

The Elements of Causal Factors Affecting Customer's Satisfaction at Hotels and Resorts

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were: 1) to examine the levels of the customers' service satisfaction of hotel and resort personnel 2) to analyze the elements of service and professional skills of the hotel and resort personnel that affect customers' Satisfaction 3) to find out the relationship between service and professional skills of hotel and resort personnel that affect customers' satisfaction. The samples used in this study were 400 customers who stayed at the hotels and resorts in Khaokho district of Phetchabun province. The tool employed to collect the data was a five-rating-scale questionnaire. The statistics used to analyze the data featured percentage, mean, standard deviation, pearson correlation coefficient, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The result showed that the levels of the customers' service satisfaction of hotel and resort personnel is ranked as highest ($\bar{x} = 4.51$), the aspect that contains the highest mean lies with the issue of service ($\bar{x} = 4.60$), whereas the lowest mean concerns the aspect of professional skills ($\bar{x} = 4.43$). The service has the relationships between fifteen variables with the standardized factor loadings of 0.584 to 0.871. The professional skills has the relationships between seven variables with the standardized factor loadings of 0.609 to 0.893. The eigen value is 4.566 and the cumulative % of variance = 65.223. The results show a positive correlation between service and professional skills as .669, with a statistic significance value of 0.01.

Keywords: Service, Customer's Satisfaction, Hotel and Resort

Introduction

In recent decades, the hotel industry has grown rapidly. This sector has contributed significantly to the economy in Thailand. Gross Domestic Product in 2017/Q4 increased by 4.0%, driven mainly by an expansion of tourist-related sector (Office of The National Economic and Social Development Board, 2561). As the same time, resort hotels are increasing in number throughout and more competition in the service trades. Customers have opportunity to make more choices the hotel and resort, therefore hotels and resort have to work and find ways to keep their customers satisfied. Customer satisfaction is an important aspect of every successful business including the hotel industry. Then regard every business should strive to have a good relationship with its customers to enhance loyalty and thus increase its profitability. A satisfied customer will visit the hotel more often and will tell the others about the pleasant experience with the hotel services. Then the hotel and resort will increase their customers later. Reshidi, Zeqiri & Kajtazi (2016) indicated that the customer satisfaction key of the success of a hotel. The quality of services and customer satisfaction are closely related to each other, because the quality of services affects customer satisfaction proportionately. Customer satisfaction indicates the quality of

services. Hu, Kandampully & Juwaheer (2009) define customer satisfaction as "a cognitive or affective reaction that emerges in response to a single or prolonged set of service encounters". Similarly, McDougall and Levesque (2000) view customer satisfaction as the overall assessment of the service provider. In a study carried out by Sureshchander, Rajendran & Anatharaman (2002) indicated that the human element of service factors affected to measure customer satisfaction. Additionally, Ali (2015) also stated that the staff performance and knowledge critical are significant determinants of customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.290$; $p < 0.01$). Resort hotel managers should be well-aware of the significant role of hotel employees in delivering services to hotel guests. Therefore, hotel managers should focus on enhancing the knowledge, skills and commitment of their employees by providing them regular trainings and incentives. Customer satisfaction is the starting point to define business objectives. In this context, positive relationships can create customer's higher commitment and increase their return rate. Long-term and reciprocally advantageous relationships between customers and the hotel is becoming progressively important because of the highly positive correlation between guests' overall satisfaction levels and the probability of their return to the same hotel (Choi & Chu, 2001). In addition, Charoensittiphan & Gluntapura (2014) studied satisfaction of people on the service quality of PTT station: A case study PTT station, Pak Kret, Nonthaburi, and the results showed that the level of people satisfaction on criteria of convenience service, staff manner, service coordination, service quality and service cost are high level and criterion of service information is medium level. And Phimmasenh & Nouansavanh (2015) analysed of pregnant woman satisfaction to hospital service by SERVQUAL method: A case study of Mahosot referral hospital, the results showed that the overall mean values of service quality gap score for the Mahosot referral hospital is 0.86. Among the five dimensions, the highest mean values is tangible (1.94) and follows by assurance (0.82), responsiveness (0.78), empathy (0.53) and the lowest for reliability (0.31) respectively. However, other researchers studied by using different facets of customer satisfaction. Majority of them think that the measurement of customer satisfaction may not be very difficult because the customer can be satisfied or dissatisfied with the service. If the customer receives the service of their want, the customer will satisfy but if the customer doesn't receive the service, the customer will dissatisfy. Thus function of the hotel industry system aims to satisfy continuously customers.

Hotels and resorts in Khaokho district of Phetchabun province need to emphasize on providing quality services as this will lead to improved customer satisfaction ensuring long-lasting profitability and survival. However, many hotel and resort have problem with satisfy their customers and end up experiencing high levels of customer dissatisfaction. The problem can be solved by learning customer needs and using the knowledge to increase satisfaction. Hence, this study aim to investigate the levels of the customers' service satisfaction of hotel and resort personnel and to analyze the elements of service and professional skills of the hotel and resort personnel that affect customers' satisfaction to develop hotel and resort personnel for the customers' service satisfaction.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the levels of the customers' service satisfaction of hotel and resort personnel.
2. To analyze the elements of service and professional skills of the hotel and resort personnel that affect customers' satisfaction.
3. To find out the relationship between service and professional skills of hotel and resort personnel that affect customers' satisfaction.

Research Methodology

Present research is a quantitative study. The research area focuses on the hotels and resorts in Khaokho district of Phetchabun province. The population of this research was 1,817,014 (guest arrivals of accommodation). Regarding to the sample size, Taro Yamane formula (Yamane, 1973) was applied in calculating the number of the sample size as shown below: $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$; $N = 1,817,014$, $e = 0.05$, sample size of 400 customer. A convenience sampling method. The tool employed to collect the data is a five-rating-scale questionnaire, it consisted of 2 parts: 1) The demographic data 2) The levels of the customers' service satisfaction of hotel and resort personnel. The resulting showed that alpha coefficient the service is 0.867, the professional skills is 0.852, and the total score is 0.877. As its reliability values were above 0.7, the questionnaire was considered highly acceptable for the data collection (Cronbach, 2003). The statistics used in data analysis are percentage, mean, standard deviation, pearson correlation coefficient and exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

Results

The questionnaire subjects are 61.3 percent female, of which 38.8 percent are aged between 36-40 years old. 42.5 percent. It found that 62 percent of them Bachelor's Degree educational. There are 48.8 percent have an income level between 20,000-30,000 THB. They are company employee 34 percent as shown in table 1

Table 1 Demographic profile of customers

Demographic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	155	38.8
Female	245	61.3
Age		
20 - 25	26	6.5
26 - 30	36	9.0
31 - 35	33	8.3
36 - 40	170	42.5
41 - 45	78	19.5
46 - 50	22	5.5
51 - 60	35	8.8
Level of Educational		
Junior high school/Under	4	1.0
High School	37	9.3
Diploma/ Higher Vocational Certificate	39	9.8
Bachelor's Degree	248	62.0
Master's Degree	64	16.0
Doctorate Degree	8	2.0
Occupation		
Student	20	5.0
Government officers	105	26.3
Company employee	136	34.0
Business ownership	129	32.3
Housewife	10	2.5

Table 1 (Con.)

Demographic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Income per month		
10,000/ Under	34	8.5
10,001 - 20,000	61	15.3
20,001 - 30,000	194	48.8
30,001 - 40,000	63	15.8
40,001 - 50,000	33	9.5
< 50,000	10	2.5

The levels of the customers' service satisfaction of hotel and resort personnel is ranked as highest ($\bar{x} = 4.51$), the aspect that contains the highest mean lies with the issue of service ($\bar{x} = 4.60$), whereas the lowest mean concerns the aspect of professional skills ($\bar{x} = 4.43$) as shown in table 2

Table 2 The levels of the customers' service satisfaction of hotel and resort personnel

Satisfaction	\bar{x}	S.D	level
Service			
Service meets customers' needs	4.91	.29	Highest
Service with willingness	4.56	.69	Highest
Expressing demeanor correctly and appropriately	4.59	.63	Highest
Solving accidental problems	4.55	.64	Highest
Polite correct and clear in communication	4.66	.49	Highest
Clean and neat dressing	4.47	.67	High
Working enthusiastically	4.56	.63	Highest
Being patient and controlling emotions	4.61	.64	Highest
Being service-minded and helpful to others	4.83	.39	Highest
Being friendly and extrovert	4.68	.50	Highest
Being thorough in work	4.51	.74	Highest
Applying body language	4.43	.76	High
Being observant and always ready to work	4.48	.69	High
Being generous and considerate	4.66	.57	Highest
Impressing customers	4.60	.66	Highest
Average	4.60	.43	Highest
Professional Skills			
Check-in	4.38	.77	High
Check-out	4.31	.79	High
Room reservation	4.46	.68	High
Room cleanliness	4.62	.64	Highest
Room decoration e.g. cloth folding, floristry	4.55	.68	Highest
Food and beverage service	4.23	1.0	High
Arts and value-added creativity	4.49	.71	High
Average	4.43	.60	High
All Average	4.51	.477	Highest

The factor analyses of service and professional skills of the hotel and resort personnel that affect customers' satisfaction as follows:

This research apply Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity to provide guidance on the suitability of the data for factor

analysis, which KMO value and Bartlett's test of sphericity were greater than 0.50, the sample is regarded as adequate (Vanichbuncha, 2011). Table 3 illustrates that a value of 0.902 was obtained, supporting the adequacy of the sample, a chi-square value of 4593.494 with 105 degrees of freedom, with the significant at 0.000. Thus, it can imply that the variables are not inter-correlated.

Table 3 KMO and Bartlett's test results

KMO and Bartlett's test	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.902
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	4593.494
Df	105
Sig.	.000

In order to identify the association of the items with each underlying factor in the service, factor scores were calculated. Factor scores are an output of factor analysis. Each item's loading represents how strongly that item is associated with the underlying factor (Field, 2000). The loading or weight of each item falls between -1 and 1. A negative figure indicates that the item does not possess characteristics similar to the measured underlying factor and is not useful (Holgado-Tello, Carrasco-Ortiz, Gándara & Chacón-Moscoso, 2009). Table 4 illustrates that service has the relationships between fifteen variables with the standardized factor loadings of 0.584 to 0.871.

Table 4 Factor scores for each item

Factor & Items	Component		
	1	2	3
	Factor Loading	Factor Loading	Factor Loading
Service Quality			
Solving accidental problems	.830		
Polite correct and clear in communication	.818		
Clean and neat dressing	.811		
Expressing demeanor correctly and appropriately	.786		
Service with willingness	.777		
Being patient and controlling emotions	.750		
Working enthusiastically	.721		
Service Empathy			
Being thorough in work		.812	
Being friendly and extrovert		.810	
Applying body language		.781	
Being observant and always ready to work		.764	
Being generous and considerate		.749	
Impressing customers		.736	
Being service-minded and helpful to others		.584	
Service Mind			
Service meets customers' needs			.871
Eigen value	7.748	1.971	1.177
Cumulative % of variance	51.650	64.792	72.636

From results, it found that (i) service quality has the relationships between seven variables with the standardized factor loadings of .830 to .721. Eigen value is 7.748 and Cumulative % of variance = 51.650. (ii) service empathy had the relationships between seven variables with the standardized factor loadings of .812 to .584. Eigen value is 1.971 and Cumulative % of variance = 64.792. (iii) service mind had the standardized factor loadings of .871. Eigen value is 1.177 and Cumulative % of variance = 72.636.

The value of 0.888 from table 5 supports the adequacy of the sample. And table 5 show a chi-square value of 1906.424 with 21 degrees of freedom, which is significant at 0.000, implying that the variables are not inter-correlated.

Table 5 KMO and Bartlett's test results

KMO and Bartlett's test	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.888
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	1906.424
Df	21
Sig.	.000

Table 6 illustrates that professional skills have the relationships between seven variables with the standardized factor loadings of 0.609 to 0.893. Eigen value is 4.566 and Cumulative % of variance = 65.223 as shown in table 6

Table 6 Factor scores for each item

Items	Component Factor Loading
Check-out	.893
Check-in	.872
Colorful and value-added creativity	.862
Room reservation	.855
Room decoration e.g. cloth folding, floristry	.785
Room cleanliness	.740
Food and beverage service	.609
Eigen value	4.566
Cumulative % of variance	65.223

Correlation measures the strength of relation between two variables. The correlation coefficient can take values between -1 and +1. The correlation coefficient with value +1 indicates that the variables have strong positive correlation, whereas when the value of the correlation coefficient equals -1 that the variables have strong negative correlation. The closer to zero will be the value of the correlation coefficient, the weaker will be a linear relationship between them and when the value of the correlation coefficient is equal to zero it indicates that there is no linear relation between variables (Ahmeti, 2016). Concerning the correlation analysis, service and professional skills of hotel and resort personnel as shown in table 7

Table 7 The correlations coefficient between service and professional skills of hotel and resort personnel

		service	professional skills
service	Pearson Correlation	1	.669**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
professional skills	Pearson Correlation	.669**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results show that correlations coefficient between service and professional skills of hotel and resort personnel. The results of a positive correlation between service and professional skills as .669, with a statistic significance value of 0.01.

Discussion

Service businesses have been growing rapidly in recent decades, while customer demand for high quality service is increasing. To remain competitive, the hotel needs to analyze customers' service satisfaction towards the service quality of personnel. In this research, results revealed that the levels of the customers' service satisfaction of hotel and resort personnel is ranked as highest, the aspect that contains the highest mean lies with the issue of service, whereas the lowest mean concerns the aspect of professional skills. The elements of service and professional skills of the hotel and resort personnel that affect customers' satisfaction, which are service quality, service empathy, service mind. The service quality had the relationships between seven variables with the standardized factor loadings of .830 to .721. The service empathy had the relationships between seven variables with the standardized factor loadings of .812 to .584. The service mind had the standardized factor loadings of .871 and the professional skills had the relationships between seven variables with the standardized factor loadings of 0.609 to 0.893. The results of a positive correlation value of .669 between service and professional skills, with a statistic significance value of 0.01. It correspond to Reshidi, Zeqiri & Kajtazi, (2016) found that the empathy aspect of the hotel services have a positive effect and significance on customer satisfaction. On the same note, Ali, (2015) indicated that the staff presentation and knowledge critical and significant determinants of customer satisfaction, which resort hotel employees appear neat (loadings 0.787), employees in the resort hotel are always willing to help (loadings 0.753), the behaviour of the employees of the resort hotel instills confidence in me (loadings 0.746), employees in the resort hotel are consistently courteous to me (loadings 0.816), the resort hotel employees give me individual attention (loadings 0.814), employees of the resort hotel understand my specific needs (loadings 0.811), and employees are able to recommend me the local places of interest (loadings 0.775). In conclusion, the resort hotel managers should be well-aware of the significant role of hotel employees in delivering services to hotel guests. Therefore, hotel managers should focus on enhancing the knowledge, skills and commitment of their employees by providing them regular trainings and incentives. These results can be used the arrange training program to improve the main work of hotel and resort personnel and to promote them in their careers for the customers' service satisfaction. It correspond to Luan, Komonpaisarn, Sriratanaban & Vy, (2014) which informed that in public and private hospital, "Technical skill" is seen as the most important in 6 dimensions (33.20% and 18.05%), next in turn are "Attitude of staffs", "Facilities and Material", "Technical skills" and "Process feature", the last one is "Information and Education". On the other hand, in private hospital, "Attitude of

Staffs” ranks at first, next in turn are “Process feature”, “Environment”, “Facilities and Material” and “Information”, the last is “Technical Skills”.

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