

FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISION-MAKING BEHAVIOR IN USING THE BOLT APPLICATION IN THE BANGKOK AREA

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Abstract

Bangkok, a leading tourist destination and economic hub of Thailand, has a large population, making transportation vital. Despite various systems like buses, trains, and taxis, issues persist, particularly with public taxis, where 37.10% of 33,718 complaints to the Department of Land Transport involve drivers refusing passengers. The rise of technology has prompted the development of ride-hailing apps like Grab and Lineman, with Bolt emerging as a competitor. Understanding factors influencing users' decisions to choose Bolt is crucial for improving its services and ensuring user satisfaction. This study investigates the factors affecting the decision to use Bolt in Bangkok, focusing on marketing mix factors (7 Cs) and demographic characteristics such as gender, age, income, occupation, and education. Data were collected from users via online questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS. The findings reveal that decision-making is influenced by key factors, ranked by importance: commercial aspects, customization (meeting individual needs), appearance (context), communication, and connectivity. Demographic differences significantly impact how these factors influence users, providing insights for enhancing Bolt's services to better align with user needs and preferences.

Keywords: Marketing Mix, Service decision, Bolt application

Introduction

Bangkok is a major tourist destination and an important economic hub in Thailand, resulting in a large population and a high demand for transportation. The city offers various transportation systems, such as trains, buses, electric trains, vans, motorcycles, and taxis. However, the increasing demand for travel has led to urban sprawl, making the management of public utilities and services challenging, often resulting in unequal access. Among public transportation issues, taxi refusals are the most common complaint, accounting for 37.10% of the 33,718 complaints reported (Transport Statistics Group, Planning Division, 2014).

Technology now plays a significant role in daily life, particularly for urban dwellers who lead busy and time-constrained lives. The rapid advancement of computer technology and internet networks has transformed how people live, conduct business, and communicate (Cheng et al., 2022). This shift has facilitated the development of smartphone applications for various services, including ride-hailing (Pahasing, B. and et al., 2022).

Bolt is an on-demand ride-hailing application that competes with established players like Grab and Lineman. Bolt differentiates itself by offering fares that are 20% cheaper than competitors (Tan & Lee, 2021). However, its service is currently limited to car-hailing and does not cover all areas or provinces in Thailand. Its primary service area is Bangkok, where many residents either lack private cars or prefer not to use them due to traffic congestion. Bolt provides a practical alternative for travel in such cases. Using the Bolt app is straightforward: users select their pickup location and destination, view the fare estimate, choose the vehicle

type, and wait for a driver (Rahman et al., 2022). After the ride, users can rate their experience. Bolt offers seven vehicle types: Taxi, Motorcycle, Economy, Ladies, Bolt, Comfort, and XL. The app is available for download on Android and iOS platforms.

Given the intense competition in the ride-hailing market, this study aims to investigate the marketing factors influencing users in Bangkok to choose Bolt. Understanding these factors can help refine and develop the service to better meet user needs, enhance satisfaction, and promote continued use (Luo & Xie, 2022).

Research Objectives

1. Study the demographic factors that affect the marketing mix (7 C)
2. Study the demographic factors that affect purchasing behavior of products and services of the Bolt application.

Scope of the Research

1. The population used in the study was consumers living in the Bangkok area.
2. Sample group used in the research It is a sample group that uses the Bolt application service in the Bangkok area by using the formula (Taro Yamane, 1973:125).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Given that n Is a sample group
 N That is the size of the population.
 E is the sample error value.

The results are as follows. $n = 5,701,394 / (1 + 5,701,394) \approx 399.97$

The calculated sample size was 399.97 or 400 people using the convenience random sampling method.

1. The location of research data collection is in Bangkok.
2. The time frame is from August to October 2024

Scope of variables

Independent variables are demographic factors, including gender, occupation, age, and income. Education level.

The dependent variable is the marketing mix factors (7C), which are context, content, society, response to user needs, communication, business, and connectivity.

Literature Review (if any)

Demographic Theory

Demographic theory studies population changes, including the size, structure, and distribution of populations. These differences influence the types of products people buy and the services they use. Demographic characteristics, according to Siriwan Sereerat (2007), are critical for market segmentation and target market determination. They are measurable variables consisting of:

Gender: Males and females exhibit different attitudes and behaviors.

Occupation: People in varying professions have different demands for goods and services.

Age: Consumer tastes vary by age, as individual preferences shift with life stages.

Income: Low- and middle-income consumers form a larger market than high-income groups, requiring segmentation based on income levels.

Education: Higher education correlates with the consumption of better-quality products and services, often at higher prices.

Marketers can use demographic data—such as gender, age, occupation, and income—to classify consumers and define target markets effectively (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior involves the decision-making process for buying, using, and evaluating products or services. Kotler (1999) defined consumer behavior as the processes and activities consumers undertake in purchasing decisions, including the factors influencing their choices. Understanding these behaviors is crucial, as variations affect product and service preferences.

Marketing Mix (7Cs)

Mohammed, Fischer, Jaworski, and Paddison (2004) introduced the 7Cs framework for online marketing strategies to enhance website success:

Context: The visual design of a website, including graphics and color schemes.

Content: Comprehensive website information, including navigation links.

Community: Fostering social interactions among users and between users and businesses.

Customization: Adapting the website to meet individual user needs.

Communication: Facilitating a two-way relationship between sender and receiver.

Connection: Establishing links between users and the website.

Commerce: Internet-based trade, offering convenience and visually engaging platforms to stimulate purchases.

Effective application of the 7Cs helps businesses tailor their websites to meet user needs and enhance online engagement (Laudon & Traver, 2021).

Research Methodology

The tool used to collect data is a questionnaire divided into 3 parts as follows:

Part 1 General information about the respondent, including gender, occupation, age, income, and education level.

Part 2. Information about Bolt application usage behavior

Part 3. Information about the marketing mix (7 C) that influence the decision to use the Bolt application service in Bangkok area.

Interpretation criteria based on the importance rating scale that users are interested in (Likert, 1961)

Average score,	Importance level
4.21 – 5.00	Most important
3.41 – 4.20	Very important
2.61 – 3.40	Moderately important
1.81 – 2.60	Not important
1.00 – 1.80	Least important

Research Results

Results of the study of questionnaire respondents' data

The results of the study on the status of the respondents, including gender, occupation, age, income, and education level, revealed the following findings from the 400 sample respondents: The majority were female, with 184 respondents (46.00%), followed by male

respondents at 154 (38.50%), and LGBTQ+ respondents at 62 (15.50%). The largest group of respondents were students, comprising 290 individuals (72.50%). Most respondents were in the 19-22 age range, with 298 people (74.50%). The majority had an income of less than 15,000 baht, with 270 respondents (67.50%). Additionally, the largest group of respondents held a bachelor's degree, with 192 individuals (48.00%).

Objective 1 test results The results of the study on demographic factors affecting the marketing mix (7 C) are shown in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3.

Table 1: Mean, standard deviation, and importance level of marketing mix (7 C) affecting decision to use Bolt application service in Bangkok area.

Marketing factors (7 C)	average \bar{x}	S.D.	Level of importance
Appearance (Context)	3.87	0.43	Very important
Content component side	3.82	0.54	Very important
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	3.89	0.52	Very important
Communication	3.84	0.50	Very important
Connection	3.75	0.53	Very important
Business (Commerce)	4.15	0.45	Very important
Total (Average)	3.85	0.40	Very important

Table 2: Summary of means, standard deviations, and importance levels of marketing mix components (7 C) that influence the decision to use Bolt application services in Bangkok by aspect.

Marketing factors (7 C)	Average \bar{x}	SD	Level of importance	Rank No.
Appearance (Context)	3.87	0.43	Very important	3
Content component side	3.82	0.54	Very important	5
Social (Community)	3.62	0.65	Very important	7
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	3.89	0.52	Very important	2
Communication	3.84	0.50	Very important	4
Connection	3.75	0.53	Very important	6
Business (Commerce)	4.15	0.45	Very important	1
Total (Average)	3.85	0.40	Very important	

Research results from the table 1 and table no. 2. It was found that service users gave the most importance to the business aspect, with the highest average value of 4.15. Next, they gave importance to the response to the personal needs of service users, in terms of applications supporting multiple systems, with the highest average value of 4.06, respectively.

The results of the test of objective 1, the results of the study, the demographic factors affecting the marketing mix (7 C) are shown in Table 3-7. In order

Table 3: Mean, standard deviation and statistics of service users towards marketing mix (7 C) classified by demographic factor of gender.

Marketing factors (7C)	Male (n=154)		female (n= 184)		LGBTQ+ (n=62)		F- value	P- value
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
Appearance (Context)	3.83	0.39	3.88	0.45	3.93	0.46	1.17	.31
Content component side	3.82	0.50	3.77	0.55	3.95	0.56	2.63	.07
Social (Community)	3.74	0.58	3.55	0.68	3.51	0.70	4.75	.00*
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	3.84	0.51	3.90	0.54	3.98	0.50	1.66	.19
Communication	3.82	0.49	3.82	0.54	3.90	0.41	.57	.56
Connection	3.80	0.53	3.70	0.53	3.79	0.53	1.48	.22
Business (Commerce)	4.19	0.49	4.12	0.41	4.17	0.45	.57	.56
Total (Average)	3.86	.39	3.82	.41	3.89	.40		

* Statistically significant at the .05 level.

The research results from Table 3 found that the demographic factor of gender has an effect on the interest of service users in the marketing mix (7 C) in the social aspect. Statistically significant differences at the .05 level

Table 4: Mean, standard deviation and statistics of service users towards marketing mix (7 C) classified by demographic factors of occupation.

Marketing factors (7C)	Civil servant, state enterprise employee (n=10)		work for hire (n=14)		company employee (n=70)	
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD
Appearance (Context)	3.93	0.17	3.95	0.28	4.04	0.42
Content component side	4.00	0.22	3.90	0.51	4.07	0.55
Social (Community)	4.26	0.34	4.14	0.17	3.90	0.70
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	4.66	0.34	3.80	0.31	4.11	0.50
Communication	4.06	0.14	3.85	0.51	4.00	0.51
Connection	4.33	0.44	3.80	0.25	4.02	0.50
Business (Commerce)	4.20	0.58	4.00	0.18	4.32	0.40
Total (Average)	4.12	.20	3.92	.20	4.07	.39

Marketing factors (7C)	Students (n=290)		Private business (n=16)		F-value	P-value
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
Appearance (Context)	3.80	0.42	4.22	0.44	7.81	.00 *
Content component side	3.74	0.53	4.00	0.38	6.660	.00 *
Social (Community)	3.50	0.62	3.66	0.68	11.20	.00 *
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	3.82	0.52	4.20	0.51	6.52	.00 *
Communication	3.78	0.50	3.91	0.59	3.44	.00 *
Connection	3.65	0.52	3.95	0.46	11.50	.00 *
Business (Commerce)	4.11	0.47	4.29	0.40	3.79	.00 *
Total (Average)	3.77	.39	4.03	.35		

* Statistically significant at the .05 level.

The research results from Table 4 found that the demographic factor of occupation has an effect on the interest of service users towards the marketing mix (7C) in terms of appearance, content components, social aspects, response to the personal needs of service users, communication, connection, and business, with statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level. To examine these differences, the Scheffé method was used for pairwise comparisons. The results were as follows:

The employee group placed more importance on appearance than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.23. In terms of content components, the employee group also placed more importance than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.33. Regarding the social aspect, employees valued it more than students, with a pairwise difference of 0.39. In terms of responding to the personal needs of service users, employees placed more importance than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.29, and more than the hired occupation group, with a pairwise difference of 0.30. The employee group also valued communication more than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.22, and connection more than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.37. In terms of business, employees valued it more than both the hired occupation group and the student group, with pairwise differences of 0.32 and 0.20, respectively.

The self-employed group gave higher importance to appearance than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.41. They also placed more importance on responding to the personal needs of service users compared to the hired occupation group, with a pairwise difference of 0.39. Additionally, self-employed individuals valued connection more than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.38, and more than the hired occupation group, with a pairwise difference of 0.30.

The civil servant and state enterprise employee groups placed more importance on the social aspect than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.76. The civil servant and state enterprise employee groups also valued the social aspect more than the private business group, with a pairwise difference of 0.60. Regarding the connection aspect, civil servants and state enterprise employees valued it more than the employed group, with a pairwise difference of 0.52, and more than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.67.

The hired worker group placed more importance on the social aspect than the student group, with a pairwise difference of 0.63, and more than the private business group, with a pairwise difference of 0.47.

Table 5: Mean, standard deviation and statistical value of service users towards marketing mix (7 C) classified by demographic factor of age.

Marketing factors (7C)	15-18 years old (n=28)		19-22 years old (n=298)		23 years and above (n=74)		F-value	P-value
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
	Appearance (Context)	3.65	0.42	3.85	0.43	4.02		
In terms of content components	3.76	0.41	3.78	0.55	4.00	0.49	5.051	.00*
Social (Community)	3.50	0.52	3.55	0.63	3.96	0.67	13.061	.00*
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	3.71	0.72	3.88	0.52	3.99	0.44	2.910	.05*
Communication	3.57	0.47	3.83	0.50	3.94	0.51	5.670	.00*
Connection	3.50	0.55	3.70	0.51	4.05	0.50	17.042	.00*
Business (Commerce)	4.09	0.55	4.12	0.45	4.29	0.41	4.379	.01*
Total (Average)	3.68	.40	3.82	.39	4.03	.36		

* Statistically significant at the .05 level.

The research results from Table 5 found that the demographic factor of age has an effect on the interest of service users towards the marketing mix (7C) in terms of appearance, content components, social aspects, response to the personal needs of service users, communication, connection, and business, with statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level. To examine these differences, the Scheffé method was used for pairwise comparisons. The results were as follows:

The age group 19-22 years gave more importance to appearance than the 15-18 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.20. In terms of communication, the 19-22 year-old group placed higher importance than the 15-18 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.26. Similarly, for connection, the 19-22 year-old group placed more importance than the 15-18 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.20.

The age group 23 years and above gave more importance to appearance than the 15-18 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.37. The 23+ group also placed more importance on appearance compared to the 19-22 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.16. The 23+ group valued content components more than the 15-18 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.23. They also placed more importance on social aspects compared to the 19-22 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.21, and more than the 15-18 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.46.

In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users, the 23+ group valued it more than the 15-18 year-old group, with a pairwise difference of 0.27. The 15-18 year-old group gave a higher importance to communication compared to both the 23+ group (pairwise difference of 0.37) and the 19-22 year-old group (pairwise difference of 0.34). The 15-18 year-

old group also gave a higher importance to connection than the other groups, with a pairwise difference of 0.55 compared to both the 23+ and 19-22 year-old groups.

In the business aspect, the 23+ year-old group placed more importance than the 15-18 year-old group (pairwise difference of 0.20) and the 19-22 year-old group (pairwise difference of 0.16).

Table 6: Mean, standard deviation and statistical value of service users towards marketing mix (7 C) classified by demographic factor of average monthly income.

Marketing factors (7C)	Less than 15,000 baht (n=270)		15,001-25,000 baht (n=116)		More than 25,001 baht (n=14)		F-value	P-value
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
Appearance (Context)	3.83	0.45	3.95	0.39	3.92	0.15	3.19	.04*
In terms of content components	3.81	0.55	3.85	0.50	3.66	0.45	.83	.43
Social (Community)	3.58	0.63	3.67	0.70	3.85	0.51	1.70	.18
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	3.83	0.54	3.98	0.45	4.19	0.51	5.77	.00*
Communication	3.82	0.53	3.86	0.45	3.80	0.44	.25	.77
	3.70	0.54	3.83	0.52	4.04	0.12	4.68	.01*
Connection	4.13	0.47	4.18	0.38	4.33	0.52	1.84	.22
Total (Average)	3.82	.42	3.91	.35	3.97	.14		

* Statistically significant at the .05 level.

The research results from Table 6 found that the demographic factor of average monthly income had an effect on service users' attention to the marketing mix (7C) in terms of appearance, response to personal needs, and connection, with statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level. To examine these differences, the Scheffé method was used for pairwise comparisons. The results were as follows: The group with an average monthly income of 15,001-25,000 baht placed more importance on appearance than the group with an average monthly income of less than 15,000 baht, with a pairwise difference of 0.11. In terms of responding to the personal needs of service users, the group with an average monthly income of 15,001-25,000 baht valued it more than the group with an income of less than 15,000 baht, with a pairwise difference of 0.15. For connectivity, the group with an average monthly income of less than 15,000 baht had a pairwise difference of 0.13. The group with an average monthly income of more than 25,001 baht placed greater importance on responding to the personal needs of service users compared to the group with an income of less than 15,000 baht, with a pairwise difference of 0.34. Similarly, in terms of connectivity, the group with an average monthly income of more than 25,001 baht valued it more than the group with an income of less than 15,000 baht, with a pairwise difference of 0.34.

Table 7: Mean, standard deviation and statistical value of service users towards marketing mix (7 C) classified by demographic factor of education level.

Marketing factors (7C)	Lower secondary school (n= 4)		High school or equivalent (n= 32)		Associate degree or equivalent (n= 170)	
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD
Appearance (Context)	3.66	0.00	3.78	0.54	4.05	0.42
Content component side	3.83	0.19	3.91	0.54	3.98	0.57
Social (Community)	3.16	0.19	3.85	0.53	3.76	0.63
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	4.50	0.57	3.81	0.69	4.11	0.47
Communication	3.50	0.19	3.79	0.57	3.95	0.52
Connection	3.66	0.38	3.66	0.78	3.90	0.51
Business (Commerce)	4.50	0.57	4.10	0.53	4.27	0.43
Total (Average)	3.83	.24	3.84	.52	4.00	.39

Marketing factors (7C)	Bachelor's degree (n= 192)		Higher than bachelor's degree (n= 2)		F-value	P-value
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
Appearance (Context)	3.73	0.36	4.00	0.00	14.75	.00*
Content component side	3.66	0.47	3.66	0.00	8.47	.00*
Social (Community)	3.46	0.65	4.66	0.00	8.04	.00*
In terms of responding to the individual needs of service users (Customization)	3.69	0.44	4.00	0.00	18.07	.00*
Communication	3.75	0.46	3.66	0.00	4.37	.00*
Connection	3.64	0.48	4.00	0.00	5.90	.00*
Business (Commerce)	4.04	0.42	4.66	0.00	7.51	.00*
Total (Average)	3.71	.34	4.09	.00		

* Statistically significant at the .05 level.

The study results from Table 7 revealed that the demographic factor of education level had an effect on service users' interest in various aspects of the marketing mix (7C), including appearance, content components, social aspects, response to personal needs, communication, connection, and business, with significant differences at the 0.05 level. Pairwise comparison using the Scheffé method showed that the group with an associate degree or equivalent placed more importance on appearance, content components, social aspects, and other factors compared to the high school or bachelor's degree groups. The postgraduate group placed higher importance on social aspects and business compared to lower education groups. Additionally, the second objective of the study found that purchasing behavior for Bolt application services was significantly influenced by demographic factors such as occupation and education level.

The average cost of a Bolt ride was influenced by factors like occupation, age, income, and education level, with significant statistical differences at the 0.05 level.

Summary of study results

The study's findings on the demographic data of respondents revealed that 38.50% were male, 46.00% were female, and 15.50% identified as LGBTQ+. Respondents' ages ranged from 15–18 years to 23 years and above, with the majority (74.50%) falling within the 19–22-year age group. Their educational levels ranged from lower secondary to higher than a bachelor's degree, with the largest group (48.00%) holding a bachelor's degree. The sample included individuals with diverse occupations, such as civil servants, state enterprise employees, company employees, students, and private business owners. Students formed the majority of the sample, accounting for 72.50%. Additionally, most respondents had an income of less than 15,000 baht, representing 67.50% of the sample.

Objective 1: To study the demographic factors affecting the marketing mix (7Cs) of the Bolt application.

Gender Analysis; The analysis found that gender significantly affects the social aspect of the marketing mix (7Cs) at a statistically significant level of .05.

Career Aspect; The analysis revealed that occupation significantly impacts the marketing mix (7Cs) in terms of appearance, content components, social aspects, responsiveness to users' personal needs, communication, connectivity, and business aspects at a statistically significant level of .05.

Age; The analysis found that age significantly affects the marketing mix (7Cs) in terms of appearance, content components, social aspects, responsiveness to users' personal needs, communication, connectivity, and business aspects at a statistically significant level of .05.

Income; The analysis indicated that income significantly affects the marketing mix (7Cs) in terms of appearance, responsiveness to users' personal needs, and connection at a statistically significant level of .05.

Educational Level; The analysis showed that education level significantly impacts the marketing mix (7Cs) in terms of appearance, content components, social aspects, responsiveness to users' personal needs, communication, connectivity, and business aspects at a statistically significant level of .05.

Objective 2: To study the demographic factors that affect purchasing behavior of products and services in the Bolt application.

A summary of the study results regarding demographic factors affecting purchasing behavior of products and services in the Bolt application, using Chi-squared statistics, is as follows:

The usage of Bolt application services depends on demographic factors such as occupation and education level, with statistical significance at the .05 level.

The average cost of a Bolt ride depends on demographic factors such as occupation, age, income, and education level, with statistical significance at the .05 level.

Suggestions

Enhance Business Trade Features; The study on factors influencing decision-making behavior in using the Bolt application across seven aspects revealed that users place the highest importance on the business trade aspect. Bolt service providers should focus on ensuring comprehensive and accurate payment systems that offer maximum convenience to users. While the current payment system in the Bolt app is efficient, it is recommended to introduce

additional features for tracking driver behavior. This would allow for periodic evaluations of driver performance, ensuring better service quality.

Focus on User Behavior Analysis; The Bolt application should prioritize understanding user behavior, specifically regarding the frequency of app usage and the cost of travel. By analyzing these patterns, Bolt can tailor its services to better meet user needs and preferences, ultimately enhancing user satisfaction and retention.

Acknowledgement

The researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for its invaluable support throughout this research.

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