

**THE FACTOR INFLUENCING CONSUMER PREFERENCE IN  
CHOOSING A PETROL STATION IN THAILAND**



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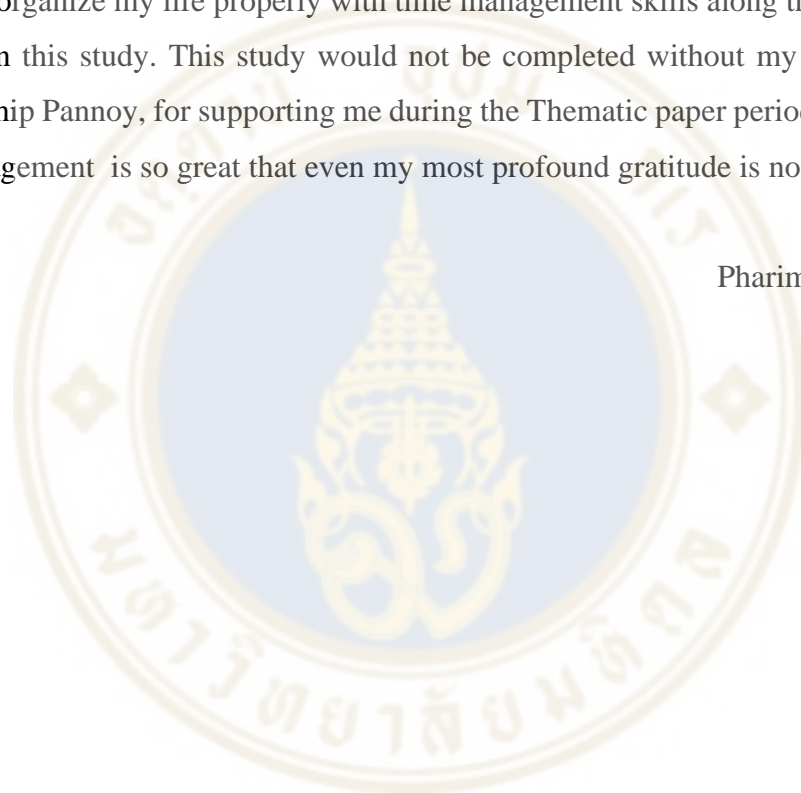
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## **THE FACTOR INFLUENCING CONSUMER PREFERENCE IN CHOOSING A PETROL STATION IN THAILAND**

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### **ABSTRACT**

It is undeniable that the popularity of investing in oil businesses like petrol stations has increased in recent years. This is due to the fact that the new car market in Thailand has been growing since the pandemic. This led to the outcome that Thai people have a high demand for buying personal cars. Since private cars offer greater convenience and risk reduction than public transportation. The oil demand also rises as the number of cars on the road increases. Order to fulfil the rising demand, is an opportunity for operators of gas stations to build more stations. Since investing in one petrol station needs high investment, some petrol stations have failed. The petrol station operator needs to know what actually influences the consumer to go to their station and adapt to their brand strategy to create a competitive advantage. This study shows what is the factor that influences consumer preference in choosing the petrol station, to create the suggestion for the business owner and be successful in this competitive market.

**KEY WORDS:** Petrol station / Consumer Preference / Location / Service / Fuels

44 pages

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Today, it is undeniable that there is growing popularity of petrol stations in Thailand over the years. This is the consequence of the new car market that has been expanding after the pandemic. The Department of Land Transport revealed that during the first half of 2021, the number of new car registrations with red labels grew by 4.2% from the same period of 2020, sorted and classified by region as follows (Direct Asia, 2022).

**Table 1.1 The number of new car registrations with red labels in January to June 2021**

Region	The number of new car registrations with red labels in January to June 2021	January to June 2022 %YOY	January to June 2021 %YOY
Bangkok and Metropolis	201,827	23%	-1.9%
Eastern region	70,703	24%	+12.2%
Central region	56,326	23.8%	+12.1%
South region	51,758	25.5%	+11/8%
North region	35,562	-26.2%	+3.6%
Isan region	15,468	-31.5%	+5.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>431,684</b>	<b>-24.1%</b>	<b>+4.2%</b>

Regarding table 1.1, we can obviously see that the number of new car registrations with red labels is increasing in the majority region in Thailand. According to Prachachat Business Newspaper, nearly 60% of the respondents plan to buy a car.

The survey results show that during the epidemic situation Thai people are very concerned about travelling by public transport. As a result, the demand for private cars for travelling has increased, reducing the risk and providing more convenience than public transport (Prachachat, 2021).

Besides, the more increasing demand for automobiles, the more increasing for oil as well. Thus, it is an opportunity for petrol station operators to increase the number of Petrol service stations to meet the growing demand. In 2021, the daily average usage of oil consumption in Thailand is 133.15 million liters/average per day (Matichon Online, 2022). According to Prachachat Business Newspaper, the competition among major oil traders is very high, as every trader tries to expand their petrol station to cover all areas and cover the needs of services as well as to maintain their market share. Some traders offer a relatively high marketing margin, averaging at 1.20-1.45 baht per liter or even offer other benefits to persuade the dealers (Prachachat, 2017).

This led petrol stations in the retail form growing rapidly. Currently, there are 29,271 petrol stations in Thailand. While the majority of shares are held by PTTOR or PTT Oil and Retail Business Public Company Limited, which has 2,225 petrol stations throughout Thailand. The second is PTGenenergy, which has 2,204 petrol stations throughout Thailand. While Bangchak Corporation Public Company Limited (BCP), Esso (Thailand) Public Company Limited, Shell plc, have 1,233 petrol stations, 702 petrol stations, 556 petrol stations throughout Thailand, respectively (Nalisa, 2021). As petrol stations are increasing and are expected to continue expanding in locations. However, in order to compete and maintain the market share in the oil industry, the company needs to be more competitive than those competitors in the market are. As a result, the companies need to provide more options in their business to attract the customers into purchasing their main products and other additional services (Kuntraradusadee & Laksitamas, 2001).

This comes to the problem statement that people who have their own cars always have their own ways to select the petrol station. Thus, an effective strategy plays an essential role. Especially, the strategy of offering additional services as the ground for attracting customers. By determining competitive strategy, the speed of the response to trends is increased, and their influence, products and services are adapted to the

demand and market conditions. The growing demands of the customers and the changes in the way of living result in the changes in retail.

## **1.2 Research Objectives and Questions**

For this study, the main objective is to investigate the factors influencing consumer preference in choosing a petrol station in Thailand.

To achieve this, the following aims are to be focused.

1. To identify key factors affecting consumer decision making in selecting a petrol station in the Thai market.
2. To evaluate the determinants of key factors affecting consumer decision making in selecting a petrol station in the Thai market.
3. To find the results for creating marketing tools which can lead to an increasing sale in this competitive market.

The research question for this study is:

*What are the factors influencing consumer preference in choosing a petrol station in Thailand?*

## **1.3 Research Method**

This is quantitative research in which data is collected by using surveys to identify service marketing that influence the consumer preference in choosing a petrol station in Thailand.

## **1.4 Scope of Research**

Due to the time constraint, this research focuses mainly on Thai consumers who have their own car and regularly go to petrol stations in their daily life.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a review of the literature covering an overview of the petrol industry, and background of theoretical framework factors, by studying from multiple sources, articles, analysis, and research that are most related to the objectives of the study. The concepts are defined and discussed to provide a background to the study.

#### **2.2 Overview of Petrol industry**

##### **2.2.1 Petrol station management**

In Thailand, there are 2 business models of petrol stations that can be divided according to the operation, which are Company Owned Company Operated (COCO) and Dealer Owned Dealer Operated (DODO). To begin with, Company Owned Company Operated is the model that the petrol stations owned and operated by the trader company, or the so-called COCO petrol stations. The company operates a fuel retailing business via COCO petrol stations under the management of their own chain company, the company's subsidiary. So, COCO has an ownership directly to the particular brand that they can manage the petrol station by themselves. Next, Dealer Owned Dealer Operated is the model of the petrol stations that the company sells the franchises to the dealers to manage the petrol stations and have the right to own and operate under the company policy and have permitted by the company to use their trademark (PTG Annual Report 2018, 2018). The company oversees providing advice and supporting these dealers on station operation matters, such as floor planning, investment and management (CODO and DODO Structure, 2014).

In addition, there are also the other models of operation for petrol stations but were not widely used in the management. The other models are CODO (Company Owned Dealer Operated), JV (Joint-Venture), and CO-OP (Co-Operative). For Company Owned Dealer Operated or so-called CODO is the petrol station owned by the trader company, but the operation run by the dealers. While Joint-Venture Or so-called JV is a joint investment between two or more dealers and CO-OP is a petrol station cooperative in the community (Marketeer Team, 2018).

### **2.2.2 Petrol industry in Thailand**

In this present, the major player companies in the retail business of fuel by distributing through petrol stations in Thailand are as follows.

1. PTT Public Company Limited, formerly known as Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT), was established on December 29, 1978, later changed the name into PTT Public Company Limited or PTT, announced on October 1, 2001. Their products that are distributed are Diesel fuel; Premium Diesel, Diesel B7 (Diesel), Diesel (Diesel B10) and Diesel B20. Benzene Fuel; Gasohol 95, Gasohol 91, Benzene, Benzene gasohol E20 and Benzene gasohol E85 and natural gas NGV .

2. The Shell Company of Thailand Co., Ltd. (Shell), began to enter this market on September 23, 1892. They are the first traders who import kerosene, in the name of “Mong kod” or “the crown”. Then, on August 17, 1990, Shell received the Garuda trademark from His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Their products that are distributed are

The first time in Thailand, in the name of the crown badge, later received the royal seal of the department store (Garuda brand) from His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Bhumibol Adulyadej on August 17, 1990, was the first oil company in Thailand that was granted a royal seal. The products that are distributed are diesel fuel, namely V-Power 26 Diesel, FuseSafe Diesel B7 (FuelSafe Diesel), FuseSafe Diesel (FuelSafe Diesel B10) and Diesel B20. Benzene fuels are V-Power Gasohol 95, FuseSafe Gasohol 91 and Gasohol E20

3. Esso (Thailand) Public Company Limited (Esso), this company entered the Thai market In 1894 by Standard Oil Company of New York. They opened their first branch in Thailand at Chalerkrung 30 valley in Bangkok. They firstly sell

kerosene, which are “Tra Kai” brand and “Tra Nok Intni” brand. In 1965, the company name was changed to Esso Standard Thailand Company Limited. Then, in 1996 the name was changed to Esso (Thailand) Public Company Limited. In 1998, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej gave the Royal Garuda trademark granted to them. The products that are distributed are diesel fuel, namely Supreme Plus Diesel, Diesel B7 (Diesel), Diesel (Diesel B10) and Diesel B20. Benzene fuels are Supreme Plus Gasohol 95, Gasohol Supreme 95, Gasohol Supreme 91 and Gasohol Supreme E20.

4. Chevron (Thai) Co., Ltd. (Caltex) was established in 1936. The products that are distributed are diesel fuel namely, Caltex Diesel B7 (Caltex Diesel), Power Diesel, Caltex Diesel B20 and Caltex Diesel (Caltex Diesel B10). Benzene fuels are Gold 95, Gasohol 95, Gasohol 91 and Gasohol E20.

5. PTG Energy Public Company Limited (PT) was established on March 21, 1988. They aim to operate an oil terminal business and the oil traders for the community, whether fisheries and industrial operators. Then, change to PTG Energy Public Company Limited under the trademark "PT" in 2018. The products that are distributed are diesel fuel and Gasoline fuels namely, benzene, gasohol 95, gasohol 91 and gasohol E20.

6. Bangchak Corporation Public Company Limited (Bangchak) was established on November 8, 1993. Then, in 2017 changed its name to Bangchak Corporation Public Company Limited. Products for sale are diesel fuel, namely Hi Premium Diesel, Hi Diesel B7 (Hi Diesel), Hi-Diesel (Hi-Diesel B10) and Hi-Diesel B20. For benzene products are Gasohol 95, Gasohol 91, Gasohol E20 and Gasoline Gasohol E85.

7. Susco Public Company Limited (Susco) was established on September 21, 1977. The Company was established under the name of Siam United Services Company Limited to operate the business. In 1993, the Company registered its conversion to a public company under the name Siam United Services Public Company Limited. and changed its name to Susco Public Company Limited on December 15, 2010. Products for sale are diesel fuel, namely Diesel B7 (Diesel), Diesel (Diesel B10) and Diesel B20. For benzene products are benzene 95, gasohol 95, gasohol 91, gasohol E20 and gasohol E85.

However, Thailand also has unbranded petrol service stations that are selling the fuels independence. They have a freedom to to buy any oil traders and operate freely by their own policy and management (Disdee, 2020).

### **2.2.3 The market share for petrol industry**

In Thailand, the oil and gas market is moderately consolidated. Some of the major companies operating in the market (Mordor Intelligence, 2022). In 2021, the ranking of the country's largest oil trader brands was topped by PTT Public Company Limited with a market share of 41%. Below is the market share of oil traders in Thailand (FinSpace, 2021).

1. PTT Public Company Limited 41%
2. PTG Energy Public Company Limited (PT): 16.60%
3. Bangchak Corporation Public Company Limited (Bangchak) 15%
4. Esso (Thailand) Public Company Limited (Esso) 15%
5. The Shell Company of Thailand Co., Ltd. (Shell) 10.50%
6. Other 4.20%
7. Susco Public Company Limited (Susco) 1.40%

### **2.2.4 Theoretical background**

The background of the theoretical framework based on theoretical concept and previous studies, antecedents of consumer preference in this study are brand trust, product quality, service quality, variety of product, and cleanliness.

#### **2.2.4.1 Consumer preference**

Consumers normally implement preferences when they go for comparing different alternatives and choices (Shihab, 2022). Consumer preferences are defined as the subjective (individual) tastes, as measured by utility, of various bundles of goods. They permit the consumer to rank these bundles of goods according to the levels of utility they give the consumer. However, that preferences are independent of income and prices. Ability to purchase goods does not determine a consumer's likes or dislikes (Saji, 2021).

#### 2.2.4.2 Brand Trust

Customers' confidence in companies or their goods is referred to as trust. Several outcomes, including brand recognition and decision-making, would result from the customers' trust in the product quality (Nurhasanah, Mahliza, Nugroho, & Yananto)(2021). Brand trust is how customers feel about a specific brand (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Based on the knowledge and experiences that influence a product's performance, consumers build their points of view. Consumers' expectations that a product can keep its promise to them are referred to as their trust in a brand. Product performance and brand trust are closely related. The expectation that the other party will act in accordance with consumers' demands and desires helps to establish trust (Han & Sung, 2008).

Customers' decisions might be influenced by brand trust in either a favorable or bad way. Customers will consider returning and repurchasing if they feel that brands can satisfy their expectations in terms of product quality or security (Amron, 2018). On the other hand, if it turns the other way, brands will lose customer trust, and customers may think twice about returning. Additionally, trust is a feeling of confidence consumers have in companies or goods, and it is seen to be the most important component in decision-making (Mullasatsarathorn, 2022).

#### 2.2.4.3 Product Quality

According to research by Putra, one of the most significant variables influencing a customer's decision toward a brand is the quality of the product. Customer perception of the brand is improved through greater product and service quality (Putra, 2017).

One of the key drivers affecting the engine's operational performance is the quality of the fuel. It is described in terms of several high-quality attributes. About 20 different qualities are used to determine the quality of gasoline and diesel; their specific values and standards are listed in the quality certificates used for each type of fuel. Ordinary users may struggle to understand these complex criteria, and the effect of low gasoline quality on a vehicle's technical condition may not become obvious right away but rather over time. Because of this, some consumers choose purchasing less expensive fuels with questionable quality. However, some are



concerned about the quality, they prefer premium fuels (Matijošius & Sokolovskij, 2008).

#### 2.2.4.4 Price and Promotion

One of the factors influencing purchase decisions is price. Price as heuristic cues is more easily observed than quality (Yoon, Oh, Song, Kim, & Kim, 2014). According to Wijaya, price is the amount of money to be paid by a customer to obtain product benefits. Reasonable price results in greater value by customers and can increase purchase decisions of consumers. If prices are offered in accordance with benefits perceived by consumers, they will make purchase decisions easily (Wijaya, 2011).

Another factor affecting purchase decisions of customers is promotion. According to (Zikmund, 2011) states that sale is the communication function of a company which is responsible to inform, persuade and invite prospective customers. (Brata, Husani, & Ali, 2017) points high degree of correlation has positive relationship. This result of the study shows the better promotion, the more positive the purchase decision of customers. Promotion is one of the factors determining the success of sales strategy. If a company has a better product quality, unfortunately customers do not get information about that. It will be difficult to make purchase decisions for customers. Besides, a study says that purchasing a bundle is more likely on sale, particularly offered to hedonic rather than utilitarian components. This finding concludes that promotion is more effective in making purchases, it indicates that promotional programs give significant effect to purchase decisions (Kivetz & Zheng, 2017).

#### 2.2.4.5 Service Quality

Service can be defined into so many definitions and one of them according to Virima. (2019), can refer to a perception of customers on how good or bad the customers are served by the specific brand. From the customers' perspective, service quality means how well the goods/services provided by the organization meet or exceed customer expectations. In the context of this research, the service would be a variety of service that the particular petrol station offers, out of filling petrol to the consumer. This service might include car window cleaning, car care, cleanliness of the toilet, restaurants, mini-marts, car service, and others (Khumpuang, 2002).

When it comes to customers, it is their perceptions of the quality of service one offers that determines success. The final measure of quality customer service is simply how the customer perceives it. Perceptions are considered relative to expectations. Customers perceive service in terms of the quality of the service they receive and whether or not they are satisfied with their experiences (Gil, 2008).

#### 2.2.4.6 Location

Site selection is important because whether leased or purchased, the success or failure of a retail business depends on its location. “Location, location, location” is a mantra for retail success. Store location is a retailer’s most costly and long-term marketing-mix decision. Unlike a bad pricing or promotional decision, a poor store location adversely affects retailer performance for several years (Yaasamoah, 2015). We know that retailers prefer to locate close to consumers but doing so exposes them to competition from other retailers that also want to be close to consumers. From the retailer’s point-of-view, proximity to consumers means proximity to other stores. In relation to retail filling stations, customers are vehicles, proximity to these vehicles is locating filling stations close to main roads (WP, 2021).

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research aim

This chapter explains the quantitative method adopted by this study to complete primary research and to answer the research questions.

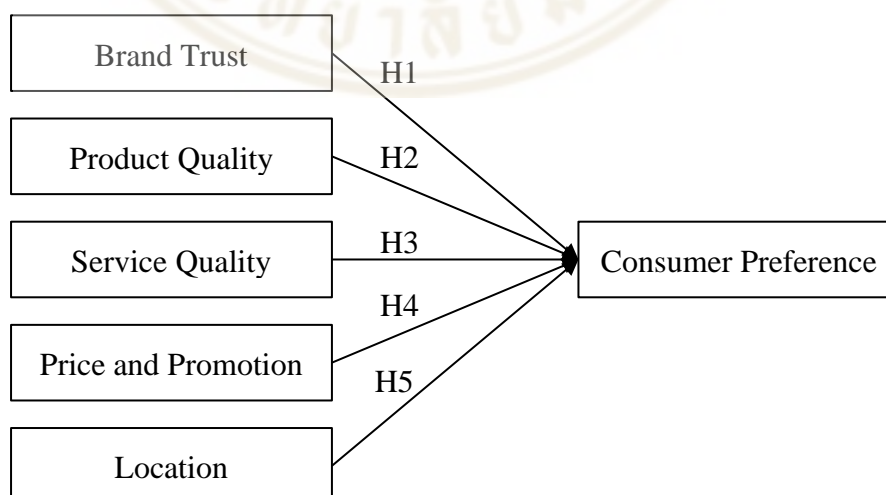
#### 3.2 Research questions

The study focuses on the following research question.

*What are the factors influencing consumer preference in choosing a petrol station in Thailand?*

By focusing on the research question, this study will identify the factor that can influence consumer preference and be used as the implication for the business.

#### 3.3 Theoretical Framework



**Figure 3.1 Theoretical framework of consumer preference**

### Hypothesis

H1 : Brand Trust significantly influences customer preference.

H2 : Product Quality significantly influences customer preference.

H3 : Service Quality significantly influences customer preference.

H4 : Price and Location significantly influence customer preference

H5 : Location significantly influences customer preference

## **3.4 Research design**

This study is quantitative research by using theoretical framework to generalize the various factors that influence consumer preference in choosing petrol stations in Thailand. Then, using surveys to collect the data, as well as analyze the factors that influence consumer preference. After that, conclude the results to present in table and descriptive design.

## **3.5 Data Collection**

As we made assumptions on the factors that influence consumer preference in choosing a petrol station in Thailand, we designed a questionnaire to study all of these factors. This questionnaire survey is used as the data collection method. The purpose of this questionnaire is to study “Customer preference in choosing petrol stations in Thailand”. The questionnaire survey is divided into four main parts; screening questions, psychographic questions, factors, and demographics of the respondents. The first part is screening questions. Screening questions are designed to filter out the responses that do not fit in our sampling plan. The second part is a psychographic or behavioural or general question. The third part is factors that are divided into 5 factors; brand trust, product quality, service quality, price and promotion, and location. The last part is the demographics of the respondents which are designed to get the demographic information of the respondents. The questionnaire survey helps to understand the consumer behaviour toward choosing petrol stations and create a proper marketing strategy.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

This chapter focuses on finding the factors influencing consumer preference in choosing a petrol station in Thailand, the main target group in this survey was the people who live in Thailand and own cars that use fuels.

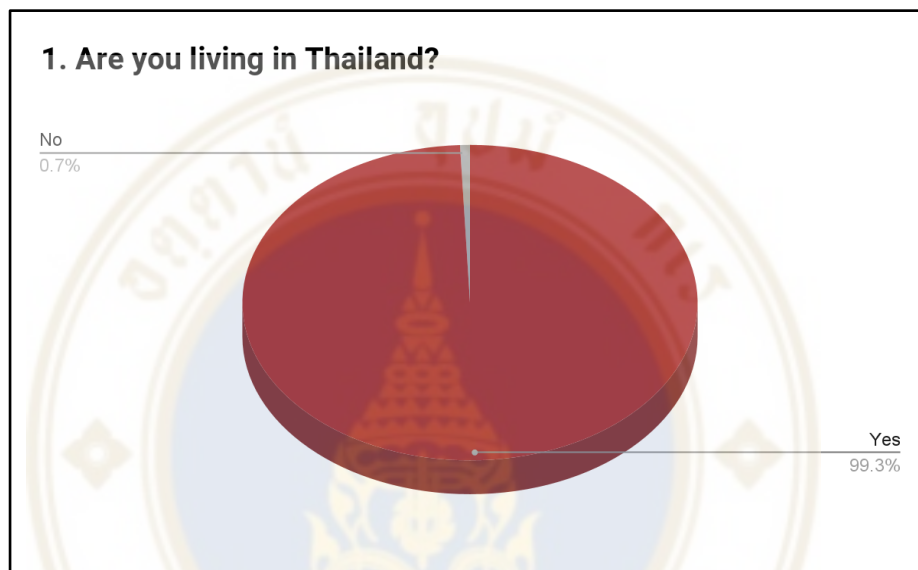
#### 4.1 Respondents

Regarding the survey, there are 142 online respondents giving the answer to the research survey. In the screening question, there were 1 respondent who are not living in Thailand. Besides, there are 11 respondents who own a personal car that uses electrical, not using fuels. So, there are 11 respondents that are not relevant to the context of the study. Consequently, the total of usable respondents' data remaining are 131 respondents. From 131 respondents, there are five demographic information that can be identified. Based on the demographic question, there are 63.4% of the total respondents that are women or 83 respondents and there are 36.6% of the total respondents that are men or 48 respondents. Next, the range of ages respondents, which were divided into 4 groups. Most of the respondents are those respondents that are more than 45 years old, which counted 39.7% or 52 respondents. While the second largest group is the people in the age between lower than 23 and 27 years old, which counted 32.8% of the total respondents or 43 people. Next is the age between 34 and 45 years old, which counted 18.3% or 24 people. The smallest group is the people between the ages of 28 to 35 years old, which counted 9.2% or 12 people. For the status, people that submitted the study were mainly single or weighed 59.5% of the total respondents or 78 respondents, while 40.5% of the respondents are married or 53 respondents. About the education level, there were 50.5% of the total respondents or 66 respondents that are in master's degree or higher degree and there were 49.5% of the total respondents or 65 respondents. The income of the respondents are mainly having more than 45,000 baht in the percentage

of 60.3% or 79 respondents, while 22.2% of the total respondent are in the range of less than 15,001 to 30,000 baht, 17.6% of the total respondents are having the income between 30,001 and 45,000 baht.

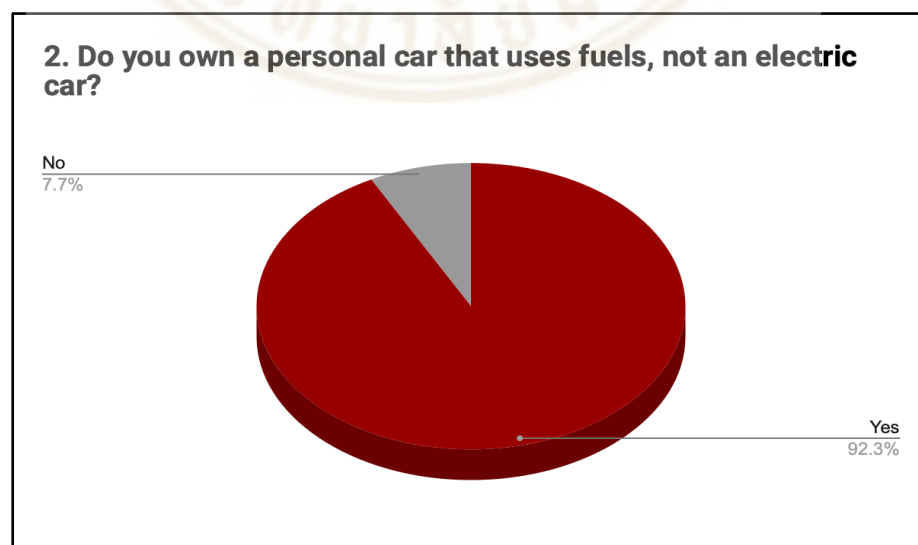
## 4.2 Screening question (142 respondents)

**Graph 1: Screening question 1**



**Figure 4.1 Screening question 1 in Quantitative research, n = 142**

**Graph 2: Screening question 2**



**Figure 4.2 Screening question 2 in Quantitative research, n =142**

### 4.3 Demographic Question (131 respondents)

Graph 3: Demographic question 1

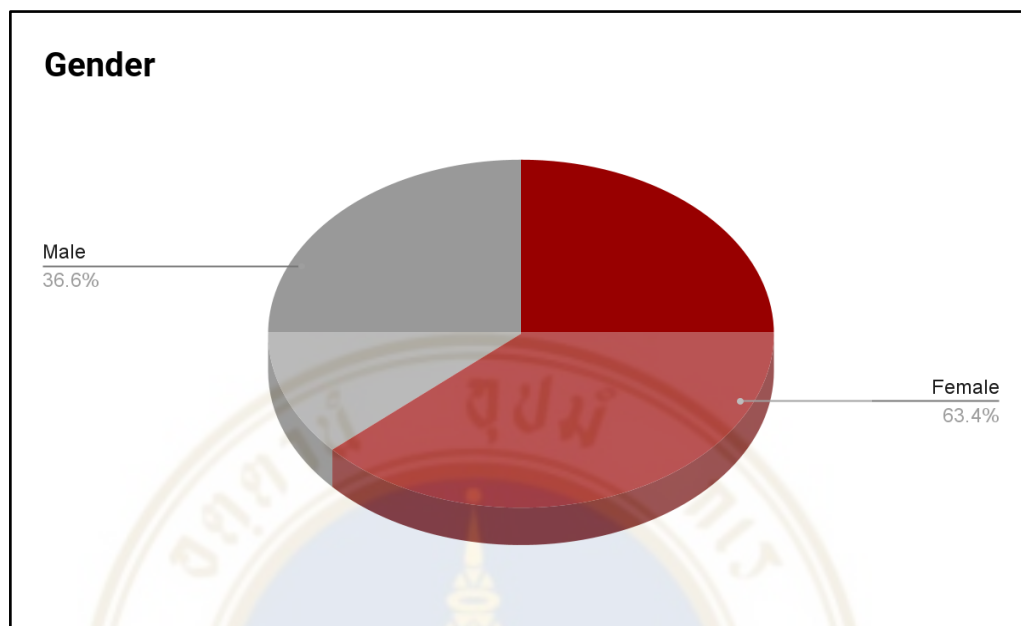


Figure 4.3 Demographic question 1 in Quantitative research, n =131

Graph 4: Demographic question 2

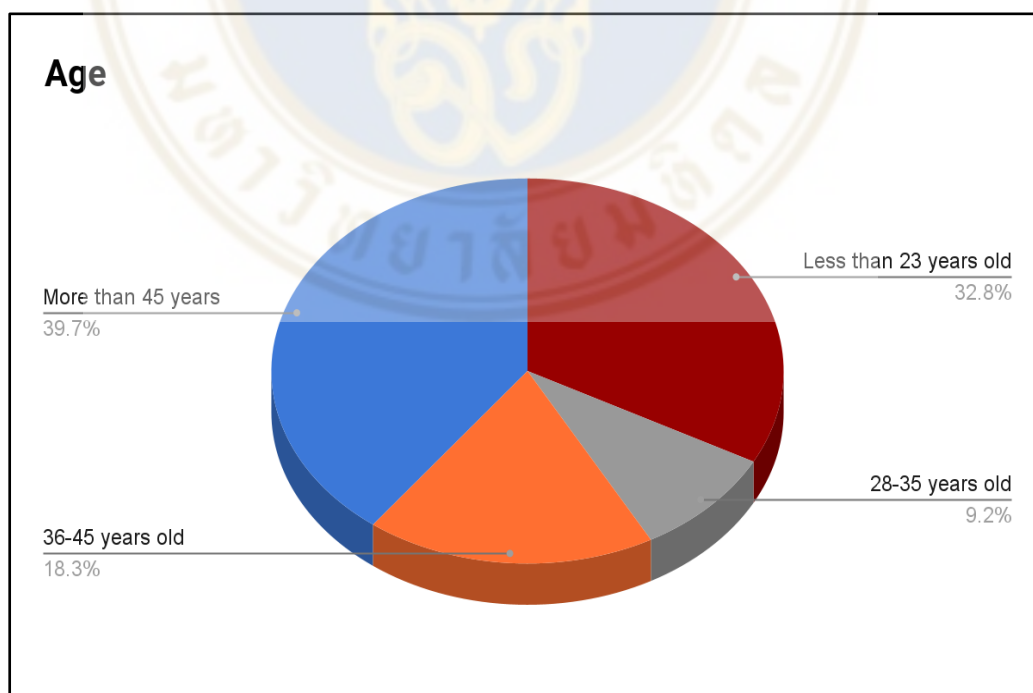
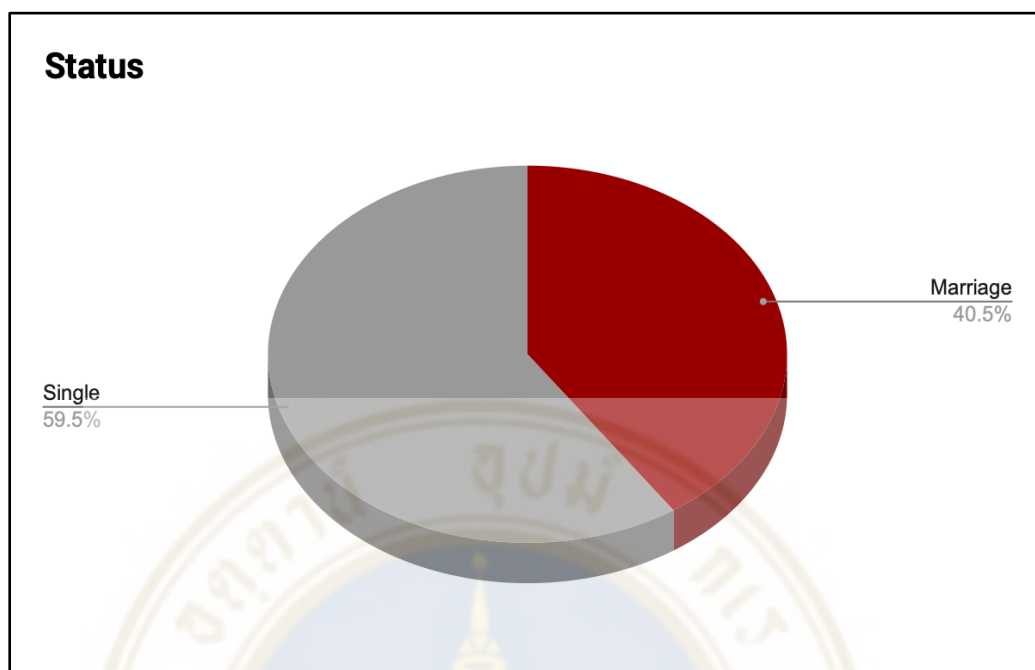
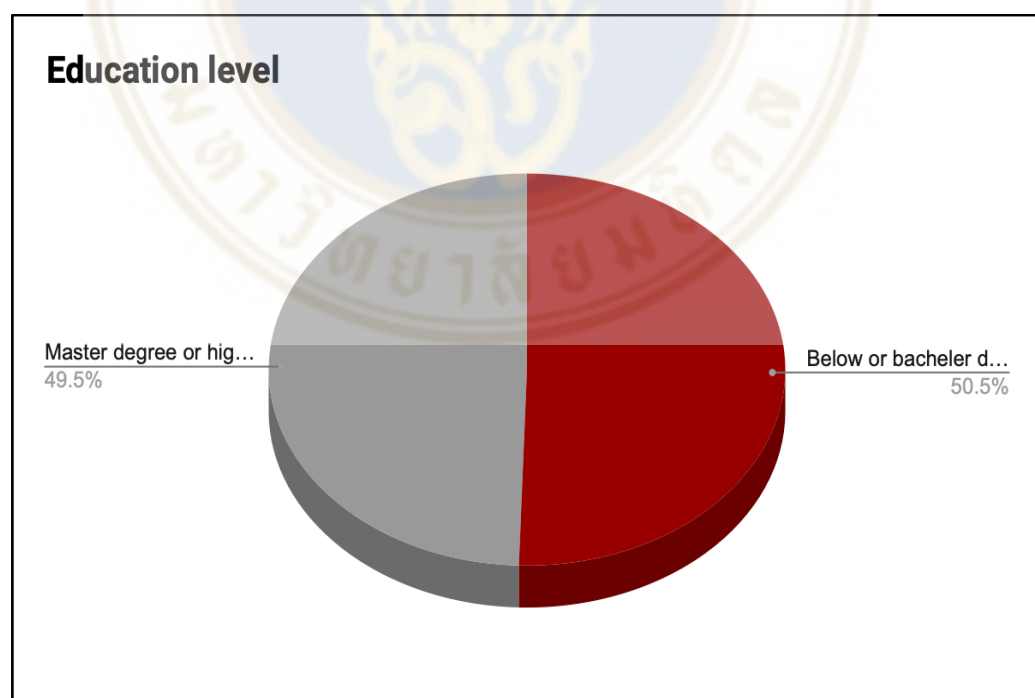
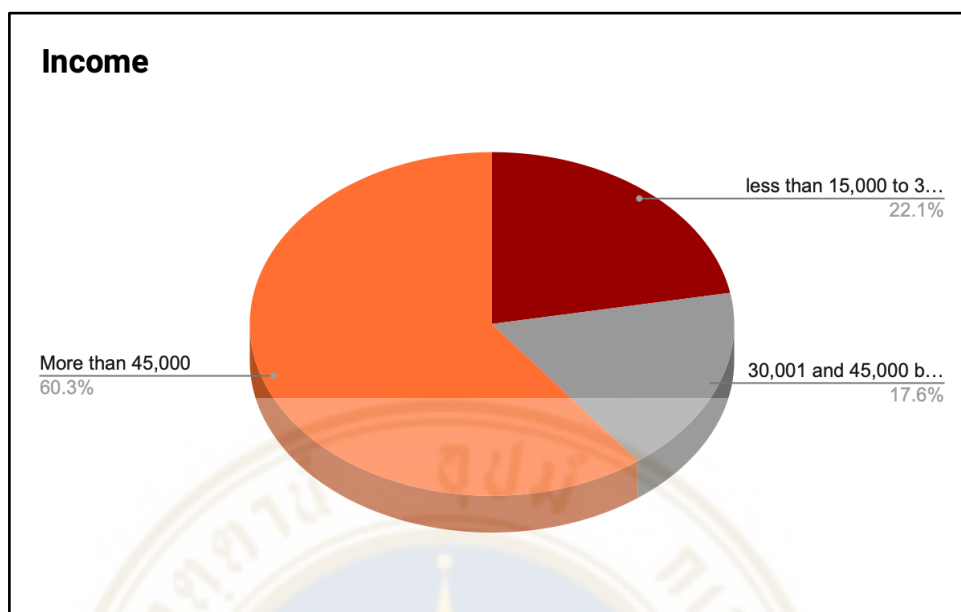


Figure 4.4 Demographic question 2 in Quantitative research, n =131

**Graph 5: Demographic question 3****Figure 4.5 Demographic question 3 in Quantitative research, n =131****Graph 6: Demographic question 4****Figure 4.6 Demographic question 4 in Quantitative research, n =131**



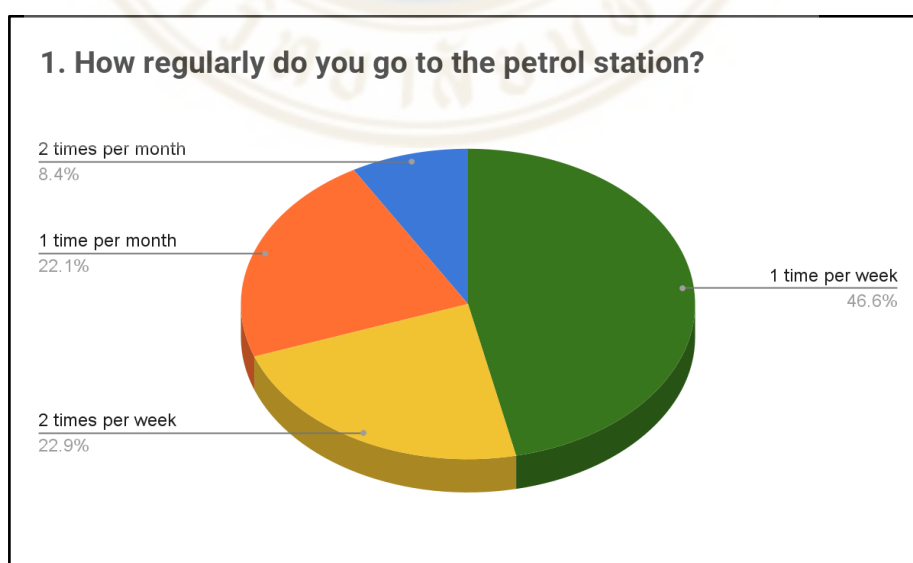
**Graph 7: Demographic question 5****Figure 4.7 Demographic question 5 in Quantitative research, n =131**

#### 4.4 General Question (131 respondents)

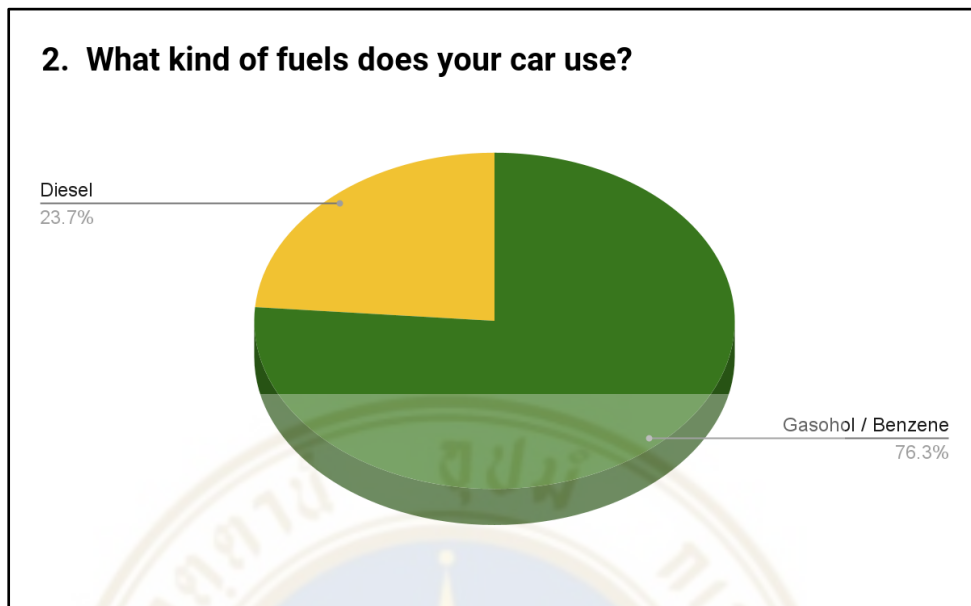
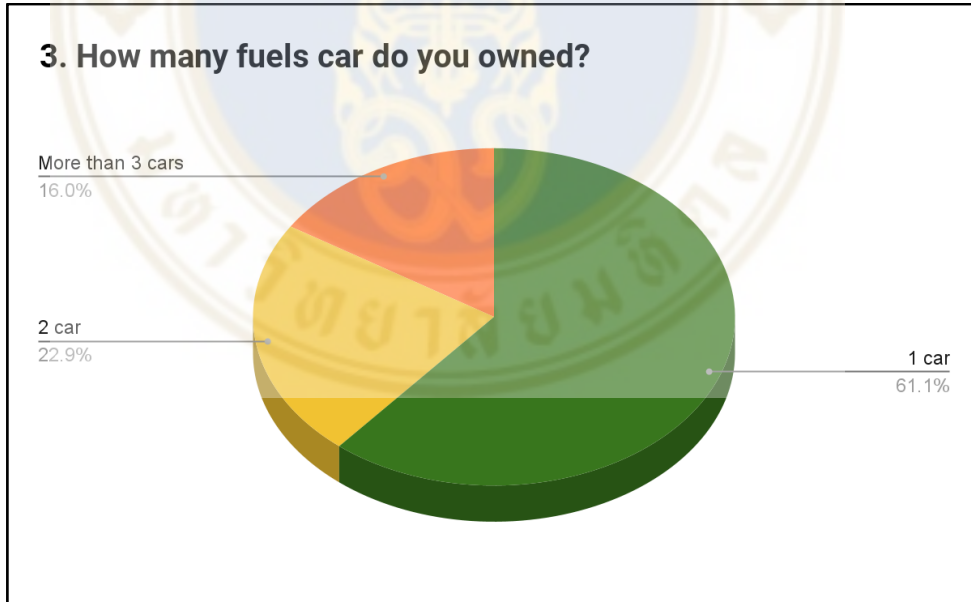
Regarding the general question result, there are 6 general questions in the questionnaire which are related to finding the consumer behavior and characteristics that lead to the consumer preference. The general question 1 is to find how regularly the respondent go to the petrol station, the result is that most of the respondents going to the petrol station quite often which is about 1 time per week, weighted 46.6% of the respondents or 61 people. While the second largest group is the people that go to petrol stations 2 times per week, 22.9% of the respondents or 30 people. For the general question 2 is to find what kind of fuels the respondent's cars mostly uses. The result is that most of the respondents use "Gasohol or benzene" fuels the most, weighted 76.3% or 100 people. While respondents who use diesel type, weighted only 23.7% or 31 people. For the general question 3 is to find how many fuel cars that the respondents owned. From the graph 9, the majority of the respondents owned only 1 car in the percentage of 61.1% of the total respondents or 80 people. While people own 2 cars in 22.9% of the total respondents or 30 people. Lastly, people owned more than 3 cars in 16% of the total respondents or 21 people. For the general question 4 is to know which

people stations brand that respondents are going to most often. The results are that PTT station is the petrol station that the respondents are going to most often in 45% of the total respondents or 59 people. The second petrol station that they are going the most is Esso station, weighted 18.3% of the total of respondents or 24 people. The third petrol station is Shell station, weighted 15.3% of the total of respondents or 20 people. However, the petrol station that respondents go to most rarely is Susco station, weighted 0.8% of the total of respondents or only 1 person. For the general question 5 is to know when the respondents are going to the petrol station. Most respondents or 74% of the total respondents are going to petrol stations during weekdays (97 people), while the least of the respondents or 26% (34 people) of the total respondents are going to petrol stations on weekends. For the general question 6 is to know what the reason is for choosing a petrol station. The result is that most of the respondents choosing the petrol station because of location, weighted 33.6% of the total of respondents or 44 people. The second reason is the quality of fuels, weighted 26.7% or 35 people. Next reason is the price and promotion, weighted 18.3% of the total of respondents or 24 people. Besides, the respondents choosing a petrol station because of brand trust, weighted 16.8% or 22 people. The minority of the respondents choosing petrol stations based on service quality only 4.6% or 6 people.

#### Graph 7: General question 1

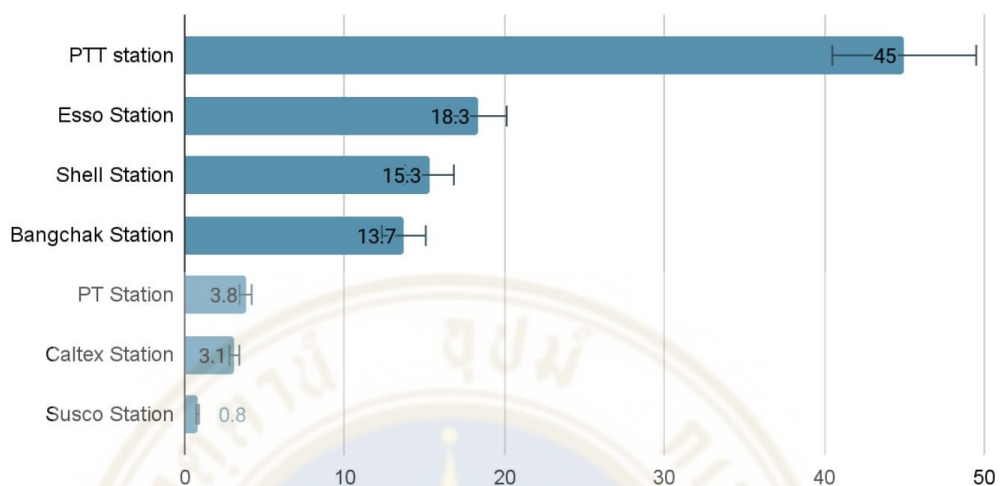


**Figure 4.8 General question 1 in Quantitative research, n =131**

**Graph 8: General question 2****Figure 4.9 General question 2 in Quantitative research, n =131****Graph 9: General question 3****Figure 4.10 General question 3 in Quantitative research, n =131**

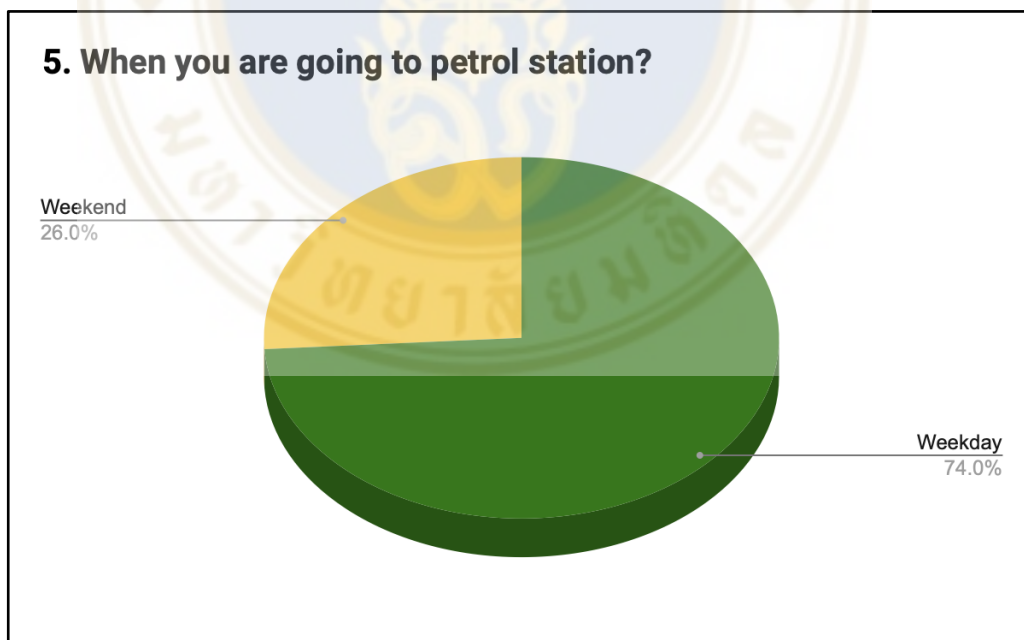
**Graph 10: General question 4**

**4. Which petrol stations brand that you are going to most oftenly?**



**Figure 4.11 General question 4 in Quantitative research, n =131**

**Graph 11: General question 5**



**Figure 4.12 General question 5 in Quantitative research, n =131**

Graph 12: General question 6

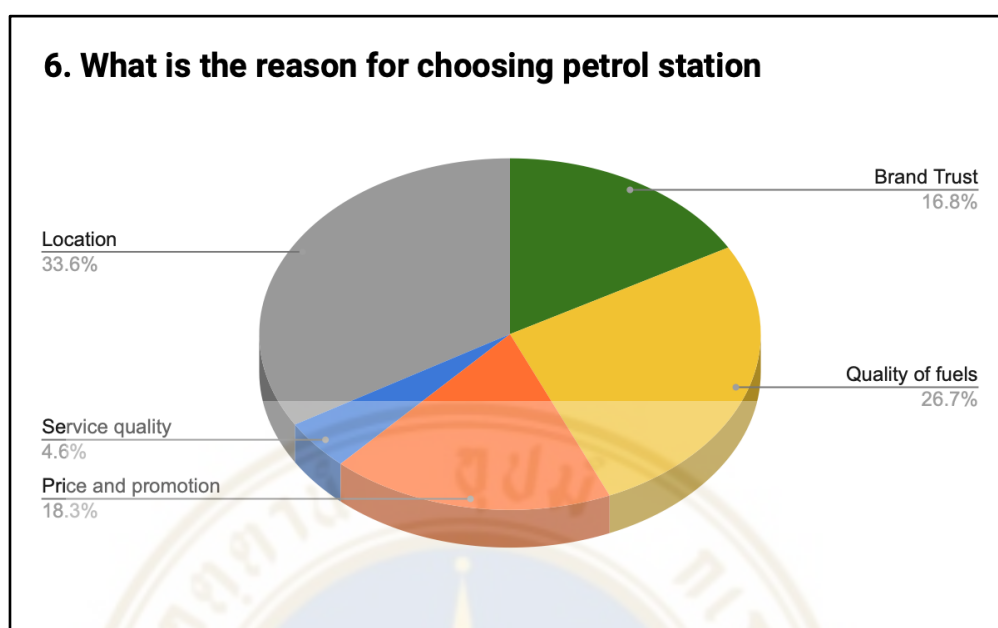


Figure 4.13 General question 6 in Quantitative research, n =131

#### 4.5 Test of Difference

This research analysis tests of difference by using T-Test and Anova methods by focusing on the number of the respondent that can allocate in a group. Based on the system calculation, there are 7 groups of the research demographic. This is based on the number of respondents, which is 130 respondents. Below is the discussion of what has been found.

- Gender

Table 4.1 Gender in T-Test Analysis

Construct	Gender	n	Descriptive		T-Test for Equality of Means	
			Could you please provide us with your physical gender?	Mean	t	Significance
						Two-Sided p
Location	Location of the petrol station is important to me.	131	Male	3.4167	-2.902	.004
			Female	3.7439		

From table 4.1, it is about the demonstration preference from T-Test in gender between male and female. In this table, it is obviously seen from the significant difference in female people that prefer to go to the petrol station based on the location that they think it is important to them with a mean score of 3.7439.

● **Marital Status**

**Table 4.2 Marital in T-Test Analysis, n =131**

Construct	Marital Status	n	Descriptive		T-Test for Equality of Means	
			Could you please provide us your status?	Mean	t	Significance
						Two-Sided p
<b>Brand Trust</b>	I worry when I go to petrol stations that I am not familiar with.	131	Single	2.9872	-3.002	.003
			Marriage	3.4808		
<b>Quality of Service</b>	I think the variety of services is important.	131	Single	3.3846	-2.210	.029
			Marriage	3.6346		
<b>Quality of Service</b>	I think that a clean restroom is one of the most important services that I am concerned about	131	Single	3.6410	-2.279	.024
			Marriage	3.8654		

People with different marital status give different insights for the preference. From the T-Test method, people who have a marriage status agree on brand trust and quality of service. With the mean score of 3.4808 that they prefer to go to the petrol station that they are familiar with, this is due to the brand trust. Besides, they see the importance of service, in the mean of 3.6346, while about the cleanliness of restrooms that is one of the qualities of service have a mean score of 3.8654.

● Education Degree

**Table 4.3 Education Degree in T-Test Analysis, n =131**

Construct	Education Degree	n	Descriptive		T-Test for Equality of Means	
			Could you please provide us your status?	Mean	t	Significance
						Two-Sided p
Quality of product	I prefer to fill premium fuels.	131	Bachelor's degree or below	2.8750	2.198	0.30
			Master's degree or higher	2.5152		
Quality of Service	I think the variety of services is important.	131	Bachelor's degree or below	3.3125	-2.947	0.004
			Master's degree or higher	3.6515		
Price and promotion	Promotion is important to me	131	Bachelor's degree or below	2.5313	-3.108	0.002
			Master's degree or higher	3.0606		
Location	Location of the petrol station is important to me.	131	Bachelor's degree or below	3.5000	-2.183	.031
			Master's degree or higher	3.7424		
Location	I prefer to go to the petrol station that is nearest to me.	131	Bachelor's degree or below	3.4063	-2.325	.022
			Master's degree or higher	3.6818		
Location	I prefer to go to whatever station that I feel is a convenient location at that time.	131	Bachelor's degree or below	3.2344	-2.212	.029
			Master's degree or higher	3.5606		

People with different levels of education give different insights for their preference. From the T-Test method, people who have a master's degree or higher agree on quality of service, price and promotion, and location preference. The highest mean score is from the question "Location of the petrol station is important to me", which is 3.7424. In addition, quality of service and price and promotion factors, they have mostly

agreed that service and price and promotion are important to them with a mean score of 3.615 and 3.0606, respectively. While people who are in bachelor degree or below have significant results in quality of products, with the question “I prefer to fill premium fuels.” that have a mean score of 2.8750.

- Age

**Table 4.4 Age in Anova Analysis, n =131**

Construct	Age		n	Descriptive	Anova		Multiple comparison (Post-Hoc)	
				Mean	F	Sig	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig
Quality of service	I think the variety of services is important	28-35 years old	131	3.1667	2.798	.043	.66667*	.023
		36-45 years old		3.8333				
Quality of service	I think that a clean restroom is one of the most important services that I am concerned about.	28-35 years old	131	3.2500	5.871	.001	.69118*	.022
		More than 45 years old		3.9412				

People with different ages give different insights for their preference. Regarding table 4.4, people who are in the age of 36 to 45 years old and more than 45 years old agree on the quality of service. The highest mean score is from the question “I think that a clean restroom is one of the most important services that I am concerned about.” have the mean score of 3.9412. As restrooms are one of the services that petrol stations can offer, people in old ages or more than 45 years old see this reason as essential. In addition, people in the age between 36 and 45 years old have a mean score of 3.8333 in the question that they think the variety of services is important as well.



- **Income**

**Table 4.5 Income in Anova Analysis, n =131**

Construct	Income		n	Descriptive	Anova		Multiple comparison (Post-Hoc)	
				Mean	F	Sig	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig
Brand Trust	I am very conscious about choosing a petrol station brand.	30,001 - 45,000	131	3.0833	3.754	.026	.43949*	.023
		More than 45,000		3.5128				
Brand Trust	I usually rely on specific brands.	30,001 - 45,000	131	2.8750	3.268	.041	.50962*	.035
		More than 45,000		3.3846				

Furthermore, people with different incomes give different insights for their preference. From table 4.5, people who have an income more than 45,000 agree on the brand trust factor. With the highest mean score of 3.5128 in the question that they are very conscious about choosing a petrol station brand, they give an essential in choosing a petrol station brand. In addition, they are likely to rely on one specific brand with a mean score of 3.3846.

- **Frequency**

**Table 4.6 Frequency in Anova Analysis, n =131**

Construct	Buying frequency		n	Descriptive	Anova		Multiple comparison (Post-Hoc)	
				Mean	F	Sig	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig
Brand Trust	I am very conscious about choosing a petrol station brand.	2 times per week	131	3.7241	3.723	.013	.58621*	.007
		2 times per month		3.1379				
		2 times per month		2.2414				

**Table 4.6 Frequency in Anova Analysis, n =131 (cont.)**

Construct	Buying frequency		n	Descriptive	Anova		Multiple comparison (Post-Hoc)	
				Mean	F	Sig	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig
Price and Promotion	I prefer to go to a petrol station that offers me a free water bottle.	1 time per week	131	2.9180	3.500	.018	.67665*	.018
		2 times per month		2.2414				

Furthermore, people who purchase in different frequencies give different insights for their preference. People who go to petrol stations most often (2 times per week) agree on brand trust factors. With the highest mean score of 3.7241, in the question that they are very conscious about choosing a petrol station brand. Besides, people who go to petrol stations once a week agree on price and promotion like they prefer to go to the petrol station that has a free bottle of water, with a mean score of 2.9180.

- **Number of cars owned**

**Table 4.7 Number of car owned in Anova Analysis, n =131**

Construct	Number of car owned		n	Descriptive	Anova		Multiple comparison (Post-Hoc)	
				Mean	F	Sig	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig
Location	I prefer to go to the petrol station that is outstanding.	1 car	131	3.1646	3.458	.034	.54551*	.029
		More than 3 cars		2.6190				

People with different numbers of car ownership generate different ideas of preference. People who have only 1 car agree on the importance of location, with the mean score of 3.1646 in the question that they prefer to go to the petrol station that is outstanding.

## 4.6 Mean Analysis

- Means of constructs

Table 4.8 Table of means of constructs, n =131

Means of constructs					
	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mean of Location	131	1.60	4.00	3.4308	.53900
Mean of Quality of Service	131	1.00	4.00	3.3400	.46499
Mean of Brand Trust	131	1.80	4.00	3.3338	.59475
Mean of Quality of Product	131	1.00	4.00	3.2862	.62155
Mean of Price and Promotion	131	1.40	4.00	2.6677	.81860
Valid N (listwise)	131				

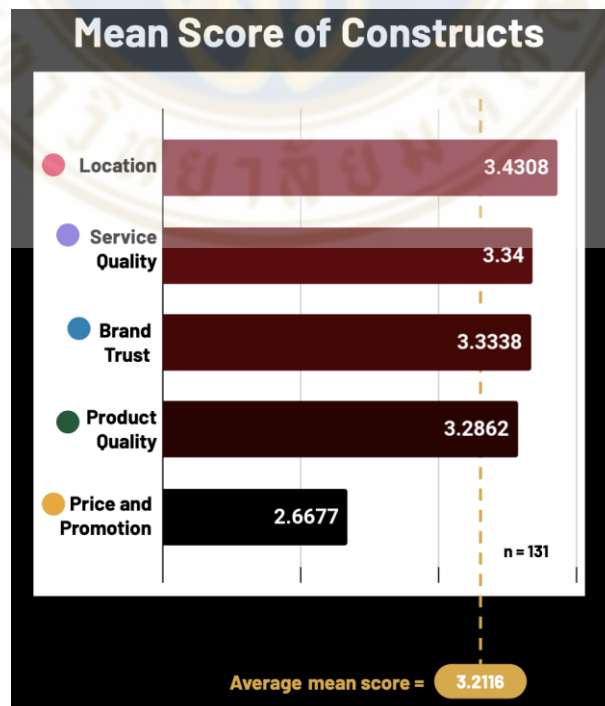
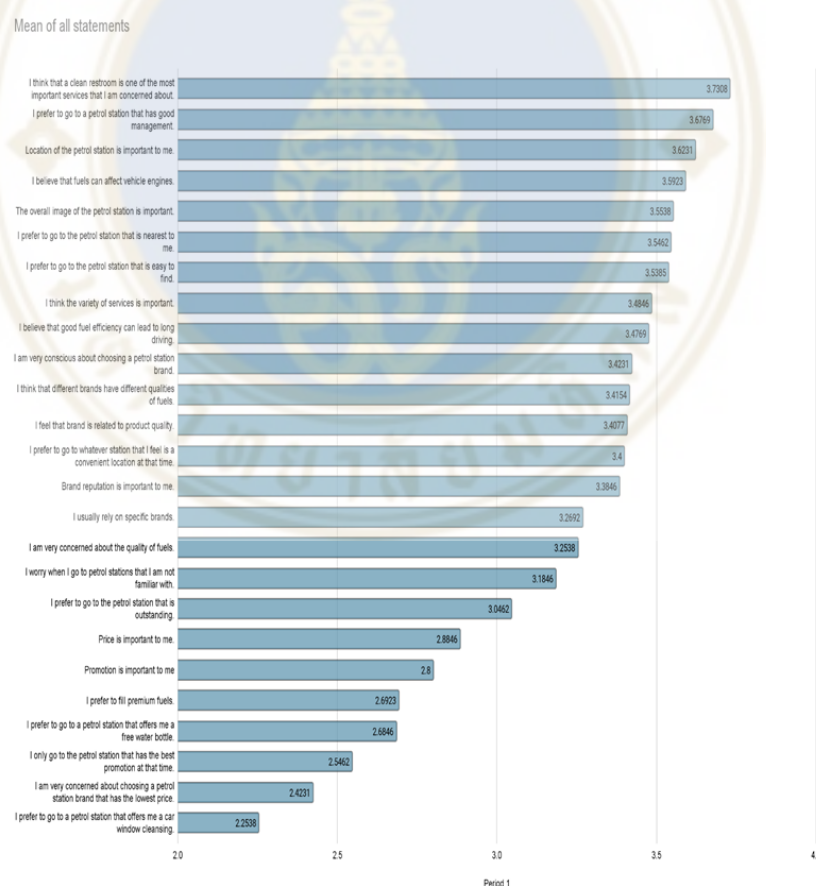


Figure 4.14 Bar chart for factor mean scores, n = 131

Regarding table 4.8 and figure 4.14, with the average mean score of 3.2116. The highest mean score of constructs is Location, which has a 3.43 mean score among other factors. People agree that they prefer to go to the petrol station based on location convenience. The second highest mean score is service quality factor, which is 3.34 mean score. People also like to go to the petrol station that offers them a good service. Besides, brand trust factors also have similar mean scores with service quality factors, which is 3.3338 means score. This means that people also give an essential on brand trust factors. Next, the quality of product factor has only 3.2862 mean score, people might not agree much on this factor. However, price and promotion factor are below the average mean score, it received only 2.6677 mean score. People might not be sensitive with the price and promotion.

#### ● Means of statements



**Figure 4.15 Bar chart for mean score of statements (n=131)**

**Table 4.9 Table of mean score for statements**

Means of statements						
Variable	Statement	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Quality of service	I think that a clean restroom is one of the most important services that I am concerned about.	131	1.00	4.00	3.7308	0.61993
Quality of service	I prefer to go to a petrol station that has good management.	131	1.00	4.00	3.6769	0.55984
Location	Location of the petrol station is important to me.	131	1.00	4.00	3.6231	0.63813
Quality of product	I believe that fuels can affect vehicle engines.	131	1.00	4.00	3.5923	0.67853
Quality of service	The overall image of the petrol station is important.	131	2.00	4.00	3.5538	0.59795
Location	I prefer to go to the petrol station that is nearest to me.	131	1.00	4.00	3.5462	0.68326
Location	I prefer to go to the petrol station that is easy to find.	131	1.00	4.00	3.5385	0.69499
Quality of service	I think the variety of services is important.	131	1.00	4.00	3.4846	0.67324
Quality of product	I believe that good fuel efficiency can lead to long driving.	131	1.00	4.00	3.4769	0.74932
Brand Trust	I am very conscious about choosing a petrol station brand.	131	1.00	4.00	3.4231	0.69176
Quality of product	I think that different brands have different qualities of fuels.	131	1.00	4.00	3.4154	0.79519
Brand Trust	I feel that brand is related to product quality.	131	1.00	4.00	3.4077	0.78450
Location	I prefer to go to whatever station that I feel is a convenient location at that time.	131	1.00	4.00	3.4000	0.84999
Brand Trust	Brand reputation is important to me.	131	1.00	4.00	3.3846	0.74067
Brand Trust	I usually rely on specific brands.	131	1.00	4.00	3.2692	0.86972
Quality of product	I am very concerned about the quality of fuels.	131	1.00	4.00	3.2538	0.84735
Brand Trust	I worry when I go to petrol stations that I am not familiar with.	131	1.00	4.00	3.1846	0.94651
Location	I prefer to go to the petrol station that is outstanding.	131	1.00	4.00	3.0462	0.86142

**Table 4.9 Table of mean score for statements (cont.)**

Means of statements						
Variable	Statement	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Price and promotion	Price is important to me.	131	1.00	4.00	2.8846	0.96957
Price and promotion	Promotion is important to me	131	1.00	4.00	2.8000	0.99922
Quality of product	I prefer to fill premium fuels.	131	1.00	4.00	2.6923	0.94702
Price and promotion	I prefer to go to a petrol station that offers me a free water bottle.	131	1.00	4.00	2.6846	1.01946
Price and promotion	I only go to the petrol station that has the best promotion at that time.	131	1.00	4.00	2.5462	0.98918
Price and promotion	I am very concerned about choosing a petrol station brand that has the lowest price.	131	1.00	4.00	2.4231	1.07736
Quality of service	I prefer to go to a petrol station that offers me a car window cleansing.	131	1.00	4.00	2.2538	0.94263
	Valid n (listwise)	131				

Regarding figure 4.15 and table 4.9, when looking deeply in variable descriptive questions, the most questions that have the highest mean score is the question from the quality-of-service variable, asking that “I think that a clean restroom is one of the most important services that I am concerned about.”. This question received a 3.73 mean score. Along with the question from the same variable, asking that “I prefer to go to a petrol station that has good management”, which gets a similar mean score of 3.6769. The third statement that has the highest score comes from the location construct, which is “Location of the petrol station is important to me.”. This statement received a 3.6231 mean score. Then, the next highest statement is the statement of quality of product, saying that “I believe that fuels can affect vehicle engines.”. This statement got 3.5923 of mean score. For the fifth highest statement is from the quality-of-service construct again, it is the statement saying that the overall image of the petrol station is important. This statement has 3.5538 of mean scores. Therefore, quality of service seems to be the construct that has the highest score of mean statement. On the other hand, price and promotion construct have the lowest mean score when comparing a particular statement.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Target Market & customers**

After analyzing the data with the SPSS program, we can draw out the group of consumers that the petrol station can focus on. Referring to the sig, the age of the customer who has a potential to be the primary target group, is a group of people who are more than 36 years old, between the age of 36-45 years old and more than 45 years old, who are preferred to have have a good service, like the cleanliness of the restroom in the petrol station. The education level of the target group would be higher than a bachelor's degree. Besides, they should focus on family as the priority and give importance to the service as well. The income of the target group would be higher than 45,000 baht or it is the target that has a high income as they are very conscious when choosing to go to a petrol station.

#### **5.2 Discussion and recommendation**

This quantitative study aims to address what is the factor that influences consumer preference in choosing a petrol station in Thailand. This study comes about after the researcher has received enough response from the survey. Literature reviews are provided in Chapter 2 in addressing relevant topics that can be used as a guideline in addressing the survey questions. Chapter 3 provides a brief discussion on research methodology emphasising on the nature of the quantitative method of conducting this study. In other words, the data provided from the survey will be run in SPSS program to be used in answering and analyze the research question.

##### **5.2.1 Location**

Based on the findings in Chapter 4, the factor that has the highest mean is Location. This can be interpreted that the factor that influences consumer preference is

location. Consumers will prefer to choose which petrol station they will go to base on the location preference or the petrol station that is the nearest from them. So, it is important for the business owner who wants to own the petrol station to give importance to the location, as “Location, location, location” is a mantra for retail success (Yaasamoah, 2015). Besides, as location is one of the most important factors for the consumer preference, the business owner should make their location simple to recognize for the consumer. For example, putting the effective pin of their petrol stations on the Google Map as people can locate the business using Google Maps. Google Maps can pin and list businesses that are relevant to the user's search due to its local search capabilities. Before choosing to visit or contact the business, the user can quickly view their options. Google Maps functions as a search engine to locate the location of the company users are looking for as well as a map to guide people there. Google Maps is a key source of traffic for mobile devices (Onstad, 2022).

### **5.2.2 Service quality**

The next factor that can influence consumer preference to choosing a petrol station is about the quality of service. The business owner should give the important in the good management of their services. This is because good management can create a consumer impression, and the image of the petrol station can create a good experience for the consumer. According to the finding, the statement that received the highest means among others is the question from this factor saying that “I think that a clean restroom is one of the most important services that I am concerned about”. It is clearly observed that “restroom” is the service that people expect from the petrol station. During long journey drives, petrol stations are helpful not just for their convenience stores, where customers may buy food and beverages, but also for their restrooms. They see the petrol station as an emergency spot (Yap, 2022). Consequently, the business owner should give the essential to their restroom and try to make it clean as the cleanliness of the restroom can be a good quality of the petrol station’s service as well. This can even create a consumer impression and consumers will return if they can rely on the petrol station that can serve them the good quality of service. Besides, the image of the petrol station can create brand trust. The petrol station image can be included by their management and their overall station images. According to the findings in Chapter 4,



the statement about good management and overall image of the petrol station also have a high mean score. Thus, Thai people prefer a good service experience. According to Salesforce Research, 89% of Thai consumers are likely to consume again, if they have had a positive customer service experience. Over 61% of customers said they would switch to another brand. After just one bad experience (Somsawat, 2022). Therefore, it is important for the business owner to take their service into account.

### **5.2.3 Brand trust**

The third factor that influences consumer preference is brand trust. People in Thailand are very conscious when choosing one specific brand of petrol station. This is because they think that brand is related to the product quality, in this case, the brand of the petrol station is related to the quality of fuels. Customers might trust a brand more if they think it is good at doing what it says it will do. Alternatively, if a brand does something bad, customers might not trust it as much. Customers might repurchase a product if they feel that the quality of the product meets their expectations, and the product is safe (Amron, 2018). Thus, it is important to spread the good image of the brand to the consumer. More than just confidence in the quality of the brand's goods creates brand trust. Additionally, it includes the full interaction that customers have with the brand, from product purchase to use (Rock Content Writer, 2021). Consequently, the business owner should be careful about the full interaction about the service and product in the petrol station. They should maintain the standard of the brand of the petrol station, to maintain the brand trust of the consumer. Because the retail of the specific brand of petrol station is one of the influential parts that can represent the brand image and link to the brand trust as well.

### **5.2.4 Quality of product**

It is undeniable that quality of product can be another one factor that can influence consumer preference in choosing a petrol station in Thailand. People in Thailand also give importance to the effectiveness of the fuels; therefore, some respondents prefer premium fuels. The quality of the gasoline is one of the main factors determining the engine's performance. It is described in terms of a selection of excellent qualities. The quality certifications used for each type of fuel list the standards and

values for about 20 different attributes that are used to assess the quality of gasoline and diesel (Matijošius & Sokolovskij, 2008). Therefore, the business owner should try to make the consumer aware of their product quality in order to influence consumer decision making and this can lead to brand trust. This can be creating printed advertisements or promoting to their social media platform. Some good examples of the brand of petrol stations that promote their product quality is from Exxonmobil. According to the figure 5.1, the advertisement tries to present the Diesel product that is clean and powerful, it can protect the car engine in double.



**Figure 5.1** Picture of Esso's diesel fuels advertisement

### 5.2.5 Price and promotion

Price and promotion are the lowest variables that influence consumer preference. People might not be sensitive with price and promotion when comparing to other factors. Besides, the oil price is varied based on the global oil price, therefore businesses cannot do anything about it. However, the success of a sales activity is influenced by a variety of factors, including promotion. Unfortunately, customers are not informed if a company produces goods of a high quality. Making purchases for customers will be challenging. Additionally, according to a study, getting a bundle is more likely to have a potential to increase sales. This study found that promoting

products can lead to more purchases, and that promotional marketing strategies have a big impact on people's decisions to buy products (Kivetz & Zheng, 2017). Although, the business owner could not control about the price of oil, but the promotion is still essential. It is essential for the business owner to make advertisements or promote the campaign more often and more visible to attract the consumer.

### 5.3 Conclusion

For petrol stations, the location has been the most important part when starting this business. Choosing the right location is what it takes to succeed, the business owner can estimate sales performance by looking deeper into the traffic data in that area. Nevertheless, good locations lead to high investment, especially in the Bangkok area. According to the report of the Thai Real Estate Research and Valuation Information Center, Agency for Real Estate Affairs (AREA), found that many locations in Bangkok-perimeter in 2022 have land prices rising more than 10% (DDproperty Editorial Team, 2022). But, building one petrol station in the Bangkok area, should have an area of not less than 400 square wah and have a section attached to the road for a length of not less than 40 meters. If it is a metropolitan or provincial area, it should be not less than 2 rai and have a side connected to the road at least 60 meters. The gas station should be on a road that is at least 12 meters wide for safety in case of fire. which must allow fire trucks to perform their duties with ease and prevent violence against road users in that area (A., 2021).

Thus, it is undeniable that building a petrol station, location should be considered in the first place. But they are not the only ones. Factors such as brand trust, service quality, product quality, and price and promotion play also an important role. Location can be the first factor that persuades customers to come. Although, it is crucial that the petrol station can also make the customer return. From Chapter 4, we can see that the cleanliness of the restroom is one of the important factors to make the customer prefer. So, in Thailand, most petrol stations tend to give essential parts to their restrooms and try to make them attractive to consumers. For example, the Esso station in Chonburi-Banbung brunch offers a restroom that is beautiful and attractive. Also, they provide an air-conditioner inside and an automatic door. Mrs. Suwarat Thiengket, 58 years old, a

customer who came to use the service said that “After coming in to fill up with petrol, I stopped by to go to the restroom. It turned out that the bathroom was very beautiful, modern, and clean. If there is a chance next time, I will visit again because I like it very much” (Komchadluek, 2021). As restrooms can make the consumer return and create loyalty to the brand. This makes many brands tend to enhance their restroom standard. In 2020, Shell Thailand developed the 3 main principles for restrooms that every partner has to take into account, which are Universal Design, Safety, and Hygiene, and Environmentally Friendly (Kasayapanunth, 2020).

Therefore, not only location and restroom can influence consumer preference. People in Thailand also get familiar with the petrol stations that they are relevant to. Apart from that, the petrol station can differ by different business owners. But the most important thing is how they can compete with the competitors in their area. Different areas can have different characteristics of the consumer and they cannot just rely on their good locations to create their success, they have to be concerned about customer return as well.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

#### **6.1 Limitation**

In this study, 83 responses from 131 samples are females, which accounted for 63.4% of the total responses, so the result of the analysis turns out to be asymmetry because females tend to have more influence on the analysis. Moreover, for the range of ages, with 52 responses from 131 respondents (39.7%) indicates that most of the respondents are people in old ages or people who are more than 45 years old. Thus, the perspective for the old generation might be hard to forecast for the young generation, who might be the next purchasing power for most petrol stations. Furthermore, the income range of total responses is most in the range of “More than 45,000 baht” which is the largest group, they are more than 60.3% of the total of respondents. Therefore, they are considered a high-income group. This group might have different views of purchasing purposes from the lower-income and middle-income groups. Moreover, the survey was sent out online which might be uncontrollable in terms of the location of respondents. As this survey was being responded from the respondents who live outside Thailand.

#### **6.2 Suggestions for Future Research**

This research study is to identify the factors that influence consumer preference in choosing the petrol station, and to help the business owner explore the competitive advantages in this modern day.

The researcher suggests the following issues for future research in order to achieve a better understanding.

- The next research should scope down the location of the research question. For example, in Bangkok and methopolish, Chiang Mai, Phuket, and etc. As

different locations, have different target groups and even location limitations. It is better to find out the influence factors.

- The next research should add “Cleanliness” as another factor, distinguished from the factor “Service quality”. As the cleanliness in the petrol station can be one of the essential purchasing preferences for consumers to go.

- The next research should include other factors which influence purchase preference such as Petrol’s Coffee shop, as some consumers are going to the petrol station and buy a cup of coffee regularly.



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