

Impact of Service Market Mix on Satisfaction of Colleges Students In Using Haidilao Restaurants, Shandong, China

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of Haidilao Restaurant's service marketing mix (7P framework) on the satisfaction of college students in Shandong, China. Against the backdrop of China's booming catering industry-particularly the hotpot sector-and the growing influence of college students as a key consumer group, this research aims to identify which elements of the marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence) significantly affect student satisfaction. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected via questionnaires from 659 college students at Shandong Foreign Affairs Vocational University who had consumed at Haidilao. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were employed to test the hypotheses. The findings reveal that Physical Evidence, Process, People, and Place exert significant positive effects on student satisfaction, while Product, Price, and Promotion show no statistically significant impact.

Keywords : Marketing Mix; Haidilao; College Students; customer Satisfaction; 7P Framework

Introduction

China's catering industry has expanded rapidly in recent years, with the hot pot sector becoming increasingly competitive and reaching a market scale exceeding 1 trillion yuan (iiMedia Research, 2025; NCBD, 2024). At the same time, the number and purchasing power of college students continue to grow, with annual per capita consumption projected to reach 35,000 yuan by 2028, indicating strong market potential (iiMedia Research, 2025). As a leading brand, Haidilao faces the challenge of enhancing college student satisfaction amid intensified competition and changing consumption patterns. This study applies the 7P marketing mix framework to examine the key factors influencing college students' satisfaction with Haidilao, aiming to provide theoretical insights and practical guidance for developing effective marketing strategies targeting the college student market.

Research Objectives

To examine the impact of service marketing mix factors affecting college students' satisfaction in visiting Haidilao restaurants.

Literature Review

Service marketing mix and customer satisfaction form the theoretical foundation of this study. The service marketing mix refers to the systematic management of marketing elements by service firms based on strategic objectives. Booms and Bitner (1981) extended the traditional 4P framework by introducing People, Process, and Physical Evidence, forming the 7P service marketing mix, which better reflects the characteristics of service industries and has been widely adopted in service marketing research.

Customer satisfaction is employed as the outcome variable in this study. It represents a relative evaluation based on the comparison between perceived performance and prior expectations. According to the Expectation–Disconfirmation Theory proposed by Oliver (1980), satisfaction increases when actual experience meets or exceeds expectations, providing a theoretical basis for examining the effects of the 7P factors on customer satisfaction.

Related research summary

Customer behavior research provides the foundation for marketing strategy formulation, and understanding college students' consumption behavior and satisfaction is essential for optimizing marketing mix strategies and enhancing competitiveness.

In this study, it is aimed to seek how service marketing mix influencing customer satisfaction. Figure 1 shows this research conceptual framework.

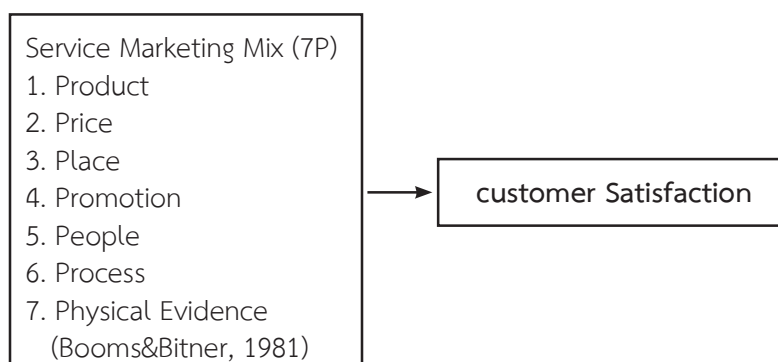


Figure 1: Research Framework Diagram

Research Hypothesis

Based on the above analysis, this paper proposes the following hypotheses:

H1 : Marketing mix factors have a positive impact on Haidilao customer satisfaction.

H1.1 : Product has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1.2 : Price has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1.3 : Place has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1.4 : Promotion has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1.5 : People has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1.6 : Process has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

H1.7 : Physical Evidence has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design targeting college students from universities in Shandong Province who consumed at Haidilao in 2024, using Shandong Foreign Affairs Vocational University as a representative case. Based on Yamane's (1967) formula with a 95% confidence level, the required sample size was 380. Using convenience sampling, 659 valid questionnaires were ultimately collected. Data were gathered through an online questionnaire distributed via the WeChat platform. After a pilot test with 30 responses and expert review, the questionnaire demonstrated acceptable content validity ($IOC > 0.5$). Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with an overall coefficient of 0.958, indicating high internal consistency. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondent characteristics, while multiple regression analysis was applied to test the effects of marketing mix factors on college students' satisfaction with Haidilao.

Results

The results show that female respondents accounted for 65.55% of the sample, and most participants were aged 18–20, with 20-year-olds representing the largest group. Freshmen constituted the majority of respondents (71.32%), indicating a concentration in lower academic years. Over half of the respondents reported monthly living expenses between 1,000 and 1,500 yuan. Most students visited Haidilao once per month, reflecting low-frequency consumption, and the majority dined with friends, highlighting the social nature of their dining behavior.

Table1 : Descriptive statistics of the dependent variable “customer satisfaction”

Item(s)	Mean	Std.
Are you satisfied with the function, quality and overall design of Haidilao products?	1.733	0.873
Are you satisfied with the pricing of Haidilao products compared to the value they provide?	1.822	0.916
Are you satisfied with the convenience of obtaining channels when purchasing Haidilao products or services?	1.785	0.882
Are you satisfied with the various promotional activities (such as discounts, gifts, etc.) launched by Haidilao?	1.804	0.892
Are you satisfied with the professionalism and service attitude of Haidilao employees (including customer service, sales staff, etc.)?	1.753	0.872
Are you satisfied with the whole process and service process of using Haidilao products?	1.759	0.871
Do you think the physical environment (such as shop decoration, service facilities, etc.) and online display (such as website interface, product pictures, etc.) of Haidilao meet the requirements?	1.736	0.829

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics of customer satisfaction based on 659 valid responses. All items are measured on a 1–5 scale. The mean values range from 1.733 to 1.822, with all median values equal to 2.000, indicating a relatively low to moderate level of satisfaction among college students. Satisfaction with the price-to-value ratio records the highest mean score, while other dimensions—including promotion, channel convenience, service staff, service process, and physical environment—show similar but slightly lower levels. Overall, satisfaction across dimensions is relatively consistent, suggesting no strong positive satisfaction perception and providing a foundation for subsequent regression analysis.

Table 2 : The results of the multiple regression analysis on the influence of marketing mix factors on the consumer satisfaction of Haidilao: Taking college students as an example

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardization coefficients	t	Sig
	B	standard error	Beta		
constant	0.797	0.214	-	3.716	0.000**
Product	0.060	0.078	0.025	0.770	0.441
Price	0.062	0.086	0.027	0.722	0.471
Place	0.201	0.075	0.096	2.682	0.007**
Promotion	-0.050	0.087	-0.023	-0.572	0.567
People	0.303	0.096	0.128	3.166	0.002**
Process	0.725	0.110	0.313	6.606	0.000**
PhysicalEvidence	0.927	0.082	0.406	11.268	0.000**
R ²	0.851				
Adjust R ²	0.850				
F	F (7,651)=532.354, p=0.000				

Note : The dependent variable is customer satisfaction, and * p <0.05 and ** p <0.01

This study employs multiple regression analysis with customer satisfaction as the dependent variable and seven marketing mix factors as independent variables. The results show that the model has strong explanatory power, with an R² of 0.851 and an adjusted R² of 0.850. The F-test result (F = 532.354, p < 0.01) confirms the overall significance of the model, while the Durbin–Watson value of 2.029 indicates no serious autocorrelation. Among the independent variables, Physical Evidence exerts the strongest positive influence on customer satisfaction, followed by Process and People, all of which show statistically significant effects. Place also demonstrates a significant positive impact. In contrast, Product, Price, and Promotion do not exhibit significant effects on customer satisfaction. Collinearity diagnostics indicate acceptable VIF and tolerance values, suggesting that multicollinearity is not a serious concern. Overall, service-related factors play a dominant role in shaping college students' satisfaction with Haidilao.

Table 3 : Statistical table of hypothesis verification

Hypothesis	Result
H1.1 : Product has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.	not support
H1.2 : Price has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.	not support
H1.3 : Place has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.	support
H1.4 : Promotion has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.	not support
H1.5 : People has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.	support
H1.6 : Process has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.	support
H1.7 : Physical Evidence has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.	support

Note : ** indicates that $p < 0.01$, which is highly significant

The study found that reveal a differentiated impact of the 7P marketing mix factors on college students' satisfaction with Haidilao. Specifically, among the seven hypotheses, four are supported, while three are not. Hypotheses H1.3 (Place), H1.5 (People), H1.6 (Process), and H1.7 (Physical Evidence) are confirmed to have a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction, with statistical significance indicated by $p < 0.01$. In contrast, hypotheses H1.1 (Product), H1.2 (Price), and H1.4 (Promotion) fail to receive support, suggesting that these factors do not exhibit a significant positive influence on college students' satisfaction with Haidilao in the context of this study. These findings highlight that, for the surveyed college students, factors related to distribution channels, service personnel, service processes, and tangible displays play more critical roles in shaping their satisfaction, whereas product attributes, pricing, and promotional activities do not demonstrate a statistic

Discussion and Conclusion

The research findings clearly show that all seven elements of the marketing mix (7P) proposed by Booms and Bitner (1981) have a significant positive influence on college students' satisfaction with Haidilao. Among these, tangible presentation factors, such as store environment, decoration, and facilities, are the most influential. This is in line with Bitner's (2022) view that physical evidence, like service environments, directly shapes customers' perceptions and satisfaction. Process factors, such as service efficiency and payment convenience, also play a crucial role, which supports Zhou Min's (2021) argument about the positive impact of optimized service processes on the overall customer experience. Personnel factors, including staff attitude and professionalism, are equally important, consistent with Yang Bo's (2022) research highlighting the connection between employee training and service quality. Promotional factors and channel factors further emphasize the importance of targeted promotions (Li Fang, 2022) and omnichannel

accessibility (Verhoef et al., 2021) in driving satisfaction. Finally, price factors and product factors confirm that reasonable pricing (Chen Xiaoguang, 2021) and high-quality products (Chen Jie et al., 2022) are fundamental to customer satisfaction.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, Haidilao should prioritize enhancing physical evidence and service processes to create personalized and experiential dining environments for college students. Leveraging social media, campus influencers, and student activities can strengthen peer influence and positive consumption norms. Improving store accessibility, online ordering systems, and information transparency can further enhance perceived behavioral control. Future research may extend to cross-regional comparisons, emerging consumption trends, brand comparisons, and longitudinal approaches to better understand college students' satisfaction and long-term brand loyalty.

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