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Research Article

ปัจจัยที่ส่งผลต่อความตั้งใจในการซื้อคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์

Factors affecting online language course purchase intention

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บทคัดย่อ

สืบเนื่องมาจากความเจริญก้าวหน้าของอินเทอร์เน็ตและเทคโนโลยี ธุรกิจคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์ได้มีการเจริญเติบโตและพัฒนาอย่างต่อเนื่องในปัจจุบัน อีกทั้งธุรกิจคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์ยังเป็นธุรกิจที่มีโอกาสทางธุรกิจอย่างมากในการสร้างผลประโยชน์และกำไร อย่างไรก็ตามการที่จะส่งเสริมและพัฒนาธุรกิจนี้ได้ยังคงมีอุปสรรคบางประการ เพราะยังขาดองค์ความรู้และความเข้าใจที่จะนำมาต่อยอดและประยุกต์ใช้ในการพัฒนาธุรกิจประเภทนี้ นอกจากนี้ปัจจัยต่าง ๆ ที่อาจจะส่งผลต่อความตั้งใจในการซื้อคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์ยังมีการระบุชี้ชัดน้อยมาก ดังนั้นจุดประสงค์ของการศึกษานี้จึงมุ่งที่จะระบุปัจจัยที่อาจจะส่งผลต่อความตั้งใจในการซื้อคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์ พร้อมทั้งพัฒนาและส่งเสริมธุรกิจนี้ไปพร้อม ๆ กัน รูปแบบโครงสร้างของการศึกษารั้งนี้ได้ถูกพัฒนาขึ้นจากองค์ความรู้จากการศึกษาก่อนหน้าซึ่งประกอบไปด้วย 4 ทฤษฎีที่สำคัญ ได้แก่ ความตั้งใจในการซื้อ การยอมรับเทคโนโลยี การตลาดแบบปากต่อปากออนไลน์ และการโฆษณาบนสื่อสังคมออนไลน์ การศึกษานี้ใช้รูปแบบการวิจัยเชิงปริมาณในการดำเนินการวิจัย โดยเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลจากผู้ตอบแบบสอบถาม 424 คน ผลการศึกษพบว่า การรับรู้ถึงประโยชน์และการรับรู้ถึงความง่ายด่ายในการใช้งานส่งผลกระทบบวกต่อความตั้งใจในการซื้อคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์ผ่านทัศนคติที่มีต่อคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์ ในขณะที่การได้ตอบและการรับรู้ถึงความเสี่ยงของส่งผลกระทบเชิงบวกต่อความตั้งใจในการซื้อคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์ผ่านความคาดหวังของลูกค้า นอกจากนี้การตลาดแบบปากต่อปากออนไลน์ก็ยังส่งผลกระทบในระดับปานกลางต่อความตั้งใจในการซื้อคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์เช่นเดียวกัน

คำสำคัญ: ความตั้งใจในการซื้อคอร์สเรียนภาษาออนไลน์; การยอมรับเทคโนโลยี; การตลาดแบบปากต่อปากออนไลน์; การโฆษณาบนสื่อสังคมออนไลน์

Abstract

According to the advancement of the Internet and technologies, online language course business is constantly growing across the world presently. Furthermore, this business also has numerous opportunities to gain enormous profits in the business context. Nevertheless, enhancing this business has a few barricades because the knowledge that can be applied to escalate this business is still lacking. Moreover, factors that can affect online language purchase intention have almost never been identified before. Therefore, this study aims to identify factors that can affect online language course purchase intention and enhance online language course purchase intention simultaneously. The theoretical model has been developed based on four important theories, which are the online purchase intention theory, the technology acceptance model (TAM), the electronic word of mouth (eWOM) theory, and the social media advertising theory. This study applied the quantitative method to find out the research results and used research questionnaires to gather data from 424 participants from various sources. The research results illustrated that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use have positive effects on online language course purchase intention through attitudes toward online language courses. Meanwhile, interactivity and perceived relevance have positive effects on online language course purchase intention through customer expectancy. Moreover, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) also has moderate positive effects on online language course purchase intention.

Keywords: Online language Course Purchase Intention; Technology Acceptance Model; Electronic Word of Mouth; Social Media Advertising

Introduction

According to the rapid development of the Internet and technologies, people turn to use the Internet and technologies for various purposes such as searching for information, doing transactions, purchasing products or services, online learning, etc. Especially in the business context, the internet and technologies are crucial tools that have been broadly applied to enhance and develop businesses. They can facilitate improving organizations and companies' competition because they are powerful media for promoting products and services [1]. Furthermore, the Internet and technologies are also important equipment in the education context. They have been widely used to teach and study online because they are convenient to use and allow people to access learning anywhere and anytime. [2]

Online language courses are related to both business and educational contexts. Moreover, they also need to rely on the internet and technologies to carry out their processes [3]. Electronic commerce (e-Commerce) is still growing continuously. Meanwhile, the growth rate of online language learning, especially in Thailand is growing consistently and dramatically as well [4]. Therefore, online

language course business which is one part of both electronic commerce (e-Commerce) and online language learning tends to become popular business and gain more revenue and profits in the future.

Nevertheless, enhancing online language course business is interrupted by a few barricades such as identifying factors that can affect online language course purchase intention has almost never been done before because some previous studies such as [5] and [6] applied online purchasing and online learning knowledge to carry out their studies for other purposes. Consequently, it is essential to find out factors that can affect and enhance online language course purchase intention because they can be applied to stimulate customers or learners to purchase online courses.

Therefore, this study aims to identify factors that can affect online language course purchase intention by integrating four important theories which are the online purchase intention theory, the technology acceptance model (TAM), the electronic word of mouth (eWOM) theory, and the social media advertising theory. Furthermore, this study aims to enhance online language course purchase intention by applying the present significant findings.

This article will start with an introduction, followed by objectives, literature review, methods, results, conclusions and discussion, and references, respectively. All components will be described thoroughly in each chapter of this article.

Literature Reviews

Online Purchase Intention

Online purchase intention was defined as a situation in which a customer is willing and intends to engage in an online transaction [7] and the degree to which a customer is willing to buy a product through an online store [6]. Online purchase intention can be led by the perception of using the Internet and technologies [8] because it needs to rely on the Internet and technologies to purchase products and services via online platforms, applications, and devices. [9]

Attitude is a factor that plays an important role toward online purchase intention [10]. If customers have a positive attitude toward online purchasing, they will intend to shop online. In contrast, if customers have a negative attitude toward online purchasing, they will not intend to shop online as well [11]. Therefore, customers will intend to purchase products or services increasingly if they have a positive attitude toward online purchasing. [6]

Moreover, online purchase intention also has a relationship with actual online purchase behavior. Online purchasing rates will increase if customers have positive attitudes and intend to purchase products or services. Therefore, online purchase intention is a crucial factor that can be applied to anticipate the customers' actual online purchase behavior. [12]

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is the theory that was applied based on the theory of reasoned action (TRA) [13]. This theory has five important variables which are perceived ease of use (PEOU), perceived usefulness (PU), actual usage, attitudes toward using, and behavioral intention to use. Perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU) are the most significant factors in this theory. Perceived

ease of use (PEOU) is defined as the individual's perception that using the new technology will be free of effort. Meanwhile, perceived usefulness (PU) is defined as the individual's perception that using the new technology will enhance or improve users' performance. [14]

Online purchase intention is considered a part of the technology acceptance model (TAM) because online purchasing needs to rely on the Internet and technologies. Moreover, the technology acceptance model (TAM) is also broadly used to examine the intention to purchase products or services online [15]. Perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU) which are the significant variables in the technology acceptance model (TAM) have significant effects on the intention to purchase products or services through attitude. [11]

The benefits of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) are diverse because it can be applied in many contexts such as electronic commerce (e-Commerce) and electronic learning (e-Learning). Perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU) which are the important variables in the technology acceptance model (TAM) are also important factors in electronic learning (e-Learning) as well. Therefore, the technology acceptance model (TAM) could be applied to examine the intention to learn languages online of customers or learners. [16]

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company which is made available to a multitude of people and institutes via the internet. It has an important role in the purchasing process because it can influence purchasing decisions of customers and it takes place in many ways such as web-based opinion platforms, discussion forums, boycotting websites, news groups, etc. [17]

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has a potential effect on the customers' decision process, and it also influences choosing products or services of customers by using information online recommendation sources [18] because it provides either positive or negative data as customers might either suggest or warn others about products or services based on their experiences. [19]

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is an important factor that can establish good images and trust of brands. Meanwhile, brand image and trust can affect customer purchase intention simultaneously. Customers are increasingly likely to purchase products or services if they believe in positive opinions and experiences that are shown on online platforms or social media [20]. Therefore, if the sharing of positive opinions or experiences on online platforms or social media increases, the intention to purchase products or services will increase too. [21]

Social Media Advertising

Social media advertising is any piece of online content designed with a persuasive intent and/or distributed via social media platforms that capacitates internet users to access, share, engage with, add to, and co-create [22]. It is a significant source for seeking information about products or services before making decisions to purchase [23]. Customers prefer to select products or services that they are interested in if they feel satisfied after accessing information through social media advertising. [24]

There are various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Google, etc. that customers can use to access products or services' information [5]. Customers' perceptions and attitudes toward social media advertising such as performance expectancy (PE), hedonic motivation (HM), habit (HB), interactivity (INTER), informativeness (INF), and perceived relevance (PRR) can affect customer online purchase intention [5, 25]. Nevertheless, this study applied just three significant elements, which are performance expectancy (PE), interactivity (INTER), and perceived relevance (PRR) to emphasize the existence of social media advertising's effect on online purchase intention.

Proposed Model and Research Hypotheses

Proposed Model

The proposed model has been developed based on four important theories. This study applied perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU) and Attitudes (ATT) from the technology acceptance model (TAM), electronic word of mouth (eWOM), trust (TRUST), and image (IMAGE) from the electronic word of mouth (eWOM) theory including interactivity (INTER), perceived relevance (PRR), and performance expectancy (PE) from the social media advertising theory to develop the proposed model. Therefore, the proposed model can be illustrated in Figure 1.

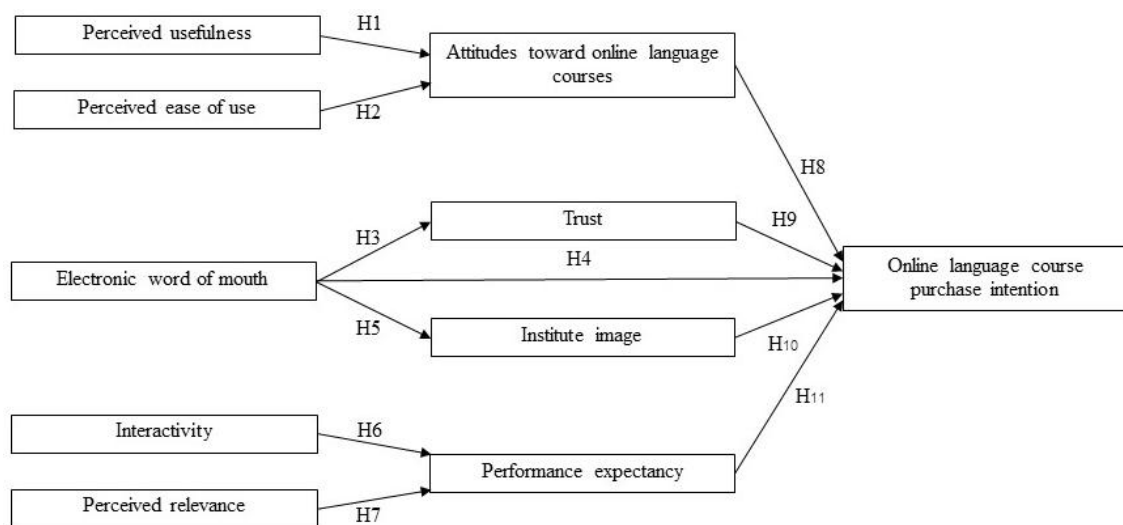


Figure 1 Proposed model.

Research Hypotheses

This study has 11 significant hypotheses which can be presented as follows.

1. H1: Perceived usefulness (PU) positively affects attitudes toward online language courses.
2. H2: Perceived ease of use (PEOU) positively affects attitudes toward online language courses.
3. H3: Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) affects trust.
4. H4: Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) affects online language course purchase intention.
5. H5: Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) affects institute image.

6. H6: Interactivity (INTER) positively affects performance expectancy (PE).
7. H7: Perceived relevance (PRR) positively affects performance expectancy (PE).
8. H8: Attitudes toward online language courses affect online language course purchase intention.
9. H9: Trust positively affects online language course purchase intention.
10. H10: Institute images affect online language course purchase intention.
11. H11: performance expectancy (PE) positively affects online language course purchase intention.

Objectives

This study has 2 important objectives that can be explained meticulously as follows.

1. This study aims to identify factors that can affect online language course purchase intention.
2. This study aims to enhance online language course purchase intention.

Methods

Research Philosophy and Research Design

This study applied the postpositivist worldview and the quantitative methods to carry out the research procedure because they are scientific methods and it is also more appropriate with perspective research which aims to investigate factors that can affect online language course purchase intention.

Measurement

There are 62 questions in the questionnaire. Demographic information such as gender, occupation, education, revenue, and marital status has been adopted to illustrate respondents' profiles and characteristics. Meanwhile, all significant elements in this study have been applied from some previous studies consisting of the online purchase intention theory, the technology acceptance model (TAM), the electronic word of mouth (eWOM) theory, and the social media advertising theory. Furthermore, the 7-Point Likert is a significant tool for explaining the range of participants' opinions. The definitions of each scale can be defined as follows.

1. 1 is strongly disagree
2. 2 is disagree
3. 3 is slightly disagree
4. 4 is Neutral / Undecided
5. 5 is slightly agree
6. 6 is agree
7. 7 is strongly agree

Population and Sample

The targeted population in this study is people who have been proved by the screening question that they intend to purchase online language courses and learn languages online. This study gathered data from 5 online language institutes which are Inspire English, Direct English, Engoo, Globish, and Perfect English.

The population in this study is the infinite population because it is difficult to identify the finite population. Therefore, this study selected a 95% confidence level and applied $e_m = \sigma/10$. According to the formula, the sample size of this research is shown below.

$$\begin{aligned} Z_c &= 1.96 \\ e_m &= \sigma/10 \\ \text{So, } \sigma/e_m &= 10 \\ \text{Therefore, } N &= (Z_c \sigma/e_m)^2 \\ &= (1.96 \times 10)^2 \\ &= 19.6^2 \\ &= 384.16 \\ &= 384 \end{aligned}$$

Consequently, this study had to collect data from at least 384 respondents.

Data Collection

Online questionnaires that were developed from various previous studies are significant tools to gather data from respondents. They have been developed from Google Forms and distributed to respondents who intended to purchase online language courses and learn languages online during January – March 2023 from diverse online language institutes via 3 online platforms which are Facebook, Line, and Gmail.

Analysis Technique

IBM SPSS Statistics 27 program is an important tool that was used to illustrate demographic information such as gender, age, education, occupation, revenue/salary, and marital status of respondents in this study.

Regarding descriptive analysis, the mean and standard deviation are significant tools to explain the attributes of collected data. The mean was adopted to measure the central tendency that gives an indication of the average value of a distribution of figures. Meanwhile, the standard deviation was adopted to measure the variability in statistics.

This study applied structural equation modeling (SEM) to test hypotheses and find out the research results because it can be used to clarify relationships in the structured model. Therefore, IBM SPSS Amos 27 program is a significant tool that was used to carry out the study's procedure.

Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a crucial tool that was applied to assess the validity of the data. Various tests such as composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and factor loadings were used to testify the validity. Meanwhile, Cronbach's alpha (α) test was a significant tool to assess the reliability of data in this study and it must be higher than 0.7.

Results

According to the sample size formula, this study had to collect data from at least 384 respondents. Nevertheless, this study attempted to collect data as much as possible. Consequently, this study has finally collected data from 424 respondents and the results in this study can be explained below.

Respondent Demographic

According to Table 1, the results showed that the gender of respondents is equal. Meanwhile, other demographics of respondents are diverse. Most of the respondents are 21-30 years old (N = 219, 51.7%) followed by 31-40 years old (N = 176, 41.5%), graduated bachelor's degree (N = 297, 70%) followed by master's degree (N = 101, 23.7%), work as a bureaucrat (N = 178, 42%) followed by staff/employee (N = 106, 25%), get salary 20,000-30,000 Thai Bath (N = 128, 30.2%) followed by 10,000-20,000 Thai Bath (N = 123, 29%), and most of them are single (N = 308, 72.6%) followed by get married (N = 109, 25.7%).

Table 1 Demographic of respondents.

Measures	Items	Frequencies	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	221	52.1
	Female	203	47.9
Ages	20 years old or under	15	3.5
	21-30 years old	219	51.7
	31-40 years old	176	41.5
	41-50 years old	11	2.6
	51-60 years old	3	0.7
Education	Below bachelor's degree	22	5.2
	Bachelor's degree	297	70.0
	Master's degree	101	23.7
	Doctoral degree	4	0.9
Occupation	Housewife	1	0.2
	Bureaucrat	178	42.0
	Farmer	1	0.2
	Business owner	56	13.2
	Seafarer	1	0.2
	Student	73	17.2
	Staff/Employee	106	25.0
	University staff	1	0.2
	State enterprise employee	1	0.2
	Freelance	6	1.4

Table 1 Demographic of respondents (Continued).

Revenue/Salary	10,000 Thai Baht or Below	52	12.3
	10,001-20,000 Thai Baht	123	29.0
	20,001-30,000 Thai Baht	128	30.2
	30,001-40,000 Thai Baht	57	13.4
	40,001-50,000 Thai Baht	26	6.1
	50,001 Thai Baht or Higher	38	9.0
Marital statuses	Single	308	72.6
	Married	109	25.7
	Divorced	5	1.2
	Have a relationship	1	0.2
	Have a relationship but still not married	1	0.2

Descriptive Analysis

According to Table 2, the result illustrated that the majority of variables have a level of agreement as “Agree” except perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived relevance (PRR) which have a level of agreement as “Slightly Agree” as shown below.

Table 2 Descriptive analysis.

Variable	Frequencies	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation	Level of Agreement
Perceived usefulness (PU)	424	1	7	5.49	1.374	Agree
Perceived ease of use (PEOU)	424	1	7	5.26	1.427	Slightly Agree
Attitudes toward online language courses (ATT)	424	1	7	5.54	1.307	Agree
Electronic word of mouth (eWOM)	424	1	7	5.36	1.360	Agree
Trust (TRUST)	424	1	7	5.32	1.314	Agree
Institute image (IMAGE)	424	1	7	5.50	1.333	Agree
Interactivity (INTER)	424	1	7	5.35	1.307	Agree
Perceived relevance (PRR)	424	1	7	5.15	1.336	Slightly Agree
Performance expectancy (PE)	424	1	7	5.35	1.360	Agree
Online language course purchase intention (OPI)	424	1	7	5.30	1.382	Agree

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

According to Figure 2 and Table 3, the results revealed that nine hypotheses in the proposed model are supported at the 0.05 level of significance, which are H1-H8, and H11 except two hypotheses that are not supported at the 0.05 level of significance, which are H9 and H10. Therefore, the results of path analysis and hypotheses testing could be concluded and shown below.

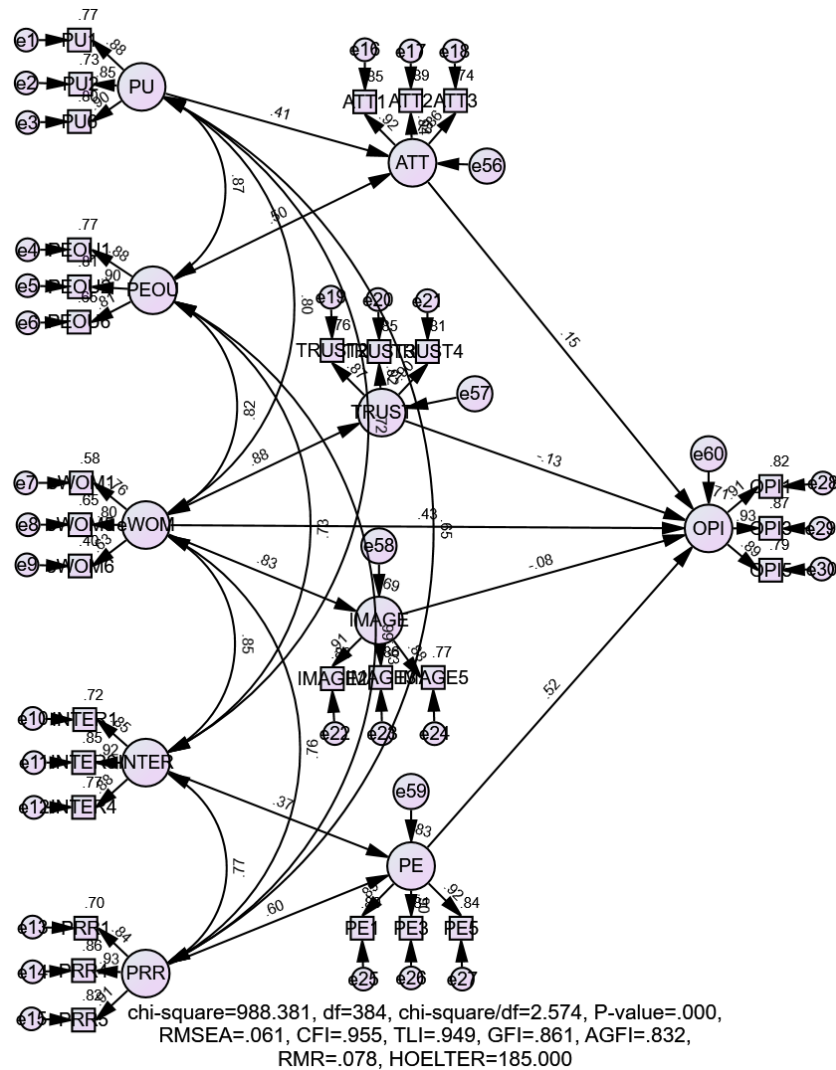


Figure 2 Results of the structural model.

Table 3 Hypotheses testing.

Hypotheses	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Estimate	P-Value	Results
H1	Perceived usefulness (PU)	Attitudes toward online language courses (ATT)	0.414	0.001	Supported
H2	Perceived ease of use (PEOU)	Attitudes toward online language courses (ATT)	0.497	0.001	Supported

Hypotheses	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Estimate	P-Value	Results
H3	Electronic word of mouth (eWOM)	Trust (TRUST)	0.875	0.001	Supported
H4	Electronic word of mouth (eWOM)	Online language course purchase intention (OPI)	0.431	0.007	Supported
H5	Electronic word of mouth (eWOM)	Institute image (IMAGE)	0.832	0.001	Supported
H6	Interactivity (INTER)	Performance expectancy (PE)	0.369	0.001	Supported
H7	Perceived relevance (PRR)	Performance expectancy (PE)	0.596	0.001	Supported
H8	Attitudes toward online language courses (ATT)	Online language course purchase intention (OPI)	0.153	0.004	Supported
H9	Trust (TRUST)	Online language course purchase intention (OPI)	-0.134	0.129	Not supported
H10	Institute image (IMAGE)	Online language course purchase intention (OPI)	-0.076	0.280	Not supported
H11	Performance expectancy (PE)	Online language course purchase intention (OPI)	0.518	0.001	Supported

Regarding table 4, the results showed that almost fit indices of the structural model reach the benchmark point. There is just only one index which is Chi-square (χ^2) does not reach the benchmark point. However, it is just the minority because the majority of fit indices of the structural model have a good fit. Nonetheless, it is not necessary that in case of model fit the Chi-square (χ^2) (P-value) must always be 0.05 or higher because it depends on many factors such as the number of items and the number of groups of samples. Consequently, it could be concluded that the default model could be acceptable.

Table 4 Model Fit Indices.

Fit Indices	Level of Acceptance	Measurement Model Results
Chi-square (χ^2)	P-value \geq 0.05	0.000
GFI	> 0.80	0.861
AGFI	> 0.80	0.832
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.061
RMR	< 0.08	0.078
CFI	\geq 0.90	0.955
TLI	\geq 0.90	0.949
Chi-square (χ^2)/Df	< 2.00 - <5.00	2.574

Conclusions and Discussion

Conclusion

This study demonstrated that some theories such as the online purchase intention theory, the technology acceptance model theory, the electronic word of mouth theory, and the social media advertising theory concordant online language course purchase intention. Perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) positively affect online language course purchase intention (OPI) through attitudes toward online language courses (ATT). Meanwhile, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) positively directly affects online language course purchase intention (OPI). Furthermore, interactivity (INTER) and perceived relevance (PRR) positively affect online language course purchase intention (OPI) through performance expectancy (PE).

Discussion

This study aims to explore factors that can affect online language course purchase intention. According to in depth reviewing previous studies, nine important variables namely perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU), attitudes toward online language courses (ATT), electronic word of mouth (eWOM), trust (TRUST), institute image (IMAGE), interactivity (INTER), perceived relevance (PRR), and performance expectancy (PE) are able to affect online language course purchase intention. Therefore, these variables have been applied to the proposed model.

According to study results, this study found that some demographics of respondents such as age, education, occupation, revenue/salary, and marital status seem to have relationships with online language course purchase intention because some customers or learners are likely to purchase online language courses than others if they have some demographics. This finding is in line with Peña-García et al. (2020) [6] who emphasized demographic information in their study.

Regarding the examination in the proposed model, perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) positively affect online language course purchase intention (OPI) through attitudes towards online language courses (ATT). This finding is in line with Zarrad and Debabi (2012) [10]. Meanwhile, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has a positive direct effect on online language course purchase intention (OPI). This finding is in line with Rahman et al. (2020) [20]. Furthermore, interactivity (INTER) and perceived relevance (PRR) can positively affect online language course purchase intention through performance expectancy (PE). This finding is in line with Alawan (2018) [5].

Therefore, factors namely perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU), attitudes toward online language courses (ATT), electronic word of mouth (eWOM), trust (TRUST), institute image (IMAGE), interactivity (INTER), perceived relevance (PRR), and performance expectancy (PE) have an effect on online language course purchase intention. Furthermore, demographic information is also important to on online language course purchase intention as well.

Theoretical Contribution

This study proved the existence of the technology acceptance model (TAM), electronic word of mouth (eWOM), and social media advertising on online language course purchase intention.

The important factors in the conceptual model were extracted from previous studies such as Alawan (2018) [5], Zarrad and Debabi (2012) [10], Davis (1989) [14], and Rahman et al. (2020). [20]

This study also proposed an efficient solution to examine online language course purchase intention. These contributions are very beneficial to researchers in the related area of interest. Because this study furthers the knowledge of online purchase intention in different dimensions which has never been done before.

Practical Implications

This study provided productive information for marketers who are interested in this area because this study identified crucial factors that marketers ought to focus on if they intend to create their marketing strategies for online language courses. Therefore, these study findings can be applied to enhance the online language business which is growing consistently recently.

Furthermore, the important findings in this study are not finite just only in online language course business because the benefits of these findings are diverse, and they can also be applied to enhance business competition in various contexts and dimensions. Any business company can enhance its business competition ability and performance based on significant findings and knowledge in this study.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Even if the background theories in these studies are diverse and they have been proven that they appropriate for examining online language course purchase intention, there are a few theories such as the subjective norm theory [12] including some factors in social media advertising theory such as hedonic motivation (HM), informativeness (INF), and habit (HB) [5] that can be applied to further studies in the future.

Furthermore, this study focused on just only people who intend to purchase online language courses, especially English language in Thailand. Therefore, it would be a great benefit if further studies apply this study concept to other dimensions.

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