The Influence of Customer Interaction, Variety, and Convenience on Customer Satisfaction and Revisit Intention: A Study of Shopping Mall in Bangkok

Amornrat Pattarakitham

Abstract—**The purpose of this paper is to explore knowledge about the impact of customer interaction, variety, and convenience on customer satisfaction and revisit intention towards shopping mall in Bangkok. A self-administered questionnaire was employed to collect data from customers who had visited shopping malls in Bangkok area in the period during which the questionnaire was conducted. The survey period was during July 2014, and 209 questionnaires were used to analyze the data by using a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. Results show that convenience has the greatest influence on the satisfaction, followed by variety, and customer interaction. In addition, convenience and satisfaction are important factors that influence revisit intention in this study.**

Index Terms—**Customer interaction, variety, convenience, customer satisfaction and revisit intention.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The retail industry is one of the most important industries due to its continuous growth in Thailand. The Retail Sales Index rose from 178.90 in 2010 to 186.42 in 2011 and to 220.78 in 2012. However, the Retail Sales Index decreased a little bit from 220.78 in 2012 to 219.82 in 2013 with around one third of the establishments were engaged in retail trade [1]. With a variety of retail formats choices available in Bangkok, Thai consumers may not just only search and buy any products/services but they tend to find more pleasurable place for their shopping. Improving the shopping mall is an important aspect for a company to survive these days. Therefore, retailers must be distinctive in offering products and services to provide a unique product and service to attract more consumers.

Colliers International Thailand Research clarified seven types of retail space in Bangkok and surrounding areas by category in 2013. Shopping malls signify 60% of the market share about 3.9 million square meters and 25% of shopping malls space are in the city area and about 22% are in the outer city area. The second largest, hypermarkets/superstore malls denote 12% of the market share or around 670,000 square meters and 63% are located in the suburban Bangkok area. The third largest, lifestyle centers/community malls indicate 10% market share or approximately 620,000 square meters. The fourth largest, specialty stores signify 6% of the market share regarding 372,000 square meters. Then, department stores signify 5% of the market share and supporting retails

symbolize 4% market share or roughly 310,000 square meters. Finally, entertainment complexes represent the lowest market share (2%) or around 124,000 square meters [2] see Fig. 1.
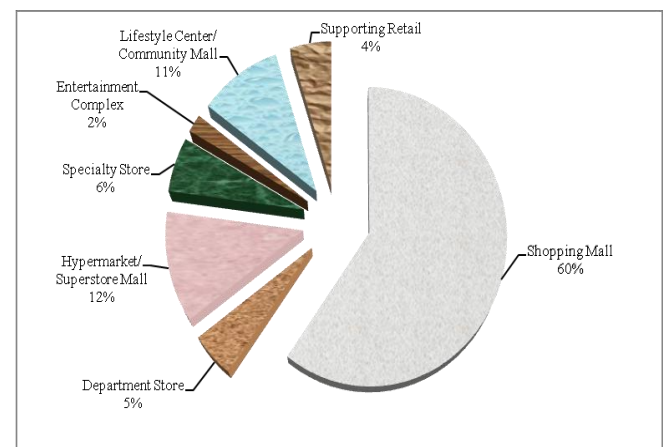

Fig. 1. Breakdown of retail space in Bangkok by category.

Retail business is prosperous especially in shopping malls format. The expansion of residential projects in Bangkok provoked retail developers in building new shopping malls and lifestyle malls. Approximately 662,000 square meters of retail space was completed in Bangkok in 2012 and higher than 204,700 square meters of retail space in 2013 [2].

The number of shopping mall in Bangkok is also increasing constantly with the new style of decoration and improvement because it could support many activities. For example, Central Department Store renovated their department store in 2011 to attract more customers with new looks and style of decoration. Furthermore, Central Embassy also opened in Bangkok in 2014 with luxury decoration.

Nowadays, customers visit the shopping malls for various reasons such as acquiring food/beverages, entertainment and other recreational activities. Therefore, shopping mall can be a place for people to meet and shop with a variety of restaurants, supermarket and tenants offered for them. To be competitive due to many malls in Bangkok today, retailers/service providers should understand customer demand [3] as a key factor for a business to succeed [4]. However, there is still a lack of research about factors that influence customer satisfaction and intention to visit the shopping mall in Bangkok. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to examine the relative influence of customer interaction, variety, and convenience on customer satisfaction and customer revisit intention.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Customers Interaction

Interaction between customers has gained the attention from researchers because people tend to shop more based on social reasons [5], [6]. Researcher suggested that customer interaction could enhance more shopping because it could enhance more chance for customers to meet other people who might have similar interest [7]. Researchers also found that compatibility between customers also designated higher satisfaction and patronage intentions [8]. In this study, interaction between customers is considered as a social communication with other people.

B. Variety

Variety is defined as various numbers of products and service providers from both retail and non-retail tenants, such as banking, education learning, restaurants, and entertainment services [9]. in a shopping mall. This is also considered as a characteristic of a shopping mall which helps customers to meet their multipurpose shopping or one-stop shopping or one-stop shopping [10].

C. Convenience

In this study, convenience is defined as how a customer could easily reach a specific shopping mall [11]. This factor also considered as the perception of customers based on time and effort reduction [12]. Researchers also pointed out that convenience is an important factor to attract customers to a shopping mall [9].

D. Customer Satisfaction

In this study, satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable level when customers purchase a product or receive a service to fulfill their needs and goals [13]. When customers perceive product performance exceeds expectations, the outcome is satisfaction [14].

E. Revisit Intention

Revisit intention in this study is referred to intention to shop at the specific shopping mall in the future and positive recommendation to other people [15], [16].

III. METHODOLOGY

This study conducted an exploratory research to enhance understanding about beliefs and thinking of customers when they shop at a specific shopping mall. The personal interviews were conducted in Bangkok and the duration of the interviews ranged from 40-50 minutes for each person. The interviews were conducted during July, 2014.

The results of the interviews are mostly consistent with the literature review with regard to the variables i.e. customer interaction, variety, and convenience. Other quotations of customers related with variables used for this study are provided in Table I.

Therefore, the conceptual framework of this study consists of three types of variable: antecedents (customer interaction, variety and convenience); mediator (customer satisfaction); and consequence (perceived customer revisit intention). The conceptual framework is illustrated in the following model.

In the second phase, a total of 209 respondents participated in this study. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is used to test how well the measurement variables represent the constructs before analyzing the structural equation model (SEM).

TABLE I: RESULTS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

| Factors	Quotation
Customer Interaction	"I always come to this shopping mall to interact with my friends". (Interview with customer)
	"I come here because of my family. They want to eat and meet at this shopping mall". (Interview with customer)
	"Generally, I come here to interact with my friends and sometime with my family". (Interview with customer)
	"I usually come here with my boyfriend to have a happy time here". (Interview with customer)
Convenience	"I like this shopping mall because it easily for me to come here". (Interview with customer)
	I come here almost every week because it is near my residential area". (Interview with customer)
	"It is convenient to visit this shopping mall" .(Interview with customer)
	"It is convenient to come here by BTS". (Interview with customer)
Variety	"I come here due to a variety of shop here" .(Interview with customer)
	"I always come here with my family. There are a lot of shops and enough restaurants for me". (Interview with customer)
	"I usually go to eat at some specific restaurant such as McDonald's, KFC, and MK restaurant" .(Interview with customer)
Revisit intention	"I will also want to come to this shopping mall in the next time" (Interview with customer)
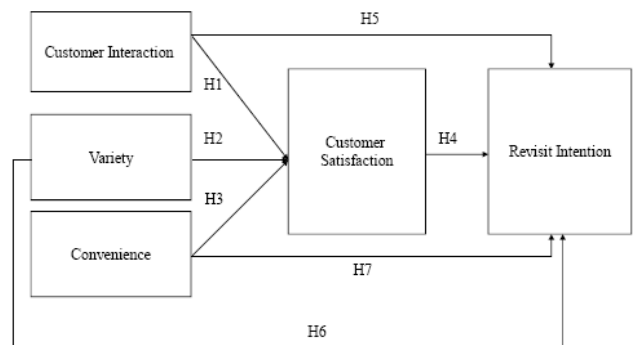
Fig. 2. Conceptual framework.

IV. FINDINGS

A. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The results of the measurement model demonstrate that the chi-square statistic (χ^2/df) is 3.293, $p<0.001$, and the RMSEA is 0.068. Regarding the rule of thumb, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) should not be greater than 0.1 [17]. The statistical criteria for determining goodness-of-fit or the baseline comparisons fit indices illustrated a marginal fit for the hypothesized model (NFI = 0.846; RFI = 0.794; IFI = 0.888; TLI = 0.847; CFI = 0.886) in this study.
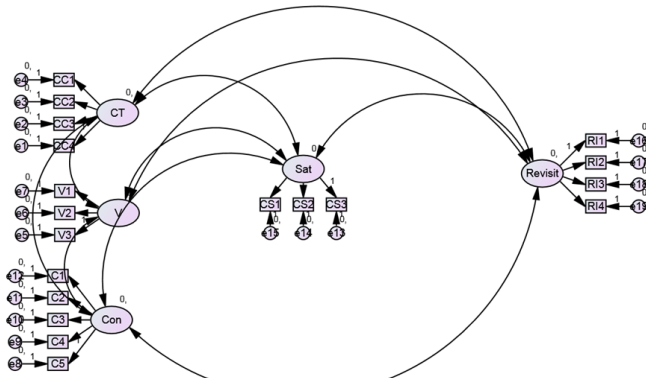
Fig. 3. CFA model.

Note: statistic ($\chi 2$/df) is 3.293, $p<0.001$, NFI = 0.846; RFI = 0.794; IFI = 0.888; TLI = 0.847; CFI = 0.886

B. Structural Equation Model (SEM)
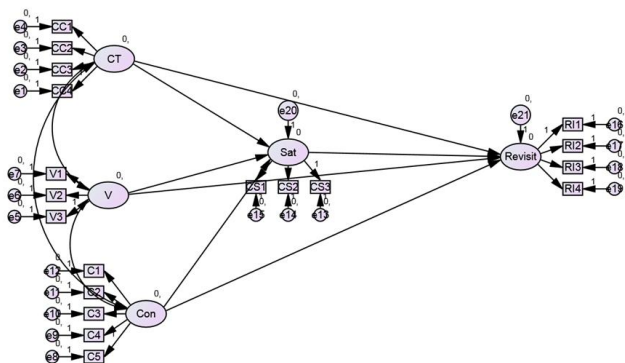

Fig. 4. SEM model.

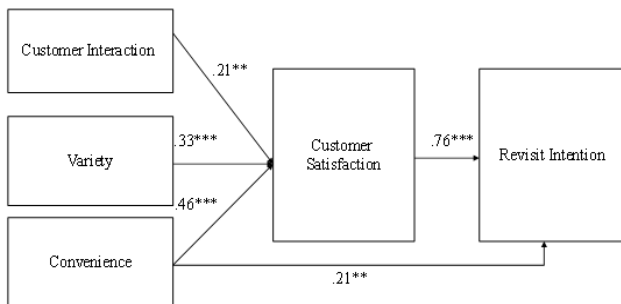Note: statistic ($\chi 2$/df) is 3.293, $p<0.001$, NFI = 0.846; RFI = 0.794; IFI = 0.888; TLI = 0.847; CFI = 0.886

Fig. 5. SEM model with standardized loading.

The results from SEM reveal that the chi-square statistic ($\chi 2$/df) is 3.293, $p<0.001$, and the RMSEA is 0.068. The baseline comparisons fit indices illustrated a marginal fit for the hypothesized model (NFI = 0.846; RFI = 0.794; IFI = 0.888; TLI = 0.847; CFI = 0.886) in this study. The results of hypotheses testing are show in Table II.

The findings of this study indicate that customer satisfaction has a significant and positive influence on revisit intention of customers towards a shopping mall. Furthermore, convenience has an influence on both customer satisfaction and revisit intention of customers. However, variety and customer interaction has influence only on the customer satisfaction.

It is noticeable that the customer satisfaction has stronger influences intention to revisit a shopping mall of customers.

This result implies that the higher level of satisfaction also leads to the higher level of customer's intention to revisit a specific shopping mall.

TABLE II: Hypotheses Test Results

Hypotheses	Hypotheses Test Results
H1: Customer Interaction →Customer Satisfaction	**Supported**
H2: Variety →Customer Satisfaction	**Supported**
H3: Convenience →Customer Satisfaction	**Supported**
H4: Customer Satisfaction → Revisit intention	**Supported**
H5: Customer Interaction → Revisit intention	Not Supported
H6: Variety → Revisit intention	Not Supported
H7: Convenience → Revisit intention	**Supported**

Moreover, convenience is considered as an important factor followed by variety and customer interaction in this study because convenience can enhance both customer satisfaction and revisit intention. Customers might also perceive more convenience due to time or effort reduction using to revisit a shopping mall. In addition, convenience also leads to higher satisfaction because customers are able to get to the shopping mall's location quickly or easily.

The result of this study also showed that the more variety of products and services provided at a shopping mall can lead to increase customer satisfaction. Finally, the higher pleasantness of customers in spending time with their family or friends at the shopping mall should lead to more satisfaction as well.

V. CONCLUSION

Satisfaction and convenience are two important factors that can influence revisit intention of customers towards a shopping mall. Variety is also considered as an important factor to influence customer satisfaction. Customer interaction has little impact on satisfaction.

Particularly, the results show that convenience has a positive influence on revisit intention. Convenience can be considered as easy to reach the shopping store. It does not take much time to reach the shopping place. Customers may able to get to the shopping store's location quickly. Customers may able to complete their purchase quickly and the time required to receive the benefits of the service is appropriate.

Specifically, variety has the positive influence on satisfaction. Variety refers to the variety of products offered at the shopping store. The store has a variety of service providers such as banking, education learning, and restaurant. This store has excellent other alternatives such as entertainment.

Customer interaction has a significant and positive influence on satisfaction but has no impact on revisit intention. The findings show that revisit intention could not be enhanced as a place for customers to get together for social interaction. However, customer interaction can enhance satisfaction.

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Amornrat Pattarakitham earned her Ph.D. (business administration: marketing) at the Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand in 2013, and master of science (logistics) at University of Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia in 2004. Currently, she is a lecturer of Martin de Tours School of Management and Economics at Assumption University. Dr. Amornrat Pattarakitham attended the conferences at Assumption University, ACCGBS, 2013 (The topic is the influence of customer experience on behavioral intention in the lifestyle center in Bangkok) at the Verona University, IABE-2014 Verona - Summer Conference, June 27-29 (the topic is a study of servicescape, employee service, and core service in the service setting in Bangkok) and also published her papers in AU Journal of Management, 2013 (The topic is the influence of affective dimension of customer experience on behavioral response in the lifestyle center in Bangkok) and in California Business Review, volume 2, 2014 (The topic is a study of servicescape, employee service, and core service in the service setting in Bangkok).