A STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE DECISION IN THAILAND DOMESTIC FLIGHT TICKET OF THAI PASSENGERS IN BANGKOK
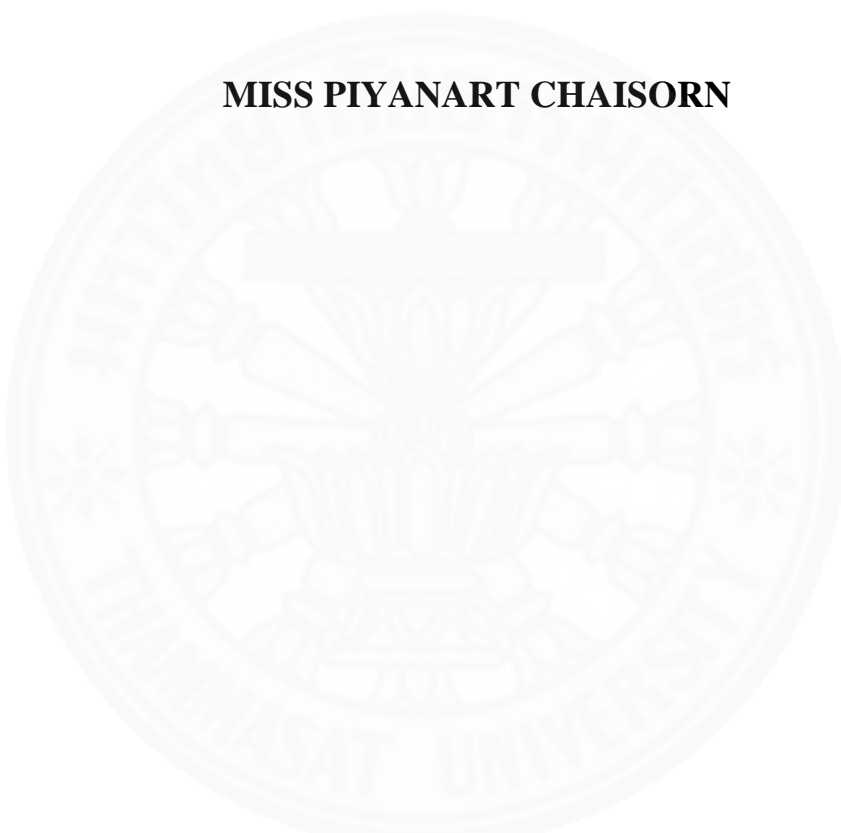
BY

MISS PIYANART CHAISORN

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN MARKETING
(INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM)
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND ACCOUNTANCY
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2016
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INDEPENDENT STUDY

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ENTITLED

A STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE DECISION IN
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BANGKOK

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for

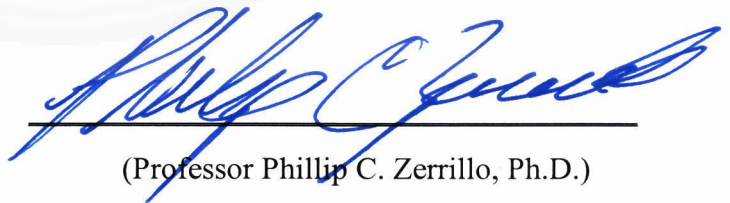the degree of Master of Science Program in Marketing (International Program)

on.. 8 MAY 2017

Chairman _____

(Associate Professor James E. Nelson, Ph.D.)

Member and Advisor _____

(Professor Phillip C. Zerrillo, Ph.D.)

Dean _____

(Associate Professor Pipop Udorn, Ph.D.)

Independent Study Title	A STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE DECISION IN THAILAND DOMESTIC FLIGHT TICKET OF THAI PASSENGERS IN BANGKOK
Author	Miss Piyanart Chaisorn
Degree	Master of Science Program in Marketing (International Program)
Major Field/Faculty/University	Faculty of Commerce and Accountancy Thammasat University
Independent Study Advisor	Professor Phillip C. Zerrillo, Ph.D.
Academic Year	2016

ABSTRACT

In recent years, there have been many factors which allow the opportunity for expansion of the Thailand domestic flight industry and its continuous growth. For example, lower price tickets, new route expansions, and government policy have been used to boost domestic travel. With these activities and the resulting growth airlines should deeply understand the consumer needs and factors influencing their purchase decision. This study will allow readers to understand more about the domestic air business, better understand potential target consumers, and improve their understanding of the factors that match with consumer needs. The study aims to understand and provide an overview of the Thailand domestic flight market, the trends toward Thai passengers in the Bangkok area and to determine factors that influence purchasing behaviors of Thai passengers in Bangkok.

This study in an applied marketing topic and will rely on exploratory research and descriptive research for its execution. Sources of data for exploratory research will come from secondary data and in-depth interviews. The results from in-depth interviews will be used to develop a questionnaire employed in descriptive research. There are three variables in this study including dependent and independent. The dependent variable is the purchasing decision of domestic flight consumers. The

independent variable are characteristics of the journey, characteristics of the transport toward Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Process, Physical Evidence, People), and characteristics of the trip maker. All respondents in this study will consist of passengers in the Bangkok area who purchased domestic flight tickets within the last 12 months.

Key findings from a total of 155 respondents show that the three most important factors influencing purchase decisions were attractive reasonable price, the second most important factors were which flight operational reliability and cabin crew and cabin cleanliness. Moreover, if when we compared the ratings of importance factors for heavy users and light users, there is a significant difference between the ratings of cabin crew and cabin cleanliness, fees and policy, and flight operational reliability factor.

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Firstly, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Professor Phillip C. Zerrillo, Ph.D., my kindest advisor, for the continuous support my Independent study. Without his support, I would never make it through this study.

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Last but not the least, I would like to thank my family: my parents and my sister for supporting me spiritually throughout my master's degree.

Miss Piyanart Chaisorn

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Importance of the study

According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) statistic in 2016, Thai consumers have been likely to travel more as following a continuous growth rate between 2014 and 2015. Statistics also shows that roughly 60 percent of Thai people travel within the country and TAT is boosting domestic tourism to Thai consumer. The most important factor which affects the desire to travel more is the cheap flight tickets. These factors create the opportunity and sustainable growth for the Thailand domestic flight business. Referring to the Travel: Euromonitor from trade sources/national statistics in 2015, domestic flight tickets accounted for 30 percent of the air travel expenditure with the market value at THB 296,056.7 million.

There are various factors that influence Thai passengers in their decision making process to choose flights as the mode of transportation for their domestic trips such as characteristics of the journey (Travel Purpose, Distance between origin and destination, Length of stay), characteristics of the transport towards Marketing Mix (Speed and Travel time, User Cost, Value for Cost, Value for Money Sales Promotion, Payment Method, etc), and characteristics of the trip maker (Age. Gender, Income, etc.) Thus, airlines need to understand the in-depth factors that influence Thai passengers' purchase decisions in order to understand more and improve the factors to match with their needs.

1.2 Purpose and Objective research

The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that influence Thai passengers in the Bangkok area to purchase flight tickets for their domestic trips. The objectives of this study are separated into three main purposes following:

1.2.1 To understand Characteristics of the journey that influence Thai passengers in Bangkok area to purchase Thailand domestic flight ticket

- Travel Purpose
- Distance between origin and destination
- Length of stay

1.2.2 To understand Characteristics of the transport facility toward marketing mix that influence Thai passengers in Bangkok area to purchase Thailand domestic flight ticket.

- Product- (Punctuality, Speed and Travel time, Comfort, Convenience, Safety)

- Price – (User Cost, Value for Money)

- Place – (Distribution Channel, Payment Method)

- Promotion – (Sales Promotion, Advertising)

- Process- (Booking and payment method, Facilities at Airport, Meal Service)

- Physical Environment- (Booking Office or Tickets Counter, Aircraft and Seat configuration, Cleanliness, Good Inner-Exteriors, Uniform)

- People - (Caring Attitude, Responsiveness, Problem Solving Skill, Personality)

1.2.3 To understand Characteristics of the trip maker that influence Thai passengers in Bangkok area to purchase Thailand domestic flights ticket.

- Gender

- Age

- Household Structure

- Income

- Car availability and/or ownership

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Overview of Thai domestic airlines business

SCB Economic Intelligence Center reported in 2014 that low cost airlines had become increasingly competitive over the past 5 years. There has been noticeable ability to gain market shares from full service airlines. Performance of the Thai airline business from 2009 to 2013 mirrored the global airline industry, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), as total revenue of all Thai airlines had grown by 9 percent. The market growth was mainly from low-cost airlines with an average growth rate at 31.5 percent, while the rate of full-service airlines increased by an average of only 6.9 percent (Figure 1).
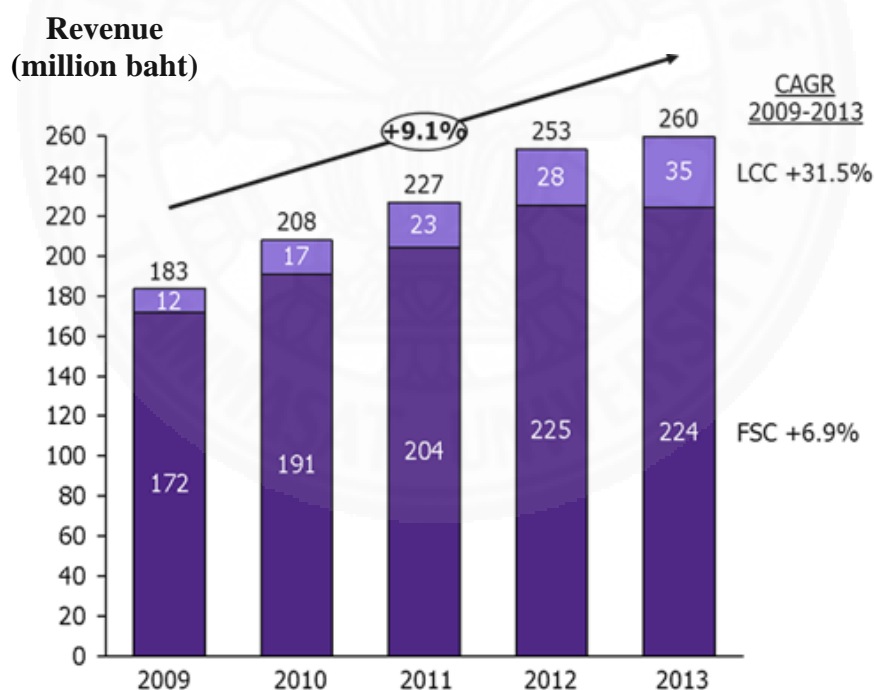
Figure 1 Revenue growth rate of Thai domestic airlines

Note: LCC is a low cost airline and FSC is a full service airline

Source: SCB Economic Intelligence Center analysis from the annual report of each airline and civil aviation department.

In 2013, the market share, calculated from the revenue on domestic routes, indicates

that low cost airlines accounted for 46 percent of the total, compared with full service airlines at 54 percent. The market leader in the market was Thai Airways, a full service airlines, with 31.6 percent of market share, followed by Thai AirAsia, Nok Air and Bangkok Airways with market share of 23.2 percent 22.7 percent, and 22 percent respectively. Considering the growth rate of revenue from 2011 to 2013, low cost airlines had the higher growth rate at 9 percent whereas the rate of full service airlines was only at 6 percent (Figure 2). Therefore, these display the higher competitiveness of the low cost airlines than of the full service airlines.
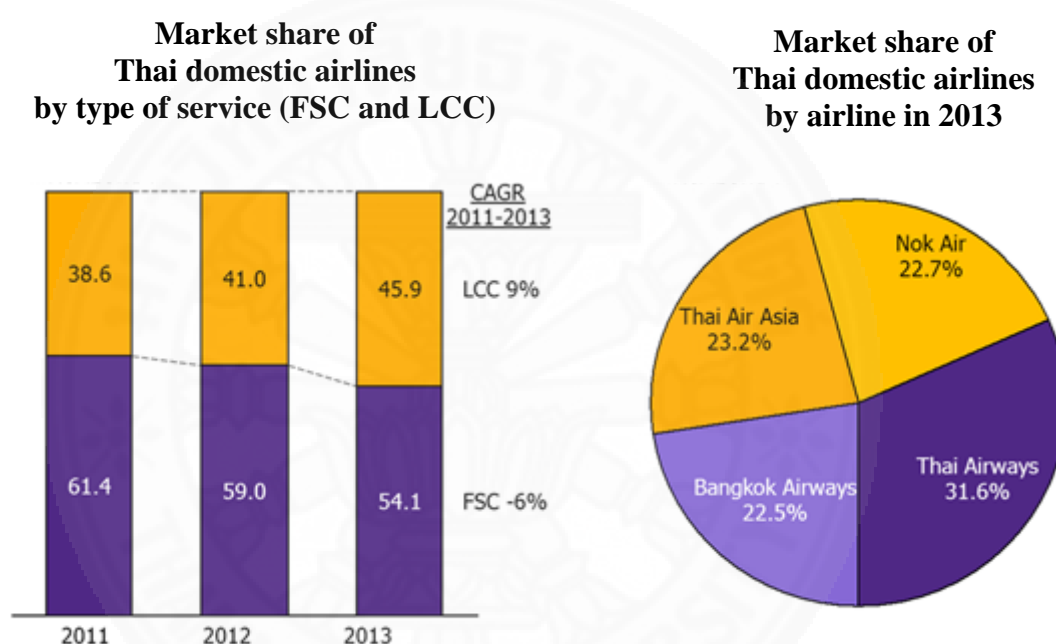
Figure 2 Market share and growth rate of Thai domestic airlines

Note: LCC is a low cost airline and FSC is a full service airline

Source: SCB Economic Intelligence Center analysis from the annual report of each airline and civil aviation department.

Kasikorn Research Center reported a steady growth for Thai domestic airlines, with Thai passengers at the 34 airports, operated by Airports of Thailand Plc. and the Department of Civil Aviation totaling 20.41 million during the first half of 2015, an increase of 27.3 percent from 2014. Moreover, Thai nationality domestic airlines passenger traffic increased continuously to 47 percent of all domestic passenger travel in 2014, up from 41 percent reported in 2011.

2.2 Trends in the Thai domestic airlines business

The six key players in the Thai domestic airlines industry are Thai Airways, Bangkok Airways, Thai AirAsia, Nok Air, Thai Smile, and Thai Lion Air, and recent expansion in the domestic airlines market has been fueled by new routes with attractive sales promotions, offering lower prices and complementary services such as seat selection, meals and beverages served on board, and 15 – 20 kg baggage allowance. Packages that offer air tickets, hotel accommodations, and car rentals now are increasing flexibility to match passenger needs. Affordable ticket prices and value for money associated with shorter travel times have resulted in increasing a number of passengers and exponential Thai domestic air market growth. In addition to lower ticket prices, high standards of onboard quality, reliability, and the safety of ground services provided by local operators have created the upmarket passenger flying experiences.

2.3 Factors Influencing Thai passengers to purchase flight tickets

Researched by Wangpreecha (2015) entitled, "Marketing strategy influenced low cost airline choosing in Thailand", it is determined that the most influential factor for passenger airline choice was value for money, together with the subfactors of cheapest ticket price, compared to other airlines and price discount promotions. The second most important factors were brand image and airline advertisements.

Key findings, reported by Qin (2012) in "The Factors Influencing Low-Cost Airline Passenger Satisfaction and Loyalty in Bangkok, Thailand", suggested that service marketing mix factors partially affected low-cost airline satisfaction and service quality as the most influential.

Buaphiban (2015) discussed in the "Determination of Factors That Influence Passengers' Airline Selection: A Study of Low Cost Carriers in Thailand" that low-cost airline passengers were not influenced by lower prices, but focused instead on service quality, airline reputation, and social acceptability. Suggestions were presented here regarding appropriate strategies to attract passengers through price leadership, service quality, airline image, and route network coverage.

2.4 Relevant Theories

2.4.1 Factors Influencing Mode of transportation

According to de Dios Ortúzar & Willumsen (2011), factors influencing mode of transportation can be classified into three groups following:

1) Characteristics of the journey: travel purpose, distance between origin and destination, and length of stay;

2) Characteristics of the transport facility which can applied through the 7P's marketing mix as Product – punctuality, speed and travel time, comfort, convenience, and safety, Price – user cost and value for money, Place – distribution channel and payment method, Promotion – sales promotions and loyalty programs, Process – booking and payment method, facilities at the airport and meal service, Physical Evidence – booking office or ticket counter, aircraft and seat configuration, cleanliness, good interiors – exteriors and uniform, and People – caring attitude, responsiveness, problem-solving skills, and personality;

3) Characteristics of the trip maker: gender, age, household structure, income, car availability, and/or ownership.

2.4.2 Consumer Behavior

People have diverse desires and needs, which reflect on their behavior. It is difficult, therefore, to predict consumer behavior through market categories, stated by Abbasi & Torkamani (2010).

Consumer behavior is a study of how individuals, groups, and organizations select, buy, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. A consumer's buying behavior is influenced by cultural, social, and personal factors. Of these, cultural factors exert the broadest and deepest influence (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

The Thai domestic airlines market has been demonstrating a continuous growth, and intense competition has positively impacted on Thai passengers in terms of lower prices and improved service quality. With more affordable ticket prices and airlines offering different levels of services, Thai passengers preferentially are now choosing

airplanes as their transportation mode, as a result of higher numbers of Thai domestic passengers and market opportunities for Thai domestic airlines to expand their customer bases and increase sales. All players in the Thai domestic airlines business must keep a close eye on business competitiveness through aggressive strategies. Airlines need to comprehend and understand the factors that influence the purchase decision-making of Thai passengers and match their product offerings with customer requirements to maintain market share in this intensely competitive industry.

2.4.3 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

Dependent Variables
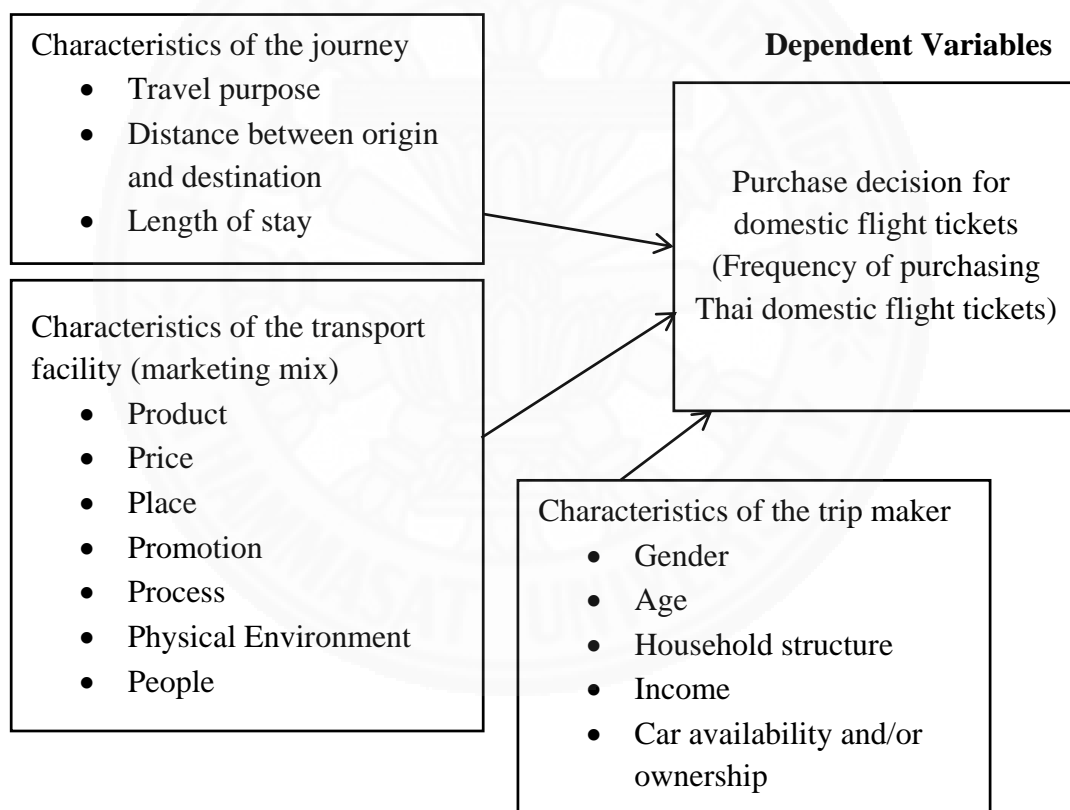
Figure 3 Conceptual Framework of the research

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were conducted to better understand the factors that influenced the purchase decisions of Thai passengers to match their needs in secondary research, followed by in-depth interviews.

3.2 Exploratory Research

3.2.1 Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected *to understand and gain an overview of the Thailand domestic flight market and trends* through credible internet sources and government publications such as Tourism Authority of Thailand, academic articles, and airline websites.

3.2.2 In-Depth interviews

Interviews were conducted *to comprehend the factors that influenced Thai passengers in the Bangkok area to purchase domestic flight tickets.* Questions were asked regarding purchasing behavior in the past 12 months to ascertain the characteristics of the journey, characteristics of the transport facility, and characteristics of the trip maker. Responses from the in-depth interviews were used for developing a questionnaire for the descriptive research.

3.3 Descriptive Research

Descriptive research was conducted *to reflect the factors that influenced Thai passengers in the Bangkok area to purchase domestic flight tickets.* A questionnaire survey method was used (see Appendix XX) for expanding the understandings from the exploratory research, using convenience sampling to choose target respondents, Thai passengers in the Bangkok area who purchased domestic flight tickets within the past 12 months.

3.3.1 Independent variables

- Characteristics of the journey : travel purpose, distance between origin and destination, length of stay
- Characteristics of the transport toward marketing mix : Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Process, Physical Evidence, People
- Characteristics of the trip maker : gender, age, household structure, income, car availability and/or ownership

3.3.2 Dependent variable

- Frequency of purchasing Thailand domestic flight tickets in the past 12 months by respondents

3.3.3 Sampling

Convenience sampling was used for both exploratory and descriptive research to choose target respondents following the criteria described below. A total of 10 respondents were selected for in-depth interviews and 155 respondents for the online survey.

Criteria:

- Males and females in the Bangkok metropolitan area
- Purchased Thailand domestic flight tickets within 12 months
- Socioeconomic status ABC by household income in Bangkok 2015 (see Appendix A), defined by Thailand Marketing Research Society:
  Class A: 85,000 baht/ month and above
  Class B: 50,001 – 85,000 baht/month
  Class C: 18,001 – 50,000 baht/month
  Class D: 7,501 – 18,000 baht/month

3.3.4 Data collection

3.3.4.1 In-depth interviews

Ten respondents in the Bangkok metropolitan area who purchased Thailand domestic flight tickets within 12 months were interviewed. Each interview lasted approximately 15 minutes and interviews were conducted from 20 October to 10 December 2016.

3.3.4.2 Online Survey

An online survey was conducted using the website Google Forms in the Thai language for the target respondents from 10 to 20 January 2017. The survey was distributed mainly through Facebook and LINE applications, and 155 completed questionnaires were collected. Each respondent took approximately 5 – 10 minutes to fill in the questionnaire (see Appendix B), which was divided into four parts following:

- Part 1.1: Characteristics of the journey(s) (in the past 12 months);
- Part 1.2: Characteristics of the journey (latest trip);
- Part 2: Characteristics of the transport facility toward marketing mix (7P's);
- Part 3: Characteristics of the trip maker.

3.4 Data analysis plan

3.4.1 The in-depth interview

Valuable insights and responses from the in-depth interviews were used for improving a descriptive research questionnaire to conduct the online survey.

3.4.2 The survey

Data from the online survey of 155 respondents were checked, cleaned, organized, and then analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Program (SPSS). Statistical data was analyzed as frequency distribution, descriptive analysis, crosstabs, t-tests and ANOVA.

3.5 Limitations of the study

Research findings cannot be generalized to the entire population as a non-probability sampling method (convenience sampling) was used with small a sample size of 155 respondents. However, questionnaires were distributed online only because time and budget were the main constraints.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Key results from the secondary research

Secondary data were collected through credible internet sources and government publications data such as Tourism Authority of Thailand, academic articles, and airline websites. Results indicated that the Thai domestic airlines market is growing continuously with increasing competition between low-cost airlines and full-service carriers. Airports of Thailand Plc. and the Department of Civil Aviation recorded a total of 20.41 million Thai passengers in the first half of 2015, up by 27.3 percent from 2014. This surge in the number of Thai passengers on domestic routes will lead to market opportunities for Thai domestic airlines to expand their customer bases and increase sales. All Thai domestic airlines must focus on their business competitiveness and adopt aggressive strategies to meet the intense competition and increase their market share.

4.2 Key results from the In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 interviewees who lived in Bangkok and purchased Thailand domestic flight tickets in the past 12 months. Each interview lasted approximately 15 minutes and aimed at understanding customer buying behavior and the marketing mix, which influenced decisions to buy domestic flight tickets. Key results of the in-depth interviews were following:

- The most important criteria before making a decision to purchase domestic flight tickets was the price;
- Customers always searched for the best price available on the Internet via airline websites, compared with other airlines and transportation choices;
- Customers usually waited and stayed tuned to buy tickets when the airlines launched low price promotions, but sometimes they bought tickets on the spur of the moment with no planning;
- Some customers would be happier if airlines provided superior

complementary options such as free seat selection or free 15-20 kg baggage allowance;

- The processes of booking and payment were important criteria, and simple convenient booking procedures encouraged ticket purchase;

- Three respondents considered that schedule options and travel time were key ticket purchase criteria. Business passengers preferred the earliest flight schedule to fly to the destination and the late night return flight on the same day;

- Brand image, safety, and service-mindedness of the service providers attracted 50 percent of the interviewees to fly with full-service airlines, Thai Airways and Bangkok Airways.

4.3 Key Results from the Questionnaire Survey

4.3.1 General Profiles of the Respondents

An online questionnaire was distributed to a total of 185 respondents, but 155 respondents, who were selected in study criteria as Thai passengers in the Bangkok area, had purchased domestic flight tickets in the past 12 months. Respondents' profiles were summarized by using frequency analysis. **Table 1** illustrates the general profiles of 155 respondents, composed of 83 percent females and 17 percent males. The largest group of respondents was aged between 20 and 29 at 76 percent, followed by 30 – 39 (22 percent). Household monthly income in Thai baht was distributed as class A (>85,000) 32 percent, B (50,001 – 85,000) 20 percent, C (18,001 – 50,000) 46.50 percent, and D (7,501 –18,000) 1.30 percent. Almost half of the respondents received a monthly household income of 18,001 – 50,000 and educated at bachelor degree level. Most of the respondents were private sector employees at 62.58 percent.

Table 1 Summary of Respondents' Profiles (n = 155)

Demographics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	26	16.77
	Female	129	83.23
Age	Under 20	1	0.65
	20 – 29	118	76.13
	30 – 39	34	21.94
	Over 49	2	1.29
Education	Senior high school	2	1.29
	Bachelor degree	83	53.55
	Master degree	69	44.52
	Higher degree	1	0.65
Occupation	Student	22	14.19
	Private sector employee	97	62.58
	State enterprise officer/government sector employee	12	7.74
	Business owner	19	12.26
	Unemployed	2	1.29
	Retired	2	1.29
	Other	1	0.65
Household monthly income (THB)	Class A: Above 85,000	50	32.26
	Class B: 50,001 – 85,000	31	20.00
	Class C: 18,001 – 50,000	72	46.45
	Class D: 7,501 – 18,000	2	1.29
Family members	1 – 2	21	13.55
	3 – 4	78	50.32
	5 – 6	47	30.32
	7 – 8	9	5.81

Respondents were split in terms of buying behavior into light and heavy users.

● Light Users: Passengers who purchased domestic flight tickets 1 – 4 times/12 months

● Heavy Users: Passengers who purchased domestic flight tickets more than 4 times/12 months

Results gave 71.61 percent light users and 28.39 percent heavy users (**Table 2**).

Table 2 Frequency of purchasing Thailand domestic flight tickets in the past 12 months

Usage Rate		Frequency	Percentage
1 – 4 times	Light users	111	71.61
5 times or more	Heavy users	44	28.39

Traveling purposes for the most recent domestic trip were mostly 56.77 percent for travel, followed by visiting family 16.77 percent, personal 13.55 percent, and business 12.90 percent (**Table 3**).

Table 3 Purpose for the most recent domestic trip

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage
Travel	88	56.77
Business	20	12.90
Visiting family	26	16.77
Personal	21	13.55

Thai AirAsia was the most popular airline (34.84 percent), followed by Nok Air (23.23 percent), and Thai Lion Air (16.77 percent). Thai Smile was the least popular airline at 7.74 percent. Low-cost airlines attracted Thai passengers more than full-service airlines like Thai Airways or Bangkok Airways (**Table 4**).

Table 4 Airline selection for the most recent domestic trip

Airline	Frequency	Percentage
Thai Lion Air	26	16.77
Thai Smile	12	7.74
Nok Air	36	23.23
Thai AirAsia	54	34.84
Bangkok Airways	14	9.03
Thai Airways	13	8.39

The most popular destination was Chiang Mai (CNX), the famous city in the Northern region of Thailand, at 38 percent, followed by Hat Yai (HDY), located at the Southern part of Thailand at 10.97 percent (**Table 5**).

Table 5 Destination for the most recent domestic trip

Destination	Frequency	Percentage
Chiang Mai (CNX)	59	38.06
Hat Yai (HDY)	17	10.97
Phuket (HKT)	15	9.68
Chiang Rai (CEI)	12	7.74
Surat Thani (URT)	12	7.74
Krabi (KBV)	8	5.16
Udon Thani (UTH)	8	5.16
Koh Samui (USM)	3	1.94
Nan (NNT)	3	1.94
Phitsanulok (PHS)	3	1.94
Khon Kaen (KKC)	2	1.29
Roi Et (ROI)	2	1.29
Sukhothai (THS)	2	1.29
Ubon Ratchathani (UBP)	2	1.29
Others	7	4.52

Respondents were asked which media sources they used for information regarding Thailand domestic flight tickets. The most popular source was Facebook fan page at 76.13 percent (118 respondents), followed by airline websites and Facebook – shared post from others (60 percent), and travel agency online booking (Traveloka, Booking, Skyscanner) at 47.10 percent. Thus, online media proved to be the most popular source for respondents (**Table 6**).

Table 6 Media channel used for obtaining information regarding Thailand domestic flight tickets

Destination	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook fan page	118	76.13
Airline website	93	60.00
Facebook – shared post from others	92	59.35
Travel agency online booking	73	47.10
Travel blogger	42	27.10
Travel exhibition	37	23.87
Friend/family	34	21.94
Line official	32	20.65
TV advertising	13	8.39
Travel agency	12	7.74
Instagram	10	6.45
Newspapers	4	2.58
Magazines	4	2.58

4.3.2 Factors influencing purchase decision for Thailand domestic flight tickets : characteristics of the transport toward Marketing Mix

Factor analysis simplifies data by grouping similar independent variables together and reduces the number of variables during maintaining maximum information. A varimax rotation was used for condensing the characteristics of the transport toward the 7P's marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Process, Physical Evidence and People) (Question D in Appendix B) into eight factors to prevent multicollinearity. The frequency of purchasing Thailand domestic flight tickets in the past 12 months was used as the dependent variable characteristic of the transport toward marketing mix (Question D in Appendix B) as independent variables. Output from the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) factor analysis contained 70.25 percent of all information, with the factors assigned to eight groups following (see Appendix C):

Factor 1 Cabin Crew and Cabin Cleanliness contained five attributes including freshness of responsiveness of service provider, caring attitude of service provider, problem- solving skill of service provider, service-mindedness of service provider, and cleanliness of the aircraft;

Factor 2 Airline Brand Image contained five attributes including uniform of service provider, corporate social responsibility of airline, airline nation of origin, advertisements, and good interiors of the aircraft;

Factor 3 Complementary & Loyalty Programs contained three attributes including free 15 – 20 kg baggage allowance, free meal and beverage served on board, free seat selection, and loyalty programs;

Factor 4 Booking & Payment Method contained three attributes including payment method, purchase accessibility, and booking and payment processes;

Factor 5 Transit Convenience contained three attributes including route network coverage, convenience of going to the airport, and facilities at the airport;

Factor 6 (Fees and Policy) contained three attributes including charge fees, luggage policy, and entertainment options;

Factor 7 (Flight Operational Reliability) contained three attributes including safety, punctuality, and travel time;

Factor 8 Reasonable Price contained three attributes including affordable price, value for money, and sales promotion.

Respondents were split into two groups as heavy users and light users depending on the frequency of purchasing Thailand domestic flight tickets in the past 12 months (**Table 2**). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the frequency of purchase for heavy and light users. Results indicated the significant differences between the frequency of purchasing Thailand domestic flight tickets in the past 12 months, $t(d.f.=153) = -15.085$, $p<.05$ (see Appendix D). Mean values suggested that heavy users purchased Thailand domestic flight tickets more often than light users (**Table 7**).

Table 7 Frequency of purchasing Thailand domestic flight tickets in the past 12 months for heavy users and light users

Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
Light Users (n = 111)	2.75	1.30
Heavy Users (n = 44)	7.45	2.57
Total (n = 155)	4.08	2.75

Light users rated reasonable price as the most important purchasing decision factor for Thailand domestic flight tickets towards marketing mix, followed by flight operational reliability and cabin crew and cabin cleanliness (Figure 3).

Heavy users also rated reasonable price as the most important factor for purchasing Thailand domestic flight tickets towards marketing mix, followed equally by flight operational reliability and cabin crew and cabin cleanliness (Figure 3).
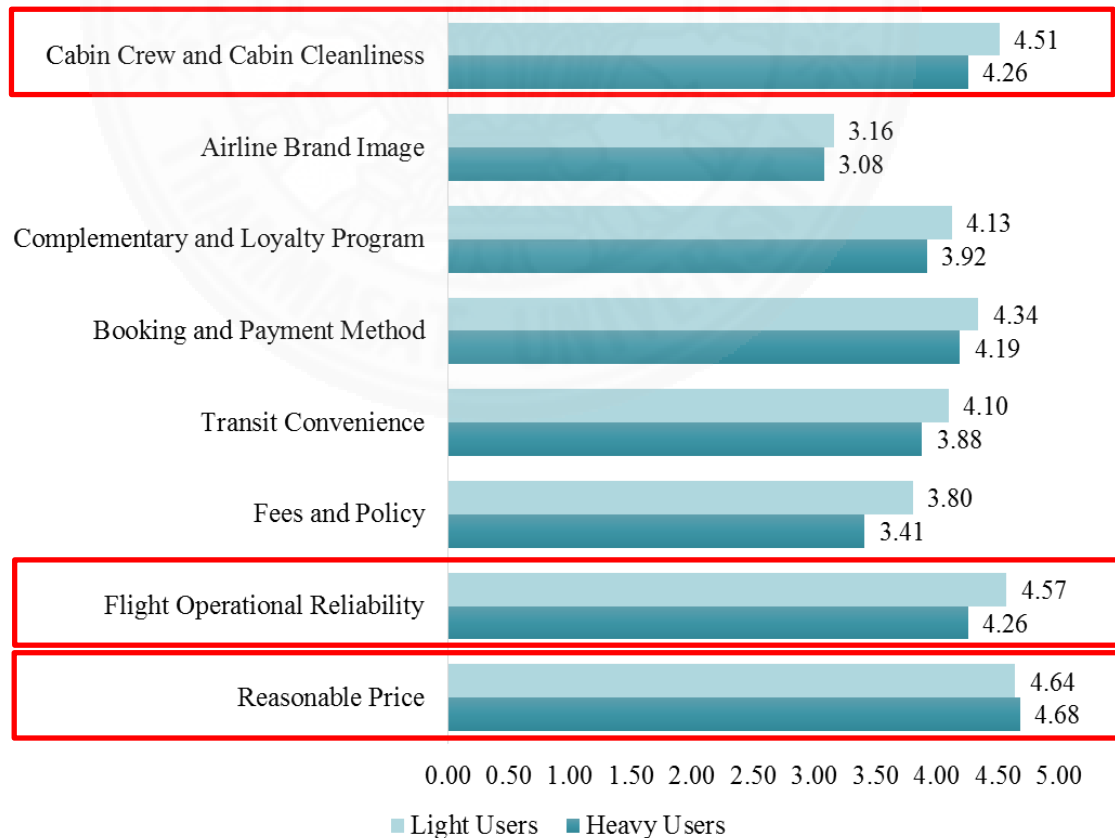
Figure 4 Important factors regarding local ticket purchase toward marketing mix

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the mean values of important factors for heavy users and light users. Results from the analysis are given in Appendix E and Table 8.

Table 8 Comparison of the means of important factors toward marketing mix

	Total		Light Users		Heavy Users	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	dard Devi	Mean	Standard Deviation
Cabin Crew and Cabin Cleanliness	4.44	.60	4.51	.52	4.26	.72
Airline Brand Image	3.14	.81	3.16	.81	3.08	.82
Complementary and Loyalty Program	4.07	.77	4.13	.73	3.92	.84
Booking and Payment Method	4.30	.70	4.34	.62	4.19	.87
Transit Convenience	4.04	.67	4.10	.63	3.88	.74
Fees and Policy	3.69	.87	3.80	.83	3.41	.92
Flight Operational Reliability	4.48	.62	4.57	.54	4.26	.75
Reasonable Price	4.65	.52	4.64	.46	4.68	.65

Factor 1 Cabin Crew and Cabin Cleanliness showed a *significant difference* t(d.f.=153) = 2.419, p<.05 (see Appendix E). Mean values indicated that light users rated cabin crew and cabin cleanliness as more important than heavy users.

Factor 2 Airline Brand Image showed *no significant difference* t(d.f.=77.865) =0.570, p>.05 (see Appendix E).

Factor 3 Complementary and Loyalty Programs showed *no significant difference* t(d.f.=70.024) = 1.420, p>.05 (see Appendix E).

Factor 4 Booking and Payment Method showed *no significant difference* t(d.f.=61.135) =1.040, p>.05 (see Appendix E).

Factor 5 Transit Convenience showed *no significant difference* t(d.f.=68.367) =1.736, p>.05 (see Appendix E).

Factor 6 Fees and Policy showed a *significant difference* t(d.f.=72.566) = 2.477 p<.05 (see Appendix E). Mean values indicated that light users rated cabin crew and cabin cleanliness as more important than heavy users.

Factor 7 Flight Operational Reliability showed a *significant difference* t(d.f.=61.213) = 2.524, p<.05 (see Appendix E). Mean values indicated that light users rated cabin crew and cabin cleanliness as more important than heavy users.

Factor 8 Reasonable Price showed _no significant difference_ t(d.f.=61.359) =-0.366, p>.05 (see Appendix E).

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Domestic flight tickets purchased by Thai passengers have been increasing continuously, as a consequence of affordable prices and more choices in cases of the level of service provided by low-cost and full-service airlines, which caused intense competition in the industry. To maintain market share, all players in this business must focus on competitiveness and examine the key strategies which attract Thai passengers. Various factors influence the decision-making of Thai passengers when they select flights or airplanes as the mode of transportation for their domestic trips. These include the characteristics of the journey (travel purpose, distance between origin and destination, and length of stay), characteristics of the transport towards marketing mix (speed and travel time, user cost, value for money, sales promotions and payment method), and characteristics of the trip maker (age, gender and income).

Both exploratory and descriptive research methodology were employed. Secondary data was collected from credible online sources and 10 respondents were deeply interviewed, lasting 15 minutes each. Results from both secondary and primary interview data were used for bolstering a questionnaire for descriptive research. A total of 155 online questionnaires were collected. Respondents were divided into two groups: heavy users who had purchased Thailand domestic flight tickets more than 4 times in the past 12 months, and light users who purchased 1 – 4 times. Furthermore, results indicated that both heavy and light users rated reasonable price as the most important factor which affected their purchase decisions, followed by flight operational reliability and cabin crew and cabin cleanliness as the second most important factor. There were the significant differences between the importance of cabin crew and cabin cleanliness, fees and policy, and flight operational reliability factors. Results can be used by players in the domestic airline industry to improve the marketing strategies, which influence purchasing decisions regarding domestic flight tickets by Thai passengers in the Bangkok area.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

DEFINIITION – HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN BANGKOK 2015

Typical SEC definition (Bangkok, Thailand) Thailand Marketing Research Society

Class	Criterion MHI (baht)	Share
Class A	85,000 baht or above	4%
Class B	50,001-85,000 baht	8%
Class C	18,001-50,000 baht	64%
Class D	7,501-18,000 baht	21%

Middle Class 72%
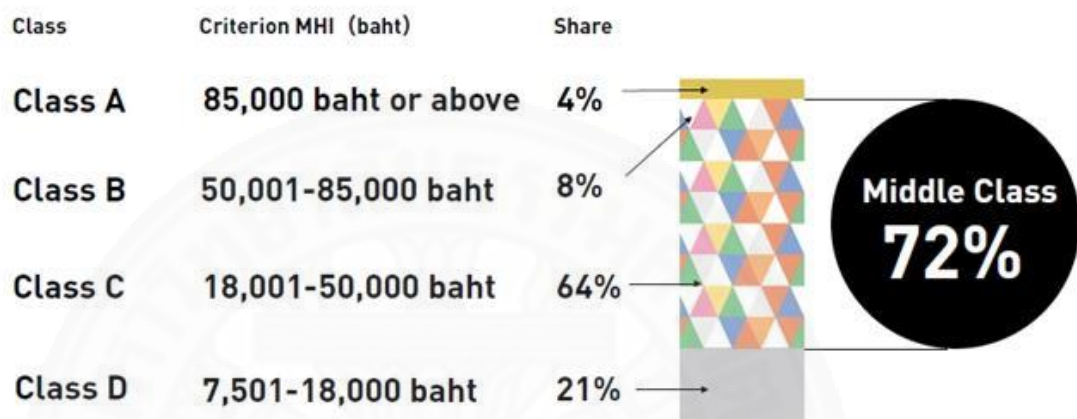
Source: Thailand marketing research society.

https://www.marketingoops.com/reports/research/hakuhodo-research-middle-class-asean/

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE DECISION IN DOMESTIC FLIGHTS TICKET OF THAI PASSENGERS IN BANGKOK

This research is a part of the course MK702: Independent Study 2 which is conducted by a student in Master's Degree Program in Marketing at Thammasat University. The purpose of this questionnaire is to study factors influencing purchase decision in domestic flights ticket of Thai passengers in Bangkok. This questionnaire will take around 10 minutes to complete.

This questionnaire is composed of 3 parts:

Part 1: Characteristics of the journey

Part 2: Characteristics of the transport facility toward marketing mix (7P's)

Part 3: Characteristics of the trip maker

Please answer the questions as honest as possible and be assured that any information provided will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. It will be used in the purpose of academic research only. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact Ms.Piyanart Chaisorn e-mail: **pyn.tng@gmail.com.** Your kind co-operation is greatly appreciated.

_____

Screening Questions

SQ1: In the last the past 12 months approximately how many round trip tickets have you bought?

__1. 1 times   __2. 2 times   __3. 3 times

__4. 4 times   __5. 5 times   __6. 6 times

__7. 7 times   __8. 8 times

__9. 9 or more (please specify_____)

__10. Never

SQ2: Which of the following sentence describes you the best? (Multiple answers are allowed)

__1. You are a purchaser of Thailand domestic flights ticket (Go to the next question)

__2. You have an influence or are the decision maker for Thailand domestic flights tickets. (Go to the next question)

__3. None of the sentence matches with my behavior. (End of questionnaire)

_____

Part 1.1: Characteristics of the journey (in the past 12 months)

A1.1 : For the trips that you bought Thailand domestic flights tickets in the past 12 months, please indicate how many times you purchased for "Travel Purpose"?

__1. 1-2 times   __2. 3-4 times

__3. 5-6 times   __4. 7-8 times

__5. 9 or More (please specify_____)

__6. This is not my purpose for the trips

A1.2 : For the trips that you bought Thailand domestic flights tickets in the past 12 months, please indicate how many times you purchased for "Business Purpose (meetings, conventions, seminars..etc)"?

__1. 1-2 times   __2. 3-4 times

__3. 5-6 times   __4. 7-8 times

__5. 9 or More (please specify_____)

__6. This is not my purpose for the trips

A1.3 : For the trips that you bought Thailand domestic flights tickets in the past 12 months, please indicate how many times you purchased for "Visiting Family, friends, or relatives"?

__1. 1-2 times   __2. 3-4 times

__3. 5-6 times   __4. 7-8 times

__5. 9 or More (please specify_____)

__6. This is not my purpose for the trips

A1.4 : For the trips that you bought Thailand domestic flights tickets in the past 12 months, please indicate how many times you purchased for "Personal Purpose (medical,wedding,funeral,study..etc)"?

__1. 1-2 times   __2. 3-4 times

__3. 5-6 times   __4. 7-8 times

__5. 9 or More (please specify_____)

__6. This is not my purpose for the trips

A2 : What is the <u>average length of day</u> spent in destination? (for the trips in the past 12 months)

__1. 1-2 days   __2. 3-4 days

__3. 5-6 days   __4. 7-8 days

__5. 9 or More (please specify_____)

A3 : What is the <u>average price</u> that you bought Thailand domestic flights round trip tickets? (for the trips in the past 12 months)

__1. less than 1,000 THB   __2. 1,001-2,000 THB

__3. 2,001-3,000 THB   __4. 3,001-4,000 THB

__5. 4,001-5,000 THB   __6. 5,001-6,000 THB

__7. more than 6,000 THB

A4 : Please check [X] in the box for the choice of where you bought Thailand domestic flights tickets and how many times which match your answer.

Where it can be bought	1-2 times	3-4 times	5-6 times	7-8 times	9 or More	Never
A4.1.Airline Website						
A4.2.Airline Office						
A4.3.Airline Call Center						
A4.4.Airport						
A4.5.Travel Agency online booking (Traveloka, Booking, Skyscanner...etc)						
A4.6.Travel Agency						
A4.7.Travel Exhibition						

A5 : Please check [X] at your <u>level of satisfaction</u> on the following Airline which you bought Thailand domestic flights tickets in the past 12 months. If you very satisfied, circle a "5". If you very dissatisfied, circle a "1" or circle any other number that corresponds to your opinion.

Airline	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Never bought
A5.1 Thai Airways	1	2	3	4	5	Never
A5.2 Bangkok Airways	1	2	3	4	5	Never
A5.3 Thai AirAsia	1	2	3	4	5	Never
A5.4 Nok Air	1	2	3	4	5	Never
A5.5 Thai Smile	1	2	3	4	5	Never
A5.6 Thai Lion Air	1	2	3	4	5	Never

Part 1.2: Characteristics of the journey (latest trip)

B1 : Which <u>latest destination</u> that you fly to from Bangkok?_____

B2 : What is your purpose for the <u>latest trip</u>?

__1. Travelling

__2. Business Purpose (meetings, conventions, seminars..etc)

__3. Visiting Family, friends, or relatives

__4. Personal Purpose (medical,wedding,funeral,study..etc)

__5. Other (please specify_____)

B3 : What is the <u>length of day</u> spent in destination? (for <u>the latest trip</u>)

__1. 1-2 days   __2. 3-4 days

__3. 5-6 days   __4. 7-8 days

__5. 9 or More (please specify_____)

B4 : What is the <u>average price</u> that you bought Thailand domestic round trip flights tickets? (for <u>the latest trip</u>)

__1. less than 1,000 THB   __2. 1,001-2,000 THB

__3. 1,001-2,000 THB   __4. 3,001-4,000 THB

__5. 4,001-5,000 THB   __6. 5,001-6,000 THB

__7. 5,001-6,000 THB

B5 : For <u>the latest trip</u>, which airline you purchase Thailand domestic flights round trip tickets ?

__1. Thai Airways   __2. Bangkok Airways

__3. Thai AirAsia   __4. Nok Air

__5. Thai Smile   __6. Thai Lion Air

__7. Other (please specify_____)

B6 : Please check [X] at your <u>level of satisfaction</u> on the latest Airline which you bought Thailand domestic flights tickets. lf you very satisfied, circle a "5". If you very dissatisfied, circle a "1" or circle any other number that corresponds to your opinion.

Latest Airline	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
	1	2	3	4	5

Part 2: Characteristics of the transport facility toward marketing mix (7P's)

C1: How long of travel time by car make you decide to fly rather than drive? _____hrs.

C2 : At what price of round trip tickets do you begin to choose other mode of transportation rather than fly? _____THB

C3 : Please rank mode of transportation you will choose, if the price for Thailand domestic flights ticket over your maximum budget? (1 = the first choice, 2=the second choice, 3 = the last choice)
__ C3.1 Drive by yourself/Car
__ C3.2 Train
__ C3.3 Bus

C4 : Please check [X] at your <u>level of satisfaction</u> on the following other modes of transportation. If you very satisfied, circle a "5". If you very dissatisfied, circle a "1" or circle any other number that corresponds to your opinion

Mode of transportations	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
C4.1 Drive by yourself/Car	1	2	3	4	5
C4.2 Train	1	2	3	4	5
C4.3 Bus	1	2	3	4	5

D : At what rate do you place <u>*importance*</u> of each factor that affects your decision to choose mode of transportation for domestic traveling? Please check [x] in the box for the answer that matches with your opinion the most. If you think it is very important, circle a "5". If it is not important, circle a "1" or circle any other number that corresponds to your opinion.

Factors	Least Importance			Most Importance	
D1 : Product					
D1.1 Punctuality	1	2	3	4	5
D1.2 Travel time	1	2	3	4	5
D1.3 Convenience of going Airport	1	2	3	4	5
D1.4 Safety	1	2	3	4	5
D1.5 Route Network Coverage	1	2	3	4	5
D1.6 Schedule options	1	2	3	4	5
D1.7 Change fees	1	2	3	4	5
D1.8 Luggage policy	1	2	3	4	5
D1.9 Entertainment options	1	2	3	4	5

Factors	Least Importance				Most Importance
D2 : Price					
D2.1 Affordable	1	2	3	4	5
D2.2 Value for Money	1	2	3	4	5
D2 : Price					
D2.1 Affordable	1	2	3	4	5
D2.2 Value for Money	1	2	3	4	5
D3 : Place					
D3.1 Accessibility to where it can be purchased	1	2	3	4	5
D3.2 Payment method	1	2	3	4	5
D4 : Promotion					
D4.1 Sales promotion	1	2	3	4	5
D4.2 Loyalty Programs	1	2	3	4	5
D4.3 Advertisements	1	2	3	4	5
D4.4 Free seat selection	1	2	3	4	5
D4.5 Free meal and beverage served on board	1	2	3	4	5
D4.6 Free 15-20 kg. baggage allowance	1	2	3	4	5

Factors		Least Importance				Most Importance
D5 : Process						
D5.1	Booking and Payment process	1	2	3	4	5
D5.2	Facilities at Airport	1	2	3	4	5
D6 : Physical Evidence						
D6.1	Comfortable Seat in flight	1	2	3	4	5
D6.2	Cleanliness of Aircraft/Cabin	1	2	3	4	5
D6.3	Good Interiors of Aircraft/Cabin	1	2	3	4	5
D6.4	Uniform of service provider	1	2	3	4	5
D7 : People						
D7.1	Caring Attitude of service provider	1	2	3	4	5
D7.2	Responsiveness of service provider	1	2	3	4	5
D7.3	Problem solving skill of service	1	2	3	4	5
D7.4	provider	1	2	3	4	5
D7.5	Service minded of service provider	1	2	3	4	5
D7.6	Service provider personality	1	2	3	4	5
D7.7	Corporate social responsibility of Airline	1	2	3	4	5
	Airline nation of origin					

Part 3: Characteristics of the trip maker

Instruction: Please check [X] the answer that matches with your information the most.

It can be assured that any information provided will be treated in with the most confidentiality. It will be used in the purpose of academic research only.

E1 : What is your gender? (Single Answer)

__ 1.Male   __ 2.Female

E2 : How old are you? (Single Answer)

__ 1.Under 20   __ 2.20-29

__ 3.30-39   __ 4.40-49

__ 5.Over 49

E3 : What is your occupation?(Single Answer)

__1.Student

__2.Private sector employee

__3.State enterprise officer/government sector employee

__4.Business owner

__5.Unemployed

__6.Retired

__7.Other (Please specify_____)

E4 : What is your highest education level? (Single Answer)

__1.Below Senior High School

__2.Senior High School

__3.High Vocational Certificate

__4.Bachelor's Degree

__5.Higher

E5 : What is the range of your household income per month? (Single Answer)

__1.Below 7,500   THB/month   __2.7,501 - 18,000   THB/month

__3.18,001 – 30,000 THB/month   __4.30,001 - 50,000 THB/month

__5.50,001 – 70,000 THB/month   __6.70,001 -   85,000 THB/month

__7.Above 85,000   THB/month

E6 : How many member(s) is in your household? (Single Answer)

__1.1-2 people   __2.3-4 people

__3.5-6 people   __4.7-8 people

__5.Above 8 people

B7 How do you get information about Airline? (select as many as apply)

__7.1 Airline Website

__7.2 Travel Agency online booking (Traveloka, Booking, Skyscanner...etc)

__7.3 Travel Agency

__7.4 Travel Exhibition

__7.5 Newspaper

__7.6 Magazine

__7.7 TV Advertising

__7.8 Friend/Family

__7.9 Travel Blogger

__7.10 Facebook Fanpage

__7.11 Facebook - shared post from others

__7.12 Line Official

__7.13 Instagram

__7.14 Other (please specify_____)

E8.1 Do you have your own car?

__1. Yes, I do.   __2. No, I don't.

E8.2 Do you often drive to work/study?

__1. Yes, I do.   __2. No, I don't.

****

APPENDIX C

FACTOR ANALYSIS

Total Variance Explained

Compo nent	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of			Rotation Sums of Squared		
	Total	Varian	Cumulative %	Total	Varian	ative	Total	Varian	Cumulative %
1	10.65	33.27	33.27	10.65	33.27	33.27	4.20	13.11	13.11
2	3.14	9.81	43.08	3.14	9.81	43.08	3.74	11.68	24.80
3	1.96	6.14	49.22	1.96	6.14	49.22	3.07	9.59	34.38
4	1.63	5.10	54.32	1.63	5.10	54.32	2.61	8.15	42.53
5	1.58	4.93	59.25	1.58	4.93	59.25	2.52	7.89	50.42
6	1.32	4.13	63.39	1.32	4.13	63.39	2.21	6.91	57.33
7	1.15	3.58	66.97	1.15	3.58	66.97	2.10	6.55	63.88
8	1.05	3.29	70.26	1.05	3.29	70.26	2.04	6.37	70.26
9	0.93	2.92	73.18						
10	0.79	2.46	75.64						
11	0.72	2.26	77.90						
12	0.66	2.06	79.96						
13	0.60	1.87	81.83						
14	0.58	1.81	83.64						
15	0.55	1.71	85.35						
16	0.45	1.42	86.77						
17	0.44	1.37	88.13						
18	0.41	1.28	89.41						
19	0.38	1.20	90.61						
20	0.37	1.15	91.76						
21	0.35	1.10	92.86						
22	0.32	1.01	93.87						
23	0.29	0.91	94.78						
24	0.27	0.83	95.61						
25	0.25	0.78	96.39						
26	0.21	0.66	97.05						
27	0.20	0.62	97.67						
28	0.18	0.55	98.22						
29	0.17	0.52	98.75						
30	0.15	0.47	99.22						
31	0.13	0.41	99.63						
32	0.12	0.37	100.00						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Responsiveness of service provider	.824							
Caring Attitude of service provider	.810							
Problem solving skill of service provider	.788							
Service minded of service provider	.687							
Cleanliness of Aircraft/Cabin	.556							
Uniform of service provider		.805						
Corporate social responsibility of Airline		.759						
Airline nation of origin		.750						
Advertisements		.730						
Good Interiors of Aircraft/Cabin		.600						
Free 15-20 kg. baggage allowance			.768					
Free meal and beverage served on board			.722					
Free seat selection			.635					
Loyalty Programs			.508					
Payment method				.860				
Accessibility to where it can be purchased				.859				
Booking and Payment process				.634				
Route Network Coverage					.665			
Convenience of going to Airport					.634			
Facilities at Airport					.520			
Change fees						.795		
Luggage policy						.691		
Entertainment options						.568		
Safety							.731	
Punctuality							.642	
Travel time							.512	
Affordable								.764
Value for Money								.742
Sales promotion								.508

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.

Factor		Attribute
1	Cabin Crew and Cabin Cleanliness	Responsiveness of service provider
		Caring Attitude of service provider
		Problem solving skill of service
		Service minded of service provider
		Cleanliness of Aircraft/Cabin
2	Airline Brand Image	Uniform of service provider
		Corporate social responsibility of
		Airline nation of origin
		Advertisements
		Good Interiors of Aircraft/Cabin
3	Complementary & Loyalty Programs	Free 15-20 kg. baggage allowance
		Free meal and beverage served on board
		Free seat selection
		Loyalty Programs
4	Booking & Payment Method	Payment method
		Accessibility to where it can
		Booking and Payment process
5	Transit Convenience	Route Network Coverage
		Convenience of going to Airport
		Facilities at Airport
6	Fees and Policy	Change fees
		Luggage policy
		Entertainment options
7	Flight Operational Reliability	Safety
		Punctuality
		Travel time
8	Reasonable Price	Affordable
		Value for Money
		Sales promotion

APPENDIX D

INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

Frequency of purchasing thailand domestic filght tickets between heavy users and light users

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Differen	Std. Error		Lower	Upper
In the past 12 months approximately how many round trip tickets have you bought	Equal variances assumed	21.804	.000	-15.085	153	.000	-4.70680	.31202		-5.32322	-4.09038
	Equal variances not assumed			-11.587	51.977	.000	-4.70680	.40623		-5.52196	-3.89163

APPENDIX E

INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

Compare means of important factors toward marketing mix

Independent Samples Test

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Lower	Upper
Cabin Crew and Cabin Cleanliness	Equal variances assumed	4.305	.040	2.419	153	.017	.25262	.10444	.04630	.45894
	Equal variances not assumed			2.108	61.589	.039	.25262	.11986	.01298	.49226
Airline Brand Image	Equal variances assumed	.012	.912	.574	153	.567	.08309	.14477	-.20292	.36910
	Equal variances not assumed			.570	77.865	.570	.08309	.14579	-.20716	.37333
Complementary & Loyalty Programs	Equal variances assumed	.654	.420	1.510	153	.133	.20567	.13622	-.06344	.47478
	Equal variances not assumed			1.420	70.024	.160	.20567	.14489	-.08329	.49464
Booking & Payment Method	Equal variances assumed	3.407	.067	1.199	153	.232	.14995	.12507	-.09715	.39704
	Equal variances not assumed			1.040	61.135	.303	.14995	.14424	-.13848	.43837
Convenience Transit	Equal variances assumed	.468	.495	1.871	153	.063	.22031	.11773	-.01227	.45289
	Equal variances not assumed			1.736	68.367	.087	.22031	.12689	-.03287	.47350
Fees and Policy	Equal variances assumed	1.684	.196	2.585	153	.011	.39571	.15307	.09330	.69812
	Equal variances not assumed			2.477	72.566	.016	.39571	.15974	.07733	.71410
Flight Operational Reliability	Equal variances assumed	2.764	.098	2.908	153	.004	.31299	.10762	.10039	.52560
	Equal variances not assumed			2.524	61.213	.014	.31299	.12401	.06504	.56095
Attractive Resonable Price	Equal variances assumed	.622	.432	-.421	153	.674	-.03918	.09301	-.22292	.14457
	Equal variances not assumed			-.366	61.359	.716	-.03918	.10701	-.25312	.17477

BIOGRAPHY

Name	Miss Piyanart Chaisorn
Date of Birth	15 September 1990
Educational Attainment	Bachelor of Business Administration (2012)
	Thammasat business School
Work Position	N/A
Scholarship	N/A
Publications	N/A
Work Experiences	Inside Sales Representative
	UPS Parcel Delivery Service Ltd.
	Sales Representative (Export-IFF)
	NYK Line (Thailand)