

3-in-1 Soap Demand among Generation Y Consumers in Bangkok Metropolitan Area

ความคิดเห็นด้านอิทธิพลของปัจจัยทางการตลาดที่มีต่อการเลือกซื้อผลิตภัณฑ์สบู่ 3-in-1

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Abstract

This research is conducted in quantitative method in order 1) to investigate the purchasing behaviors of soap among Generation Y consumers 2) to investigate the demand for 3-in-1 soap among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok Metropolitan area. In the study of the marketing strategy will be associated with the marketing mix or 4P's, i.e. product, price, place and promotion. The research instrument for this study is questionnaire. Related statistics used in analyzing data include descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations.

The results showed that consumers have a positive demand for 3-in-1 soap product. The marketing mix factors were scored at a high level in all aspects as follows: price, product, place, and promotion.

Keywords: Purchasing Behaviors, Generation Y, Marketing Strategy

Paper type: Research

บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้เป็นงานวิจัยเชิงปริมาณ มีวัตถุประสงค์ในการศึกษา คือ 1) ศึกษาพฤติกรรมการซื้อสบู่ในหมู่วัยรุ่นใหม่ (Generation Y) 2) ศึกษาความต้องการซื้อที่มีต่อผลิตภัณฑ์สบู่ 3-in-1 ของวัยรุ่นใหม่ที่อยู่อาศัยอยู่ในเขตกรุงเทพมหานคร ในการศึกษากลยุทธ์การตลาดจะเกี่ยวกับส่วนประสมการตลาด 4P's คือ ผลิตภัณฑ์ ราคา สถานที่และกิจกรรมส่งเสริมการตลาด เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัยในครั้งนี้เป็นแบบสอบถาม สถิติที่เกี่ยวข้องในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลคือ สถิติพรรณนา (Descriptive statistics) และการวิเคราะห์ไขว้ (Cross-tabulation) ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ผู้บริโภคมีความต้องการซื้อผลิตภัณฑ์ 3-in-1 ในด้านบวก ในการศึกษากลยุทธ์การตลาดที่เกี่ยวกับส่วนประสมการตลาด 4P's ครั้งนี้มีระดับการตอบสนองมากในทุกด้าน โดยด้านที่มีระดับการตอบสนองมากที่สุดคือ ด้านราคา ด้านผลิตภัณฑ์ ด้านสถานที่และด้านกิจกรรมส่งเสริมการตลาด

คำสำคัญ: พฤติกรรมการซื้อ, วัยรุ่นใหม่, กลยุทธ์การตลาด

1. Introduction

In the city life, everything seems to be in a rush – people have limited time due to fixed hours and tight schedules. Students have to go to school early in the morning and take extra classes in the evening. While office workers also have to wake up early to make it in time to work. In this limited time, people need to quickly take a shower, dress up and

sometimes breakfast and lunch gets combined into one meal. This is always the cycle because the world is moving very fast. Everything has to be done quickly, those who are slow gets looked down upon and were seen as outdated (Aomjai, 2012).

The different generations living in the city include "Baby Boomers", Gen X and Gen Y. Among these generations, Generation Y is one of the largest groups in



terms of population. The birth years of Generation Y ranges from the early 1980s right through the early 2000s (Bruce, 2012). The people in Generation Y are seen as very individualistic. These people have grown up in a world with diverse internet resources and intense multi-tasking. The Generation Y in Thailand has now changed. These people are very complex in their way of life, enjoy multiple tasks and are engaged with many digital tools at the same time (Pongsak, 2011).

Personal care is a part of the daily lives of everyone, part of this is taking a shower which requires the use of soap. Currently the soap industry has a total market value of 9 billion baht, with 5 billion for bar soap and 4 billion for liquid soap (Siamturakij, 2013). The market structure of the soap industry are separated into many categories, beauty soap has a leading market share of 40%, followed by personal soap – 25%, herbal soap – 16%, kids and babies' soap – 10%, and men soap – 5% (Marketeer, 2014). The essential nature of bath and shower supported its positive current value growth in 2013. Unilever Thai Holdings Ltd led bath and shower with 21% value share in 2013, attributed to its strong portfolio of brands including Lux, Vaseline and Dove. Consumers' improved disposable incomes also made them more willing to explore different bath and shower brands and products. Furthermore, the retailing of beauty and personal care gets dynamic which leads to expectation of positive performance in beauty and personal care (Euromonitor International, 2014). Among many of these products, 3-in-1 soap is a new product that provides consumers with a quick, easy, and affordable method to clean the body from head to toe which is also suitable for the multi-tasking lifestyle of Generation Y.

To efficiently develop the 3-in-1 soap product, it is important to apply the right marketing strategies. Marketing mix can be applied to this to determine the product's offer through product, price, place and promotion. After planning the market strategy, producers can use the Voice of the Customer or VOC to further study the opinion and insights of the customer. The VOC tells the needs and wants of customers with relative importance of features and benefits associated with the product by gathering information from customers through direct and indirect interviews (Qualtrics, 2014).

From knowing the industry and what consumers want, the companies which have this product will be able to use this information to improve and implement the product to truly meet the demands of these consumers. Other companies that wish to develop a new product can also use this information to conduct a business plan for further growth of the company in the future (Nata, 2013).

2. Objectives and Research Questions

2.1 Objectives

1. To investigate the purchasing behaviors of soap among Generation Y consumers.
2. To investigate the demand for 3-in-1 soap among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok Metropolitan area.

2.2 Research Questions

1. What are the purchasing behaviors of soap among Generation Y consumers?
2. How is the demand of 3-in-1 soap among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok Metropolitan area?

3. Literature Review

Marketing mix is one of the many useful marketing tools. The marketing mix can be used to determine a product or brand's offer, and is often associated with the four P's: price, product, promotion, and place. In addition to further improve the product; it is important to know what consumers think. This can be done through the using the Voice of the Customer (VOC) to obtain the opinion and insights of the customers. There are two ways to gather the Voice of the Customer, through direct and indirect interviews. The type of interview used to obtain the Voice of the Customer in this study is the direct interview through conducting a questionnaire.

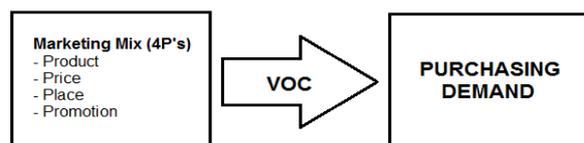


Figure 1: The Factors that Determine the Demand for 3-In-1 Soap

4. Research Mythology

4.1 Population and Sampling

Population: The population for this study is Thai Generation Y consumers born since 1980 until 2000, which are at the age of 15-34, living in Bangkok Metropolitan Area. The population of age range between 15-34 years old living in Bangkok Metropolitan Area is 3,266,709 people (National Statistical Office, 2010).

Table 1: Population of Generation Y in Bangkok Metropolitan Area

Age range	Population
15-19	576,980
20-24	826,116
25-29	943,763
30-34	919,850
Total	3,266,709

Sampling: The sampling size for this study will be calculated using the simplified formula proportions defined by W.G. Cochran (Gaiyawan, 2006).

$$n = Z^2 P(1-P)/D^2 \quad (1)$$

n – the sample size

Z – the confidence level 95% or 1.96

P – the percentage of population size

D – the acceptable sampling error (e = 0.05)

The value represent in the formula as calculated below.

$$n = 1.96^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)/0.05^2$$

$$n = 400$$

According to the calculation above, the sampling size in this research is 400 people.

4.2 Research Tools

The research tool used for this study is the quantitative research in the form of questionnaire. A questionnaire can be used to gather information through asking questions. The advantages that questionnaires have over other methodology are that large amounts of information can be obtained from a large number of people and results can be analyzed statistically. However, questionnaires may lack validity since there is no way to tell how truthful the answers are.

4.3. Data Collection

A questionnaire was randomly distributed to 410 people in Bangkok Metropolitan area by accident through paper questionnaire. The questionnaire will be evenly distributed to 205 people in the area of Siam and 205 people in the area of Silom during rush hours since Siam has the main BTS interchange which is the most crowded station and contains many popular tutorial schools, while Silom has many large companies located in the area. These people were explained about the reason behind this study and then asked to fill up the questions given in the questionnaire. Since the people were randomly selected, different opinion among each person can be obtained which can then be used to analyze further on. The random people that will be chosen to do the questionnaires are consumers at the age between 15-34, both male and female. The questionnaire will take place only in Bangkok Metropolitan area, Thailand and will last from November to December 2014.

4.4 Data Analysis

After the distribution of the questionnaire, the results of the questionnaire will be put into the SPSS program to create a statistical result which can be used to show data and analyzed into findings for this research topic. The data analysis of this study will be Descriptive Statistic and Cross-tabulation.

5. Findings

From the two objectives of this research, findings are as follow:



Objective 1 is to investigate the purchasing behaviors of soap among Generation Y consumers. Results related to the first objective are as follow:

Department Store	70.4
Salesperson	1.5

Table 2 Soap Buying Behavior (%)

Attributes	Population (n=409)
Type of Soap	
Bar	31.5
Liquid	65.8
Foam	2.7
Fragrance	
Herbal	14.7
Floral	57.7
Sweet	2.2
Perfumed	19.1
Unscented	6.4
Others	2.2
Frequency	
1-2 Months	57.5
2-4 Months	33.0
Over 4 Months	6.1
Never	3.4
Price	
Below 100	21.8
100-200	53.1
Above 200	22.5
Location	
Convenient Store	19.0
Internet	7.6
Agent	1.5

- 1) The type of soap that consumers are currently using is mostly in liquid form.
- 2) The fragrance of soap that consumers use is mostly floral scent.
- 3) The frequency of soap purchasing is once every 1 to 2 months.
- 4) The average price that consumers spent in purchasing soap is between 100 to 200 baht.
- 5) The location that consumers choose to purchase soap is at the department store.

Objective 2 is to investigate the demand for 3-in-1 soap among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok Metropolitan area. From studying into previous researches about soap and the effect of the marketing mix, after applying the knowledge of marketing mix and listening to the voice of the customers into questions for this research, results related to the second objective are as follow:

Table 3 Knowledge of 3-in-1 Soap (%)

Attributes	Population (n=409)
Do you know 3-in-1 soap?	
Yes	31.3
No	68.7
Is 3-in-1 soap convenient?	
Yes	66.3
No	33.7
Type of 3-in-1 soap preferred	
Bar	5.9
Liquid	77.8
Foam	16.4
Price of 3-in-1 soap (250ml)	
Below 100	23.0
100-200	63.5
Above 200	12.5
Fragrance of 3-in-1 soap	
Herbal	11.5
Floral	58.9
Sweet	4.4
Perfumed	14.2
Unscented	10.5
Others	0.5

- 1) Most of the population in this research does not know about the 3-in-1 soap product. However, they think that the 3-in-1 soap is convenient.
- 2) The interests in purchasing the 3-in-1 soap in the future is positive.
- 3) The type of 3-in-1 soap preferred is in liquid form.
- 4) The price appropriate for a 250ml 3-in-1 soap product is between 100 to 200 baht.
- 5) The fragrance preferred for 3-in-1 soap is floral scented, followed by perfumed and herbal scent.

Table 4 Interests on 3-in-1 soap

Attributes	Population (n=409)	
	Interested	Not Interested
Sex		
Male	66.4 (85)	33.6 (43)
Female	58.0 (163)	42.0 (118)
Age		
15-19	66.6 (34)	33.4 (17)
20-24	59.0 (82)	41.0 (57)
25-29	60.5 (69)	39.5 (45)
30-34	60.0 (63)	40.0 (42)
Income		
Below 5,000	62.3 (38)	37.7 (23)
5,000-10,000	65.2 (43)	34.8 (23)
10,001-15,000	55.0 (22)	45.0 (18)
15,001-20,000	60.8 (48)	39.2 (31)
20,001-25,000	65.7 (44)	34.3 (23)
Above 25,000	55.2 (53)	44.8 (43)
Occupation		
Student	62.8 (93)	37.2 (55)
Government	85.7 (6)	14.3 (1)
State Enterprise	0.0 (0)	100.0 (3)
Office Worker	58.9 (139)	41.1 (97)
Business Owner	61.5 (8)	38.5 (5)
Unemployed	100.0 (2)	0.0 (0)

6) More males are interested in buying the product than females.

7) The age range among Generation Y that is most interested in buying the product is between 15 to 19 years old, followed by 25 to 29, 30-34 and 20 to 24.

8) The income range that has most interest in purchasing the 3-in-1 soap product is between 20,001 to 25,000 baht. Moreover, the interests in purchasing the product among other income ranges are all positive.

9) The occupation that is most interested in purchasing the 3-in-1 soap product as calculated by percentage is unemployed, followed by, government service, students, business owner and office worker; whereas state enterprise scored the least.

6. Discussion

In terms of the demands and interests to buy the product, the results are positive. However, producers need to take into account about the product's offer, especially through marketing. Findings show that consumers want the product that meets their needs, save the cost of purchasing, provides convenience and want knowledge and information about the product. Which corresponds to the definition of product, price, place and promotion stated by Dave Needham (1996) that product is seen as an item that satisfies what a consumer demands, price is the amount a customer pays for the product and adjusting the price has a profound impact on the marketing strategy, place refers to providing the product at a place which is convenient for consumers to access, and promotion includes all of the methods of communication that a marketer may use to provide information to different parties about the product. From these findings, it is clear that it is very important for producers to consider the business plan in terms of using the right business tools and marketing strategy for their products.

The opinions of the consumers on the 3-in-1 soap in terms of product are also important. By listening to the voice of the customers, producers will be able to use this information to further improve the product's quality. For the product, consumers are worried about how reliable the product will be. They are also concerned about the irritation the product might cause if used for facial cleansing. To improve the product's quality, producers will need to study into how to make the product mild enough for facial use yet clean enough for the hair and body. Producers will also have to make sure that the functionality for facial, hair and body use will be effective enough for cleaning each part of the body. Results also show that the fragrance of the product is also an important factor.

Table 5 Importance of 4Ps for 3-in-1 Soap

Attributes	Population (n=409)	
	Mean	SD
Product		
Quality	4.42	1.30
Fragrance	4.02	1.70
Popularity/Brand Recognition	3.89	1.69
Size variety	3.81	1.68
Packaging	3.75	1.67
Shape(convenient)	3.87	1.68
Place		
Near home	4.17	1.72
Easy to find	4.34	1.75
Sales Agent	3.42	1.64
Trustworthy location	4.17	1.72
Price		
Cheap	3.86	1.24
Matches quality	4.52	1.78
Promotion		
Free gifts	3.57	1.65
Discounts	3.89	1.69
Booth	3.53	1.65
Prize/Rewards	3.28	1.64
Tester	4.06	1.71
Advertisements	4.16	1.72
Total	3.93	1.65

In terms of price, consumers prefer the price that matches the quality of the product. The price range that they think will be suitable for a 250ml 3-in-1 soap is between 100 to 200 baht. Moreover, the price should not be too high because consumers expect to save the cost of purchasing individual products for face, hair and body.

The place for selling the product should be a trustworthy location and easy to find since consumers prefer a place that is convenient. Producers should also consider selling the product in department stores since most of the consumers purchase soap there.

For promotion, consumers would like to know more about the 3-in-1 product; therefore, advertising is very important for the consumers to become aware of the product. Giving out testers is also another way to attract consumers since many still do not know about 3-in-1 soap product yet.

Overall, by listening to the opinions of the consumers about the product, price, place and promotion will help producers know which aspects are important and will be able to use this information to further improve the product so that it can truly meet the demands of the consumers.

7. Suggestions and Recommendations

From studying the demand of 3-in-1 soap among Generation Y consumers in Bangkok Metropolitan area through the use of marketing mix applied to the questionnaire, information obtained from this research can be used to help producers know what the consumers want. Moreover, the producers who have this product will be able to use this information to improve and implement the product to truly meet the demands of these consumers. Other companies that wish to develop a new product can also use this information to conduct a business plan for further growth of the company in the future. This section will be divided into 2 parts where the first part will be suggestions on how to meet the demands of the consumers for the 3-in-1 soap product and the second part will be the recommendations for other researches on this product in the future.

The suggestions on how to meet the demands of the consumers for the 3-in-1 soap product through listening to the opinions, needs and wants of customers with relative importance of features and benefits associated with the product and application of the marketing mix to determine

the product's offer through product, price, place and promotion are as follow:

1) Producers must consider the quality of the product in terms of allergy tests.

2) Producers must consider the price for the product that correlates with the quality of the product.

3) Producers must consider the location for selling the product that is trustworthy and easy for the consumers to find.

4) Producers must consider the promotion activities to help consumers know about the product, especially through advertisements.

The recommendations for other researches on this product in the future are as follow:

1) Study the marketing strategies for the 3-in-1 soap product in other generations or areas of consumers.

2) Study the process and ingredients of the product to further improve the quality and functionality.

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