was the most influential element of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents not to shop at Mom and Pop shops. Mom and Pop shops are family businesses operated for the most part without the benefits of modern management practices. As a result, Mom and Pop shops do not have central purchasing departments or computerized stock management systems which maximize economic procurement and allow discounts on sale prices to consumers. They also do not have a central marketing function which can cooperate with suppliers on promotion campaigns, develop and execute effective advertising, and create and manage a brand image. Mom and Pop shops could counter this by using promotions that encouraged intimacy and warm relationships between local community and shop owners/operators, for example, a free home delivery service for valuable neighborhood consumers.

With regard to 7-eleven outlets, the store personnel was the most influential element of the retail marketing mix that influenced the respondents not to shop at 7-eleven outlets. During the data collection process, approximately ten respondents mentioned that 7-eleven staff should offer a more sincere greeting and thank shoppers for their patronage, 7-eleven staff should be trained to show sincerity in customer service. On the other hand, store personnel ranked as the second most influential element of the retail marketing mix that influenced respondents to shop at Mom and Pop shops. This underlines that good customer service, warm personal relationships and intimacy between local consumers and Mom and Pop shop owners/operators gave them an advantage over 7-eleven outlets. Mom and Pop shop owners/operators need to find ways to capitalize on this traditional strength.

Price and terms of payment was the third most influential factor for shopping at 7-eleven outlets, but the third most important reason not to shop at Mom and Pop shops. Convenience stores, such as 7-eleven, charge high prices but the 7-eleven chain often has sales promotions to attract customers, for example, buy two bottles of drinking water and get a five baht discount. Mom and Pop shops also charge high prices but never, or seldom, offer sales promotions as noted above because Mom and Pop shop owners/operators have limited knowledge of or ability to employ modern management practices, including pricing strategies. On the other hand, Mom and Pop shop owners/operators do have experience and the ability to offer price and terms of payment conditions that 7-eleven outlets cannot or will not offer: selling non-standard quantities of products (for example, three eggs or one cigarette with a free light), giving impromptu discounts (accepting 50 baht in payment for a customer bill of 52 baht) or extending credit terms for certain customers. Individual Mom and Pop shop owners/operators should take advantage of these strengths to counter the strengths of their 7-eleven outlet competitors. Such pricing and terms of payment tactics underline the image of intimacy, warm relations and being a part of the local community which 7-eleven outlets, as a national/international brand, do not enjoy.

Although store appearance and atmosphere is generally considered to be one of the key factors in the retail marketing mix, store appearance and atmosphere ranked as the second most important reason not to shop at Mom and Pop shops, and as the third most important reason not to shop at 7-eleven outlets. Mom and Pop shops operate out of shop houses that offer limited space and lighting, and generally are not air-conditioned and use “L steel bar” as product displays. The dark, dingy often crowded and unkempt store appearance and atmosphere is a challenge to be considered by Mom and Pop shop owners/operators. Mom and Pop shops should improve the appearance of their shops and create a more modern, bright and welcoming proper atmosphere in order to attract more customers, especially those tempted to shop at a more attractive 7-eleven outlet. With regard to 7-eleven outlets, several respondents mentioned that they spent too much time in the store looking for what they wanted to buy. This suggests that, 7-eleven outlets should display categories of products on shelves in a manner more convenient for customers.

In summary, all six elements of the retail marketing mix were ranked by at least 50.00% of respondents as positive influences on consumer decisions to shop at 7-eleven outlets. Only four elements of the retail marketing mix including product quality and assortment, store location, price and terms of payment and store personnel were ranked by at least 50.00% of respondents as positive influences on consumer decisions to shop at Mom and Pop shops, but promotions and store appearance and atmosphere were ranked by at least 50.00% of respondents as negative influences on consumer decisions to shop at Mom and Pop shops. Although most of the respondents preferred to shop at 7-eleven outlets, opportunities for Mom and Pop shops may exist to raise the number of consumers using their service by turning some of the elements of the retail marketing mix into their advantage.

Several final remarks are called for.

First, the five demographic factors examined in this research (gender, age, education, occupation and income) quite clearly identified the consumers that shopped at Mom and Pop shops and/or 7-eleven outlets at the time of the study in the Radburana district of Bangkok. Those same factors indicate the continuation of the trends toward a decrease in the number of Mom and Pop shops and an increase in the number of 7-eleven outlets.

Second, all six elements of the retail marketing mix (product quality and assortment, store location, promotions, price and terms of payment, store personnel and store appearance and atmosphere) were ranked as positive influences on consumer decisions to shop at 7-eleven outlets by at least 50.00% of the respondents, while only four of the six elements were similarly ranked in favor of shopping at Mom and Pop shops. This does not bode well for the future of Mom and Pop shops.

Add to these, the majority of the respondents in the study already preferred shopping at 7-eleven outlets. The structures of these two competing convenience store businesses are also worth consideration. 7-eleven outlets are part of a successful international franchise with modern and sophisticated management systems and expertise, as well as the financial strength that derives from such a business model. Mom and Pop shops are stand-alone, individually owned businesses with limited managerial and financial resources.

All of the above suggest that Mom and Pop shops will be swept into the dustbin of business history in the not too distant future.

Nevertheless, some hope may exist for the future of Mom and Pop shops. That hope may lie in the traditional role of Mom and Pop shops in Thai society and their public image. Mom and Pop shops owners/operators can exert on influence on their shops' images. They can accomplish this by investing in intimate and warm personal relationships within the local community, becoming (again) a social center of the neighborhood, providing services that competing convenience stores cannot or will not. 7-eleven outlets provide products on a 24-hour basis and a bill paying service. Mom and Pop shops could provide products on a 16 to18–hour basis and a wide range of personal/community services at a low cost.

If Mom and Pop shop owners/operators are to survive for long, they must attract the most important demographic groups (women and young consumers) into their shops, and must turn as many elements of the retail marketing mix as possible into their favor.

Limitations of the Study

This study had the following limitations:

1. Only 80 respondents were included in the survey and, therefore, the findings may not accurately reflect the wider population.

2. The sampling of respondents in this study was limited to the Radburana district of Bangkok and only two Mom and Pop shops and two 7-eleven

outlets in Soi Suksawad 38. Here too, the findings may not accurately reflect the larger area of the district.

Recommendations for Further Study

As follow up to the present study, the following studies are recommended:

1. Studies of the demographic factors and the elements of the retail marketing mix that most influence consumers to shop at Mom and Pop shops or 7-eleven outlets in different geographic areas should be conducted in order to obtain a complete view of these two competitors in the retail market. Consumers in metropolitan, suburban and rural areas might have different profiles and be influenced by different elements of the retail marketing mix.

2. This present study, and the studies mentioned in item 1 above, should be repeated regularly to identify trends that might emerge.

3. Studies of Mom and Pop shop consumers and different chains of convenience store consumers should be made to determine consumer profiles and purchasing behaviors toward convenience store shopping in order to obtain a complete view of the convenience store segment of the retail market in Thailand.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

AC Nielsen (Thailand) Co., Ltd. (2004). *Thailand shopping behavior study*. Bangkok: AC Nielsen (Thailand).

Cheungsuvadee, K. (2006). *Business adaptation strategies used by small and medium retailers in an increasingly competitive environment: a study of Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand.* (Online). Available: http://portal.ecu.edu.au/adt-public/adt-ECU2007.0002.html Retrieved March, 2007.

Chotithummaporn, W. and Bowornchokchai, K. (2005). *The study of the attitudes and behaviors of people to use the convenience store service in Din-Dang area* (Master of Business Administration (Marketing), Research Paper, Suansunandha Rajabhat University.

Dana, T.E. (1999). *The decision of the traditional small family retail business in Thailand*. Singapore: Technological University Press.

International Retail and Franchise Business R&D Center. (2007). (Online). Available: http://www.irf-spu.com Retrieved December, 2007.

Juwattanasamran, P. (2006). *A comparative study of buying decision behavior between convenience stores and traditional retail stores in Khon Kaen municipality* (Master of Business Administration (Marketing), Research Paper, Srinakharinwirot University.

Kasemkosin, S. (2002). *The locational impact of modern convenience store on small grocery stores: a central place theoretical case study of the samutprakarn municipality area*

(Master of Urban and Regional Planning (Urban and Environmental Planning), Thesis, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang.

Kotler, P. (1991). *Marketing management: analysis, planning, implementation and control.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Lamb, C.W., Hair, J.F., and McDaniel, C. (2000). *Marketing (5th edition).* Cincinnati, Ohio: South-Western College Publishing.

Manager Online. (2007). (Online). Available: http://www.manager.co.th Retrieved October, 2007.

Mandhachitara, R. (2000). *Patterns of modernization in Thai retailing.* Bangkok: Thammasat University Press.

Ouiyamapun, O. (1998). *Consumers' attitude and behavior toward am/pm convenience store in PTT gas station in Bangkok metropolitan area* (Master of Business Administration (Business Administration), Research Paper, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang.

Phupoksakul, N. (2003). *Retail industry in Thailand*. (Online). Available: http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/imr-ri.nsf/en/gr115629e.html Retrieved August, 2007.

PriceWaterHouseCoopers. (2006). *2004/2005 global retail & consumer study from Beijing to Budapest.* (Online). Available:http://www.pwc.com Retrieved July, 2007.

Pumas, P. (2007, October 10). Kamphaeng Saen retailers say no to Tesco. Bangkok Post, p. B1.

Saubhayana, D. (2003). *Comparison study of consumer's opinion of traditional trade with modern trade in Bangkok* (Master of Business Administration (Marketing), Research Paper, Rajabhat Institute Suan Dusit.

Satyaem, C. (2007, August 10). 200 retailers protest Makro store building. Bangkok Post, p. B2.

Schiffman, L.G. and Kanuk, L.L. (2000). *Consumer behavior*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Siamwalla, A. and Paopongsakorn, N. (2003). *The retail business in Thailand: impact of large scale multinational corporation retailer.* Bangkok: Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI).

Solomon, M.R. (1999). *Consumer behavior*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Struggle against megastores. (2007, August 25). Bangkok Post, p. B1.

Sudsanguan. (2001). *Chow huay.* Bangkok: Sakulthai Publishing.

Wiboonpongse, A. and Sriboonchitta, S. (2004). *Regoverning markets: securing small producer participation in restructured national and regional agri-food systems in Thailand.* (Online). Available:http://fuangfah.econ.cmu.ac.th/files/Thailand_report_final.pdf

Wigglesworth, E.F. and Brotan, J. (1966). Retailing trends in Thailand. *Journal of Retailing*, *Summer 1966*, 41-51.

Appendix

APPENDIX A

Thai Questionnaire

แบบสอบถาม

แบบสอบถามนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาระดับปริญญาโท หลักสูตรศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจเพื่อการสื่อสารนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ

ผู้วิจัยขอขอบคุณที่ท่านสละเวลาตอบแบบสอบถาม โดยข้อมูลที่ได้จากแบบสอบถามจะถูกเก็บเป็นความลับ และใช้เพื่องานวิจัยเท่านั้น

ส่วนที่ 1 ประสบการณ์การใช้บริการร้านค้าสะดวกซื้อ

1. ( ) ในอดีต คุณเคยใช้บริการจากร้านขายของชำ (โชห่วย) และร้านเซเว่น อีเลเว่น

โปรดเลือกเพียง 1 ข้อ

2ก. ( ) ปัจจุบันนี้ คุณใช้บริการจากร้านขายของชำ (โชห่วย) และร้านเซเว่น อีเลเว่น

2ข. ( ) ปัจจุบันนี้ คุณใช้บริการจากร้านขายของชำ (โชห่วย) เท่านั้น

2ค. ( ) ปัจจุบันนี้ คุณใช้บริการจากร้านเซเว่น อีเลเว่น เท่านั้น

ส่วนที่ 2 ข้อมูลส่วนตัว

โปรดทำเครื่องหมาย (✓) ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความเป็นจริง

1. เพศ

( )	ชาย	( )	หญิง

2. อายุ

( )	ต่ำกว่า 15 ปี	( )	46-55 ปี
( )	16-25 ปี	( )	56-65 ปี
( )	26-35 ปี	( )	มากกว่า 65 ปี
( )	36-45 ปี		

3. การศึกษา

( )	ประถมศึกษาหรือเทียบเท่า	( )	ปริญญาตรี
( )	มัธยมศึกษาหรือเทียบเท่า	( )	ปริญญาโทหรือสูงกว่า

4. อาชีพ

( )	นักเรียน/นักศึกษา	( )	ข้าราชการ
( )	พนักงาน/ลูกจ้าง	( )	แม่บ้าน/พ่อบ้าน
( )	รับจ้าง/ธุรกิจส่วนตัว	( )	อื่นๆ...........................

5. รายได้ต่อเดือน

( )	น้อยกว่า 5,000 บาท/เดือน	( )	15,001-20,000 บาท/เดือน
( )	5,001-10,000 บาท/เดือน	( )	20,001-25,000 บาท/เดือน
( )	10,001-15,000 บาท/เดือน	( )	มากกว่า 25,001 บาท/เดือน

ส่วนที่ 3 ปัจจัยทางการตลาดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจเลือกใช้และไม่เลือกใช้บริการร้านขายของชำ (โชห่วย) และร้านเซเว่น อีเลเว่น

โปรดทำเครื่องหมาย (✓) ลงในช่องที่ตรงกับความเห็นของคุณ

1. ปัจจัยต่อไปนี้ ปัจจัยใดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจของคุณในการเลือกใช้และไม่เลือกใช้บริการจาก**ร้านขายของชำ (โชห่วย)**

ปัจจัยทางการตลาด	**มีอิทธิพลให้เลือกใช้บริการ**	**ไม่มีอิทธิพลให้เลือกใช้บริการ**
1. คุณภาพและความหลากหลายของสินค้า		
2. ทำเลที่ตั้งของร้านค้า		
3. รายการส่งเสริมการขาย		
4. ราคาและวิธีการชำระเงินค่าสินค้า		
5. พนักงานร้านค้า		
6. การจัดร้านและบรรยากาศภายในร้านค้า		
7. อื่นๆ.................................		

2. ปัจจัยต่าง ๆต่อไปนี้ ปัจจัยใดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจของคุณในการเลือกใช้และไม่เลือกใช้บริการจาก**ร้านเซเว่น อีเลเว่น**

ส่วนประสมทางการตลาด	**มีอิทธิพลให้เลือกใช้บริการ**	**ไม่มีอิทธิพลให้เลือกใช้บริการ**
1. คุณภาพและความหลากหลายของสินค้า		
2. ทำเลที่ตั้งของร้านค้า		
3. รายการส่งเสริมการขาย		
4. ราคาและวิธีการชำระเงินค่าสินค้า		
5. พนักงานร้านค้า		
6. การจัดร้านและบรรยากาศภายในร้านค้า		
7. อื่นๆ.................................		

ส่วนที่ 4 ร้านค้าที่คุณจะเลือกใช้บริการระหว่างร้านขายของชำ (โชห่วย) และร้านเซเว่น อีเลเว่น

ถ้าคุณจำเป็นต้องเลือกใช้บริการจากร้านสะดวกซื้อ คุณจะเลือกใช้บริการจากร้านใด โปรดทำเครื่องหมาย (✓) เพียงหนึ่งข้อ

( ) ร้านขายของชำ (โชห่วย)

( ) ร้านเซเว่น อีเลเว่น

ส่วนที่ 5 ปัจจัยทางการตลาดที่มีอิทธิพลมากที่สุดต่อการตัดสินใจเลือกใช้และไม่เลือกใช้บริการร้านขายของชำ (โชห่วย) และร้านเซเว่น อีเลเว่น

โปรดทำเครื่องหมาย (✓) เพื่อเลือกคำตอบเพียงหนึ่งข้อต่อหนึ่งคำถาม

จากปัจจัยทางการตลาดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจของคุณในคำถามส่วนที่ 4:

ปัจจัยทางการตลาด	**1. ปัจจัยใดมีอิทธิพลมากที่สุดต่อการตัดสินใจ<u>เลือก</u>ใช้บริการจากร้านค้าที่คุณเลือก**	**2. ปัจจัยใดมีอิทธิพลมากที่สุดต่อการตัดสินใจ<u>ไม่เลือก</u>ใช้บริการจากร้านค้าอีกร้าน**
1. คุณภาพและความหลากหลายของสินค้า		
2. ทำเลที่ตั้งของร้านค้า		
3. รายการส่งเสริมการขาย		
4. ราคาและวิธีการชำระเงินค่าสินค้า		
5. พนักงานร้านค้า		
6. การจัดร้านและบรรยากาศภายในร้านค้า		
7. อื่นๆ..................................		

APPENDIX B

English Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed for a research project for a Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication at Srinakharinwirot University.

Your assistance is much appreciated. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and used for this study only. Thank you very much.

Part I: Convenience Store Shopping Experience

1. ( ) I have shopped at both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets.

Choose only ONE:

2a. ( ) I presently shop at both Mom and Pop shops and 7-eleven outlets.

2b. ( ) I presently shop only at Mom and Pop shops.

2c. ( ) I presently shop only at 7-eleven outlets.

Part II: Personal Information

Tick (✓) the most appropriate responses

1. Gender

( ) Male ( ) Female

2. Age

( ) 15 or less ( ) 46-55

( ) 16-25 ( ) 56-65

( ) 26-35 ( ) Over 65

( ) 36-45

3. Education

( ) Primary level or equivalent ( ) Bachelor's degree

( ) Secondary level or equivalent ( ) Master's degree or advanced degree

4. Occupation

( ) Student ( ) Government employee

( ) Employee ( ) Housewife/husband

( ) Self-employed ( ) Other………………..

5. Income

( ) Less than 5,000 baht/month ( ) 15,001 to 20,000 baht/month

( ) 5,001 to 10,000 baht/month ( ) 20,001 to 25,000 baht/month

( ) 10,001 to 15,000 baht/month ( ) More than 25,001 baht/month

Part III: Elements that Influence Convenience Store Choices

1. Do/did the following elements influence you to do or not to do your convenience store shopping at Mom and Pop shops? Mark one tick (✓) for each element.

Retail Marketing Mix	Influenced Me To Shop	Influenced Me Not to Shop
1. Product quality and assortment		
2. Store location		
3. Promotions		
4. Price and terms of payment		
5. Store personnel		
6. Store appearance and atmosphere		
7. Other………………		

2. Do/did the following elements influence you to do or not to do your convenience store shopping at 7-eleven outlets? Mark one tick (✓) for each element.

Retail Marketing Mix	Influenced Me To Shop	Influenced Me Not to Shop
1. Product quality and assortment		
2. Store location		
3. Promotions		
4. Price and terms of payment		
5. Store personnel		
6. Store appearance and atmosphere		
7. Other………………		

Part IV: Choice of Convenience Store

If you had to choose to do all your convenience store shopping at only one or the other type of convenience store, which would you choose? Tick (✓) only one.

( ) Mom and Pop shops

( ) 7-eleven outlets

Part V: Most Influential Elements of Consumers' Choices

Of all the elements in Part III that influenced your choice of a convenience store in Part IV, which ONE element influenced you most to shop and which ONE element influenced you most not to shop at the two types of convenience stores. Tick (✓) only ONE element in each column.

Retail Marketing Mix	1. Which **ONE** element most influenced your choice **TO SHOP** at the store of your choice?	2. Which **ONE** element most influenced your choice **NOT TO SHOP** at the other store?
1. Product quality and assortment		
2. Store location		
3. Promotions		
4. Price and terms of payment		
5. Store personnel		
6. Store appearance and atmosphere		
7. Other……………..		

VITAE

VITAE

Name:	Sopida Kesornbua
Date of Birth:	01 March 1980
Place of Birth:	Bangkok
Address:	330 Moo 6, Suksawad Road
	Suksawad Soi 38, Radburana, 10140 Bangkok

Educational Background:

1996	Suksanari School
2000	BA in Languages for Careers
	From Srinakharinwirot University
2010	MA in Business English for International Communication
	From Srinakharinwirot University