



Factors Influencing the Perception of Persuasion Strategies in Choosing English Language Institutes among Higher Vocational Certificate (PVS) Students under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in Bangkok

Witt Nithisakdadet and Patcharee Chayakornsopit

Faculty of Business Administration and Information Technology, Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-ok, Thailand

Email: Witt.nithisakdadet@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-5075-4539>

Email: patchree_ch@rmutto.ac.th, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5495-9440>

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Abstract

Background and Aims: English language proficiency is an important factor in enhancing the competitiveness of the vocational workforce, a key driver of the nation's industrial sector. In the current highly competitive market of English language institutes, understanding the factors that persuade Higher Vocational Certificate (PVS) students is crucial for strategic success. Therefore, this research aimed to study the influence of personal factors, service marketing mix factors (7Ps), and brand loyalty on PVS students' perception of persuasion strategies in choosing an English language institute.

Materials and Methods: This quantitative study collected data via questionnaire from a sample of 400 PVS students in Bangkok and analyzed the data using inferential statistics.

Results: The findings revealed that all four personal factors (gender, field of study, GPA, and family income) had a significantly different influence on the perception of persuasion strategies ($p < .05$). Multiple regression analysis indicated that service marketing mix factors explained 75.0% of the variance in the dependent variable (Adjusted $R^2 = .75$), with Price ($\beta = .504$) and Promotion ($\beta = .417$) having the strongest positive influence. Meanwhile, brand loyalty factors explained 73.0% of the variance (Adjusted $R^2 = .73$), with Behavioral Loyalty ($\beta = .598$) being the highest positive predictor. Interestingly, Cognitive Loyalty had a significant negative influence ($\beta = -.134$). Furthermore, the persuasion strategy that students valued the most was Reciprocity ($\bar{x} = 4.29$).

Conclusion: These results imply that practitioners should segment marketing by learner characteristics, focus on tangible value (price, promotion) and initial engagement, and be cautious with overt persuasion tactics toward rationally-convinced students.

Keywords: Perception of Persuasion Strategies; Choice of English Language Institute; Service Marketing Mix Factors; Brand Loyalty; Vocational Students

Introduction

In an era of global economic and social transformation, language skills—especially English—have become essential tools for communication, further education, and employment in the international labor market. English holds the status of a global language, with over 2 billion learners worldwide (British Council, 2023), and the trend of supporting English language learning continues to grow. This is reflected in the global investment in English education, which reached over USD 50 billion in 2023 and is expected to grow at a rate of 8% annually. Many countries, particularly in Asia, have undertaken significant education reforms—for example, Japan has increased English instruction hours in primary education, and China has increased its investment in English programs by over 15% in the past five years.



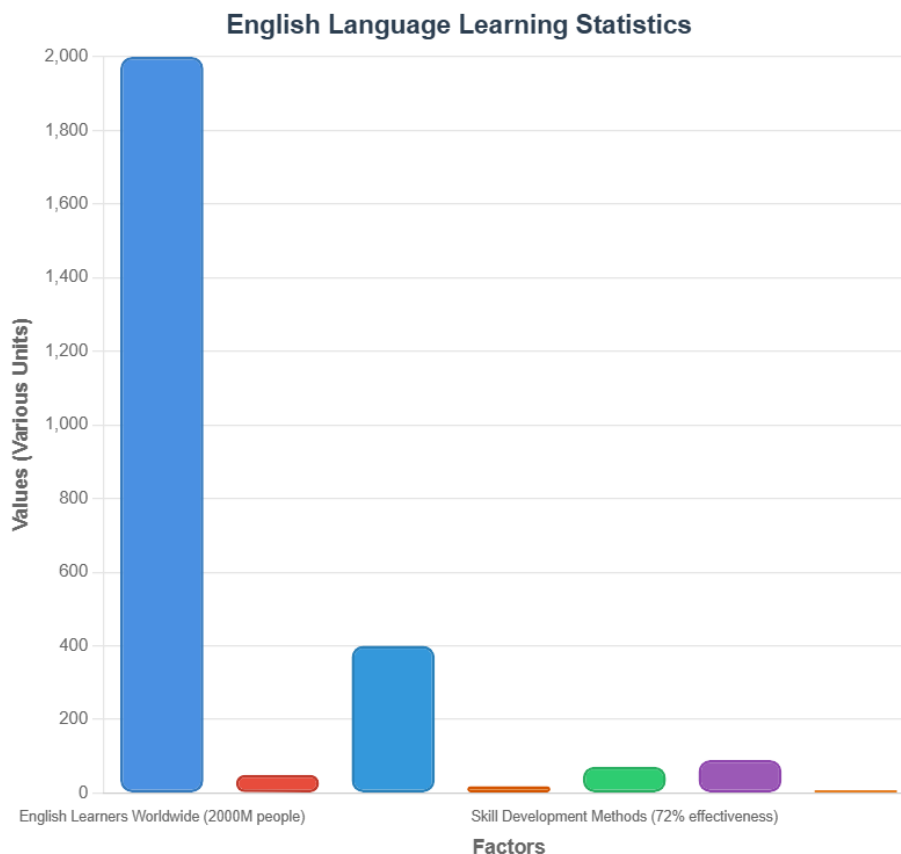


Figure 1 Global Trends in English Language Learning Support
Source: UNESCO (2023)

At the same time, online learning has grown rapidly, with the English language learning app market valued at USD 18.7 billion in 2023 (Technavio Report, 2024). A key driving force also comes from the business sector, where over 72% of multinational companies seek employees with English proficiency and are willing to offer higher salaries. This aligns with policies in several regions, such as the European Union's goal for 90% of its citizens to be able to communicate, as shown in Figure 1, which illustrates global trends in support for English language learning.

In Thailand, integration into the ASEAN Community and the global economy has increased the demand for English proficiency across all sectors. The trend in English language learning between 2023 and 2024 has changed significantly. Leading educational institutions have reported a rise in the number of learners—for example, Chulalongkorn University's Language Institute saw a 15–20% increase in learners, and Thammasat University reported over a 25% increase in online course enrollment compared to the pre-COVID-19 period. Major private language institutes such as the British Council and Wall Street English also experienced a recovery in student numbers of approximately 10–15% (British Council Thailand, 2023), as shown in Figure 2, which compares the growth rates of learners across various platforms.

English Language Learning Statistics in Thailand 2023-2024

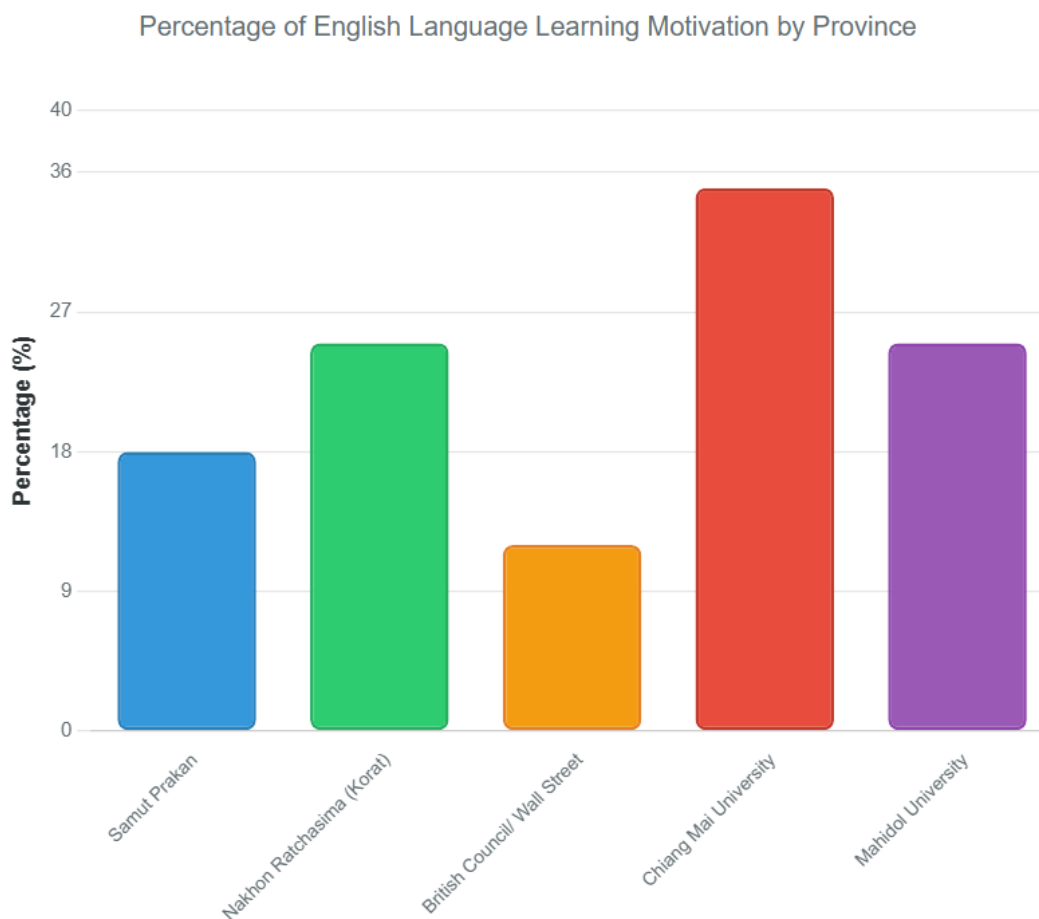


Figure 2 English Language Learning Statistics in Thailand, 2023–2024
Source: Office of the Vocational Education Commission (2024)

For vocational students—a key target group poised to enter the labor market shortly—the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), as the agency responsible for producing and developing skilled and technical manpower, places strong emphasis on the development of English language skills to enhance competitiveness. OVEC has implemented several concrete policies, such as establishing Excellence Language Centers in educational institutions, developing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curricula aligned with professional fields, building partnerships with enterprises and international organizations for internships and exchanges, organizing English language skill competitions, training English teachers, promoting the use of technology, setting English proficiency standards based on the CEFR framework, and integrating English into vocational subjects through Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2024). However, English instruction in vocational institutions may still fall short in fully meeting the specific needs of learners. This is especially true for students in the Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) level, who are at a critical transition point—preparing either to enter the workforce or pursue higher education. These students tend to have specific

goals and motivations for language development. As a result, many seek opportunities to enhance their English skills through private language institutes, which offer a wide range of competitive programs and diverse teaching approaches.

Although the English language institute market has grown and become highly competitive (Technavio, 2024), there remains a lack of in-depth understanding regarding the factors that influence the perception of persuasion strategies, which significantly affect learners' decisions when selecting an English language institute (Cialdini, 2021). This gap is particularly notable among vocational certificate (Diploma) students—a key target group with high potential due to their imminent entry into the labor market and their demand for job-relevant skills (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2024). The absence of such insights may cause language institute operators to miss critical business opportunities, as they are unable to effectively design curricula, services, or marketing communications that align with the needs and perceptions of this specific group (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Therefore, this study aims to investigate *the factors influencing the perception of persuasion strategies in the selection of English language institutes by Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) students under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region*. The goal is to generate knowledge and insights that will help language institute entrepreneurs better understand the perceptions and decision-making processes of their target customers. This understanding can, in turn, lead to the development of more precise and effective business strategies. In essence, this research serves as a guiding compass, enabling entrepreneurs to 'read the minds' of their target group—Diploma-level vocational students—and deeply comprehend their decision-making processes. Such insights can drive business decisions that yield both profitability and sustainable success.

Research Objective

1. To examine the personal factors that influence the perception of persuasion strategies in the selection of English language institutes among Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) students under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region.
2. To examine the influence of the 7Ps of service marketing mix on the perception of persuasion strategies in the selection of English language institutes among Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) students under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region.
3. To examine the influence of brand loyalty on the perception of persuasion strategies in the selection of English language institutes among Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) students under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region.

Literature review

Perception Theory

Perception refers to the process by which individuals select, organize, and interpret information received from the environment to create a meaningful picture (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). This aligns with Mowen and Minor (1998), who describe perception as the process through which an individual becomes exposed to information, pays attention to it, and interprets its meaning. The perception process consists of several key stages: selective exposure, selective attention, interpretation, and retention.

In summary, perception is a cognitive and interpretive process by which individuals make sense of the world around them. It plays a crucial role in shaping behavior and decision-making. Importantly, different individuals may perceive the same information or stimulus differently, depending on their personal experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and other influencing factors.

Persuasion Theory

Persuasion refers to a deliberate attempt to change the beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors of others through communication (O'Keefe, 2016). It is a process that occurs widely in society, ranging from interpersonal interactions to mass communication and marketing. Within the context of marketing and

consumer communication, persuasion serves as a crucial tool for attracting attention, providing motivating information, and encouraging purchasing decisions or desired actions.

Social psychology scholars have long studied the factors and mechanisms behind successful persuasion. One highly influential figure is Robert Cialdini, who synthesized extensive research and identified basic psychological principles that often trigger compliance or acceptance of proposals. Those being persuaded do not always process information thoroughly but may respond to cues or use heuristics in decision-making, which helps conserve cognitive energy (Cialdini, 2007, 2021; The World of Work Project). These principles have been widely applied in designing marketing strategies, sales techniques, negotiations, and various communication forms.

In summary, persuasion is a purposeful effort to change others' beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors through communication. It is a pervasive process occurring at levels from interpersonal exchanges to mass communication and marketing. In the marketing and consumer communication context, persuasion is an essential tool to capture interest, provide information, motivate, and stimulate purchasing decisions or desired behaviors.

Service Marketing Mix 7Ps

The 7Ps service marketing mix is a set of tools or marketing variables that service business organizations can control and adjust to create customer satisfaction and achieve the organization's marketing objectives (Kotler & Armstrong, 2023). Archarungroj, P. et al. (2017) explained that the 7Ps service marketing mix is a key strategy for service-oriented businesses, consisting of controllable marketing variables that must be used together to meet the target market's needs.

Meanwhile, Rungrueangphon (2020) described the 7Ps as essential components in executing marketing strategies for service businesses, consisting of seven elements that require integrated and consistent management. Samoejai (2013) explained that the 7Ps service marketing mix is a set of controllable marketing factors that service businesses must collectively use to achieve organizational objectives. Similarly, Navaratan Na Ayudhya (2020) defined it as controllable marketing tools or factors that businesses must use together to stimulate demand among target customers.

Meaksuntornakul (2011) emphasized that each component is interrelated and connected, while stating that the importance of the 7Ps service marketing mix lies in creating value and a positive experience for customers, which leads to loyalty and word-of-mouth promotion. Understanding and managing all seven components in an integrated manner is therefore crucial to the success of service businesses, including English language institutes, which face intense competition and must meet the diverse expectations of learners (service users).

In summary, the 7Ps service marketing mix is a set of controllable marketing tools or variables that service businesses can adjust to meet the needs of target customers and achieve marketing objectives. It consists of seven components that must be integrated harmoniously. Effective management of these elements is vital for the success of service businesses confronting high competition and diverse customer expectations.

The Context of Vocational Education Management and Foreign Language Promotion in Thailand

Vocational education or Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Thailand plays a crucial role in producing and developing skilled and technical manpower to meet labor market demands and drive the country's economic development. The primary agency responsible is the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), under the Ministry of Education (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2024). OVEC manages education at multiple levels, from the Vocational Certificate (VCC) to the Higher Vocational Certificate (HVC), which is equivalent to an associate degree and considered part of higher education (Office of the National Education Commission [ONEC], 2022).

Current vocational education policies focus on enhancing learner quality to align with the needs of target industries through work-integrated learning, such as the Dual Vocational Training (DVT) system,



and the development of 21st-century skills, including digital skills and foreign language skills, especially English (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2024). OVEC has launched the “English for All” policy to elevate English proficiency among vocational students nationwide, emphasizing communication skills essential for career readiness and integration into vocational curricula (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2020). Additionally, other agencies, such as the Ministry of Labor, collaborate to set guidelines for foreign language skill development that align with labor market needs (Ministry of Labor, 2021). The Thailand Professional Qualification Institute (Public Organization) has incorporated foreign language skills into professional qualification standards across several fields (Thailand Professional Qualification Institute, 2021), reflecting the importance of language skills in the overall Thai workforce.

In summary, the context of vocational education management and foreign language promotion in Thailand is vital for developing skilled and technical manpower to meet labor market demands and drive economic growth. The Office of the Vocational Education Commission is the key agency managing vocational certificate education, focusing on both professional and 21st-century skills. Foreign language skills, particularly English, are promoted through policies like “English for All,” which emphasize communication skills for career purposes and integration into vocational instruction. Collaboration with other agencies, such as the Ministry of Labor and the Professional Qualification Institute, further underscores the significance of foreign language skills as part of professional standards, highlighting their importance for the current Thai workforce.

Educational Marketing

Educational marketing is a strategic process used by educational institutions to understand the market, create value, and build relationships with stakeholders, especially target learners. Kotler and Fox (1995) define educational marketing as “the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully designed programs aimed at creating valuable exchanges with target markets to achieve institutional objectives.”

Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) summarized key points for marketing in higher education, which can be applied to language institutes, stating that institutions need to (1) understand the behavior and decision-making of stakeholders—not only learners but also parents and future employers; (2) develop a Unique Selling Proposition (USP) to differentiate themselves from competitors; and (3) establish a clear Market Positioning to communicate value and create a consistent image.

Maringe and Gibbs (2009) proposed the application of the 7Ps marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, Physical Evidence) in the educational context, which helps institutions analyze and manage the elements affecting learners’ perceptions and experiences comprehensively.

In summary, successful brand building in education remains challenging. A qualitative study of universities in the United Kingdom found that even universities considered to have “successful” brands face issues such as a lack of internal brand engagement and limited international resonance (O’Sullivan, H., et al., 2024).



Conceptual Framework

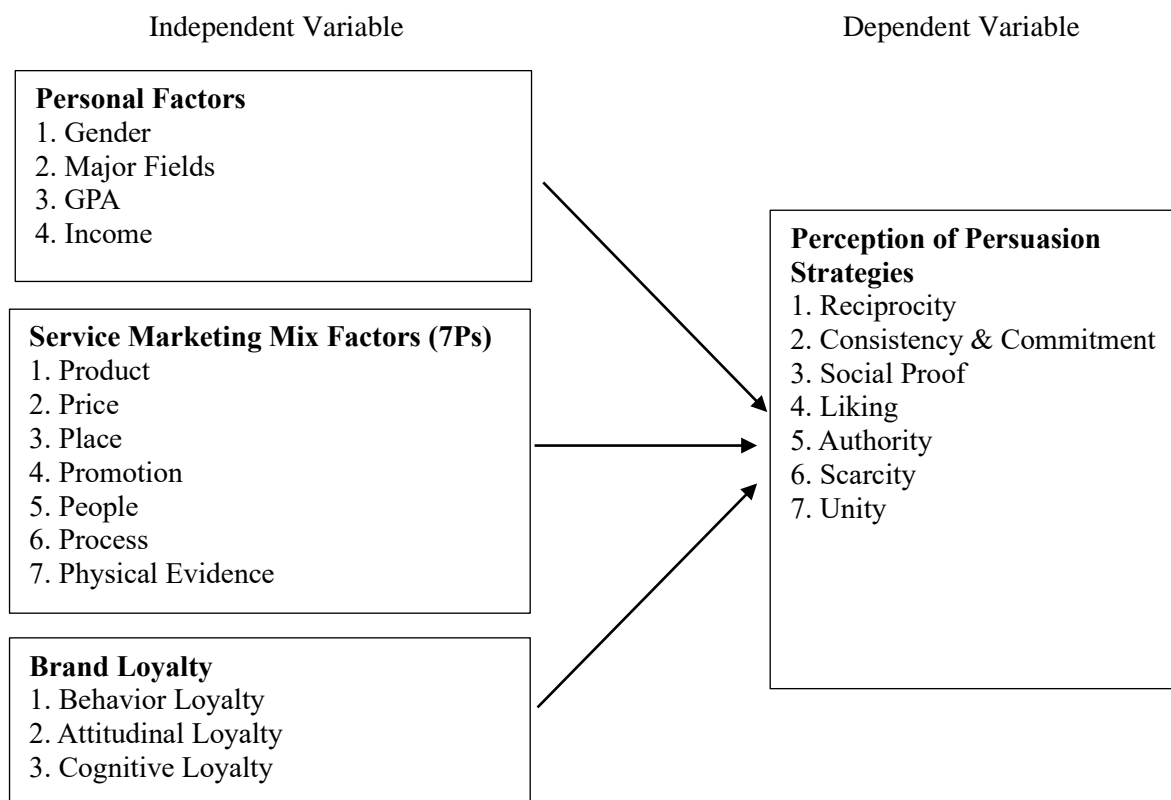


Figure 3 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Population

The population used in this study consists of Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) students currently studying in both public and private institutions under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area. A total of 13,895 students are enrolled across 16 institutions (Bangkok Vocational Education Office, 2025).

Sample

The sample in this study consists of Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) students whose qualifications match the defined population criteria. Since the total population is known ($N = 13,895$ students), the researcher determined the sample size using Taro Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1967), with a permissible margin of error (e) of 5%, corresponding to a 95% confidence level.

Data Collection Instrument

The instrument used for data collection in this study was a questionnaire, which was developed by the researcher based on a review of relevant literature, concepts, theories, and prior research. The purpose was to ensure that the instrument comprehensively covered all research objectives and variables. The design of the questionnaire structure and items was guided by principles of good questionnaire construction (Sreejesh et al., 2014; Cohen et al., 2007).

Instrument Quality Assessment

Content Validity

To assess content validity, the researcher submitted the draft version of the questionnaire to three experts with academic expertise in service marketing, consumer behavior, and educational assessment.

These experts reviewed each item for accuracy and relevance. The evaluation was conducted using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) to determine the alignment between questionnaire items and the research objectives (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977, as cited in Srisatitnarakun, 2010).

Reliability Testing

After revising the questionnaire based on expert feedback, the researcher conducted a try-out with a sample of 30 Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) students in Nonthaburi Province. These students were chosen because they shared similar characteristics with the intended study population. The data collected from the try-out were used to calculate the reliability of both the entire questionnaire and its sections using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951; as cited in Saiyos & Saiyos, 1995).

Analysis of General Information and Opinion Levels of the Sample Group

Qualitative variables, such as gender and field of study, were analyzed using frequency and percentage statistics to present the number and proportion of respondents in each category.

Ordinal variables, such as Grade Point Average (GPA) and average monthly household income (categorized into ranges), were also analyzed using frequency and percentage to show the distribution of respondents across different ranges. In addition, mean and standard deviation (S.D.) were presented to summarize the data.

Result

Analysis of Factors Influencing the Perception of Persuasion Strategies in Choosing English Language Institutes Among Higher Vocational Certificate (Diploma) Students under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area is as follows:

Analysis of Respondents' Personal Information

The analysis of the respondents' personal information is presented as follows:

Table 1 General Information of the Respondents.

General Information	Number	Percentage
1. Gender		
- Male	231	57.80
- Female	169	47.20
Total	400	100.00
2. Field of Study		
- Business Administration	108	27.00
- Home Economics	31	7.75
- Industrial Technology	139	34.75
- Information Technology	122	30.50
Total	400	100.00
3. GPA		
2.00-2.50	52	13.00
2.51-3.00	223	55.75
3.01-3.50	92	23.00
3.51-4.00	33	8.25
Total	400	100.00
4. Income		
- Less than 20,000 baht	90	22.50
- 20,000-30,000 baht	230	57.50
- 30,001-40,000 baht	53	13.25
- 40,001-50,000 baht	18	4.50
- More than 50,000 baht	9	2.25
Total	400	100.00

From Table 1, it was found that the majority of respondents were male, totaling 231 people (57.80%), while females accounted for 169 people (42.20%). Most were students in the Industrial field, numbering 139 people, representing 34.75%. Next was the Information Technology field with 122 people, or 30.50%, followed by Business Administration with 108 people, or 27.00%. The Home Economics had the fewest respondents, with 31 people, or 7.75%. In summary, the majority of the sample was from the Industrial field, reflecting the labor market demand trend in the industrial sector.

Most respondents had a GPA between 2.51 and 3.50, totaling 223 people (55.75%), followed by a GPA between 3.01 and 3.50 with 92 people (23.00%), a GPA between 2.00 and 2.50 with 52 people (13.00%), and a GPA between 3.51 and 4.00 with 33 people (8.25%), respectively. It can be concluded that most of the sample had a GPA between 2.51 and 3.50, which indicates that students in this GPA range tend to choose English language institutes. Therefore, English language institutes should develop strategies to persuade this target group.

Moreover, most respondents' family income was between 20,000 and 30,000 baht, with 230 people (57.50%), followed by income below 20,000 baht with 90 people (22.50%), income between 30,001 and 40,000 baht with 53 people (13.25%), income between 40,001 and 50,000 baht with 18 people (4.50%), and income above 50,000 baht with 9 people (2.25%) respectively. This information reflects the economic status of the respondents' families, mostly falling into the low to middle-income group.

Table 2 Number and percentage of the sample group classified by educational institution.

General Information	Number	Percentage
Kanchanaphisek Mahanakorn Technical College	31	7.75
Dusit Technical College	10	2.50
Thonburi Vocational College	7	1.75
Saowapha Vocational College	3	0.75
Chetupon Commercial College	20	5.00
Kanchanaphisek College of Goldsmith Arts	3	0.75
Don Mueang Technical College	50	12.50
Ratchasitharam Technical College	26	6.50
Kanchanaphisek Nong Chok Vocational College	57	14.25
Nawamintharachuthit Vocational College	5	1.25
Bangkok College of Fine Arts and Crafts	2	0.50
Min Buri Technical College	74	18.50
Bangkok Business and Tourism College	41	10.25
Iamla-or Vocational College	3	0.75
Intharachai Commercial College	8	2.00
Bangna Commercial College	60	15.00
Total	400	100.00

From Table 2, it was found that the majority of respondents were studying at Min Buri Technical College, totaling 74 people (18.50%), followed by Bangna Commercial College with 60 people (15.00%), Kanchanaphisek Nong Chok Vocational College with 57 people (14.25%), Don Mueang Technical College with 50 people (12.50%), Bangkok Business and Tourism College with 41 people (10.25%), and Kanchanaphisek Mahanakorn Technical College with 31 people (7.75%). Ratchasitharam Technical College had 26 respondents (6.50%), Chetupon Commercial College had 20 respondents (5.00%), Dusit Technical College had 10 respondents (2.50%), and Intharachai Commercial College had 8 respondents (2.00%). Thonburi Vocational College had 7 respondents (1.75%), and Nawamintharachuthit Vocational College had 5 respondents (1.25%). Saowapha Vocational College, Kanchanaphisek College of Goldsmith Arts, and Iamla-or Vocational College each had 3 respondents, accounting for 0.75% respectively. The

lowest number of respondents came from the Bangkok College of Fine Arts and Crafts, with only 2 people (0.50%).

This information reflects that the majority of the sample came from large educational institutions in urban areas of Bangkok, particularly in Min Buri, Bangna, and Nong Chok districts, where vocational institutions have a high student population. In contrast, specialized institutions focusing on specific skill sets, such as the Bangkok College of Fine Arts and Crafts and the College of Goldsmith Arts, had a smaller proportion of respondents, which may reflect differences in the student population size at each institution.

Analysis of Service Marketing Mix Factors (7Ps)

The analysis of data related to the 7Ps of the service marketing mix reveals the following results:

Table 3 Mean and standard deviation of overall service marketing mix (7Ps) factors.

Item	Service Marketing Mix (7Ps) Factors	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation	Rank
1	Product	3.89	0.70	High	6
2	Price	3.99	0.51	High	4
3	Place (Distribution Channels)	3.98	0.61	High	5
4	Promotion	4.12	0.54	High	3
5	People	4.14	0.55	High	2
6	Process	4.15	0.67	High	1
7	Physical Evidence	3.83	0.63	High	7
Overall Average		3.86	0.42	High	

The 7Ps of the service marketing mix are significantly important in influencing the perception of persuasive strategies in choosing an English language institute, with an overall high level of importance ($\bar{x} = 3.86$, S.D. = 0.42). The narrow standard deviation indicates a consistency in respondents' opinions.

When considered by individual elements, the process factor was rated as the most important ($\bar{x} = 4.15$, S.D. = 0.67), reflecting that learners value the efficiency of the service delivery process at language institutes. This was followed by the People factor ($\bar{x} = 4.14$, S.D. = 0.55), indicating the importance of the quality and competence of teaching staff. The Promotion factor ranked third ($\bar{x} = 4.12$, S.D. = 0.54), highlighting the significance of promotional and public relations activities.

Other factors such as Price ($\bar{x} = 3.99$, S.D. = 0.51), Place/Distribution Channels ($\bar{x} = 3.98$, S.D. = 0.61), Product ($\bar{x} = 3.89$, S.D. = 0.70), and Physical Evidence ($\bar{x} = 3.83$, S.D. = 0.63) were also rated at a high level of importance, though slightly lower than the top-ranked factors.

Analysis of Brand Loyalty Factors

The analysis of data related to brand loyalty factors reveals the following results:

Table 4 Mean and standard deviation of overall brand loyalty factors.

Item	Overall Factors of Brand Loyalty	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation	Rank
1	Behavioral Loyalty	3.90	0.59	High	3
2	Additudinal Loyalty	4.25	0.55	High	2
3	Conitive Loyalty	4.34	0.48	High	1
Overall		4.12	0.43	High	

The analysis of brand loyalty factors revealed that overall brand loyalty is highly important in influencing the perception of persuasive strategies in choosing an English language institute ($\bar{x} = 4.12$, S.D. = 0.43). When examined by dimension, the factor with the highest mean score was cognitive loyalty ($\bar{x} = 4.34$, S.D. = 0.48), rated at a high level. This was followed by attitudinal loyalty ($\bar{x} = 4.25$, S.D. = 0.55), also at a high level. The factor with the lowest mean score was behavioral loyalty ($\bar{x} = 3.90$, S.D. = 0.59), which was still rated at a high level. The standard deviations (S.D.) ranged from 0.48 to 0.59, which are relatively low, indicating consistency in respondents' opinions.

Analysis of Persuasion Strategies

The analysis of data related to persuasion strategies revealed the following results:

Table 5 Mean and standard deviation of overall persuasion strategies.

Item	Persuasion Strategies	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation	Rank
1	Reciprocity	4.29	0.50	High	1
2	Consistency and Commitment	4.13	0.34	High	4
3	Social Proof	4.20	0.38	High	2
4	Liking	4.20	0.49	High	3
5	Authority	4.04	0.62	High	7
6	Scarcity	4.04	0.52	High	6
7	Unity	4.05	0.46	High	5
Overall		4.17	0.43	High	

From Table 5, it was found that the overall persuasion strategies are rated at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.17$, S.D. = 0.43), with a standard deviation indicating consistency in opinions. When examined by individual aspects, the principle of Reciprocity was rated the highest in importance ($\bar{x} = 4.29$, S.D. = 0.50). This was followed by the principles of Social Proof ($\bar{x} = 4.20$, S.D. = 0.38) and Liking ($\bar{x} = 4.20$, S.D. = 0.49), which had the same mean scores. However, Social Proof had a lower standard deviation, indicating greater consensus among respondents.

The principle of Consistency and Commitment ranked fourth ($\bar{x} = 4.13$, S.D. = 0.34), with the lowest standard deviation, reflecting the highest agreement among respondents. The principles of Unity ($\bar{x} = 4.05$, S.D. = 0.46), Scarcity ($\bar{x} = 4.04$, S.D. = 0.52), and Authority ($\bar{x} = 4.04$, S.D. = 0.62) were also rated at a high level of importance, although ranked lower compared to the other factors.

Analysis of the Hypothesis Regarding the Influence of Personal Factors on the Perception of Persuasion Strategies in Choosing English Language Institutes Among Higher Vocational Certificate (HVC) Students Under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

The analysis of the hypothesis regarding the effects of personal factors revealed the following results:

Table 6 Results of the test on differences in personal factors influencing the perception of persuasion strategies – classified by gender.

Gender	Decision Overview		t	Sig.
	\bar{x}	S.D.		
Male	4.07	0.33	-8.83	0.00*
Female	4.39	0.40	-8.59	0.00*

*Significance level of 0.05

From Table 6, it was found that gender differences have a statistically significant influence on the perception of persuasion strategies at the 0.05 significance level. Female respondents had a higher average decision-making score than male respondents (Female: $\bar{x} = 4.39$, S.D. = 0.40; Male: $\bar{x} = 4.07$, S.D. = 0.33), indicating that females are more perceptive of persuasion strategies when choosing English language institutes compared to males.

Table 7 Results of the test on differences in personal factors influencing the perception of persuasion strategies – classified by field of study.

Source of Variance		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Reciprocity	Between Groups	14.78	3	4.93	22.75	0.00*
	Within Groups	85.73	396	0.22		
	Total	100.51	399			
Consistency and Commitment	Between Groups	1.20	3	0.40	3.46	0.02*
	Within Groups	45.80	396	0.12		
	Total	47.00	399			
Social Proof	Between Groups	2.66	3	0.89	6.51	0.00*
	Within Groups	53.89	396	0.14		
	Total	56.55	399			
Liking	Between Groups	10.86	3	3.62	17.09	0.00*
	Within Groups	83.93	396	0.21		
	Total	94.79	399			
Authority	Between Groups	5.79	3	1.93	5.10	0.00*
	Within Groups	149.90	396	0.38		
	Total	155.69	399			
Scarcity	Between Groups	6.20	3	2.07	8.14	0.00*
	Within Groups	100.49	396	0.25		
	Total	106.69	399			
Unity	Between Groups	13.47	3	4.49	25.67	0.00*
	Within Groups	69.29	396	0.18		
	Total	82.76	399			
Overview	Between Groups	5.75	3	1.92	13.58	0.00*
	Within Groups	55.86	396	0.14		
	Total	61.61	399			

*Significance level of 0.05

From Table 7, the results of the one-way ANOVA analysis revealed that different academic disciplines have a statistically significant effect on the overall perception of persuasion strategies at the 0.05 level ($F = 13.58$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), which supports the hypothesis.

When examining each aspect, it was found that academic disciplines significantly influenced the perception of persuasion strategies across all dimensions. The Unity principle showed the highest F value ($F = 25.67$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), followed by the Reciprocity principle ($F = 22.75$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Liking principle ($F = 17.09$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Scarcity principle ($F = 8.14$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Social Proof principle ($F = 6.51$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Authority principle ($F = 5.10$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), and the Consistency and Commitment principle, which had the lowest F value but was still statistically significant ($F = 3.46$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.02^*$).

These findings are consistent with the proposed hypothesis and indicate that academic discipline is a key factor influencing the perception of persuasion strategies in all dimensions. This suggests that persuasion strategies can and should be adapted appropriately according to students' academic disciplines to maximize communication and marketing effectiveness.



Table 8 Results of the analysis of differences in personal factors influencing the perception of persuasion strategies – classified by academic performance level

Source of Variance		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Reciprocity	Between Groups	14.30	3	4.77	21.89	0.00*
	Within Groups	86.22	396	0.22		
	Total	100.51	399			
Consistency and Commitment	Between Groups	1.09	3	0.36	6.12	0.01*
	Within Groups	45.91	396	0.12		
	Total	47.00	399			
Social Proof	Between Groups	2.64	3	0.88	6.47	0.00*
	Within Groups	53.91	396	0.14		
	Total	56.55	399			
Liking	Between Groups	12.62	3	4.21	20.28	0.00*
	Within Groups	82.17	396	0.21		
	Total	94.79	399			
Authority	Between Groups	2.97	3	0.99	6.56	0.00*
	Within Groups	152.72	396	0.39		
	Total	155.69	399			
Scarcity	Between Groups	4.69	3	1.56	6.07	0.00*
	Within Groups	102.00	396	0.26		
	Total	106.69	399			
Unity	Between Groups	7.03	3	2.34	12.24	0.00*
	Within Groups	75.74	396	0.19		
	Total	82.76	399			
Overview	Between Groups	9.90	3	3.30	20.72	0.00*
	Within Groups	63.05	396	0.16		
	Total	72.95	399			

*Significance level of 0.05

From Table 8, the results of the one-way ANOVA analysis indicate that differing levels of academic performance have a statistically significant effect on the overall perception of persuasion strategies at the 0.05 significance level ($F = 20.72$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), which supports the hypothesis.

When examining each aspect, it was found that different academic performance levels influenced the perception of persuasion strategies across all dimensions. The Reciprocity principle had the highest F value ($F = 21.89$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), followed by the Liking principle ($F = 20.28$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Unity principle ($F = 12.24$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Authority principle ($F = 6.56$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Social Proof principle ($F = 6.47$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Consistency and Commitment principle ($F = 6.12$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.01^*$), and the Scarcity principle, which had the lowest F value but was still within the boundary of statistical significance ($F = 6.07$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$).

These findings are consistent with the proposed hypothesis and demonstrate that academic performance level is a key factor influencing the perception of persuasion strategies in nearly all dimensions. This suggests the potential for tailoring persuasion strategies to different academic performance levels to maximize communication and instructional effectiveness.

Table 9 Results of the analysis of differences in personal factors influencing the perception of persuasion strategies – classified by family income

Source of Variance		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Reciprocity	Between Groups	11.04	4	2.76	12.18	0.00*

Source of Variance		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Consistency and Commitment	Within Groups	89.47	395	0.23		
	Total	100.51	399			
	Between Groups	1.72	4	0.43	3.76	0.00*
Social Proof	Within Groups	45.28	395	0.12		
	Total	47.00	399			
	Between Groups	1.57	4	0.39	2.82	0.02*
Liking	Within Groups	54.98	395	0.14		
	Total	56.55	399			
	Between Groups	8.93	4	2.23	10.27	0.00*
Authority	Within Groups	85.86	395	0.22		
	Total	94.79	399			
	Between Groups	5.67	4	1.42	3.74	0.01*
Scarcity	Within Groups	150.02	395	0.38		
	Total	155.69	399			
	Between Groups	8.27	4	2.07	8.30	0.00*
Unity	Within Groups	98.42	395	0.25		
	Total	106.69	399			
	Between Groups	6.50	4	1.63	8.42	0.00*
Overview	Within Groups	76.26	395	0.19		
	Total	82.76	399			
	Between Groups	4.43	4	1.11	7.64	0.00*
	Within Groups	57.19	395	0.15		
	Total	61.61	399			

*Significance level of 0.05

From Table 9, the results of the one-way ANOVA analysis revealed that different levels of family income have a statistically significant effect on the overall perception of persuasion strategies at the 0.05 level ($F = 7.64$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), which supports the hypothesis.

When examined by individual dimensions, it was found that varying levels of family income influenced the perception of persuasion strategies across all dimensions. The Reciprocity principle showed the highest F value ($F = 12.18$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), followed by the Liking principle ($F = 10.27$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Unity principle ($F = 8.42$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Scarcity principle ($F = 8.30$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Consistency and Commitment principle ($F = 3.76$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.00^*$), the Authority principle ($F = 3.74$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.01^*$), and the Social Proof principle, which had the lowest F value but was still statistically significant ($F = 2.82$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.02^*$).

These findings demonstrate that family income is an important factor influencing the perception of persuasion strategies across all dimensions. This suggests that persuasion strategies can be tailored appropriately based on family income levels to maximize the effectiveness of communication and influence within target groups.

Table 10 The results of hypothesis testing indicate that the service marketing mix factors (7Ps) positively influence the perception of persuasion strategies in the selection of English language institutes among Higher Vocational Certificate students under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in the Bangkok area, based on a multiple regression analysis.

Independent Variable	b	S.E.	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	.383	.158	-	2.419	.016*	-	-

Independent Variable	b	S.E.	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Product (X_1)	.077	.024	.092	3.221	.001*	.779	1.284
Price (X_2)	.351	.020	.504	17.375	.000*	.750	1.334
Place/Distribution Channel (X_3)	.101	.030	.128	3.415	.001*	.447	2.240
Promotion (X_4)	.327	.030	.417	10.729	.000*	.418	2.393
People (X_5)	.019	.019	.030	1.017	.310	.711	1.406
Process (X_6)	.028	.021	.042	1.324	.186	.622	1.608
Physical Evidence (X_7)	.032	.034	.031	.948	.344	.573	1.745
R = 0.87 R ² = 0.75 AdjustedR ² = 0.75 F = 170.68 Sig. = 0.00*							

From Table 10, the results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that the overall 7Ps service marketing mix factors can explain 75.00% of the variance in the perception of persuasion strategies in choosing English language institutes ($R^2 = 0.75$). The model is statistically significant and appropriate for predicting the dependent variable ($F = 170.68$, $Sig. = 0.00$).

Furthermore, no multicollinearity problems were found among the independent variables, as the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all variables ranged from 1.284 to 2.393, and Tolerance values ranged from 0.418 to 0.779.

At the 0.05 significance level, the analysis showed that Price ($\beta = 0.504$, $p = .000$), Promotion ($\beta = 0.417$, $p = .000$), Place/Distribution Channel ($\beta = 0.128$, $p = .001$), and Product ($\beta = 0.092$, $p = .001$) had statistically significant positive influences on the perception of persuasion strategies. Among these, Price had the strongest influence, followed by Promotion, Place, and Product, respectively.

In contrast, People ($p = .310$), Process ($p = .186$), and Physical Evidence ($p = .344$) did not have a statistically significant influence on the perception of persuasion strategies in this model.

Summary of Research Findings

Based on the analysis of the personal information of the respondents, who were 400 Higher Vocational Certificate (HVC) students under the Office of the Vocational Education Commission in the Bangkok area, the key characteristics of the sample group can be summarized as follows:

Gender: The majority of the respondents were male (231 students or 57.8%), while female respondents accounted for 169 students (42.2%).

Field of Study: Most respondents were enrolled in Industrial Technology (139 students or 34.75%), followed by Information Technology (122 students or 30.50%), Business Administration (108 students or 27.00%), and the least represented field was Home Economics, with 31 students (7.75%).

Academic Performance: The majority had a cumulative GPA (GPAX) in the range of 2.51–3.00 (223 students or 55.75%), followed by those in the 3.01–3.50 range (92 students or 23.00%).

Family Income: Most respondents reported an average monthly family income in the range of 20,000–30,000 baht (230 students or 57.50%), followed by those with income below 20,000 baht (90 students or 22.50%).

Analysis of Service Marketing Mix Factors (7Ps)

The analysis of respondents' opinions on the 7Ps service marketing mix revealed that, overall, these factors were considered highly important ($\bar{x} = 3.86$, $S.D. = 0.42$). This indicates that Higher Vocational Certificate (HVC) students place strong importance on these factors in perceiving persuasion strategies used by English language institutes.

When examining the mean scores for each dimension, ranked from highest to lowest, the results are as follows:

Process was rated as the most important factor ($\bar{x} = 4.15$, S.D. = 0.67), with the highest-rated item being “A clear and easy-to-understand system for tracking learning progress” ($\bar{x} = 4.29$).

People ranked second ($\bar{x} = 4.14$, S.D. = 0.55), with the highest-rated item being “The ratio of native-speaking teachers to students” ($\bar{x} = 4.19$).

Promotion ranked third ($\bar{x} = 4.12$, S.D. = 0.54), with the top-rated item being “Offering free trial classes or orientation activities before enrollment” ($\bar{x} = 4.23$).

Price ranked fourth ($\bar{x} = 3.99$, S.D. = 0.51), with the highest-rated item being “Special discounts or promotions for HVC students” ($\bar{x} = 4.16$).

Place (Distribution Channel) ranked fifth ($\bar{x} = 3.98$, S.D. = 0.61), with the highest-rated item being “The institute’s location is convenient for commuting” ($\bar{x} = 4.11$).

Product ranked sixth ($\bar{x} = 3.89$, S.D. = 0.70), with the highest-rated item being “Certification of the curriculum by a credible organization” ($\bar{x} = 4.03$).

Physical Evidence was rated the lowest among the 7Ps ($\bar{x} = 3.83$, S.D. = 0.63), with the top-rated item being “Clear, attractive, and well-designed instructional materials and handouts” ($\bar{x} = 3.89$).

In summary, HVC students placed the greatest importance on factors directly related to the service experience, especially processes with clear systems and procedures, and people, particularly the quality of instructors. This was followed by promotion, particularly tangible offerings such as free trial lessons. These findings suggest that the quality of service delivery and interaction with staff are key priorities that English language institutes should focus on.

Discussion

Academic Performance (GPA)

The analysis found that academic performance is the most influential personal factor in students’ overall perception of persuasive strategies ($F = 20.72$, $p < .001$), with statistically significant differences observed in nearly all aspects of persuasion. This suggests that students with different GPA levels tend to process marketing messages and respond to them differently. These findings align with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which posits that individuals process information via two main routes: the central route, involving careful and thoughtful consideration, and the peripheral route, which relies on external cues or heuristics (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). An interesting aspect of the findings is that the relationship between GPA and perception is not linear—students with the highest GPAs (3.51–4.00) did not always report the highest levels of perception across all strategies. A more complex pattern emerged. For example, with the Reciprocity and Liking principles, students with GPAs in the 3.01–3.50 and 2.00–2.50 ranges showed significantly higher perceptions than other groups. This could be interpreted as students in the 3.01–3.50 range being more inclined to assess tangible value—such as free trial lessons—before making decisions, while those in the 2.00–2.50 group might be more responsive to simple motivators like “free offers” or the “friendly personality of instructors,” which are easily understood and influence decisions more immediately.

In contrast, for the Authority principle, a clear trend was observed: the higher the GPA, the stronger the perception of authority-based strategies. Students with GPAs between 3.01 and 4.00 reported significantly higher awareness of this principle than their peers. This may be because high-achieving students tend to place more value on expertise and professional qualifications. These findings are consistent with the research of Sinthavorn (2015), who found that vocational students with different demographic characteristics (including academic performance) considered different factors when deciding to study English. However, this study extends that understanding by demonstrating that differences occur not only in decision-making but also in the perception of persuasive strategies, which precedes the decision stage.

Therefore, it can be concluded that academic performance is closely related to differences in information processing styles and learning motivation. Language institutes should avoid using a one-size-fits-all communication strategy. Instead, marketing messages should be tailored to different student segments. For instance, emphasizing credibility and instructor qualifications (Authority) may appeal more

to high-performing students, while promoting tangible benefits (Reciprocity) and friendly interactions (Liking) may be more effective for students in other GPA ranges.

Program Type

The findings revealed that program type is a highly influential factor. Students from different academic programs exhibited statistically significant differences in their overall perception of persuasive strategies ($F = 13.58$, $p < .001$). Notably, significant differences were found across all seven principles of persuasion. The analysis consistently showed that students in business administration (or commerce) programs reported higher mean scores in their perception of persuasive strategies than those in other fields, especially in the principles of Reciprocity, Social Proof, Liking, and Unity. This can be explained by the fact that students in these programs are directly exposed to concepts in marketing, management, and consumer behavior, resulting in greater sensitivity and awareness of these strategies compared to others.

In summary, program type serves as a clear differentiator in how students perceive persuasive strategies. Therefore, effective communication and persuasive messaging should be segmented according to program type.

Therefore, it can be concluded that academic performance levels are associated with different information processing styles and learning motivations. Language institutes cannot use a one-size-fits-all communication strategy for everyone, but should instead design differentiated marketing messages to reach each learner group. For example, emphasizing the credibility and qualifications of instructors (Authority) for high-performing students, and highlighting offers that provide immediate tangible value (Reciprocity) and friendliness (Liking) for students in other performance levels.

Family Income

The analysis confirmed that family income significantly influences the overall perception of persuasive strategies ($F = 7.64$, $p < .001$). Differences were found across all seven persuasive strategy aspects, indicating that economic status is a crucial factor determining learners' criteria for consideration and responses to marketing messages. This may relate to purchasing power, value perception, and access to different information.

This finding can be discussed in terms of the group of students being the most “value-conscious,” possessing the ability to spend on additional education while carefully considering value. Consequently, they respond particularly well to strategies that offer upfront value (Reciprocity), impressive environments and personnel (Liking), and a sense of community (Unity), as these factors reinforce confidence that their educational investment is worthwhile and a sound decision. Conversely, the lowest-income group may face budget constraints as a primary factor in decision-making, making other persuasive strategies less important. Meanwhile, the highest-income group may emphasize other factors, such as academic excellence or exclusivity, more than general marketing strategies. These results align with the studies by Prayalo et al. (2018) and Wongmahased (2020), which found that socioeconomic status affects perceptions of marketing communication strategies. This research provides additional insight that such influences are not always uniform; the middle-income group emerges as the most responsive target across several dimensions.

Therefore, the strategic recommendation for language institutes is to avoid assuming that high-income learners respond best to all strategies. Instead, attention should be focused on the middle-income learners as the primary potential target group. Strategies should be designed to emphasize tangible value creation, relationship building, and strong community development to specifically persuade this group.

Gender

The analysis found that gender significantly influences the perception of persuasive strategies ($p < .05$). Female respondents had a notably higher mean perception score ($\bar{x} = 4.39$) compared to males ($\bar{x} = 4.07$). This finding indicates that females have greater sensitivity and tend to be more aware of persuasive strategies than males.

This difference can be discussed from social psychology and communication perspectives, suggesting that socialization processes and differing social role expectations lead females to develop more refined skills in observing and interpreting social cues, non-verbal communication, and emotional perception. These abilities make females more likely to process marketing messages embedded with psychological strategies effectively, especially those relying on interpersonal relationships, such as the principles of Liking and Social Proof. These findings align with numerous previous studies indicating gender differences in marketing message perception, which found females have a greater ability to perceive and understand persuasive strategies in digital media compared to males.

Therefore, in communication and marketing strategy planning, language institutes should consider gender-based perceptual differences among target groups. Communication that emphasizes relationship-building, friendly atmospheres, testimonials, or emotionally connected storytelling may be particularly effective with female learners. Conversely, communication targeting male learners may require more straightforward presentations focusing on clear practical benefits to maximize persuasive effectiveness across all target groups.

The Influence of the Service Marketing Mix Factors (7Ps)

1. Price ($\beta = .504$): This is the most influential factor. This finding reflects the characteristics of the sample group, which consists mainly of vocational diploma students whose families mostly have middle-level incomes. As a result, they are price-sensitive and place high importance on value for money. Strategies directly related to price, such as discounts, special promotions, or installment payment plans, are therefore tangible messages perceived as the clearest and most powerful persuasive efforts

2. Promotion ($\beta = .417$): This is the second most influential factor, which is predictable because promotion is the most direct channel for communicating persuasive strategies. Whether it's using the principle of Social Proof by showcasing alumni success, the principle of Reciprocity through free trial lessons, or the principle of Scarcity via limited-time offers, these are clear, persuasive techniques easily perceived by learners.

3. Place ($\beta = .128$) and Product ($\beta = .092$): Although these two factors have less influence than the first two, they remain significant. It can be discussed that these two factors serve as the "credibility foundation." That is, a convenient location or an accessible learning format (Place) and certified, quality courses (Product) create the credibility that supports and strengthens the impact of price and promotion strategies. Without good products and appropriate channels, discounts or advertising might not be effective.

Recommendations

Based on the research summary and previous discussions, the researcher offers strategic recommendations that may benefit English language institute operators in planning marketing and communication strategies to effectively reach and persuade vocational diploma-level learners. Additionally, suggestions for future research are provided as follows:

1. The research found that Price and Promotion are the most important factors influencing vocational diploma students' perception of persuasive strategies. Institutes should design pricing strategies that are accessible and offer good value, along with suitable promotions and payment options. Additionally, marketing promotions should emphasize the principle of reciprocity, such as free trial classes, and social proof, such as reviews and success statistics, to enhance credibility and attract this group of learners.

2. The research reveals a complex relationship between loyalty and the perception of persuasive strategies. Institutes should promote behavioral loyalty through initial engagement activities and build attitudinal loyalty by fostering a positive atmosphere and maintaining teaching quality. At the same time, they should be cautious when applying strategies to groups with high cognitive loyalty, focusing on enhancing value rather than direct persuasion.

3. The research shows that personal factors affect how strategies are perceived. Institutions should tailor messages by field of study, with business students responding to diverse strategies and industrial

students valuing instructor expertise. They should also consider academic performance and income to target value or credibility accordingly.

4. Although People, Process, and Physical Evidence do not have a direct influence on the regression model, learners still place a high level of importance on these factors. They are therefore considered "hygiene factors" or expected standards. Institutions should consistently maintain high quality in these areas, as any shortcomings could negatively impact decision-making, even if they are not direct persuasive factors.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Qualitative research, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups with vocational students, is recommended to explore the reasoning behind their perceptions and decision-making. A key area of interest is understanding why cognitive loyalty negatively affects the perception of persuasive strategies, especially to uncover underlying attitudes or skepticism among brand-loyal learners.

2. Experimental research is recommended to compare the effectiveness of different persuasive strategies, such as using A/B testing on websites or ads to test Social Proof (e.g., showing the number of learners) versus Scarcity (e.g., limited seats). This approach provides concrete data on which strategy best increases enrollment intent.

3. Although People and Process do not directly influence strategy perception, they are rated as highly important. Future research should explore their role as hygiene factors that may impact post-purchase satisfaction and long-term word-of-mouth, both crucial outcomes in service marketing.

4. Future studies should replicate this research with other populations, such as university students, working adults, or learners from different provinces, to compare whether the factors and persuasive strategy influences found among vocational students in Bangkok apply similarly or differently to other groups.

5. A longitudinal study is recommended to track the same group of learners over time, examining how brand loyalty and perceptions of persuasive strategies evolve from pre-enrollment through their studies and post-graduation. This approach offers a complete view of the learner-institution relationship.

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