

Effect Service innovation stimulus, Employee engagement, and Service innovation on Marketing Performance of Pharmacy Retail Business in Thailand

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Abstract

It is a fact that when the employees are inspired by the company's leaders to think creatively, they have self-confidence as well as resources to pursue the ideas. The role of innovation, as well as engagement, is very important for the employees at all levels. The given study is designed to examine the impact of service innovation stimulus on marketing performance of the retail pharmacies firms in Thailand while with the help of mediating the role of service innovation and moderating role of employee engagement. Moreover, as there are various sampling techniques used for the analysis and collection of data, in the following study the convenience sampling technique is used. The data has been collected through a survey questionnaire. It is important to mention that the response rate was generated through a pencil and paper questionnaire. Under the analysis section, different techniques are used such as KMO, SEM, Bartlett test, demographic profile, convergent and discriminate validity test, etc. Whilst the results and tables of findings have illustrates that there is a significant impact of service innovation stimulus on the marketing performance of the pharmaceutical companies. At the same time, service innovation and employee engagement both have a positive moderating and mediating role in this regard. Therefore, in the end, it is recommended that future researchers or studies should focus on other different variables to make research more significant and novel.

Keywords: Service innovation, marketing performance, Service innovation Stimulus, Employee engagement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rising importance of marketing performance have drawn the attention of research and policy makers towards the service innovation by adopting innovated technology and transformation leadership (Afriyie, Du, & Musah, 2019; Widiana, 2017). Extant literature on implication of innovative activities proposed their role in enhancing customers and developing new services. The innovated product of services that is produced in firm required adequate resources, capital, research and development spending, and effective marketing strategies to introduced in market

(Azadegan & Dooley, 2010; Zontek, 2016). Moreover, innovative stimulus based on technology and human related factors also facilitates the adoption sophisticated marketing strategy of innovated product and services. The purpose of this research is to empirically explore the impact of service innovation stimulus on marketing performance of retail pharmacies in Thailand, by considering the moderating and mediating role of service innovation and employee engagement, respectively. Building upon the innovative stimulus theory, Tajeddini and Martin (2020) have identified the mediating role of service

innovation on relationship between marketing and financial performance of tourism firm. The scope of the study is limited to the retail pharmacies in Thailand. The retail businesses of pharmaceutical firms are referred to the sale of medicines or drugs to customers for their personal use. The pharmaceutical industry of Thailand has considerable share in its GDP. According to country's anecdotal evidence the market size of pharmaceutical firm is 4.6 billion USD in 2016, which is project to increase to 6.3 billion USD by 2021 and 8.4 billion USD by 2026.

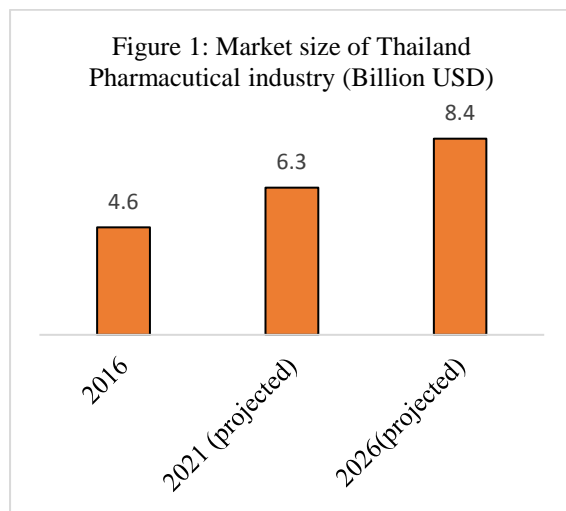


Table 1 indicates that the leading pharmaceutical companies in Thailand are Pfizer which constitutes about 18.1 percent share in total revenue of industry, Novartis which has 14.2 percent share in total revenue and GSK which has 11.1 percent share in total revenue of industry. Thus, the study adds into the literature by considering the role of service innovative stimulus in retail pharmacies in their marketing performance. The study fills gap in literature by empirically investigating the moderating role of employee engagement in reinforcing service innovation through innovation stimulus.

Companies in Thailand	Share in revenue
Pfizer	18.1
Novartis	14.2
GSK	11.1
Sanofi-Aventis	9.9
Roche	9.8
Better pharma	8.6

Mega lifescience	6.5
Berlin Pharma	5.9
Merck limited	5.7
Takeda	5.1
Astrazeneca	5

The study has following research objectives:

- To empirically explore the impact of service innovation stimulus on marketing performance of retail pharmacies in Thailand
- To empirically explore the mediating impact of service innovation on relationship between service innovation stimulus and marketing performance of retail pharmacies in Thailand
- To empirically explore the moderating impact of service innovation on relationship between service innovation stimulus and marketing performance of retail pharmacies in Thailand

Existing literature on marketing and introduction of product has emphasized the role of innovation in marketing and business performance (Han, Kim, & Srivastava, 1998; Sandvik & Sandvik, 2003). Few studies has supported the contribution of services innovation stimulus in developing new products and service innovation, that consequently reinforce marketing performance of firms (Tajeddini & Martin, 2020). Extant studies on service innovation stimulus has enhanced the implications for future research. The aims of this study is to add into literature along with significant practical and theoretical implications. This manuscript comprised on five sections such as introduction, literature review, data and methodology, empirical analysis, and conclusion and discussion

2. Literature Review and Theoretical background

The service innovation theory is drawn on the theories of economics that emphasized on the innovation in services enhance the performance of various dimension of firm (Moreira, Kuk, Melo Albuquerque, Guimaraes, & Castro Lucas De Souza, 2018). Various studies and leading

research on innovation theory has unanimously supported its role in reinforcing the performance of company. The service innovation literature has highlighted its linkages with knowledge management, customer's satisfaction, performance, innovation capabilities, ICT, innovation typologies and innovative design and development. Service innovation is defined as the innovative performance of service providers (Agarwal, Erramilli, & Dev, 2003; Kerdpitak, 2022a). According to, Clarke, Murphy, and Adler (2016) the innovation in service enhance the competitiveness of firm by facilitating firm to generate unique and efficient product and services

2.1 Service innovation Stimulus and Marketing performance

Various studies have conducted on the innovation management, that also delineate on the factor that stimulates innovation in firm. According to Prajogo and Ahmed (2006) model the innovation stimulus in study by focusing on technology and human aspect of innovation management. The study based on survey responses of 194 managers in Australian firm indicates that innovation stimulus such as technology, leadership innovation, research and development, knowledge management have considerable impact on innovation performance of firms, which consequently also improve the marketing strategy and performance of firm. Moreover, Tajeddini and Martin (2020) also proposed that human related factors of service innovation such as leadership, people management, knowledge management, and leadership management have significant role in promoting the marketing performance of tourism firms, through the mediating channel of service innovation. Also, the study proposed that employee commitment has moderating role in reinforcing the marketing performance through service innovation stimulus. Moreover, many studies have emphasized on the constructive role of leadership in bolstering the performance of firms (Hashim, Haron, & bin Ibrahim, 2019; Naranjo-Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez, & Sanz-Valle, 2016; Nawaz & Khan_PhD, 2016; Verburg, 2019; Kerdpitak, 2022). The innovative qualities of leadership through technological deployment also improve

the marketing strategy of firm, which consequently enhance the marketing performance. Hence based on literature the following hypothesis is built:

H1: Service innovation stimulus has significant impact on the marketing performance of retail pharmacies in Thailand.

2.2 Mediating role of service innovation

Various studies have highlighted the role of service innovation on the performance of firms, through enhancing the competitive advantage of firm, employee engagement, and customer's satisfaction. However, its implication on the marketing performance is not deeply explored in literature. Bustinza, Gomes, Vendrell-Herrero, and Baines (2019) also identified in their study, through seminal works on same context during last three decades, that R&D intensity help to facilitate the relationship of service innovation and performance of firm. The study also proposed that through their strategic partnership with Knowledge-Intensive service provider firm, enhance the extent of service innovation in firm. Based on empirical findings of 370 manufacturing firm across the world, the authors indicate that R&D intensive firms are more likely to reap the advantage by deploying innovation in services, which consequently improves the marketing of product and services. In addition, Tajeddini and Martin (2020) also proposed that human related factor of service innovation reinforce the financial and marketing performance of tourism firm in Japan, through the moderating role of employee commitment and mediating role of service innovation. Besides, various studies have also supported the role of services innovation in facilitating performance of SMEs. (Maldonado-Guzman, Garza-Reyes, Rocha-Lona, & Kumar, 2017; Kerdpitak, 2022b). The innovation in services through deployment of advance technology also enable the firm to support customers to enhance their satisfaction with services of firm, which is also mediated through innovation in marketing strategies. Thus, based on literature the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Service innovation has significant mediating impact on relationship between service innovation stimulus and marketing performance of retail pharmacies in Thailand.

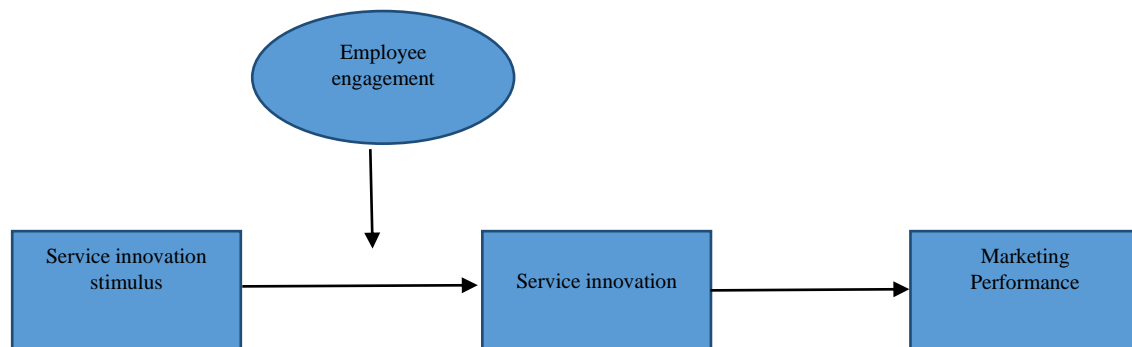
2.3 Moderating role of employee engagement

Employee engagement is referred to the deep involvement of employees in functioning of firm. In other words it is the extent of employee's passion about his responsibilities, job, and commitment to the organization (Bailey, Madden, Alfes, & Fletcher, 2017; Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2017; Mone, London, & Mone, 2018). The employee's engagement enable the employee to put discretionary effort into his work. Despite of its considerable importance in innovative and marketing performance of firm, the literature on the moderating role of employee's engagement is limited. Mozammel and Haan (2016) supported the role of transformational leadership in reinforcing the employee engagement and

productivity of Bangladesh banking industry. The study proposed that ineffectiveness of banking industry in Bangladesh is attributed from the leadership inabilities to consider well-being of employees working in banking sector. Employee engagement in firm also reinforce the innovative performance of employees which is analogues to improving the services and product innovation in firm. Hurmelinna and Olander (2017) also supported the effect of employee engagement on innovation performance of firms, which will also facilitate employees to improve marketing strategy to reinforce the sales of firms. Therefore, based on aforementioned studies the following hypothesis is constructed:

H3: employee engagement has significant moderating impact on relationship between service innovation stimulus and service innovation of retail pharmacies in Thailand.

2.4 Theoretical Framework



3. Methods

3.1 Sample Characteristics

A questionnaire based survey design was applied for this study. The technique of convenience sampling was used to locate the senior managers of the pharmaceutical companies of Thailand. The responses were generated via a self-administered pencil and paper questionnaire. The researcher utilized the method of item response theory following the criteria of ten response against each item i.e. $40 \times 10 = 400$. 10 percent of these weren't received back, and the remaining 8 had more than 40 percent of missing values so they were

considered redundant. Therefore the remaining 352 were used for the analysis.

3.2 Measures

The scale was developed after examining relevant literature expansively. The scales which have previously been used in a number of studies were finalized and included in the study. All of the constructs had significant reliability and validity scores in previous studies. The content validity of the finalized scale was verified by pretesting the questionnaire on managers and academicians. In order to measure the effects in the variables appropriate scales were developed and adapted according to the requirements of the study. In

accordance with the method proposed by Campbell, Brislin, Stewart, and Werner (1970) the questionnaire was first devised in English and then translated into Thai using the forward and back translation method. Two different linguists who are fluent in both Thai and English were consulted for the translation and then academicians reviewed the questionnaire to see if any contextual mistakes had been made. The scale items were quantified by a five point Likert scale.

3.2.1 Service Innovation Stimulus

Service innovation stimulus is measured on the basis of the interactive service innovation dimension introduced in the service innovation scale by Salunke, Weerawardena, and McColl-Kennedy (2013). The scale originally consisted of twelve items and this dimension was based on 6 items which were incorporated into the study. A sample item includes “The mode with which our firm interacts with the clients, they advantage”. The scale was adapted according to the requirements of the current study.

3.2.2 Employee Engagement

The organizational engagement questionnaire developed by Saks (2006) was used to measure the employee engagement levels. The scale originally has two dimensions employee engagement, job engagement and organizational engagement that measure the level of engagement of an employee. The overall scale consists of eleven items that were considered and adapted for the study. A sample item includes “sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time” and “Being a member of this organization is very captivating”.

3.3 Service Innovation

The service innovation scale developed by Salunke et al. (2013) was used. It was adapted according to the requirements of the present study, however the original 12 twelve item

scale was decomposed into two parts for the purpose of this study. 6 items were used to measure service innovation stimulus and the remaining six, supportive service innovation were used to measure this construct. A sample item includes “The ways by which our firm evaluates the quality of the offered services”.

3.4 Marketing performance

In order to correctly measure the firm’s marketing performance multiple dimensions were adopted. From the studies of Azadegan and Pai (2008) and Ottenbacher and Harrington (2010) a four item scale was developed. A sample item includes “We have a better reputation among major customer segments than our competitors”.

4. Results

4.1 Demographics

A sample of 352 senior sales managers belonging to the pharmaceutical organizations, serve as respondents for this research. 55.4 percent were male and 44.6 of the respondents were female. The age of 71.9 percent of the respondents ranged between 20 to 35 and the experience of 76.7 percent of the respondents was in between 2 and 8 years. The main reason for the gender disparity is the fact that more men were found to be employed at senior managerial posts and the level of employment explains the age and experience results.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

The mean values are centered on 4 exhibiting the acquiescent of respondents with the statements of the variables. The skewness values are within the range of -1+1, validating the normality of the data. The minimum and maximum values are in accordance with scale values (1-5). Therefore no outliers were observed in the data.

Table 1: *Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
ServInno	352	1.00	5.00	3.2392	1.06584	-.175	.130

ServInnoSti	352	1.00	5.00	3.6158	1.17649	-.710	.130
MarkPerf	352	1.00	5.00	3.4787	1.13898	-.565	.130
EmpEng	352	1.00	5.00	3.5713	1.07751	-.663	.130

Valid N (listwise) 352

4.3 KMO and Bartlett's

The KMO value is more than 0.6 and is nearing 1, representing the adequacy of the sample and Bartlett's sphericity is significant, pointing towards the non-relevance of construct items.

Table 2: *KMO and Bartlett's Test*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.976
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	33691.259
	df	861
	Sig.	.000

4.4 Factor Loading

The results in table 3 proves, all items are significant, as the loadings of individual items are greater than 0.7 and participate in the overall variance of the construct. The predicament of cross-loading hasn't been detected as well.

Table 3: *Rotated Component Matrix^a*

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
SI1		.777		
SI2		.783		
SI3		.746		
SI4		.732		
SI5		.944		
SI6		.945		
SI7		.946		
SI8		.945		
SI9		.938		
SI10		.946		
SI11		.947		
SI12		.936		
IS1	.896			
IS2	.879			

IS3	.810
IS4	.862
IS5	.932
IS6	.937
IS7	.927
IS8	.931
IS9	.921
IS10	.919
IS11	.920
IS12	.930
IS13	.940
IS14	.938
IS15	.917
IS16	.933
IS17	.921

MP1		.794
MP2		.796
MP3		.780
MP4		.790
EE1	.712	
EE2	.763	
EE3	.814	
EE4	.792	
EE5	.794	
EE6	.873	
EE7	.863	
EE8	.822	
EE9	.831	

4.5 Convergent and Discriminant Validity

The CR value of all scales is larger than 0.7 and AVE is more than 0.5 (Hassan, Hameed, Basheer, & Ali, 2020; Iqbal & Hameed, 2020), thus the construct impacts the variance and is also internally consistent. The MSV values are less than the AVE values and the self-correlation coefficients are greater than those between the variables, therefore we can empirically justify the presence of discriminant validity of the construct. Therefore convergent validity is also present.

Table 4: *Convergent and Discriminant Validity*

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	MP	SI	IS	EE
MP	0.938	0.791	0.346	0.940	0.889			
SI	0.906	0.855	0.258	0.999	0.508	0.925		

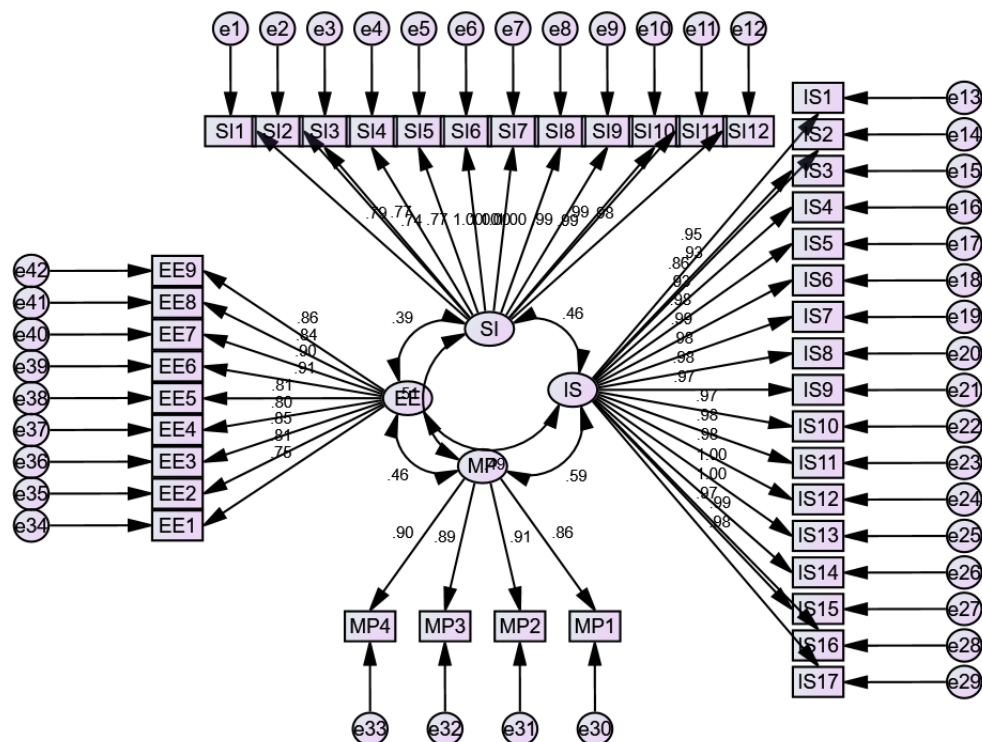
IS	0.916	0.835	0.346	1.000	0.588	0.457	0.967	
EE	0.955	0.705	0.238	1.000	0.461	0.392	0.488	0.840

4.6 Model Fitness

The model fitness is evaluated on the basis of the CMIN, CFI, IFI, GFI and RMSEA values. As table 5 demonstrates all items are in accordance with the set threshold ranges. Therefore the model is stated to be fit and can be used to explore the associations and relationships among the variables.

Table 5: *Confirmatory Factors Analysis*

Indicators	Threshold range	Current values
CMIN/DF	Less or equal 3	2.406
GFI	Equal or greater .80	.826
CFI	Equal or greater .90	.967
IFI	Equal or greater .90	.967
RMSEA	Less or equal .08	.063

Figure 1: *CFA*

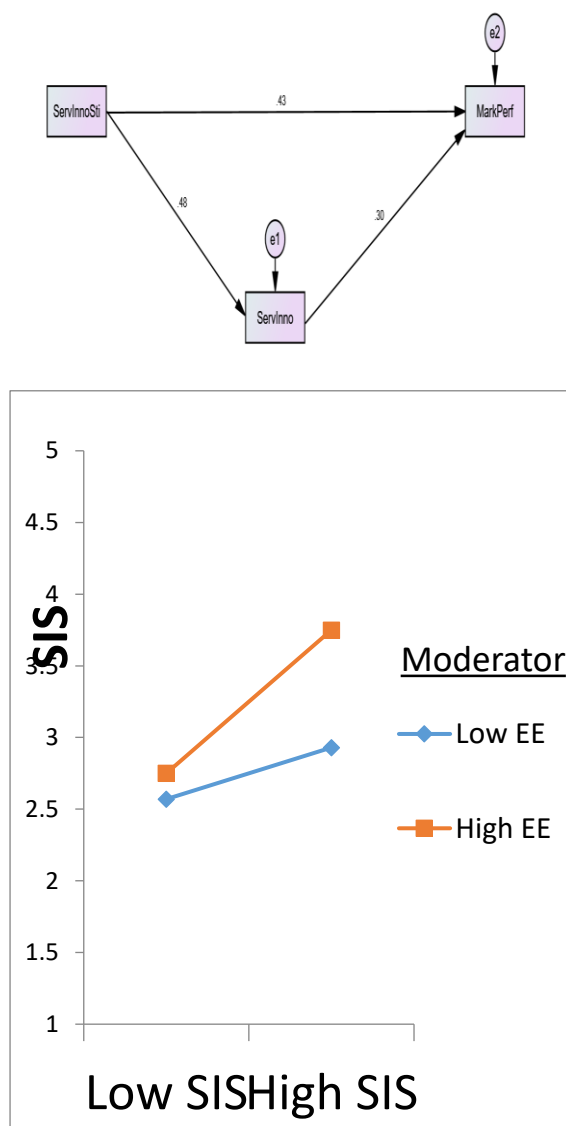
4.7 SEM

Table 6 presents the results for SEM. A unit change in ServInnoSti and ServInno produces an effect of 42.6 and 30.5 percent in MarkPerf. The hypotheses are accepted as the relationships are significant. The combined effect of the mediation of ServInno through ServInnostiti produces an effect of 14.8 percent on MarkPerf. The hypothesis is accepted as the relationship is significant. Graph 1 presents the moderation effect of EmpEng on the relationship between ServInnoSti and ServInno, the relationship is significant i.e. the variable successfully moderates the relationship therefore the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 6: *Structural Equation Modeling*

Total effect	ServInnoSti	ServInno
ServInno	.484***	.000
MarkPerf	.574***	.305***
Direct Effect	ServInnoSti	ServInno
ServInno	.484***	.000
MarkPerf	.426***	.305***
Indirect Effect	ServInnoSti	ServInno
ServInno	.000	.000
MarkPerf	.148**	.000

Figure 2: SEM



5. Discussion

According to research by Storey, Cankurtaran, Papastathopoulou, and Hultink (2016) Organization size, service innovational stimulus, collaboration and the degree of employee engagement are just one of the key factors and inputs considered to be significant in the aspect of innovation of service in pharmaceutical firms. Service innovational stimulus or SIS is a significant factor that can boost the marketing performance of the sector and this also indicated by the primary results of the study. SIS can enhance the productivity of the sector and also generate better quality products that positively influence the process of

marketing performance (Baradarani & Kilic, 2018). That is why the first hypothesis of the study has been accepted and supported by the results. The results of the study also demonstrate that the combined mediating role of service innovation mainly through the service innovation stimulus can also positively affect the marketing performance of retail pharmacies in Thailand. The process of service innovation can handle the legal issues of innovation effectively and also improved the motivation level of employees and staff (Sarmah, Kamboj, & Kandampully, 2018). Therefore, the hypothesis about the mediating role of service innovation has been accepted and largely supports the results of the study.

6. Conclusion

The main objective of the study here to identify the impact of service innovation stimulus on the marketing performance of the retail pharmacies sector of Thailand. Furthermore, the given research study also aims to evaluate the mediating role of service innovation and the moderating role of employee engagement in the marketing performance of the sector. For this intention, all of the data and information of the study are mainly collected from about 352 employees of the pharmaceutical sector of Thailand, in which 157 were female and 195 were male. This collected data was analyzed and computed with the help of KMO, convergent validity and structural equation modeling technique.

6.1 Implications and Limitations

Every research study has wide practical as well as managerial implications, the results of this study will be very supportive and applicable to the retail pharmaceutical firms of Thailand and also help these firms to understand the significance of service innovation stimulus. The verdicts of the given research paper also support prior studies and researches by proposing that crucial service innovation can be very helpful in enhancing the marketing performance of the sector. The findings of the given research highlight that the moderating effect of employee engagement also plays a

significant role in enhancing the marketing performance of the firm.

Several limitations are present within this research providing an opportunity for future studies. First, the sample of this study is composed of retail pharmacy service employees in Thailand, though, future studies can evaluate the drivers of supportive innovation in other services sectors of Thailand. Second, the study only takes one mediating variable for the evaluation of marketing performance, therefore, future studies should focus on other mediating variables for more effective results.

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