

Marketing Mix Factors Affecting the Choice of Chinese Tutoring Among High School Students in the Municipality of Khon Kaen, Khon Kaen Province

Jixiao You¹ and Somkiat Kiatcharoen²

¹Master of Public Administration (Public and Private Management), Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University, Thailand

² Public Administration Program (Public and Private Management), Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University, Thailand

¹E-mail: JixiaoYou2567@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-7465-8013>

²Corresponding E-mail: somkiet6925@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-2447-3738>

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Abstract

Background and Aims: A service process is a crucial component of the marketing mix that influences high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province, while choosing Chinese tutoring. To develop a procedure that can provide high-quality services, effective personnel, and contemporary equipment are needed. The purpose of this study was to: 1) determine the degree of marketing mix factors that influence high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province, to choose Chinese tutoring; 2) determine the degree of Chinese tutoring among high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province; 3) determine the marketing mix factors that influence high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province, to choose Chinese tutoring; and 4) investigate the recommendations that impacted the decision of high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality to choose Chinese tutoring.

Methodology: According to Yamane's calculations, 381 high school pupils from Khon Kaen Municipality made up the sample size. A survey was used to collect the information. The following statistics were used to examine the data: At the 05 level, the mean, standard deviation, percentage, frequency distribution, and Pearson's coefficient were all statistically significant.

Result: The survey's findings revealed that: 1) High school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province, choose to learn Chinese tutoring at a modest level overall due to marketing mix considerations. 2) Overall, high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province, have a moderate preference for studying Chinese tutoring. 3) There is a strong correlation between academic reasons and product factors. There is a strong correlation between price considerations and psychological and intellectual elements. There is a strong correlation between curriculum-related elements and distribution channel factors. There is a strong correlation between process factors and social coercion-related reasons. 4) The following advice can help you study Chinese successfully: teachers to employ teaching methods that would hold students' attention and spark their passion for studying Chinese. To focus on conversation lessons, they should role-play various situations. Many students won't be able to apply their information if the course material is improper. There should be a



curriculum-appropriate textbook available. The site or environment of the tutoring school should be created to support learning.

Conclusion: The study found that some traits and student motivations are significantly correlated, and that the marketing mix and elements that influence high school students' decisions to choose Chinese tutoring in Khon Kaen are at a fair level. Some recommendations for improving Chinese language learning include interesting teaching strategies, practical discussion topics, relevant textbooks, a friendly learning environment, and flexible tuition payment options.

Keywords: Factors; Mix; Marketing

Introduction

The economic and social expansion, coupled with technological advancements, has transformed the modern world into a borderless society. People worldwide can connect seamlessly through the universal medium of “language.” In Thailand, the nation’s global engagements in industrial investments and tourism have highlighted the crucial role of language across diverse groups, such as students, employees, investors, hotel staff, and government officials.

Language education institutions have therefore become increasingly important, encouraging individuals to seek additional knowledge to enhance their foreign language skills and competitiveness. Foreign language education also aligns with Thailand's goals of fostering a learning society, driving the national development strategy, and ensuring equitable and continuous educational opportunities.

The competitive nature of education and employment, particularly in securing admission to prestigious schools and universities domestically and abroad, has propelled parents to seek supplementary education for their children, even in areas where they may lack expertise. While formal education is typically delivered in schools, advancements in communication and technology have facilitated various educational approaches, including non-formal education, homeschooling, community-based education, distance learning, and tutorial schools.

Tutorial schools play a significant role in Thailand’s education system. Originally designed to prepare students for university entrance exams, they have evolved to encompass broader educational levels, including secondary education and specialized exams. The rise of tutorial schools is evident, with 1,983 such institutions nationwide—487 in Bangkok and 1,496 in the provinces. Major tutorial schools are concentrated in metropolitan areas and key regional hubs, reflecting high demand.

The growing influence of the Chinese economy and the relative decline of Western economies have led to an increased interest in learning Asian languages, especially Chinese,

Japanese, and Korean. Among the foreign languages taught in Thai schools, Chinese is the most popular, with approximately 300,000 students in nearly 700 schools. Recognizing the importance of Chinese language education, Thailand's Basic Education Commission has developed strategies to promote Chinese language learning, aiming to enhance competitiveness in the knowledge economy.

In Khon Kaen Municipality, there are four Chinese language tutorial schools serving secondary students from six schools, encompassing both public and private institutions, with a total of 7,894 students. These schools operate as commercial enterprises, employing marketing strategies to meet the diverse needs of their target audience.

The growing significance of the Chinese language in Thai education highlights the limitations of classroom learning in fully addressing student needs. This has led to an increased reliance on tutorial schools to provide supplementary Chinese language education. Consequently, tutorial schools must utilize marketing strategies to meet customer demands effectively.

This study focuses on the marketing mix factors influencing secondary students in Khon Kaen Municipality to choose Chinese language tutorial schools. It examines four key aspects: product, price, distribution channels, and processes. The research population comprises 7,894 secondary students categorized by gender, grade level, curriculum, and school affiliation. The findings aim to guide business owners in the Chinese language tutorial sector in improving marketing strategies and operational management, ensuring better customer satisfaction, and serving as a foundation for new entrepreneurs in this field.

Objectives

1. To examine the level of marketing mix factors influencing the selection of Chinese language tutorial schools among upper secondary school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province.
2. To assess the level of preference for Chinese language tutorial schools among upper secondary school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province.
3. To explore the relationship between marketing mix factors and the decision to select Chinese language tutorial schools among upper secondary school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province.
3. To gather suggestions regarding the factors influencing the decision to select Chinese language tutorial schools among upper secondary school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province.

Literature Review

Kotler (2003:16) states that the marketing mix refers to the controllable factors in marketing, which means it is a variable that can respond to customer needs and satisfy them.

Ruengrujira (2005:29) defines the marketing mix as the key components in marketing operations, which are factors that businesses can control. A business must develop an appropriate marketing mix when formulating its marketing strategy.

Kooharajananon (2006) summarizes that the marketing mix consists of factors that can be controlled and adjusted to fit the environment, enabling the business to survive. The marketing mix can be seen as a tool used to meet the needs of target customers, ensuring customer satisfaction and happiness.

Chaoprasert (2003:63-68) explains that the marketing mix for products typically involves four key components: product, price, distribution channels, and promotion (Kotler, 1997). However, the marketing mix for services differs from that for general products. It requires a focus on employees, the service process, and the physical environment. These three elements are essential for delivering the service. Therefore, the marketing mix for services includes the 7Ps: product, price, distribution channels, promotion, people (employees), process, and physical environment.

Conceptual Framework

A Study of Marketing Mix Factors Influencing the Selection of Chinese Language Tutorial Schools Among Upper Secondary School Students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province. This study applied the marketing mix theory as a primary framework to analyze the factors influencing students' decision-making. Four key aspects were examined: Product, Price, Place (Distribution Channels), and Process, as suggested by Chaoprasert (2003:63-68). Additionally, the study incorporated concepts related to the reasons for attending tutorial schools, based on the ideas of Sinlarat (2002: 19), to better understand the underlying motivations for choosing Chinese language tutorial classes. The conceptual framework is as follows:

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable
1. Product Factor 2. Price Factor 3. Place (Distribution Channel) Factor 4. Process Factor	The reasons for selecting Chinese language tutorial schools among upper secondary school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province, are as follows: 1. Academic Reasons 2. Intellectual and Psychological Reasons 3. Curriculum and Instruction-Related Reasons



Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

4. Social Pressure Reasons

Methodology

Research model:

Section 1: A questionnaire gathering general information about the students. The independent variables of the study include gender, grade level, academic track, and the school they attend.

Section 2: A questionnaire regarding the level of marketing mix factors. It asks about the marketing mix factors influencing the choice of Chinese language tutorial classes, covering all four aspects of the marketing mix: product, price, place (distribution channels), and process.

Section 3: A questionnaire on the level of selection for Chinese language tutorial classes among upper secondary school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province.

Section 4: An open-ended questionnaire to gather suggestions on the factors that influence students' decisions to choose Chinese language tutorial classes among upper secondary school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province. Part 4: Contains open-ended questions regarding suggestions for improving the success of learning Chinese at the Ouyang Language School, Khon Kaen.

Data Collection:

Request for Certification and Introduction Letter from the Faculty of Political Science and Public Administration, Mahasarakham Rajabhat University to Secondary Schools in Khon Kaen Municipality: This refers to the formal request for an official letter to be issued by the Faculty of Political Science and Public Administration, Mahasarakham Rajabhat University, to secondary schools in Khon Kaen Municipality (under the Office of Secondary Education Service Area 25), seeking permission to collect data for research purposes.

Data Collection by the Researcher and Assistants: The researcher personally, along with two assistants, conducts the collection of survey data (questionnaires) from participants. This ensures that the data collection is properly managed and facilitates effective participation from the target group.

Reviewing and Analyzing Survey Data: Once the completed questionnaires are returned, the researcher checks the accuracy and completeness of the collected data. A total of 381 valid responses are reviewed, and then statistical analysis is performed using computer software to process and analyze the data further. This step ensures that the data are ready for meaningful interpretation and application in the research study.

Data Analysis:

After collecting all the questionnaires from the respondents, the researcher proceeded with the following steps:

Data Editing: The researcher checked the completeness of the responses and separated the incomplete questionnaires from the valid ones to ensure that all data used for analysis was accurate and complete.

Coding: The researcher assigned predefined codes to the valid questionnaires. This involves assigning numerical or categorical codes to represent the answers or information gathered from the questionnaires, such as codes for gender, age, or responses related to marketing factors.

Data Processing: The coded data was entered into a computer system for processing. A computer program was then used to analyze the data statistically, calculating measures such as the mean, standard deviation, or performing hypothesis tests as planned in the research.

The analysis of marketing mix factors in the selection of Chinese language tutoring by high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality, Khon Kaen Province, was conducted using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation. The interpretation of the mean was based on the criteria of Niamsanit (2000: 45) as follows:

Highest level:	5 points
High level:	4 points
Moderate level:	3 points
Low level:	2 points
Lowest level:	1 point

Results

1. General Information: It was found that the majority of students were female, with 257 students, accounting for 67.50%. Most students were in Grade 12, with 250 students, representing 65.60%. The majority followed the science track, with 223 students, accounting for 58.50%. Most students attended public schools, with 351 students, representing 92.10%.

2. Marketing Mix Factors in Choosing Chinese Language Tutoring: The overall marketing mix factors in the selection of Chinese language tutoring by high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality were at a moderate level. When examined by each factor, the average score was high for the product aspect. The other three factors—distribution channels, process, and price—had average scores at the moderate level, listed from highest to lowest: distribution channels, process, and price.

3. Level of Choosing Chinese Language Tutoring: The overall level of choosing Chinese language tutoring by high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality was at a moderate level. When examined by each reason, the average score was high for reasons related to the curriculum. The other reasons were at a moderate level, listed from highest to lowest: social pressure, intellectual and psychological reasons, and academic reasons.

4. Correlation Between Marketing Mix Factors and Reasons for Choosing Chinese Language Tutoring:

The correlation between the product factor and academic reasons was high, with a correlation coefficient of .603**.

The correlation between the price factor and intellectual and psychological reasons was high, with a correlation coefficient of .558**.

The correlation between the distribution channel factor and reasons related to the curriculum was high, with a correlation coefficient of .216**.

The correlation between the process factor and social pressure was high, with a correlation coefficient of .687**. All these correlations are positively significant at the .01 level.

5. Suggestions on Marketing Mix Factors for Choosing Chinese Language Tutoring: Suggestions from students were listed in order of importance:

Teachers should have teaching techniques that engage students and foster interest in learning Chinese, with an emphasis on conversation through simulated situations. A large number of students cannot apply what they learn if the content is not suitable, so textbooks should align with the curriculum.

The environment of the tutoring school should be welcoming and conducive to learning. More emphasis should be placed on learning Chinese writing. Tuition fees should be payable in installments.

Discussion

The results of the study showed that the overall marketing mix factors in the selection of Chinese language tutoring by high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality were at a moderate level, which aligns with the hypothesis. This was because students were interested in various Chinese language courses, including basic Chinese (listening, speaking, reading, writing), Chinese for university entrance exam preparation, Chinese for business or trade, Chinese for daily communication, and Chinese for tourism. Students wanted to gain knowledge in Chinese to improve their speaking, reading, and writing skills, to continue their education at a higher level, and to increase their potential. They also preferred to learn Chinese from native-speaking teachers to improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Additionally, students wanted a reasonable price, flexible class schedules, and small group sizes, with teachers who were knowledgeable and able to teach interestingly and understandably, providing continuous assessments of student progress.

This result is consistent with the study by Chuenjai (2008) on the demand for tutoring schools among high school students in Fang District, Chiang Mai Province. The study found that students wanted tutoring schools because they made learning more effective and helped them prepare for higher education. Students preferred morning classes (9:00 AM to 12:00 PM) on weekends and were most interested in learning mathematics. The study also found that students gave the highest importance to the distribution channel (clear schedules), followed by price (affordable tuition), and the lowest importance to the product factor (qualified teachers and personalized care).

The results of the study showed that, overall, the level of choosing Chinese language tutoring by high school students in Khon Kaen Municipality was at a moderate level, which was in line with the hypothesis. This was because students wanted to acquire Chinese language skills, including speaking, reading, and writing, for current studies and future higher education. They also wanted to study Chinese to correct their mistakes in the language and use it for social interactions. Families wanted their children to improve their Chinese language skills as well. This aligns with Phla-asa's (2010) study on the marketing factors influencing the

choice of tutoring schools for high school students at Wanasorn Building. The study found that students primarily sought tutoring to prepare for entrance exams and to improve their understanding of subjects like mathematics and English. The study identified the importance of various marketing factors in choosing tutoring schools, such as the physical attributes of the school, the product (courses offered), and the location. It also found significant differences in students' choices of tutoring schools based on their characteristics, such as gender, school, and parental income, which influenced the importance they placed on factors like price and location.

Conclusion

Research results on the relationship between factors and success in studying Chinese at Ouyang Language School, Khon Kaen, Khon Kaen Province

Hypothesis 1: The level of factors affecting success in studying Chinese at Ouyang Language School, Khon Kaen, Khon Kaen Province, is at a high level. The results of the study found that the overall research results were at a high level. The overall research results were at a high level, in line with the hypothesis. This is because the success of Chinese language teaching and learning found that students wanted to develop themselves in speaking Chinese, reading Chinese, writing Chinese, including acceptance from others or society around them and were able to work in careers that use Chinese by receiving support for studying Chinese and receiving advice from friends, family members and people in the community, including teachers who have sufficient knowledge and ability to teach Chinese, have easy-to-understand and interesting teaching methods or techniques, and continuously monitor and evaluate students' learning results. This is consistent with Tinto's (1993) analysis of factors affecting student retention and success in educational institutions. It was found that support from family and community is an important factor in promoting student success. Students' decisions to stay with educational institutions include personal factors such as emotional readiness, learning skills, and adaptation in educational institutions, social factors such as endorsement and support from family and friends, and cultural factors such as beliefs and values affecting access to education. Tinto's study focused on the factors affecting students' retention in educational institutions and the lack of opportunities for them to drop out of university education, which is an important concept in planning and implementing educational management and developing educational policies.

Hypothesis 2: The overall level of success in studying Chinese at Ouyang Language School, Khon Kaen, Khon Kaen Province, is at a high level. The results of the study found that the overall results of the research were at a high level, in line with the hypothesis. This is because the classroom has complete teaching equipment, the classroom environment is comfortable, the classroom atmosphere promotes and stimulates learning, and the classroom and contact areas are clean, tidy, and safe. In addition, the school is located in a community, easy to travel to and contact, and Chinese is a language that is accepted as an international language and can be used in practice, making it acceptable to friends, parents, relatives, and society. It also helps to open up or raise the level of further study at a higher level. This is consistent with Horwitz (2001), who analyzed the learning environment in a foreign language

classroom and found that a classroom with an open atmosphere and learning support can help students be confident and successful in learning. The importance of managing anxiety in studying foreign languages and creating a friendly and supportive learning environment. Reducing anxiety can help students be confident and have better academic results, which will ultimately affect their success in studying foreign languages.

Hypothesis 3: The relationship between factors and success in studying Chinese at Ouyang Language School, Khon Kaen, Khon Kaen Province, is at a high level. The results of the study found that the relationship between motivation to study and learning results is at a high level. That is, when learners are motivated to study Chinese, they will be more determined and interested in studying than usual, resulting in better learning results. The relationship between family support and satisfaction with learning is at a high level. That is, families and communities encourage learners to be interested in studying Chinese both directly and indirectly, causing learners to be interested and satisfied with studying Chinese. The relationship between the quality of teachers and the ability to use language skills is at a moderate level. That is, when teachers have knowledge, skills, techniques, and good methods of teaching Chinese, it will result in learners being able to learn well, be able to speak, read, and write Chinese better. The relationship between the teaching environment and the achievement of learning goals is at a high level. That is, when the teaching environment, including equipment, classroom atmosphere, and learning place, is ready, it will result in learners being able to study happily as planned. And the relationship between attitudes towards learning Chinese and developing other skills is at a high level. That is, when learners have an open attitude towards learning, it will result in their being able to develop in various aspects as well. Consistent with Gardner and Lambert (1972), the study of the relationship between students' attitudes towards teachers and success in learning foreign languages found that a good attitude towards teachers is related to success in learning. Students who are integratively motivated are more likely to be successful in learning French than utilitarianly motivated students. Positive attitudes toward the Francophone community and culture are associated with language learning success. Motivation and attitude are important factors affecting the ability to learn a second language.

Recommendation

Suggestions for implementation

1. Objective 1

1.1 Students should be encouraged to see the benefits of learning Chinese, which will help them to be more open to further studies and generate income or opportunities to create a career.

1.2 The teaching and learning environment should be developed, decorated with pictures and materials that inspire learning, and tables and chairs should be arranged appropriately for learning.

2. Objective 2

2.1 Students should be encouraged to be satisfied with the location and facilities, such as classrooms, tables, chairs, tools, learning equipment, learning media, etc.



2.2 Students should be encouraged to achieve their learning goals, including speaking Chinese, reading Chinese, and writing Chinese, as well as being able to generate income or create a career from Chinese and learning.

3. Objective 3

Promote and support the development of teachers' skills in the transfer of knowledge and skills in Chinese because when teachers have knowledge, skills, techniques, and good methods for teaching Chinese, this will result in learners being able to learn well, be able to speak, read, and write Chinese better.

4. Objective 4 should arrange the learning place, including the environment inside and outside the tutoring school, which is suitable for teaching and learning, such as learning through conversation by simulating events, including emphasizing Chinese writing and introducing learning techniques to attract students, etc.

Suggestions for future research

1. Learners should be studied and grouped into group activities appropriately with mixed abilities at each level, so that learners can learn new things.

2. Research on designing activities to organize the learning process according to the teaching of language for communication should be studied to organize the learning process and develop learners even better.

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