Marketing Mix Analysis in Private Dental Healthcare Service Sector

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the patients' attitude toward healthcare service marketing mix among dental clinics patients in Sriracha, Thailand. The quantitative survey design was employed for data collection through simple random sampling from 392 completed questionnaire copies. The reliability and validity of the constructed were tested. The relationship between marketing mix factors was examined. The results showed that patients perceived People mix become the most essential factor ($\bar{x}$=4.804, SD=0.39), followed by Physical Evidence ($\bar{x}$=4.770, SD=0.38), Process ($\bar{x}$=4.740, SD=0.43), Price ($\bar{x}$=4.665, SD=0.44), Product ($\bar{x}$=4.623, SD=0.47), Place ($\bar{x}$=4.620, SD=0.48) and Promotion ($\bar{x}$=4.416, SD=0.56). People mix has the highest correlation with Physical Evidence (r=0.739), followed by Process (r=0.689), Price (r=0.599), Product (r=0.516), Place (r=0.410) and Promotion (r=0.374), respectively at p-value less than 0.01 on 2 tailed significant. The limitations are not covering the outcome variables. Applying the results to different cities may give outstanding or additional helpful results. However, future qualitative research will give more in-depth knowledge. Thus, the researchers recommended the study furthermore. The implications are dental clinics could emphasize healthcare quality improvement through these marketing mix factors. It could help clinic owners find the marketing strategies appropriate to their patient's needs and expectations in this sector.

KEYWORDS: Healthcare Service, Marketing Mix, 7Ps, Dental Clinic, Dental Care

INTRODUCTION

The healthcare service context has become patient-centered and expecting high-quality care at a reasonable price. The patients are more critical and expect quality services or high standards. The essential person in this dynamic environment is the patient. Healthcare providers must strive for maximum patient satisfaction. The market process involves marketing planning, marketing decision-making, and marketing mix strategies. (Sreenivas et al., 2013) Quality improvement is a progressive management method to engage staff in leading change and remodeling work systems. However, many quality improvement efforts in the healthcare context have been geared toward improving the safety or efficiency of the patient experience improvement. The main quality improvement techniques are listening to the customers' feedback and delivering services value. (Jensen et al. 2016)

Marketing communications is one of the criteria that may impact consumers' choice of a dentist or a dental clinic. It plays an essential role in raising awareness of different dental care choices and providing valuable knowledge about various dental care attributes. The customers regarded advertisement to provide data and a thoughtful decision to choose a dentist or a dental clinic and affect a dentist or clinic's overall reputation or image. (Wang et al., 1996)

Service marketing mix factors are considered in the healthcare context to direct contact between service providers and patients. Hospital staff plays a crucial role in the services. The patients might not observe more valuable tangibles than the healthcare service

staff representing the service and the hospital in every service visit. Healthcare service delivery relies on human interactions with the patients. Thus, the hospital industry is a representative sector of the general service industry. (Al-Quarni et al., 2013) Hospital marketing is becoming increasingly competitive worldwide. Hospitals become consumer-centered and are expecting high medical care and demanding quality services at reasonable prices. Thus, innovative marketing such as a service marketing mix (7Ps, ie. product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence, and process) could be delivered, and statistical tools to know whether respondents' perceptions are indistinguishable or not are important. (Sreenivas et al., 2013) The marketing mix made by a dental clinic can influence consumer decisions in performing dental care services. The seven elements of 7Ps are essential that must be considered to achieve marketing objectives. Growth is the ability of the clinic to develop its business model to survive and improve the quality of healthcare services. Therefore, the dental clinic requires the right marketing strategies for consumers willing to visit and do maintenance. (Yoyada&Kodrat, 2014)

This research analyzes the patients' attitude toward healthcare service marketing mix among dental clinics patients in Sriracha, Thailand. The implication could be applied to improving healthcare management quality in dental clinics through marketing mix indicators. Finally, the outcome of

quality of life & health in the community will have happened.

Research Methodology
Study Population and Sample
The target population is the dental clinics' patients in Sriracha, Thailand. Both female and male respondents were from probability sampling. The population number is unknown. In this study, the sample size was 392.

Study Design and Data Collection
The self-administered printed questionnaires were distributed for data collection through simple random sampling. The demographics and marketing mix (7Ps) are the constructs in this survey. All items were used a five-point Likert rating scale to measure patients' attitude toward the marketing mix (5=Very important, 4=Important, 3=Moderately Important, 2=Slightly Important, and 1=Not important according to Brown,2010). Marketing mix factor indicators were based on the study of Al-Qurni et al. (2013), Sreenivas et al. (2013), Dobros&Katsaliaki (2017), and Puttharak (2020). The researcher's assistants explained the study's objectives and ask for respondents' participation before questionnaire distribution.

Data Analysis
The respondents' demographics in frequency, mean and standard deviation were analyzed. SPSS Program-Version 27 was adopted to analyze reliability, validity, and Pearson correlation statistical analysis.

Results
Patients' attitudes toward the marketing mix (7Ps, n = 392) are shown in table 1. The reliability and validity of the marketing mix constructs(n = 392) are shown in table 2. The Pearson correlations between marketing mix (n = 392) are shown in table 3. Demographic characteristics among dental clinics patients(n = 392) are shown in table 4. The normal QQ-Plot of marketing mix factors are shown in figure 1-8.

Table 1 Patients' attitude toward marketing mix (7Ps, n = 392)

Descriptive Statistics
Survey Items
Would you please give opinions on these factors in order of importance? Considered visiting a dental clinic, please answer the questions for 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 by rating.

5=Very important, 4=Important, 3=Moderately Important, 2=Slightly Important, and 1=Not important

Questionnaire Items		
Would you please give opinions on these factors in order of importance? Considered visiting a dental clinic, please answer the questions for 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 by rating.	The Importance	
Product/Service 5 4 3 2 1 Cronbach's Alpha=0.873		
1. Procedures and prices are informed before the treatment begins (Factor Loading=0.821)		
2. The treatment results equal your expectation (Factor Loading=0.868)		
3. There is quality assurance and follow-up, such as new filling if required		

(Factor Loading=0.856)					
4. Staff answer questions and provide services willingly (Factor Loading=0.833)					
5. Paymentis available in cash or credit card or through a mobile app (App) (Factor Loading=0.737)					
Process 5 4 3 2 1 Cronbach's Alpha=0.916					
1. There is always doctor(s) work at the clinic for a convenient time (Factor Loading=0.863)					
2. The appointment could be made in advance before coming (Factor Loading=0.887)					
3. The next appointment has been made but not a long time (Factor Loading=0.887)					
4. There is not a long queue when arriving at the clinic (Factor Loading=0.868)					
5. Posttreatment advise or suggest an appointment for the next follow up (Factor Loading=0.818)					
Physical Evidence5 4 3 2 1 Cronbach's Alpha=0.895					
1. Signs and logos of the clinic is clear and easy to seek (Factor Loading=0.722)					
2. The dental room and equipment are well organized and look clean (Factor Loading=0.854)					
3. The dental room and equipment look safe and reliable (Factor Loading=0.882)					
4. The waiting area and toilet are comfortable (Factor Loading=0.878)					
5. The waiting area and toilet are clean and free of bad smells (Factor Loading=0.872)					
Questionnaire Items					
Place 5 4 3 2 1 Cronbach's Alpha=0.877					
1. The clinic is near the markets, schools, or places (Factor Loading=0.799)					
2. The clinic is near the patient's workplace (Factor Loading=0.831)					
3. The clinic is near the residence. (Factor Loading=0.844)					
4. Easily access by public transport or private car (Factor Loading=0.857)					
5. The car parking is available and not far from the clinic (Factor Loading=0.785)					
Price5 4 3 2 1 Cronbach's Alpha=0.860					
1. The dental fees are informed at any channels or willing to answer if required (Factor Loading=0.921)					
2. The dental fees are reasonable for provided services (Factor Loading=0.862)					
3. The payment is equal to the informed prices (Factor Loading=0.932)					
4.Free charge or no sterilization fee for a screening check-up (Factor Loading=0.803)					
5.Social assurance or insurance covers the dental fees. (Factor Loading=0.544)					

	5	4	3	2	1
Promotion Cronbach's Alpha=0.842					
1. There are provided gifts such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, or mouthwash for some occasions. (Factor Loading=0.761)					
2. There are fan pages or Line app for consultation include addresses, phone numbers available online (Factor Loading=0.780)					
3. Brochure, leaflets, or business cards that include phone numbers can be easily picked up (Factor Loading=0.818)					
4. Discounts and promotion packages are informed in front of the clinic (Factor Loading=0.785)					
5. Discounts and promotion packages are informed via Line app or fan pages (Factor Loading=0.795)					
People Cronbach's Alpha=0.963					
1. Doctor/assistant/counter staff dress clean, look good and tidy (Factor Loading=0.898)					
2. Doctor/assistant/ counter staff are polite (Factor Loading=0.962)					
3. Doctor/assistant/ counter staff treat all patients equally (Factor Loading=0.930)					
4. Doctor/assistant/ counter staff have good knowledge and expertise skills (Factor Loading=0.946)					
5. Doctor/assistant/ counter staff are reliable (Factor Loading=0.933)					

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