BEHAVIORS AND PURCHASE DECISION OF IMPORTED COSMETICS THROUGH E-COMMERCE CHANNELS IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The objective of studying behavior s and purchase decision of imported cosmetics through E-commerce channels in Thailand is to study the purchasing behavior of imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels of consumers in Bangkok by questionnaire with 120 people in Bangkok who have purchased imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels. Data were analyzed by distribution of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

The results showed that

1) Most of the respondents were female with the age between 21-30 years old, a bachelor's degree, single status, most of them have occupations as employees of private companie which has a monthly income of more than 30,000 baht.

2) Most of the respondents prefer to purchase imported cosmetics from Korea which are face cosmetics such as creams and facial cleansing lotions, skin creams, foundations, lipsticks, etc., ordered through Instagram. There is an order cost of 2001-3,000 baht per time and the purchase of imported cosmetics is less than 2 times / month.

3) Most of the respondents strongly agreed with their decision to purchase imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels. Overall, when considering each aspect, the first purchase decision was the purchase decision was followed by the behavior after the purchase.

KEY WORDS: Behavior / Purchase Decision / Imported Cosmetics / E-commerce

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1. 1 Background and Significance of the Problem

At the very moment, information and communication technologies (ICT) play a crucial role in every aspect of human life. For example, by allowing people that reside on opposite sides of the world to interact with each other in real-time. Today, many businesses from both the private and public sectors are utilizing ICT technologies to achieve substantial growth. Over the past decades, ICTs have significantly developed to an extent that allows the world to enter an era known as the "World Without Borders". (Kiatrasamee, 2015)

Surprisingly, as ICT technologies are becoming more advanced, the cost of adopting ICT technologies tends to become lower. Since ICT technologies allow businesses to expand and accrue more revenue at a proportion that is significantly higher than the cost of adoption, businesses are motivated to adopt ICT technologies to their business operations. Over the past decades, many new businesses have been born online. Likewise, existing businesses transcend themselves to the online scene to expand their market. This literally marked the start of the e-commerce industry. Other than providing equal opportunity to both the sellers and buyers, e-commerce also helps businesses reduce their expenses since businesses that are conducted online do not require the rent of space or the extensive hire of human labor. Due to these reasons, the e-commerce industry has slowly become the rising start of the 21st century. (Panthong, 2014) (Kundeesri, 2014) (Thanomthai, 2016).

The e-commerce industry has significantly grown and is still growing. In the beginning, people did not trust the e-commerce industry as there are many associated risks when purchasing products online. For example, the risk of not receiving the product after making the payment. However, as the e-commerce industry accumulates many positive reputations overtime, people slowly lose their fear of purchasing online. Currently, the online promotion, ease of use, and eliminated risks motivates people to

make more online transactions. According to the Digital Council for Economy and Society (2020), the Thai e-commerce industry is the fastest growing industry in 2020. In 2019, the industry generated 163,000 million Baht of revenue which accounted for 18% of the country's total retail sales. However, in 2020, the industry generated 220,000 million Baht of revenue. The industry basically grew by more than 35% in just one single year. Combined with the coronavirus pandemic, the e-commerce industry is expected to grow by more than 50% in 2021 and is expected to account for 21.8% of the country's total sales in 2024. (Wiwattananukul, 2021) (Thai E-Finance News Agency, 2021) (Malabuppha, 2020) According to Malabuppha (2020), consumer products, home decoration, and cosmetics & food supplements categories accounted for the largest sales proportion of the e-commerce industry.

For more than a century, women have always been regarded as the representatives for beauty and beauty defines their value. Despite being a want, cosmetics & food supplements gain extreme success as it is related to enhancing the beauty of a woman. Since women make up half of the world population, there is no wonder why cosmetics & food supplements categories accounted for one of the top three largest sales proportions within the e-commerce industry. (Tunchida, 2016) According to Tunchida (2016), cosmetics & food supplements play a role in every woman's daily life as it helps enhance not only the woman's beauty, but personality and is related to the increase in confidence as well.

The cosmetic & food supplements industry is one of the industries that is continuously growing. Both men and women of all ages are paying more attention to taking care of themselves. Due to the increase in interest and demand, cosmetic & food supplements companies are researching and developing various types of cosmetic & food supplement products to suit the needs of the consumers. Regarding the cosmetic & food supplements industry as a whole (including both offline and online), the value of the industry increased by 6.7% from 2018 to 2019, and by 5% from 2019 to 2020 making the cosmetic & food supplements industry one of the largest growing business industries in Thailand. (Lertkitcha, 2020) However, according to the Marketing and Product Creation Division, due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the industry is experiencing a slight regression in both domestic and international markets in 2020 and 2021 (Teekakhirikul, 2020).

Even though the coronavirus pandemic tolls the overall cosmetic & food supplements industry, not all cosmetic & food supplements products are regressing. For example, products related to personal care (such as facial foam) and skincare (such as whitening cream) are significantly growing. In the first half of 2020, the sales of these products grew by more than 20%. Moreover, while 70% of these products are sold online, only 30% are sold offline (Sathitsathien, 2020). The proportion of sales through online and offline channels for cosmetic & food supplements products suggest that buyers are willing to purchase cosmetic & food supplements online rather than offline. According to Panyawai (2014), customers prefer to purchase products online as it provides greater ease of buying as it eliminates the time to travel to the destination (especially those who seek to purchase foreign cosmetics & food supplements), often associated with more promotion, availability of product reviews, etc. (Chananchanan, 2017). After the buyer makes the payment through e-payments, what is left is just for the customers to wait for the product to arrive at home. On the other hand, what motivates cosmetic & food supplements sellers to sell online is the low investment cost as it eliminates the requirement to rent space or hire extensive human labor. Combined with the high-profit margin of cosmetic & food supplements products, sellers are earning more online than offline. Since the profit margin for cosmetic & food supplements products sold through online channels is extremely high, some sellers even drop-ship the products especially from one country to another (Gibson, 2000).

This research studies the consumer behavior and purchase decision of cosmetics & food supplements products through online commerce channels. When conducting the research, the marketing of cosmetic & food supplements products is also considered as a factor as it can alter the result of the study. The result obtained from this study can be used as a guideline for planning and improvements for sellers that offer cosmetics & food supplements online. By understanding the needs of the consumers, it would help improve online sales. By following the study result, it will enhance the credibility and convenience of providing services through e-commerce channels.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Consumer Behavior Theory

The definition for the term, consumer behavior, has significantly developed and changed over time. According to Bukhari (2019), consumer behavior is defined as, "*the decision-making process and physical activities that a person is involved in when assessing acquisition or purchase of goods and services*". On the other hand, Wagner (2020) defines consumer behavior as, "*an action that affects each other's knowledge, understanding, behavior, and events under the environment that humans have done in human life*". While Chamlertwat (2016) defines consumer behavior as, "*the behavior that consumers express, whether they are seeking, buying, using, evaluating, consuming products, services, and ideas that consumers expect to be able to meet their needs. Decision-making uses the available resources of money, time, and energy to consume goods and services including what to buy, when to buy, how, where and how often*". Whereas Thampramuan (2016) defines consumer behavior as, "*the action of any individual which is directly related to the procurement and use of the products. This includes the decision-making process in determining the action which has the psychological and sociological processes contributing to the formation and refinement of attitudes and values.*" Chalermwat (2016) and Sukcharoen (2016) definition of consumer behavior is similar. Sukcharoen (2016) defines consumer behavior as, "*the activities that a person does when he or she consumes a product or service including the elimination of goods or services after consumption to answer the question that consumers buy what, where, how and how much, when, and why.*" At the same time, Lertwanwit (2016) and Smithikrai (2019) defines consumer as, "*the processes and activities in which individuals are involved in the pursuit, selection, purchase, using, evaluation of products and services to satisfy needs and desires to be satisfied*" and "*the reflection of all consumers' purchasing decisions related to the acquisition consumption and disposal to goods, services, time and ideas by the purchasing decision unit (person)*

at a particular time" respectively. Combining the definitions given by the scholars above, consumer behavior can be referred to as the expression of consumers used for consideration, analysis, decision making, selection, selection of goods and services until they can meet their needs.

2.2 Process of Behaviors

Human behavior is caused by a stimulus that sends a signal to the human brain. The brain, then, sends the most appropriate response to the stimulus which is expressed through human behavior. For example, when touching a hot surface, the burning sensation sends a signal to the brain asking what is the most appropriate response. The brain then informs the body to remove the hand from the hot surface. The action of removing the hand from the hot surface is known as behavior. The process of behaviors are generated according to the model below.

Figure 2.1 Process of Behaviors

The behavioral processes of all humans are the same, however, the patterns and responses of behavior are different because each brain is not the same. The

differences can be caused by many factors, both internal and external. Internal factors are such as the individual EQ and IQ levels. And, external factors are such as the culture and society that the individual has lived in. These factors affect the individual decision-making process causing each individual to exhibit different behaviors.

2.3 Consumer Behavior Analysis

According to Kotler & Keller (2012), to understand the characteristics of consumer needs, deciding factors to purchase, and consumer usage behavior, the conduction of a consumer behavior analysis is required. The analysis will allow marketers to develop a marketing strategy that can satisfy their consumers appropriately. The questions that are used to conduct the consumer behavior analysis consist of 6Ws & 1H which are Who, What, Why, Whom, When, Where, consumer needs, deciding factors to purchase, and consumer usage behavior. A well-rounded understanding of these areas will lead to the formulation of effective marketing strategies that are aligned with consumer needs. Therefore, in this research, the consumer behavior analysis will also be conducted to understand the consumer behaviors more through the following areas which will generate a full understanding of consumer behaviors resulting from a conclusion that will help guide and improve the service to meet the consumer needs:

1. The motivation in purchasing imported cosmetics.
2. The frequency of purchase per month.
3. The number of purchases per time.
4. The country of imported cosmetics purchased.
5. The types of imported cosmetics purchased.
6. The influencers that influenced the purchasing decision.
7. The motivation in choosing why the purchase was made online/offline.

Sample Table

Table 2.1 Consumer Behavior Analysis

Questions	Consumer Behaviors
1. Who is in the Target Market?	The characteristics of the target audience which is about demographics and buying behaviors.
2. What Does the Consumer Buy?	What the consumer wants to buy and wants from the product in relation to the features or benefits.
3. Why Does the Consumer Buy?	Purpose of the consumer's purchase.
4. Who Participates in the Buying?	Buying decision that influences purchasing decisions including initiators, influencers, purchase decision-makers, buyers, and users.
5. When Does the Consumer Buy?	Opportunity to buy, for example, what day of the month? what time of day?
6. Where Does the Consumer Buy?	Channel or source that consumers uses to buy, such as convenience stores.
7. How Does the Consumer Buy?	Process of making a purchase decision which consists of problem recognition, searching for information, evaluating options, making purchase decisions and feeling after purchase.

2.4 Concept of Purchasing Decision Theory

2.4.1 Definition of Decision

According to Perera (2019), the term, decision, refers to, "*the action of choosing to do something in particular from among the options available to, the selection of goods or services to be the most relevant to the needs of consumers.*"

Likewise, Kamiri (2018) defines decision as, "*the process of choosing to do one thing out of several things. The selection process would differ according to the situation and the options must be compared with reasons before a decision making.*"

Rachmawati (2019) defines decision similarly as, "*the choice of behavior in response to a problematic situation. The decision-making process for after consideration of alternatives, whereby consumers are considered in relation to the decision-making process both in terms of feelings, thoughts and behaviors which occurred over a period.*" Similarly, Kiyanyong (2019) states that decision-making refers to, "*the process of selecting a course of action from various alternatives to achieve the desired objectives which are organized as part of the troubleshooting process by using certain criteria to consider and a decision making.*"

Combining the definitions provided by the scholars above, decision refers to the thinking in making choices from available options. While good decisions can be referred to as rational thinking in making the right choice from the available options, bad decisions can be referred to as rational thinking in making the wrong choice from the available options.

2.4.2 Decision-Making Processes

Kotler & Keller (2012) presented the sequence of the Buying Decision Process Framework as follows:

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Problem/Need Recognition      │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│          Information Search          │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Evaluation of Alternatives    │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│               Decision               │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│         Post purchase Behavior       │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
```
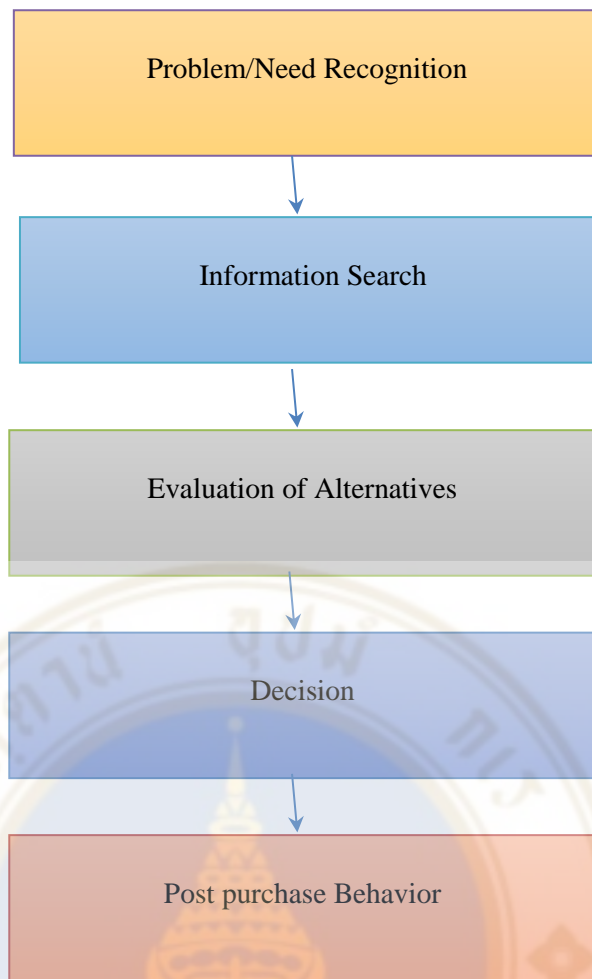
Figure 2.2 Decision-Making Processes

The decision-making process starts from the individual recognition of a problem or need. The individual then searches for information regarding their problem or need. After having enough information, the information is sorted and the individual evaluates the alternatives that the individual has. Then, the individual makes the decision. After the decision is made, an individual undergoes the stage of post-purchase behavior. In this stage, the individual reflects whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the decision. Positive satisfaction acts as a positive reinforcement in making the same decision, however, negative satisfaction will refrain the individual from making the same decision. While positive satisfaction derives when the goods or services meet or exceed the expectation, negative satisfaction derives when the goods or services fail to meet the set expectation. This study has taken the decision-making process into account to understand the consumer decision-making process when making an online purchase.

Even though Kotler & Keller (2012) decision-making process framework is widely accepted, Muangtham (2020) does not fully agree with the flow. Muangtham (2020) stated that after the consumers recognize their problems or needs, but are not sure whether or not to make the purchase, consumers often seek out information that justifies their purchase decision while trying to avoid conflicting opinions. As a result, in stages 2 and 3 presented by Kotler & Keller, if the following scenario happens, it can significantly influence the outcome of stage 4, hence causing the decision-making process framework presented by Kotler & Keller (2012) to head in an incorrect direction.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Method

The research utilizes qualitative sampling of 120 people in Bangkok that purchase imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels within the past 6 months. The research is conducted in sequence as follows:

1. Conduct secondary research and set the scope of the variable which is related to the research conceptual framework. The variable will then be used to create the research questionnaires, while keeping in mind that the questionnaire should be aligned with the research objectives, definitions, and samples. (Kanlaya, 2020)

2. Request the research advisor to validate the appropriateness and validity of the questionnaire content. If not provided by the advisor, the researcher will ask for advice for improvements so that the questionnaire is not only fully related to the research conceptual framework, but also aligned with the research objectives, definitions, and samples (Noppaporn, 2012).

3. Revise the questionnaire according to the advisor's suggestions.

4. Test the questionnaires by passing them out to 30 respondents. Then, assess the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Method (a-Coefficient). In the case that the index value is greater than 0.70, the questionnaire and its response can be deemed as reliable. If the questionnaire is deemed to be reliable, the rest will be passed out to 90 more respondents. If not, the questionnaire will be revised and step 5 will be revisited (Kitpreedapurasut, 2006).

This research uses questionnaires as the main tool to collect data. The content of the questionnaire is divided into 3 parts as follows:

Sample Table

Table 3.1 Research Method

Questionnaires	Question Type	Questions	Analytical Statistics
Personal Factors	Check List	Gender, age, education level, status, occupation, monthly income	Frequency and percentage distribution
Buying behavior of imported cosmetics	Check List	Manufacture Country, Purchasing Channel, Purchasing Cost per time and Frequency per month	Frequency and percentage distribution
Decision to buy imported cosmetics	Rating Scale 4.21–5.00 = Strongly Agree 3.41–4.20 = Agree 2.61–3.40 = Not sure 1.81–2.60 = Disagree 1.00–1.80 = Strongly Disagree (Kitpreedapurasut, 2006)	Awareness of needs, Search for information, Alternative assessment, Purchase decision and Behavior after purchase	Means and Standard Deviation

3.2 Data Collection

This research divided the method of collecting and gathering data into two different ways: review data (secondary research) and field data.

Regarding secondary research, the researchers studied and collected academic information from sources such as academic papers, meeting papers, journals, magazines, newspapers, articles from the internet that are related and potentially can help answer the research objectives.

Regarding field data, the researchers collected and gathered data through Google Forms, a freeware survey program that is a part of the Google Office Suites. The questionnaire is then distributed to respondents through a direct survey link and QR Code. The direct survey link and QR Code are then posted in various sample groups in various social media applications such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Line, and also sent via email. This method is used until the researchers can collect a total of 120 samples.
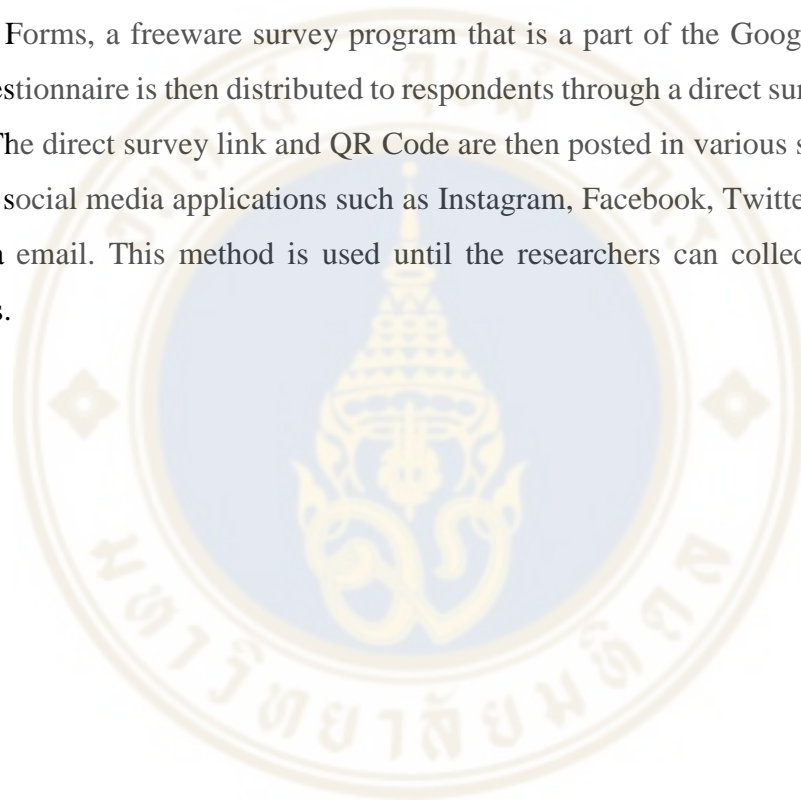
CHAPTER IV
DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Personal Factors

Regarding **gender**, the majority of the respondents were female (98 respondents) which represented 81.7% of the sampled population. In contrast, there were only 22 male respondents which represented 18.3% of the sampled population.

Regarding **age**, the majority of the respondents were between 21 to 30 years old (59 respondents) which represented 49.2% of the sampled population. On the other hand, 9 respondents were under 20 years old, 39 respondents were between 31 to 40 years old, and 13 respondents were above 40 years old which represented 7.5%, 32.5%, and 7.5% of the sampled population respectively.

Regarding the **level of education**, the majority of the respondents achieved a bachelor's level of education (95 respondents) which represented 79.2% of the sampled population. Meanwhile, 18 respondents achieved education greater than the bachelor level and only 7 respondents have not achieved bachelor level of education. These respondents represented 15% and 5.8% of the sampled population respectively.

Regarding **marital status**, the majority of the respondents were single (69 respondents) which represented 57.5% of the sampled population. In contrast, 49 respondents were already married, representing 40.8% of the sampled population. Meanwhile, only 3 respondents which represented 1.7% of the sampled population are divorced.

Regarding **occupation**, the majority of the respondents worked as office workers (46 respondents) which represented 38.3% of the sampled population, while 32 respondents are self-employed, 29 respondents were students, and 13 respondents were civil servants/state enterprises which represented 26.7%, 24.2%, and 10.8% respectively.

Lastly, regarding the **income level**, the majority of the respondents have a monthly income of more than 30,000 Thai Baht (56 respondents) which represented

46.7% of the sampled population. However, 36 people have a monthly income between 25,001 to 29,999 Thai Baht, 16 people have a monthly income between 15,001 to 24,999 Thai Baht, and only 12 people have a monthly income that is less than 15,000 Thai Baht. The groups mentioned above represented 30%, 13.3%, and 10% of the sampled population respectively.
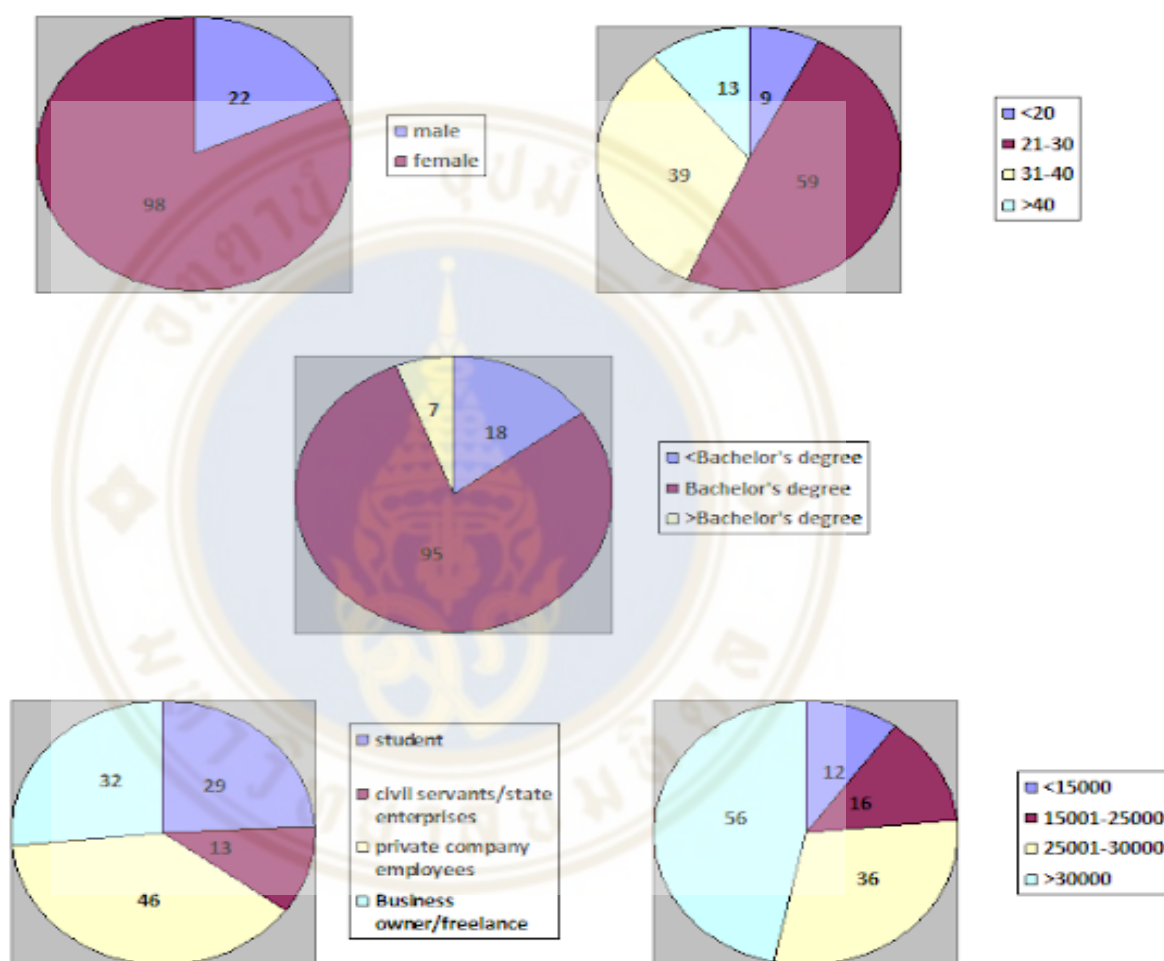

Figure 4.1 Personal factor

4.2 Buying behaviors of imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels

Regarding **the country which the consumers prefer to purchase imported cosmetics from the most,** the majority of the respondents prefer to purchase

cosmetics imported from Korea (58 respondents), followed by America (26 respondents), Japan (17 respondents), Europe (13 respondents), and China (6 respondents). The respondents that prefer to purchase cosmetics imported from Korea represented 48.3% of the sampled population followed by America at 21.7%, Japan at 14.2%, Europe at 10.8%, and China at 5%.

When investigating **what are most commonly purchased**, creams, lotions, foundations, & lipsticks ranked first followed by body cosmetics, cosmetics for hair, and fragrance. For cream, lotions, foundations & lipsticks, 76 respondents, or 63.3% of the sampled population have purchased it. Regarding body cosmetics, cosmetics for hair, and fragrances, 32 respondents or 26.7%, 6 respondents or 5% of the sampled population, 6 respondents or 5% of the sampled population purchased the products respectively.

Regarding **the e-commerce channel of purchase**, most of the respondents ordered the products from Instagram (97 respondents or 80.8% of the sampled population, followed by Facebook (21 respondents or 17.5% of the sampled population), and Line Official (2 respondents or 1.7% of the sampled population.

Regarding **the amount of purchase per order**, the majority of the respondents ordered at around 2,001 to 3,000 Thai Baht per purchase order (70 respondents or 58.3% of the sampled population). Meanwhile, 38 respondents or 31.7%, 7 respondents or 5.8%, and 5 respondents or 4.2% of the sampled population spent more than 3,001 Thai Baht, between 1,001 to 2,000 Thai Baht, and less than 1,000 Thai Baht respectively.

Lastly, regarding **the purchase frequency**, most of the respondents ordered imported cosmetics once per month answered by 102 respondents or 85% of the sampled population. On the other hand, 17 respondents, or 14.2% and 1 respondent or 0.8% of the sampled population ordered 2 to 4 times per month and more than 5 times per month respectively.

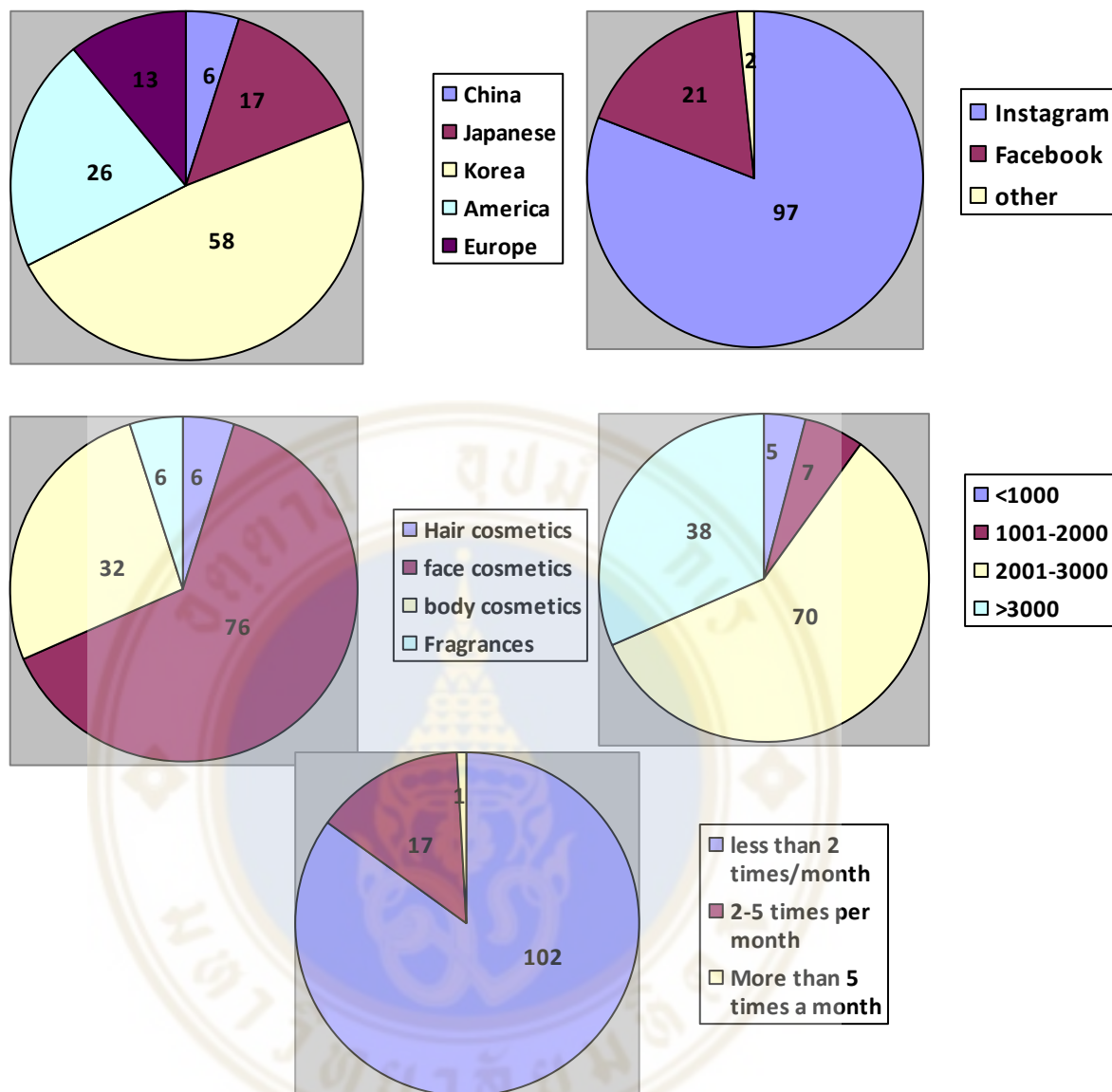**Figure 4.2 Purchase Behaviors of Imported Cosmetics**
Through E-Commerce Channels

4.3 Decision to Purchase Imported Cosmetics Through E-Commerce Channels

        The majority of the respondents strongly agreed with their decision to purchase imported cosmetics through e-commerce channels with an overall average of 4.60 (S.D. = 0.24). When considering each aspect, purchase decisions ranked first with

a mean score of 4.85 (strongly agree) (S.D. = 0.29) followed by behavior after purchase, need awareness, alternative assessment, and information search with a mean score of 4.73 (S.D. = 0.43), 4.55 (S.D. = 0.61), 4.5 (S.D. = 0.57), and 4.36 (S.D. = 0.58) (highly agreeable) respectively (as shown in Figure 3).
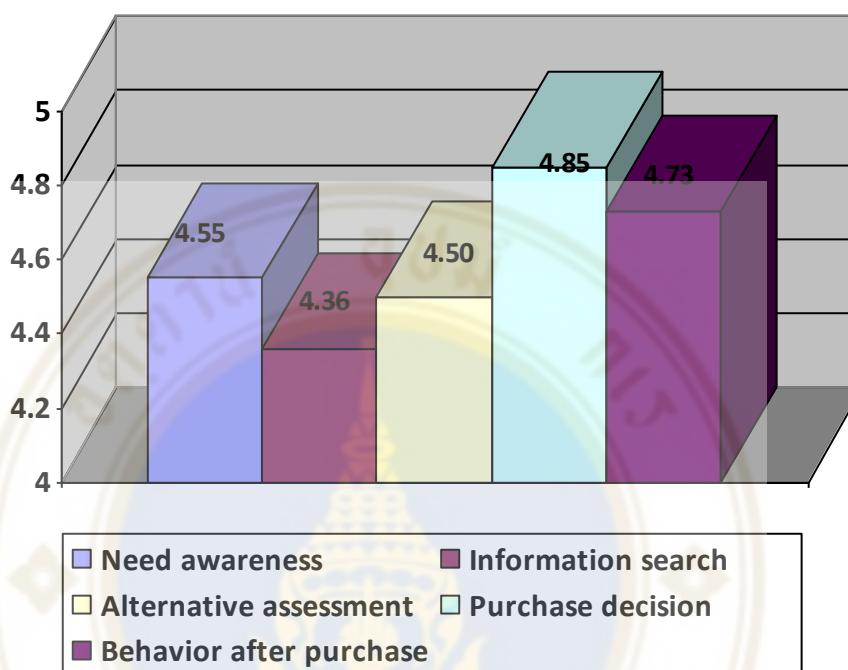
Figure 4.3 Decision to Purchase Imported Cosmetics Through E-Commerce Channels

Need Awareness

For the respondents that purchased cosmetics via e-commerce channels, the need for awareness exists as the mean score for this aspect is 4.55 (S.D. = 0.61). However, when looking into each aspect within the need of awareness, the desire to purchase cheap cosmetics that have the same quality as Thailand counter brands ranked first with a mean score of 4.78 (S.D. = 0.55), followed by the desire to eliminate the travel expense to purchase cosmetic products from other countries with a mean score of 4.63 (S.D. = 0.60) and the desire to use new brand name cosmetics that are not currently available in the country with a mean score of 4.25 (S.D. = 0.96).
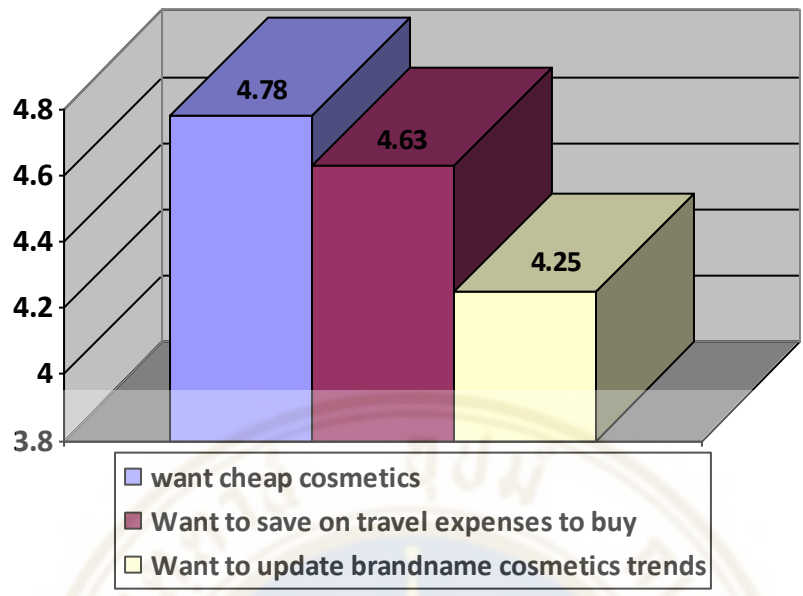
Figure 4.4 Need Awareness

Information search

For the respondents that purchased cosmetics via e-commerce channel, the majority of the consumers search for information online before purchasing with a mean score of 4.36 (S.D. = 0.58). Before deciding whether or not to purchase, consumers first read reviews from those who have already purchased and used the product with a mean score of 4.79 (S.D. = 0.50), followed by searching for information related to the product online via websites, Facebook, and Instagram with a mean score of 4.50 (S.D. = 0.71) and asking for reviews from friends, relatives, and family with a mean score of 3.79 (S.D. = 1.08).
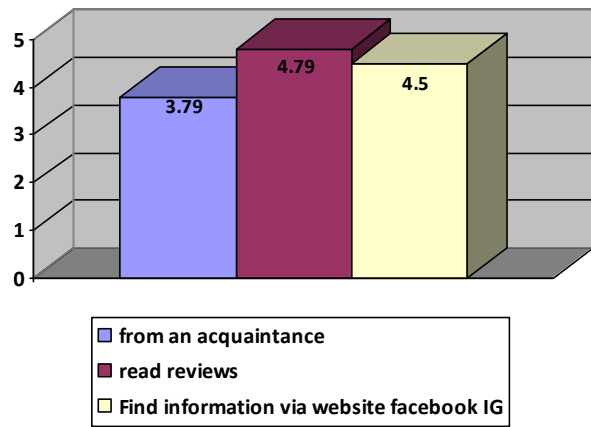
Figure 4.5 Information Search

Alternative Assessment

For the respondents that purchased cosmetics via e-commerce channel, the majority of the consumers will alternatively assess before making the decision with a mean score of 4.50 (S.D. = 0.57). Regarding what aspects were alternatively assessed, price comparison is the first factor followed by reputation & review comparison, and terms & conditions of purchasing imported cosmetics in each store comparison with a mean score of 4.83 (S.D. = 0.47), 4.38 (S.D. = 0.71) and 4.29 (S.D. = 0.74) correspondingly.
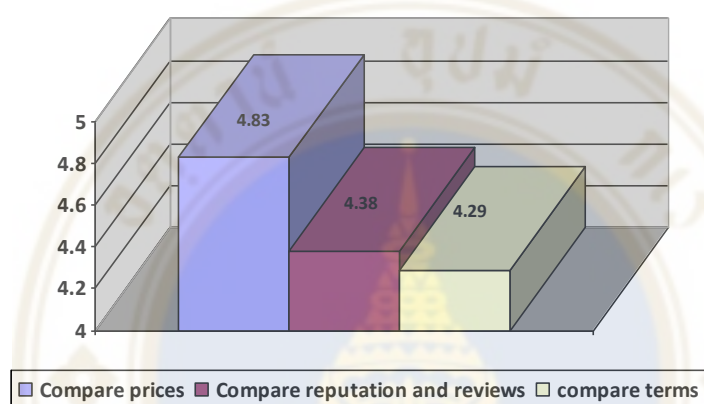
Figure 4.6 Alternative Assessment

Purchasing Decision

For the respondents that purchased cosmetics via e-commerce channel, the purchase decision that instantly triggers the decision to purchase exists with a mean score of 4.86 (S.D. = 0.29). The trigger that triggers the decision to purchase the most is product promotion with a mean score of 4.92 (S.D. = 0.29). Meanwhile, a good after-sales service such as allowing product claims and receiving refunds for returns creates the confidence which lead to a purchase. This aspect has a mean score of 4.78 (S.D. =0.50).
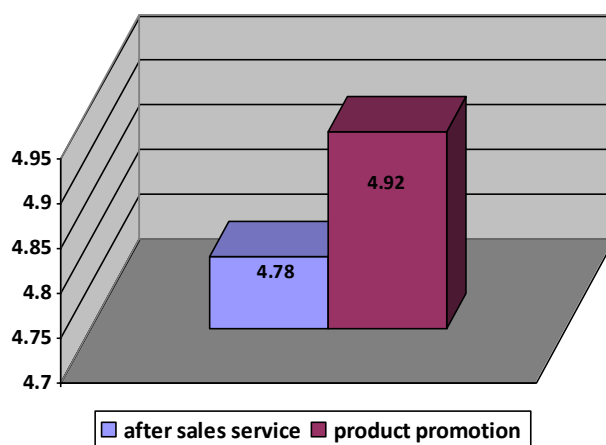
Figure 4.7 Purchasing Decision

Behavior After Purchase

For the respondents that purchased cosmetics via e-commerce channel, the majority of the consumers act after making an online purchase with a mean score of 4.73 (S.D. = 0.43). Whether the satisfaction is positive or negative, the majority of the consumers review the products that they have purchased online with a mean score of 4.86 (S.D. = 0.34). Meanwhile, consumers also recommend and share their experience to others to purchase or not purchase the product or service with people in their network (offline & online) with a mean score of 4.60 (S.D. = 0.70).
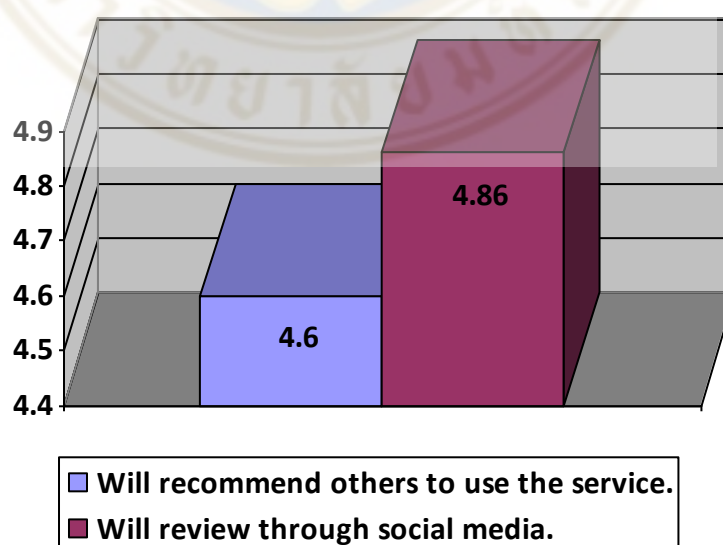
Figure 4.8 Behavior after purchase

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

5.1 Purchase Behavior of Imported Cosmetics Through E-Commerce Channels

According to the research, the majority of the respondents prefer to order imported cosmetics from Korea. These cosmetic products include but are not limited to creams, lotions, foundations, and lipsticks. While the majority of the purchase orders are between 2,001 to 3,000 Thai Baht, the majority of the purchase orders were made via the Instagram channel and the orders are usually made only once a month. However, there is a clear trend that those who experienced the ease of purchase from online channels will slowly become addicted and start to make more purchase orders, as well as the purchase frequency, will rise as well. Surprisingly, the data gathered in this research is also aligned with the sales data provided by e-commerce sites.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the pandemic has motivated Thai people to learn how to use e-commerce systems more. As a result, this has caused the online retail market of Thailand to grow significantly. More sellers, buyers, and products are listed online, not only via e-commerce platforms but various social media such as Facebook Marketplace as well. (Malabuppha, 2020) On the other hand, Lertkitcha (2020) discovered that the cosmetic market value in Thailand has consistently increased approximately 10% per year over the past few years. Malabuppha's (2020) and Lertkicha's (2020) findings can reflect that the Thai e-commerce cosmetics market is growing and more consumers are purchasing imported cosmetics online.

5.2 Decision to purchase imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels Need of awareness

Consumers prefer to seek out cosmetics that are cheaper but have the same quality as counter brands cosmetics in Thailand. This is consistent with Kotler & Keller (2012) findings where Kotler & Keller explained that after the consumers are aware of the problem, in this case, the high price of counter brands products, consumers will then turn this into a demand which also creates the state of desire at the same time. If the consumers have a high motivation for their desire, it turns into a need that has to be fulfilled.

Information search

Online reviews are the source of information that consumers seek out first before making a cosmetic purchase online. This is aligned with Kotler & Keller (2021) findings which explained that after the consumer has a need, information such as the characteristics of the product, price of the product, distribution channels, special offers, and reviews from those who have already purchased the products will be sought out for. Therefore, marketers should always pay attention to the different sources of information that consumers and market accordingly to manipulate the consumer purchasing decision for different sources.

Alternative assessment

The factor that leads to an alternative assessment is the price. This is aligned with the findings for Kotler & Keller (2012) before choices are made, consumers receive information from many different places in which the information is used to make logical decisions. Consumers will define their own needs, consider the different characteristics, benefits, and drawbacks of each brand's products, compare the price, and then, select the product that best suits their needs. Even though a certain brand product is the best among the available alternatives, the purchase decision is also subjected to faith, brand belief, and attitude toward the brands as well, not just the product that suits the needs.

Purchase decision

Discounts & promotions play an important role in influencing the consumers' purchase decision. This is consistent with the findings of Kotler & Keller (2012) who explained that before the consumers purchase a product, they will undergo an evaluation stage in which they logically think which products best suit their needs.

Consumers will internally score the product based on its characteristics when selecting the one that is best among the available options. Each consumer and product will require a different amount of time to decide. While some consumers might take several hours to decide, some might take days or even years.

Behavior after purchase

Consumers will always review their purchases on social media after the product is received or used. This is aligned with Kotler & Keller (2012) who explained that there will always be a product evaluation at the last step of the purchase process. In the case that the satisfaction with the product is equal to or exceeds the customer's expectation, the customers will positively review the product. Moreover, they will share their positive experience with others through word-of-mouth. On the other hand, if the satisfaction of the product is lower than the customer's expectation, it means that the customers are not satisfied. Customers might stop purchasing the product and spread negative reviews both offline and online through social media and word-of-mouth. Negative reviews and word-of-mouth may cause the product to experience lower sales.

CHAPTER VI
RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATION

6.1 Recommendations

1. According to Nattapon's purchase decision theory (2020), for customers that have decided to purchase but are unsure whether their purchase decision is right or wrong, a promising after-sales service will help boost the confidence of the customers in purchasing because customers tend to believe that the payments that they have made have a long-term guarantee. Due to this reason, a promising after-sales service can also be considered as a unique selling point that helps trigger the decision to purchase both existing and new customers.

2. According to Perera (2019), decision refers to the logical action of choosing among available options to make the best available purchase that suits the needs. Therefore, suppliers should match their product characteristics with the current trends. The definition of decision proposed by Perera (2019) is also aligned with Karimi's (2018) definition of decision. Karimi (2018) proposed that this decision refers to the selection of an option between available alternatives. However, factors that can influence the act of selection differ for each person due to the different environments that each person is in which generate different types of needs.

3. According to Bukhari (2019), consumer behavior is defined as the decision-making process of a person that assesses all the factors that can influence the act of selection already. For example, the needs and purchasing power. This is aligned with the definition provided by Chuchai (2019). Chuchai (2019) proposed that consumer behavior is the reflection of the decision-making process of a person that has already considered the factors that can influence the act of selection already such as the product, service, time, needs, or price.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Questionnaire for behaviors and decisions to purchase imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels.

Explanation

This questionnaire is developed to be used as a tool to study of buying behaviors and decisions making of imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels. Responses to this questionnaire are critical to the analysis of research data. Please answer questions to make this research more accurate and truly beneficial. Please answer the questionnaire truthfully. However, the your information to the researcher's questionnaire will be kept confidential and the presentation of the research results will be presented in the overview only. This questionnaire is divided into 4 parts:

Part 1 Personal Factors

Part 2 Behavior of buying imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels

Part 3 Decision to purchase imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels

Part 4 Recommendations

The screening question is a question used to screen the sample group.

1. In the past 6 months, have you bought imported cosmetics?
   - o Yes (Continue)
   - o No (End of questionnaire)

2. Have you ever bought imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels?
   - o Yes (Continue)
   - o No (End of questionnaire)

Part 1 Personal Factors

Instructions: Please select the answer to each of the questions that is most relevant to you.

1. Gender
    o   Female
    o   Male

2. Age
    o   Less or 20 years old
    o   21 – 30 years old
    o   31 – 40 years old
    o   More than 40 years old

3. Education
    o   Lower than bachelor degree
    o   Bachelor degree
    o   Higher than bachelor degree

4. Status
    o   Single
    o   Married
    o   Widowed/divorced/separated

5. Occupation
    o   Student
    o   Government officials/State enterprises
    o   Private company employees
    o   Business owner/freelance
    o   Housewife
    o   Other, please specify ....

6. Monthly income
    o   Less or to 15,000 baht
    o   15,001 – 25,000 baht
    o   25,001 – 30,000 baht
    o   Over 30,000 baht

Part 2 Buying behavior of imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels

Explanation: Please mark in front of the message. The questions are consistent with the buying behaviors of imported cosmetics through your electronic commerce channels.

1. Which manufacturer's country do you usually buy?

☐ China

☐ Korea

☐ Europe

☐ Japan

☐ America

☐ Other, please specify ....

2. Which e-commerce channel do you normally purchase imported cosmetics from?

☐ Instagram

☐ Facebook

☐ Other, please specify ....

3. Types of imported cosmetics that you purchase through electronic commerce channels (more than 1 answer)

☐ Hair cosmetics such as shampoo, hair straightener, curling agent hair vitamins, etc.

☐ Face cosmetics such as face wash creams and lotions, skin care creams, foundations, lipsticks, etc.

☐ Body cosmetics such as creams and body lotions, sunscreen lotions, etc.

☐ Fragrances such as perfumes, perfumed creams and hard incense, etc.

☐5. Others, please specify ....

4. How much does it cost to purchase imported cosmetic products through electronic commerce channels per time?

☐ Less than 1,000 baht

☐ 1,001 – 2,000 baht

☐ 2,001 – 3,000 baht

☐ Over 3,000 baht

5. How many times do you order imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels per month?

☐ Less than 2 times/month

☐ 2-5 times per month

☐ More than 5 times/month

Part 3 Decision to purchase imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels

Explanation: Please mark in the box to indicate your level of opinion on the decision of buying imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channels

5 means Strongly agree

4 means Agree

3 means Not sure

2 means Disagree

1 means Strongly disagree

The decision to purchase imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channel	5 means Strongly agree	4 means Agree	3 means Not sure	2 means Disagree	1 means Strongly disagree
Awareness of Needs					
1. Brand-name cosmetics that have Cheaper than counter brands in Thailand					
2. To save the cost of Travel to buy cosmetics in each country.					
3. To update the trend of new brand-name cosmetics that are not yet available for sale in Thailand.					
Searching for information					
1. From a person you know, friend, relative or someone you trust.					
2. Find information through the website or reviewer.					

The decision to purchase imported cosmetics through electronic commerce channel	5 means Strongly agree	4 means Agree	3 means Not sure	2 means Disagree	1 means Strongly disagree
3. Find information via Facebook IG review.					
4. Ask for information from the dealer directly.					
The evaluation of alternatives					
1. Compare the price of imported cosmetics in each shop.					
2. Compare reputation and purchase reviews imported cosmetics in each shop.					
3. Compare the conditions of the imported cosmetics purchasing in each shop.					
The purchase decision					
1. Imported cosmetics from the well-known producing country.					
2. Convenient purchasing channels.					
3. Cheaper than counter brands.					
4. Has better reviews or feedback than others.					
5. The store is famous and well known.					
Behavior after purchase					
1. Will recommend the shops to friends.					
2. Will review the experience through the media social media after using the service.					

Part 4 Suggestions

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