The Impact of Marketing Mix Factors on customer, Satisfaction with Didi Chuxing in Weihai

Abstract

With the rapid development of China's ride-hailing industry, Didi Chuxing has become a leading platform, yet it faces fierce market competition and growing demands for service quality from users. User satisfaction is a core indicator of the platform's competitiveness and sustainable development, and the marketing mix is widely recognized as a key determinant of user satisfaction. However, there is a lack of systematic research on how Didi Chuxing's specific marketing mix elements jointly influence user satisfaction and their internal mechanisms. This study aims to explore the relationship between Didi Chuxing's marketing mix and user satisfaction. First, it identifies key influencing factors from seven aspects: product variety and service quality, pricing and subsidy strategies, channel convenience and technological support, promotional activities and brand communication, service staff professionalism, service process smoothness and consistency, and physical evidence. Second, it quantifies the contribution of each marketing mix factor to user satisfaction based on user experience data and clarifies their internal relationships. Finally, it proposes targeted optimization strategies for existing problems.This research not only reveals the mechanism of Didi Chuxing's marketing mix affecting user satisfaction but also provides practical guidance for ride-hailing platforms to optimize resource allocation, enhance competitiveness, and meet diversified user needs.

Keywords: Ride-hailing Platform; Marketing Mix; User Satisfaction.

Introduction

With the rapid development of the sharing economy, Didi Chuxing, as a leading enterprise in China's shared mobility sector, has experienced rapid growth and achieved remarkable accomplishments since its establishment in 2012. However, Didi Chuxing also faces numerous challenges, such as intensifying market competition, diversified consumer demands, and changes in the policy and regulatory environment. Against this backdrop, improving user satisfaction has become a critical approach for Didi Chuxing to respond to market competition and policy changes.

This study focuses on the Marketing Mix Theory (7Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence), and conducts an in-depth investigation into the service characteristics of Didi Chuxing and their mechanism of influence on user satisfaction. The research significance is specifically reflected in the following aspects: enriching the marketing mix theory and deepening

research on user satisfaction; enhancing the competitiveness of Didi Chuxing and promoting the improvement of service quality in the shared mobility industry; boosting urban transportation efficiency and the development of green travel, while helping to protect consumer rights and interests; and supporting the standardized development of the industry.

Research objectives

Identify Key Influencing Factors: Explore how Didi Chuxing's performance in various aspects such as product variety and service quality, pricing and subsidy strategies, convenience of channels and technological support, promotional activities and brand communication.

Literature Review

Marketing mix

McCarthy (1960) first put forward the concept of marketing mix with the 4 P (product, price, Placeand promotion). He defined the marketing mix as "the combination of strategic and tactical means used in marketing to meet consumer needs and achieve business objectives" (McCarthy, 1960, p. 37). This theory provides a systematic framework for marketing practice and helps enterprises to formulate and implement marketing strategies.

Booms and Bitner (1981) extended the 4P model in Marketing of Services by introducing 3P (people, process and physical evidence) in service marketing to form the 7P theory. They define a marketing mix as "all strategic elements including product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence that work together to meet customer needs and improve service quality" (Booms & Bitner, 1981, p. 48). This extended theory is particularly applicable to the service industry, taking into account the special nature of services and the management of customer touchpoints.
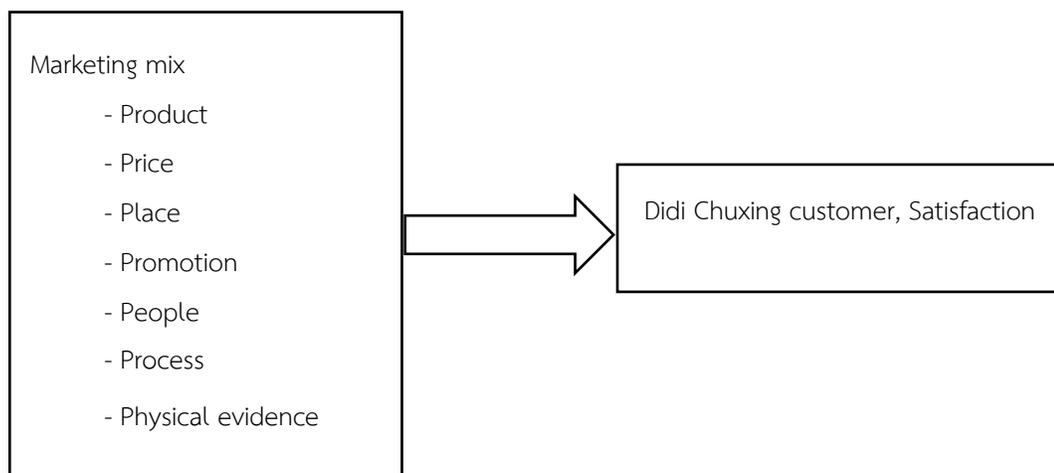
Customer,s' satisfaction

Customer'satisfaction refers to the evaluation of a consumer's overall experience after purchasing and using a product or service, typically reflecting the gap between the consumer's expectations and actual experience. In simple terms, customer, satisfaction is the degree to which a product or service meets the consumer's needs and expectations. High satisfaction means that consumers perceive the product or service as exceeding their expectations, whereas low satisfaction

usually indicates that the product or service has failed to meet their needs or expectations (Oliver, 2014).

According to Oliver (2014) and Klaus and Maklan (2013), customer, satisfaction plays a crucial role in the consumer decision-making process. It not only affects purchasing behavior but also determines brand loyalty, consumer recommendations, and a company's long-term profitability. Specifically, the level of customer, satisfaction directly influences behaviors such as repurchase intentions, brand loyalty, and word-of-mouth communication, thus having a profound impact on a company's market competitiveness and brand value (Klaus & Maklan, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

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│ Marketing mix           │                    │                                  │
│     - Product           │                    │                                  │
│     - Price             │                    │                                  │
│     - Place             │ ═══════════════▶   │ Didi Chuxing customer, Satisfaction │
│     - Promotion         │                    │                                  │
│     - People            │                    │                                  │
│     - Process           │                    │                                  │
│     - Physical evidence │                    └──────────────────────────────────┘
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METHODOLOGY

This paper studies the influence of marketing mix theory on customer, satisfaction. This study adopts quantitative research method and convenience sampling method to collect data. Through an online questionnaire, the research surveyed 400 customer,s who had used "Didi Chuxing" in Weihai City, Shandong province in 2024, as the original data for analysis.

Population and Sampling

The population of this study is the customer,s of "Didi Chuxing" in Weihai City in 2024.

Sample size

In 2024, Didi Chuxing had about 1.74 million customer,s in Weihai City. The accuracy level formula of 95% confidence (e=0.05) proposed by Yamane (1967) was used to determine the sample size. Therefore, the sample group is 400 customer,s of "Didi Chuxing" in Weihai City in 2024.

Research Tools

This study is a quantitative study. Using online questionnaire as a tool, 400 Didi Chuxing customer,s were collected in Weihai City in 2024, and the Chinese version of the questionnaire was distributed among the respondents.

Result

Based on an analysis of survey data from 408 Didi Chuxing users, this study systematically explores the impact of seven factors in the marketing mix—product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence—on customer satisfaction. The results indicate that all factors exert a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction, albeit with varying degrees of influence.

Demographic characteristics reveal that the sample is dominated by young people aged 19–25, with males accounting for 80.15%, civil servants 44.85%, a monthly ride frequency of mostly less than 2 times, and a per-trip cost concentrated below 15 yuan. This user profile provides an important context for interpreting the results.

Overall, to enhance customer satisfaction, Didi Chuxing should prioritize optimizing its promotion strategies and place services, while ensuring smooth service processes and price competitiveness. Continuous improvements in product quality and personnel services are also necessary to comprehensively elevate the user experience.

Table 1 Multiple regression analysis

	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardization coefficients	t	p
	B	standard error	Beta		
constant	0.014	0.289	-	0.049	0.961
Product	0.297	0.119	0.121	2.502	0.013*
price	-0.097	0.139	-0.039	-0.700	0.484
Place	0.326	0.125	0.134	2.610	0.009**
Promotional	0.968	0.109	0.415	8.874	0.000**
Personal	0.148	0.143	0.060	1.030	0.303
Process	0.118	0.153	0.049	0.772	0.440
Visual presentation	0.705	0.080	0.278	8.872	0.000**
R^2	0.921				
Adjust R^2	0.919				
F	F (7,400)=663.201,p=0.000				
D-W price	2.014				

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

In terms of explanatory power, the promotion factor demonstrates the strongest effect, with an adjusted R² of 0.856, indicating that it explains 85.6% of the variance in customer satisfaction. The standardized Beta coefficient of 0.925 suggests that promotional activities have the most prominent impact on user satisfaction. The place factor follows closely, with an adjusted R² of 0.853 and a Beta value of 0.924, signifying that APP convenience and vehicle dispatch speed are critical aspects influencing the user experience. The explanatory power of the process factor is 0.818, slightly higher than the 0.812 of the price factor, showing that the efficiency of the service process, problem-solving capabilities, pricing rationality, and the attractiveness of promotions all exert a strong influence on satisfaction. The explanatory power of the product and people factors is relatively close, at 0.798 and 0.793 respectively, indicating that service adequacy, vehicle environment, driver attitude, and customer service performance are also key user concerns. The physical evidence factor has a relatively lower explanatory power of 0.757; however, APP interface design and vehicle appearance still have a significant positive effect on user satisfaction.

Table 2 hypothesis verification

Hypothesis	Multiple Regression Result (β, p)	Verification Result
H1	Supported (0.121, p = 0.013)	Supported
H3	Supported (0.134, p = 0.009)	Supported
H4	Supported (0.415, p = 0.000)	Supported
H7	Supported (0.278, p = 0.000)	Supported

Conclusions

Based on a sample of 408 Didi Chuxing users in Weihai, this study explores the impact of the 7Ps marketing mix on user satisfaction, with key results as follows:

Intensity of Influencing Factors: All seven marketing mix factors exert a significant positive effect on user satisfaction, but with varying degrees of influence. Among them, promotional factors (e.g., coupons, discounts) and place services (APP usability, vehicle dispatch efficiency) are the most critical drivers, with standardized Beta coefficients of 0.925 and 0.924 respectively. Process factors (smoothness of service processes, problem-solving capabilities) follow closely (Beta=0.905), while product, price, people, and physical evidence factors also have significant effects but relatively weaker influence.

User Profile Characteristics: The sample is dominated by young adults aged 19–25 (51.47%), with males accounting for 80.15% and civil servants being the largest occupational group (44.85%). Most users take fewer than 2 rides per month, with a single trip cost of less than 15 yuan. This group is price-sensitive and places high value on service convenience and promotional activities.

Theoretical and Practical Value: Theoretically, it extends the 7Ps theory to the shared mobility sector, verifying its applicability in technology-driven service scenarios. Practically, it identifies core directions for Didi to optimize services, providing a reference for improving service quality across the industry.

Discussion

Consistency with Existing Literature: The findings align with studies on the application of the 7Ps theory in multiple industries (e.g., hospitality, catering), confirming that product quality, price fairness, and service staff attitude jointly determine satisfaction, reinforcing the theory's generalizability.

Innovative Contributions: It is the first empirical study applying the 7Ps theory to shared mobility in mid-sized cities like Weihai, revealing the unique performance of marketing mix dimensions in technologized, real-time service scenarios (e.g., the enhancement of place factors by APP functions). It also proposes differentiated optimization directions for young and low-frequency users, filling gaps in regional and segmented group research.

Future Research

1. Conduct cross-regional comparative studies covering first-tier, second-tier cities, and rural areas to analyze the impact of regional differences on the effectiveness of marketing mix factors.

2. Adopt a longitudinal research design to track the long-term effects of market competition, technological innovation (e.g., autonomous driving), and policy adjustments on user satisfaction.

3. Explore the interaction effects between marketing mix factors and the impact of sustainable development initiatives (e.g., promotion of new energy vehicles) on user satisfaction.

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