

## **DEVELOPMENT OF A CAUSAL FACTOR MODEL INFLUENCING ONLINE PURCHASING DECISIONS FOR PLUS-SIZE WOMEN'S CLOTHING IN BANGKOK**

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### **Abstract**

This research aims to study the factors influencing marketing strategies aligned with digital consumer behavior, the creation of content tailored to the digital target audience, target market customer management, and digital communication strategies in relation to the decision-making process for purchasing plus-size women's clothing online in Bangkok. This study employs a mixed-methods research approach, utilizing quantitative research through surveys conducted among plus-size women in Bangkok and qualitative research through in-depth interviews with business operators and digital marketing professionals. The research results found that the important factors that influence online purchasing decisions are 1) marketing that is consistent with digital consumer behavior, 2) creativity that is in line with target groups, 3) target market customer management, and 4) digital technology communication strategies. In addition, the results of the causal model analysis found that these factors significantly affect consumer satisfaction, trust, and purchasing decisions. This study provides practical recommendations for plus-size women's clothing businesses. The focus is on developing digital marketing strategies that can effectively respond to the needs of this consumer group. In addition, the research results can be used as a guideline for entrepreneurs who want to increase the competitiveness of their plus-size clothing businesses in the online market.

**Keywords:** Plus Size women's Clothing, Online Purchasing Decisions, Bangkok

### **Introduction**

In an era where people's consumption behavior has changed from before by changing to use technology according to the era to meet the needs and for convenience. It is more popular to spend money online than to go to stores or shopping malls. In the year 2022 The total online expenses are 51 6, 89 5 million baht, growing 1 5 % in women's expenses in online spending via smartphones It is approximately 1,600 baht per month. With desktop at 1,450 baht / month as a result, the E-Commerce business has grown rapidly (Electronic Transactions, 2023), with Thai women preferring to spend online more than men. Calculated as a percentage: 62 % and 38 % The new generation is the group that likes online shopping the most and the top 5 are: clothes food shoe Sports and tourism products from the survey made entrepreneurs see business opportunities and were interested in producing and distributing clothing for overweight women (plus size) to have beautiful clothing that is suitable for their body shape. and helps enhance personality and confidence Including wanting to create their own clothing brand. which will be sold mainly through online channels or consigned to Multi-Brand Stores (Electronic Transactions Development Agency, 2022)

The plus size clothing business is a niche market business, selling products specifically for fat people, not general clothing (Nelson & Mertens, 2024) is a clothing product that has a special size characteristic. The disadvantage of this type of marketing is that the consumer group is not very wide. It is sold only to obese people, who are a group of people with specific

characteristics. However, the advantage of this type of marketing is that there are relatively few business competitors (Hernández-García, Colomo-Palacios & Soto-Acosta,2023). allowing for appropriate market segmentation. For sellers in this online era, to survive, in addition to adapting to the changing technologies and channels, the key is still the quality of plus-size women's clothing products that meet standards, as well as truly understanding the needs of consumers, which will create a difference, making products memorable and winning the hearts of consumers in the end.

From the importance of the problem mentioned above, the researcher therefore intends to conduct research on “Developing a model of causal factors that influence the decision to buy online products in the category of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok” in order to obtain knowledge that sellers will use to improve and develop online sales, develop sales channels to have the highest potential and efficiency, so that businesses can keep up with changes in technology and consumer behavior, as well as respond to consumer needs, including being a guideline for adjusting strategies to truly align with the needs of buyers, with a variety of clothing styles to choose from that can meet the needs of this customer group very well. By selling through online channels that have the opportunity to generate more sales It is to create stability and growth of the business, develop competitiveness, which will benefit all stakeholders to be more prosperous and lead to further development of the country.

### **Objective of the research**

This research aims to study the factors that influence marketing that is consistent with digital consumer behavior, creativity that matches the target group in the digital age, management of target market customers, communication strategies through digital technology and decision-making to buy online products in the category of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok.

### **Scope of the research**

#### **Scope of variables**

1. Exogenous Latent variables consist of: 1) Marketing that is in line with digital consumer behavior 2) Creativity that is in line with digital target groups
2. Mediator Latent variables consist of 1) target market customer management 2) digital technology communication strategies.
3. Endogenous Latent Variables Variables. The latent variables are the causal factors that influence the decision to buy online products in the category of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok.

### **Population and Sample Scope**

The population used in the research was buyers of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok who were 20 years of age and older. The sample group was buyers of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok who were 20 years of age and older, and used a sample of 300 people. The key informants who were experts or qualified persons consisted of 5 senior executives of plus-size women's clothing manufacturers, 5 senior marketing executives, and 2 online marketing academics, totaling 12 people.

The scope of the study area is Bangkok. The research period is from October 2022 - December 2023. The researcher will collect data between August - December 2023.

## Conceptual framework of the research

From the study of the concept and research literature, the researcher has studied and reviewed the literature, consisting of 1) concepts and theories about the causal factors that influence the decision to buy online products in the category of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok. 2) Concepts and theories about concepts and theories about marketing that are consistent with consumer behavior in the digital age. 3) Concepts and theories about managing target market customers 4) Concepts and theories about creating marketing that meets the target groups in the digital age. 5) Concepts and theories about communication strategies through digital technology 6) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) or Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework 7) Decision making to purchase products online, women's plus-size clothing category, in Bangkok and 8) related research. The researcher has integrated and synthesized it into a conceptual framework for research on "Development of a model of causal factors influencing the decision making to purchase products online, women's plus-size clothing category, in Bangkok, as shown in Figure 1.

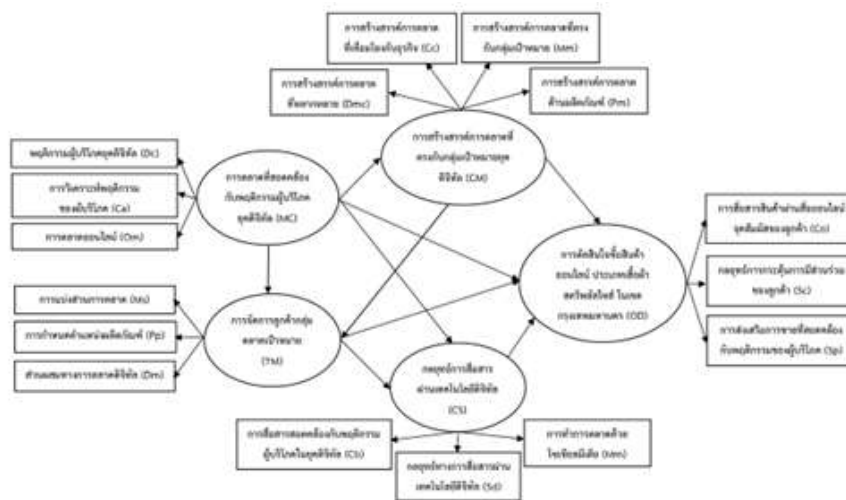


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the research

## How to conduct research

This research uses a mixed methods research methodology, which is an integration of quantitative and qualitative research. The details of the steps are as follows:

### 1. Data collection

Primary data is collected from questionnaires and expert interviews.

Secondary data is studied from academic documents, research and related reports.

Population and sample Quantitative research used convenience sampling to give every sample unit an equal chance of being randomly selected from plus-size women's clothing consumers and to select a sample group that can be accessed immediately. From studying the behavior of buyers in a location, which is suitable for research in a limited area, such as Bangkok, using a total of 300 people. For qualitative research with in-depth interviews with 10 experts, including marketing executives and experts in the plus-size women's clothing industry, data collection will be conducted until the point of data saturation, which is after interviewing 10 research participants, no new issues or duplicate data were found from data analysis to ensure that the collected data is comprehensive and sufficient to answer the research questions. There is no need to collect additional information because no new interesting data is found.

According to the Theoretical Saturation principle in the Grounded Theory framework, which means stopping data collection when no new concepts or categories are found in the data.

## **2. Research tools**

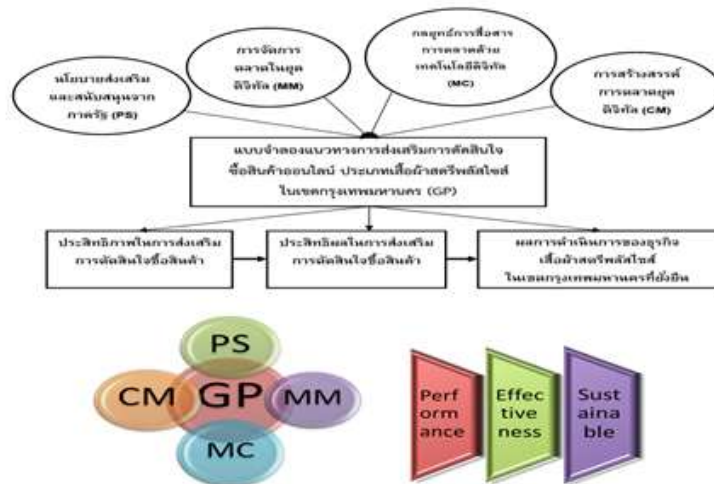
The research instruments were 1) Questionnaire which was examined for content validity (IOC) by 5 experts and tested for reliability using Cronbach 's Alpha coefficient. 2) In-depth Interview using semi -structured interview structure.

## **3. Data analysis techniques**

Quantitative research uses SEM to analyze the influence of variables. The quality of the model is checked with the Model Goodness of Fit value and the causal relationship analysis is performed. Qualitative research analyzes data with Content Analysis and uses the Triangulation Method to increase the reliability of the data.

## **Summary of research results**

Summary of the results of the path analysis based on the linear structural equation model showing the development of the causal relationship model of the factors that influence the promotion of online purchasing decisions for plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok (GP). The results of the influence path analysis between the variables in the model, the causal relationship of the factors affecting the decision-making approach to buy online products, the category of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok (GP), by considering the consistency and harmony, including the prediction equation of the structural model of the causal factors of the decision-making approach to buy online products, the category of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok (GP). From the results, the influence path of the causal relationship of the components that have a causal relationship can be explained as being positively influenced by the promotion and support policies from the government (PS) with a value of 0.56, which is statistically significant; Digital Marketing Management (MM) with a value of 0.88, which is statistically significant; being positively influenced by Digital Marketing Creativity (CM) with a value of 0.97, which is statistically significant; and Digital Marketing Communication Strategy (MC) with a value of 0.30, which is statistically significant. In addition, it was found that Digital Marketing Communication Strategy (MC) was influenced by the promotion and support policies from the government (PS) with a value of 0.75, which is statistically significant; and being influenced by Digital Marketing Management (MM). Value 0.80 and received the total influence from Digital Marketing Creativity (CM) with a statistically significant value of 0.62 as shown in Figure 2.



Picture 2: Modeling guidelines for promoting online purchasing decisions Plus size women's clothing category In Bangkok Metropolitan Area (GP)

### Discussion of results

This research has important points in the discussion of the results from the study results that the 5 main factors, namely, government policy (PS), digital marketing management (MM), digital marketing creativity (CM), digital communication strategy (MC) and purchasing decision promotion approach (GP), have a causal relationship. The SEM model shows that government policy (PS) has a direct influence on digital marketing management (MM) and affects purchasing decision promotion approach (GP) through mediating variables such as digital marketing creativity (CM) and digital communication strategy (MC). This finding is consistent with the concept of Rodríguez-Torrico, San-Martín & Pradhan (2024) who emphasized the use of government support policies as an important resource in developing business potential, especially SMEs that rely on financial support, training and technology to create competitive advantages, including that digital marketing management (MM) has the highest influence on GP ( $\beta = 0.88$ ), reflecting the importance of Digital Transformation in the digital age, which is consistent with the research of Patel, Wang. & Davenport (2023) It points out that customer data analysis and technology adoption can significantly improve online marketing efficiency.

Factors affecting purchasing decision from a questionnaire with a sample of 300 people found that factors related to online marketing mix, such as using influencers (average 4.23) and creating online marketing experiences (4.22), were ranked highest. This result supports Chen's theoretical idea. & Sørensen (2023) As explained, consumers tend to trust recommendations from influencers more than traditional advertising. Therefore, using influencers is a strategy that responds to the behavior of modern consumers who trust reviews from real users. In addition, the focus on online marketing experiences (Omnichannel Experience) is in line with the concept of Customer Journey Mapping, in which businesses must design touchpoints that are consistent with buyer behavior, such as using AR/VR to allow customers to "try on" products virtually.

The role of government policy the sample agreed that government policies should support clothing size standardization (mean 4.06) and product display (4.01) to increase credibility and convenience of purchasing. This size standardization is consistent with the concept of Inclusive Marketing of Wu, Zhang. & González-Benito (2023) Aiming to meet the diversity of consumers, this policy not only reduces the risk of product returns but also promotes the brand image as being friendly to all body types and in line with Thompson. &

Baxter (2024) found that trade shows and fashion shows reflect the importance of Experiential Marketing, which creates emotional interactions with customers through the actual touching of products, even in the digital age.

The results of qualitative research from interviews with experts found important issues such as: Create valuable content with style guide videos The use of AR/VR technology to enhance the purchasing experience, influencer marketing and creating niche promotions, creating valuable content is in line with the Content Marketing theory of Gupta, Mishra. & Oliveira (2023) It focuses more on providing information than direct sales, which helps build long-term relationships with customers and is in line with Kim, Gursoy. & Lee (2023) found that the use of AR/VR is an application of the concept of Phygital Experience (combining Physical + Digital) to reduce the gap between online and offline shopping. Linking the research results with the discussion shows that the approach to promoting online shopping decisions must integrate government policies, digital marketing management that meets consumer behavior, and the use of technology to create a superior shopping experience. The results of this study not only support modern marketing theory, but also provide guidelines for businesses that want to expand their market share in the plus-size women's clothing group, which has high growth potential in the digital economy era.

In the conclusion section, the research discussed and the results are related to the objectives of the study as follows:

1. Study on government promotion and support policies, digital marketing management, digital marketing creativity, digital technology marketing communication strategies, and promotion of online shopping decisions from quantitative and qualitative data analysis found that government promotion and support policies play an important role in promoting online shopping decisions for plus-size women's clothing, especially in terms of supporting the development of small and medium-sized businesses, providing knowledge and training in online marketing, and promoting the use of digital technology innovations in production and marketing. For example, the government should support training programs to develop skills and knowledge in design and production for plus-size women's clothing entrepreneurs, including providing knowledge about online marketing and sales to enhance competitiveness in the international market. This is consistent with Roberts & Choi (2024) who explained that digital marketing management is also very important in creating a convenient and interesting shopping experience for customers. The use of digital technology, such as developing mobile applications that provide an improved shopping experience, using artificial intelligence (AI) to analyze buyer behavior, and creating valuable and interesting content for customers, such as articles about plus-size women's fashion, video tutorials on wearing styles, and product reviews, are all strategies that help increase interest and trust in brands.

2. Study of the influence of government promotion and support policies, digital marketing management, and digital technology marketing communication strategies on online shopping decisions. From the results of the causal relationship path analysis (Structural Equation Modeling: SEM), it was found that government promotion and support policies have a direct influence on digital marketing management (MM) and digital marketing creativity (CM), with direct influence values of 0.51 and 0.26, respectively. In addition, digital marketing management also has a direct influence on digital marketing creativity (CM) and digital technology marketing communication strategies (MC), with direct influence values of 0.54 and 0.47, respectively. Digital marketing creativity (CM) has a direct influence on digital marketing communication strategy (MC) and online shopping decision promotion approach (GP) with a direct influence value of 0.62 and 0.78, respectively, while digital marketing communication strategy (MC) has a direct influence on online shopping decision promotion approach (GP)

with a direct influence value of 0.30. These analysis results indicate that government promotion and support policies, digital marketing management, and digital marketing initiatives all have significant influences on online purchasing decisions for plus-size women's clothing. In particular, digital marketing initiatives have the highest influence on online purchasing decisions, reflecting the importance of creating valuable and engaging content for customers, using digital technology to create a convenient shopping experience, and communicating to meet customer needs.

3. Proposing guidelines for online purchasing decisions for plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok From the analysis of qualitative data, it was found that guidelines for promoting online purchasing decisions for plus-size women's clothing should consist of several important factors, including: 1) Creating valuable and interesting content by creating content related to plus-size women's fashion, such as articles about the latest fashion trends, video tutorials on wearing styles, and product reviews, which will help increase interest and trust in the brand. 2) Using technology such as AI to analyze buyer behavior and develop mobile applications that provide a convenient shopping experience will help increase customer satisfaction and promote purchasing decisions. 3) Creating a convenient purchasing experience by designing websites and applications that are easy to use, support users of all screen sizes, and have advanced search features, which will help customers find the products they want quickly. 4) Providing fast and quality customer service, including responding to customer questions and concerns, will help build trust and satisfaction in the brand. 5) Providing promotions and discounts for customers, such as discounts for membership or limited-time promotions, will help stimulate online purchasing decisions. 5) Building trust in Brands, by providing quality customer service and support, as well as promotions and discounts for customers, will help build brand trust and encourage purchase decisions.

The research results indicate that government policies, promotion and support, digital marketing management, and digital marketing creativity all have significant influences on online purchasing decisions for plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok. Creating valuable and interesting content, using digital technology to create a convenient shopping experience, and providing quality customer service are important factors that effectively promote online purchasing decisions. Therefore, approaches to promoting online purchasing decisions should focus on building brand trust, using digital technology to increase convenience, and providing quality customer service so that customers are confident and effectively decide to purchase online products.

Modeling causal factors influencing online shopping decision the category of plus-size women's clothing in Bangkok can be applied to develop marketing strategies and operate online plus-size women's clothing businesses more efficiently and is also beneficial to the government in setting policies that promote sustainable growth of this industry.

### **Research Suggestions**

The research suggestions are as follows:

1. Marketing in the digital age: Each person's purchasing method will be based on social trends. Business owners must therefore understand their target audience and create plus-size women's clothing products that appeal to their customers' behaviors. This is done by assessing purchasing factors, preferences, and how they perceive marketing and sales offers that will help them sell their products effectively.

2. Creating marketing that is targeted to the target group can make a difference to the plus-size women's clothing category and also impress consumers, but it requires a clear strategy. It must have utility and value in the eyes of the target customer group.

3. Purchasing decisions have components of attitudes and behaviors such as repeat purchases, amount of money spent each time, which are characteristics of purchasing behavior. Business owners should understand the decision-making behavior, what are the supporting factors, whether there is word-of-mouth and a commitment to repeat purchases and a high purchase volume per purchase, due to the value of plus-size women's clothing products, trust or confidence in plus-size women's clothing products.

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