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Causal Factors Influencing Service Quality of Hotels in Chonburi Province



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Abstract

The objectives of this research were to 1) study behavior of using service, service quality, and the attitude towards marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province, 2) compare service quality of hotels categorized by behavior of using service of hotels, and 3) study marketing mix of hotels influencing service quality of hotels. The sample group included 400 customers using service of hotels by using questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The Statistics, using to analyze data for hypothesis testing, consisted of frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, comparison of difference of two independent groups by Independent-Samples t-test, comparison of the difference of more independent groups by one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) F-test, and Multiple Regression Analysis. The finding indicated as follows: 1) Most of customers, who had been using service of hotels, were female between age of 21 to 30 years old, single, graduated with bachelor's degree, working for private company, and earning monthly income around 25,001-35,000 baht. 2) Behavior of using service of hotels indicated that the frequency of their staying at the hotels was less than twice a year, length of stay was averaged about 1 to 2 nights, and the expense was around 2,501-3,500 baht. The persons, who had decision power, were themselves. The facility, which responded to the respondents' needs most, was Wi-Fi access. 3) Overall, marketing mix of hotels was at the highest level. In each aspect, the first highest average represented people, the second was process, the third was price, the fourth was product/service, the fifth was promotion, the sixth was physical evidence, and the last one was place. 4) Overall, service quality of hotels was at the highest level. In each aspect, the first highest average represented assurance, the second was empathy, the third was responsiveness, the fourth was reliability, and the last one was tangibility. 5) The differences in factors of sex, age, education, career, and monthly income, had different attitude towards service quality of hotels, however, customers had same attitude towards service quality of hotels in spite of different status. 6) In term of behavior of using service of hotels, the differences of amount of money spending for hotel service, main purpose of the trip, and persons who had decision power, affected different opinion about service of hotels. However, customers had not different attitude towards service quality of hotels in spite of different frequency of using hotel service. 7) Marketing mix of hotels in which of price, place, people, process, and physical evidence affecting service quality of hotels, was statistically significant at 0.05 level. However, product/service and promotion had no effect to service quality of hotels.

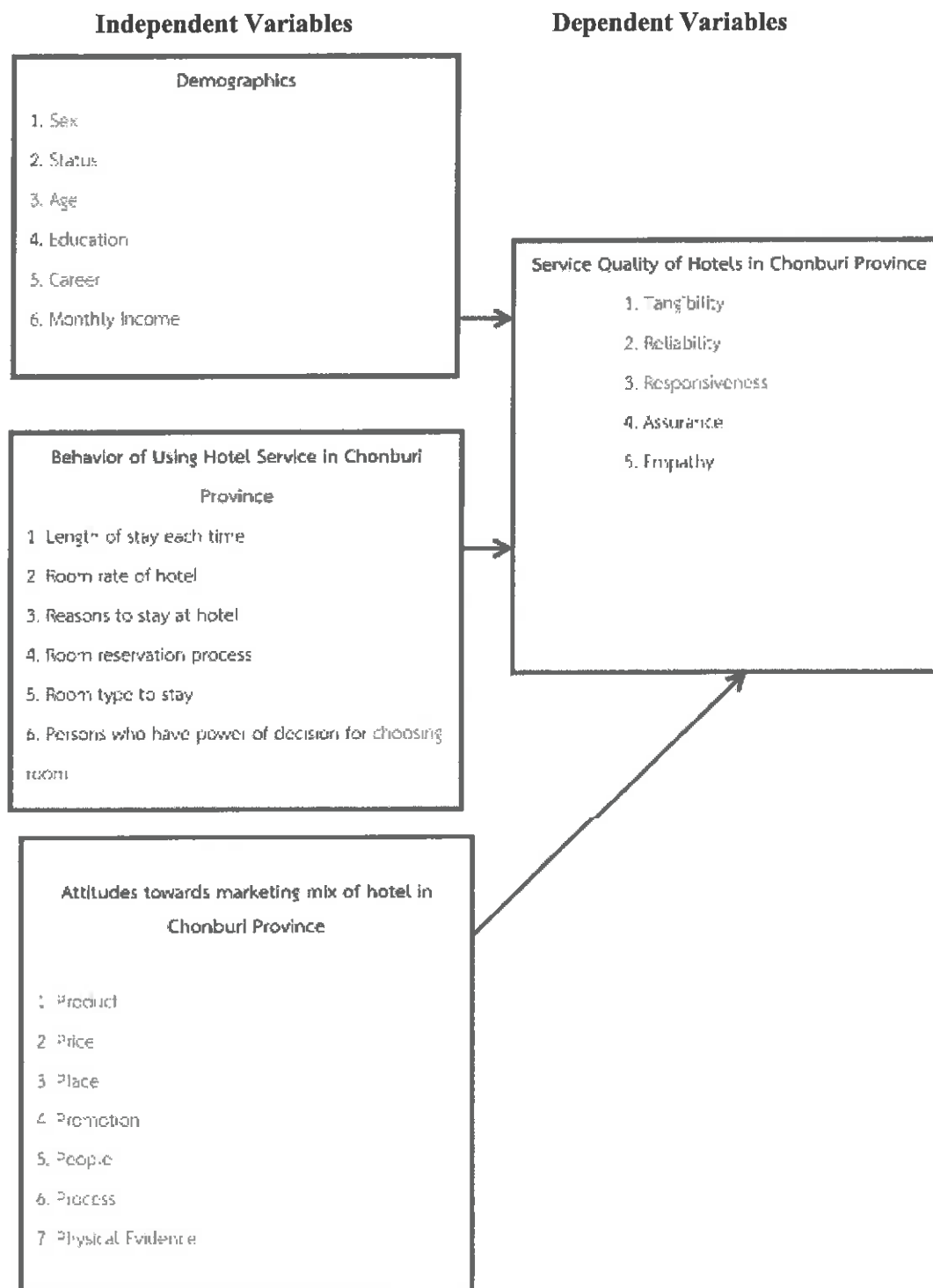
1. Introduction

The growth of tourism industry in Thailand has been more increasing due to potential location, variety of travel resources, and Thai style. Thailand has a lot of potentiality and opportunity in traveling segment because of its location in the center of Southeast Asia, diversity of natural resources, unique culture and tradition, and courtesy of Thai people. In 2015, the global competitiveness index was a measure computed by World Economic Forum: WEF. Thailand was ranked in the 35th of all 141 countries around the world. Besides, Thailand tourism was selected to be one of the best place to travel of the world by international ranking. In 2015, Bangkok had been voted as the Best City Destination in Asia Pacific by Master Card, and the Best Beach in Asia by World Travel Awards. In 2014, Thailand had won the prize of Best Country to visit for family, relaxation, and wedding, and also the prize of Best Meetings and Conventions Place by TTG Travel Awards. Moreover, Thailand had won the prize of Grand Travel Awards as Best Tourist Country in 2011 for the ninth consecutive year by Travel News, famous travel magazine of Scandinavia. With all of special cultures and variety of traveling places, it shows the potential of Thailand as the world's popular tourist attraction (National Tourism Policy Committee, 2017, page ngor).

The growth of tourism influences better economics and income distribution in Thailand. The most important part of tourism is "hotels and resorts" which becomes the high competitive business. The great hotels service could attract tourists come back to stay again and also the new customers who have read positive reviews of the hotels by old guests. In 2016, there are 9,865 of hotels and guesthouses and 457,976 of rooms. In Chonburi province, Pattaya is very popular so there are 12.28 million tourists each year. Demand for hotel rooms is rising to 43,603 rooms. As mentioned previously, Chonburi is an important province driving economics of Thailand. In 2016, Pattaya had made money to the country for 198,138 million baht (TerraBKK, 2018).

As stated above, the researcher would like to study the causal factors influencing service quality of hotels in Chonburi province. The research result would be guideline for development plan of service quality of hotels in Chonburi province to be more effective and better in competitive advantage. Also, the study result could be benefit information for creating marketing strategy which responding to customers' needs and satisfaction. Customers' good impression leads to increasing new customers by words of mouth. The objectives of the study were to: 1) study behavior of using service, service quality, and the attitude towards marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province, 2) compare service quality of hotels in Chonburi province categorized by behavior of using service of hotels in Chonburi province, and 3) study marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province influencing service quality of hotels in Chonburi province.

2. Conceptual Framework



3. Research Methodology

This research study is a quantitative research to study causal factors influencing service quality of hotels in Chonburi province. The researcher has reviewed the literature and uses questionnaire as data analysis instrument. The following statement explains about research methodology.

3.1 Population and Sample Group

Population: Customers of hotels in Chonburi province

Sampling to Determine: The sample group in this research includes customers of hotels in Chonburi province. The researcher specifies sample size in case of unknown population by W.G.cochran formula (W.G.cochran, 1963, Thanin Sinjaru, 2014, 46). Finally, the sample group consists of 400 people.

Statistics Using to Analyze

Due to information of specific variables and data collection, the researcher allows software package program for processing and statistical analysis. The statistics is used to analyze the data in this study that mentioned as follows:

1. Descriptive Statistic consists of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.
2. Inferential Statistic concludes comparison of mean test of two independent sample groups (t-test independence), one way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Multiple Regression Analysis.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

4.1 Conclusion

1. The majority respondents are female (65%), single (57%), aged between 21-30 years old (32.75%), graduated with bachelor's degree (59%), working for private company (159 persons or 39.75%), monthly income around 25,001-35,000 baht (31.35%).

2. The analysis result of behavior of using hotel service in Chonburi province finds out that the most respondents use hotel service less than twice a year (55.75%). The length of stay at the hotels in Chonburi province is around 1-2 nights (84.75%). They spend money for hotels about 2,501-3,500 baht each time (43.75%). Main purpose of the travelling is for relaxation (56.75%). The reasons, affecting choosing the hotel to stay, consist of cleanliness and beautiful decoration (18.83%). Also, there are respondents who get information of hotels in Chonburi province via online media such as Facebook (29.19%). The persons who have power of decision for choosing hotel service in Chonburi province are themselves (56%). The Wi-Fi internet access is the most important of all facilities for the respondents using hotel service in Chonburi province (31.93%).

3. Overall, marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province is at the highest level. In each aspect, the first highest average represents people, the second is process, the third is price, the fourth is product/service, the fifth is promotion, the sixth is physical evidence, and the last one is place.

4. Overall, service quality of hotels in Chonburi province is at the highest level. In each aspect, the first highest average represents assurance, the second is empathy, the third is responsiveness, the fourth is reliability, and the last one is tangibility.

5. The analysis result of hypothesis testing mentions as follows: 1) In term of demographics of customers who has been used hotel service in Chonburi province, the differences in factors of sex, age, education, career, and monthly income, has different attitude towards service quality of hotels in Chonburi province, however, customers have same attitude towards service quality of hotels in Chonburi province in spite of different status. 2) In term of behavior of using hotel service in Chonburi province, the differences of amount of money spending for hotel service, main purpose of the trip, and persons who have decision power, influences different opinion towards service quality of hotels in Chonburi province. However, customers have not different attitude towards service quality of hotels in Chonburi province in spite of different frequency of using hotel service. 3) Marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province, in which of price, place, people, process, and physical evidence, affects service quality of hotels in Chonburi province. All five factors, as mentioned previously, could forecast service quality of hotels in Chonburi province about 76.4 percent. However, product/service and promotion have no effect to service quality of hotels in Chonburi province.

4.2 Discussion

1. Overall, marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province is at the highest level. In each aspect, the first highest average represents people, the second is process, the third is price, the fourth is product/service, the fifth is promotion, the sixth is physical evidence, and the last one is place. The detail would be explained as the following:

1.1 The marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province represents that product is at highest level. The customers have attitude towards clean room at most and also full facilities such as refrigerator, air conditioner, water heater. It concludes that the customers, who have been stayed at the hotels in Chonburi province, have satisfaction in cleanliness and impression on room facilities. This is related to marketing mix theory in aspect of product by Siriwan Sereerat and team (1998, page 337). It mentions about the considering of service would consider the service boundary and quality.

1.2 The marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province represents that price is at highest level. The customers have strong attitude towards room rates at most because they would like to feel worth the money. Hotels in Chonburi usually shows the price of rooms and service obviously. When the customers acquire good service, they feel satisfied and worth the price. This is related to the price theory of Chalongsri Pimonsompong (1999, page 81). It states that price means amount of money the tourists have to pay for value of product/service which specified by tourism company.

1.3 The marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province represents that place is at high level. The customers prefer faster room reservation system via online booking. We can see that the hotels in Chonburi provides many choices of reservation especially online booking. This is related to marketing mix theory in aspect of place by Yupawan Wanwanich (2005, page 29-33) which mentions that the easy location becomes an important factor of service marketing. However, it is not only easy to go but also easy to communicate. Therefore, channel of sales distribution becomes more important factor to reach the service.

1.4 The marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province represents that promotion is at high level. It shows that hotels in Chonburi province offer promotion and discount for customers, who make online booking, to increase more online reservation. This is related to marketing mix theory in aspect of promotion by Siriwan Sereerat and team (1998, page 337). It mentions that promotion works as a satisfied instrument to communicate with customers. It aims to provide information to persuade creation of positive attitude and behavior of using service. This is an important key of relationship marketing.

1.5 The marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province represents that people is at highest level. The customers have positive attitude towards professional salespersons, who have good manners and politeness, at most. Most hotels in Chonburi have been arranged training courses to develop quality human resource of the organization, so the salespersons have service mind along with good performance. This is related to marketing mix theory in aspect of people by Yupawan Wanwanich (2005, page 29-33) which states that salespersons' roles in service business must offer good service and sale service products at the same time. The customers relationship management is very important for service business.

1.6 The marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province represents that process is at highest level. The customers admire accurate and reliable payment method at most. The hotels in Chonburi province have trustable payment process and faster check in/check out system to satisfy customers in aspect of service quality. This is related to marketing mix theory of Kotler & Armstrong (2003, p.121) in aspect of process. The theory mentions that process is an important factor of marketing mix. There must be professional salesperson or innovative instrument to create process of delivery service quality to customers.

1.7 The marketing mix of hotels in Chonburi province represents that physical evidence is at high level. The customers have attitude towards facilities of the hotels at most such as swimming pool, spa, and fitness. It indicates that hotels in Chonburi province have service of swimming pool, spa, and fitness, so the customers feel more comfortable. This is related to theory of marketing mix of Kotler & Armstrong (2003, p.121) in aspect of physical evidence. It states that physical evidence is components which make the customers feel that service has quality, suitability, and also effectiveness.

2. Overall, service quality of hotels in Chonburi province is at the highest level. In each aspect, the first highest average represents assurance, the second is empathy, the third is responsiveness, the fourth is reliability, and the last one is tangibility. This is related to the research of Nutkamon Hanpanich (2014) in the topic of Satisfaction Towards Service of Park Inn Chiang Rai Province. The finding of research indicates that the customers have satisfaction towards service quality at most. However, the hotel staffs in Chonburi province have good manner and personality. The staffs speak nicely and make good relationship with customers. With all of these, the customers have attitude towards service quality of hotels in Chonburi province in aspect of assurance as the first priority. It is related to the theory of service quality of Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1985: 44-46). They define "assurance" as service of professional staffs, working skill responding to customers' needs, and good relationship. All of these would build customers' trust that they would receive good service.

5. Recommendation

Recommendations of Research

According to research result, the researcher suggests as follows: 1) The hotels in Chonburi province should always keep cleanliness of the rooms. 2) The hotels should show price details to the customers clearly. 3) It should develop reservation system through online channel to comfortably the customers. 4) It should launch marketing promotion and discount continually for online booking. 5) There should be training programs to develop professional service skills of staffs continuously. 6) It should develop the accurate and trustable payment method. 7) It should give an important for hotel facilities such as swimming pool, spa, and fitness.

Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher recommends for the future research as following:

1. It should study causal factors influencing service quality of hotels in other provinces to compare the information and use it as guideline to develop service quality of hotels in Chonburi province to be most effective and better in competitive advantage.
2. It should study other factors affecting service quality of hotels in Chonburi province.
3. This is a quantitative research by using questionnaire as a tool to collect data so the future research should also do qualitative research to get deeper information.

6. Acknowledgments

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