The 4th National and International Graduate Study Conference 2014

“Creative Education”

At Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre
22 - 23 May 2014
Preface

The 4th International Silpakorn Graduate Study Conference 2014 (IGSC2014) "Creative Education" on May 22 – 23 2014 is going to be a major contribution of the Graduate Research and Creative to the community of graduate students researchers and artists. We are proud to offer presentations from a number of participants from academic research institutes and organizations around the country. The IGSC 2014 conference program committee has done the great job in establishing an outstanding program which includes:

- Keynote speakers who is the Chair of the Interdisciplinary Network of the Royal Institute of Thailand under the Royal Patronage of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn
- Selected research papers to be presented in oral sessions.
- Poster sessions to engage and interact with researchers from several institutes.

We would like to thank the Keynote all referee and committee who contributed for this conference. As well as experts who share the knowledge in research and creative work and all staff of the Graduate School for operations to achieve the objectives and also thank you for the sponsors. We look forward to initiate the opportunity to work together to develop graduate education between universities and strengthen graduate research and creativity in future.

(Assoc. Prof. Panjai Tantatsanawong Ph.D.)
Dean of Graduate School, Silpakorn University
NGSC / IGSC 2014

May 22-23, 2014

at

PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI SIRINDHON ANTHROPOLOGY CENTRE
The 4th National & International Graduate Study Conference 2014
NGSC & IGSC 2014
: Creative Education
AGENDA: Thursday, May 22, 2014
VENUE: PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI SIRINDHON ANTHROPOLOGY CENTRE, BKK.

The Conference Room 4th Floor
08.30 – 09.00 am Registration
09.00 – 09.30 am Report by
   Assoc. Prof. Panjai Tantatsanawong Ph.D.
   Dean of Graduate School, Silpakorn University
   Opening & Awarding Outstanding Researches Ceremony
   By Professor Emeritus Khaisri SRI – AROON: Chairperson
   of Silpakorn University Council
09.30 – 10.30 am Opening Poster Presentation Research
   (Total of 203 research topics projects)
   By Professor Emeritus Khaisri SRI – AROON: Chairperson
   of Silpakorn University Council
10.30 – 12.00 pm Keynote speaker: “Creative by Interdisciplinary” by
   Professor Emeritus Dr. Yongyut Watcharadul
   Chair of the Interdisciplinary Network of the Royal
   Institute of Thailand under the Royal Patronage of HRH
   Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn
12.00 – 13.00 pm Lunch

AGENDA: Friday, May 23, 2014

The Main Hall of 4th Floor
13.00 – 17.00 pm Oral Presentation Research
VENUE: PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI SIRINDHON ANTHROPOLOGY CENTRE, BKK.

08.30 – 09.00 am  Registration
09.30 – 10.00 am  Oral Presentation Research

Humanities/ Social Sciences
: Multimedia room, The Conference Room 4th Floor, Room 407, Room 307

Science/ Health Science/ Engineering and Technology
: Room 404, 405

International
: Multimedia room

10.00 – 10.15 am  Break
10.15 – 12.00 am  Oral Presentation Research (continue)
12.00 – 13.00 am  Lunch
13.00 – 17.30 am  Oral Presentation Research (continue)

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Consuming Thailand! Images of Indian Cuisine among International Tourist

Author: Amarjeet Singh Mastana

Introduction

Thailand is an Asian country; the population includes native Thai, as well as people of Chinese and Indian origin. In addition, the Thai government has identified tourism as a high priority growth sector and is aggressively promoting Thailand worldwide (Tourism Authority of Thailand). Tourism in Thailand is critical to its economy, It is the backbone of its growth. Leisure and entertainment business accounts for 6.5 % of the country’s GDP. According to official statistics, in 2012, Thailand received more 22 million foreign tourist which included more than one million Indian visitors, this in spite of the flooding which affected major portions of northern, central region and Bangkok itself (http://secretary.mots.go.th/download/graph/2012/By_Nationality/Total/Inter_January-December_2012.pdf) moreover The increase in diversity of populations within individual nations has fueled consumer demand for more culturally diverse foods As a result, restaurants around the country in different tourist destination operate with an increasingly more ethnically and culturally diverse customer base of locals and foreign tourists. In the USA, it reflects the increasingly pluralistic composition of contemporary American society (CREST, 1997). In the past decade, ethnic foods have become widely available and increasingly popular in western consumer food markets (Iqbal, 1996). By the 1980s, ethnic restaurants constituted 10% of all restaurants in the USA (Gabaccia, 1998). With estimates of over 10,000 plus Indian restaurants in the United Kingdom and connection between the two countries, Indian cuisine is the most popular cuisine there. While there are no statistics on Indian restaurants in Thailand, but there are many Indian restaurants around Bangkok metro area and other popular tourist destination across country. With growing interest in regional and localized spicy food at international level, it shows that there is huge potential for Indian cuisine in Thailand.
Statement of problems

According to the National restaurant association (NRA, 2000b) survey, today's hot and trendy items tend to fall into two categories: ethnic-oriented items: ethnic cuisines, hot-and-spicy foods; and healthy alternatives: lower-fat items and vegetarian entrees. Aged balsamic vinegar, hot chilli peppers, exotic mushrooms, ginger, hot sauce and roasted garlic are among the twenty most stylish food ingredients, which, coincidentally, are the principal ingredients in most of regional or localized cuisines that are growing in popularity.

International travelers growing interest in Asian ethnic food has been strongest in Chinese food, while Japanese Sushi and Thai food are slowly reaching a broader audience (NRA, 2000b). However, Indian food did not even figure in the list of some less well-known cuisines in the NRA study in the USA.

Bangkok has grown rapidly as a focal tourism center and is also becoming a food destination in Asia for tourists visiting Thailand. They can obviously try local food. They can also try a whole array of international cuisines. Among the many cuisines available in Bangkok, Indian cuisine has a special place as it has played a major role in the popularity of the Indian Restaurants in Bangkok. The distinct and unique flavor and aroma of Indian food have been some of the main reasons for the liking and spreading of Indian restaurants in Bangkok. In some measure, Indian food has also been underrated and has not received all the attention it deserves, mostly because of some low-quality, unauthentic Indian restaurants that have given a bad name to the cuisine. Though calling themselves Indian restaurants, they serve oily food. The fact is Good Indian food is not spicy or oily but it is well balanced with different kinds of spices like Cardamom, Ginger, Turmeric, Cumin etc, which have tremendous health benefits.

Indian Cuisine, however, has recently been gaining worldwide recognition. In London, Chicken Tikka Masala has become a signature dish in some restaurants and is very popular among British. It has also been rated among the top seven world’s best cuisines. Indian food and Restaurants are creating a buzz all over the world. Indian restaurants are known for offering fine dining that suits one’s taste buds. A number of entrepreneurs have also been creating a great buzz with Indian meals available at supermarkets, making Indian food popular globally.
Need for the study

The restaurant industry is highly competitive and, to attract and retain customers, it is necessary for restaurant operator should have a considerate of taste and preferences of International tourist who will be most likely to decide to eat at restaurant. Moreover continuously tourism world is adapting to ever increasing competition and constantly changing customer demand for higher service quality, it can be achieved through enhanced mutual cooperation among different stakeholders, so as to enlarge tourist trustworthiness and likeness. The purpose of this study is to enable Indian restaurant operators to better understand consumer needs and attitudes so that they can be well positioned to take advantage of this growing trend towards eating ethnic foods.

From an academic perspective, despite the increasing interest in ethnic foods, there is very little research in this area of customer perceptions of food and service in ethnic restaurants, and the implications of these perceptions for restaurant operators. Other than Qu s (1997) study of Chinese restaurants, the researchers could find no studies in major publications addressing this issue in Thailand perspective, thus this research will add knowledge for academic as well as industry literature.

Research Objectives

To recognize factor that influences International tourist to eat at Indian restaurant in silom and Khao san metro area in Bangkok, Thailand,
RO1 = To recognize factor that influences all patrons’ choice to eat at Indian restaurant.
RO2 = Determine differences in factor, between patrons of South Asian origin, and those of other ethnic origin, when they dine at Indian restaurants.
RO3 = How to popularize Indian food among Bangkokies?

Research Questions

RQ1 = How often do foreign travelers eat the local cuisine while travelling?
RQ2 = what are the types of cuisine patronized by foreign travelers?
RQ3 = How is Indian cuisine perceived by foreign travelers?
RQ4 = How is Indian cuisine perceived as compared to Thai cuisine?
RQ5 = what sources of information inform travelers’ knowledge of Indian cuisine?
RQ6 = Based on their cuisine perceptions, culinary experience satisfaction, and challenges faced, would foreign travelers recommend India cuisine?
Literature Review

Food consumption studies are predominantly concerned with understanding the determinants of various food-related behaviors, most commonly including liking, preference and service quality. However many studies modified these terms directly and indirectly, but they different. Food taste refers to joy gained from taste served dish whereas food preference refers to the availability of at least two different full meals and refers to the choice of one rather than the other. Although in most cases people prefer to have food that they like more and have eaten before, food love can be one of the motivation that may be counted as liking. Easy accessibility, health benefits, convenient to eat and value of money are factors that can influence food choice and may not affect the food liking (Logue, 1991). Moreover food choice refers to ‘a set of conscious and unconscious decisions made by a person while buying the meal, at the point of consumption or while selection. In an aggregate form, food selection behavior creates demand for suppliers in the food chain for producer, processer, and distributer food (Sobal, Khan, & Bisogni, 1998). Food choice also plays an essential role in displaying social status of an individual as it is a way to express preferences, identities, and cultural meanings. Food eating refers to the quantity of food actually eaten by a person. It is usually calculated in terms of number of meals eaten, nutrition intake or frequency of quantity inhaled.

Food consumption is recognized as a complex behavior, with cultural, social, psychological and sensory acceptance factors all playing a role in the decision-making process (Köster, 2009; Sobal et al., 2006). Food researchers agree that these factors can be classified into three broad categories: the individual, the food, and the environment. The preparation of food creates an perception among the consumer with its ingredients such as flavor, aroma, texture, and appearance whereas the environment represents cultural, society, economic and physical impact. As for the Tourist (local or international) regional or ethnic cuisine makes direct or indirect effect socially, culturally and psychologically on food eating behavior . Amongst these three broad categories, factors relating to ‘the individual’ are widely accepted to be extremely crucial in explaining the variations in food consumption (Rozin, 2006).
Regional food perception and acceptance

Cuisine is a main part of the vacation, and accordingly, restaurants visit tends to be a peak experience to the tourists (Blichfeldt, Chor, Ballegaard, 2010). Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis, & Cambourne (2003), argue that because food is integral to the tourist experience, it has become an important element in the marketing of tourism and in determining visitor satisfaction. Exploring food is important in destination and tourism (Long, 2003 cited in Ryu & Jang, 2006). Clark & Chabrel, 2007; Kneafsey et al., 2004 cited in Sims (2009) state that consumption of local foods will connect tourist more deeply with the people and the places. Therefore, experiencing the Indian food and its culture is considered as a way to meet this necessity. Research on tourism and gastronomy/culinary is concerned with meetings between cultures (Hjalager, 2004). Ethnic food offers opportunity to explore the culture by tasting the cuisine, its preparation and being in the surroundings.

Experiencing ethnic food can be categorized as one of gastronomy tourism activity (Green & Dougherty, 2009). Gastronomy tourism refers as travelling for the aim to explore and experience the destination’s food and beverage (Wolf, 2002 cited in Kivela & Crotts, 2005). This type of tourists is a meaningful and might become a highly loyal market segment (Kivela & Crotts, 2005). Gastronomy experience can be a powerful tool for promoting the destination. Promoting ethnic food is as same as promoting the destination. According to Hjalager and Richards (2002) cited in Kim et al (2010), gastronomy tourism is promoted to publicize destinations’ identity and culture, and generate opportunities for local food producers by adding the value and creating a special experience for tourists afterwards.

Perception on food comprises on food products, situation and people as a whole food serving environment (Hansen, 2005). Food perception occurs during food consumption, when the brain receives variety of input (visual, gustatory, tactile, or trigeminal) and the information from physiologically distinct sensory modes is integrated (Prescott, 2004; Small & Prescott, 2005 in the work of Costel et al., 2010. Furthermore, perception will drive consumer acceptance (Brennan & Kuri, 2002; Clark, 1998). Font (2009) emphasizes that perception is an essential determinant of consumer acceptance, and whether perception moves along with acceptance. Clark (1998) argues that consumer acceptance is indicated by liking state of the eaten food which contributes to food choice decision, while Lusk & Coble (2005) and Ywason & Kuzma (2010)
argue that acceptance is also measured by the willingness to buy and consume. For the purpose of the study, the perception and acceptance of ethnic food attributes comprise of appearance, sensory characteristics, various menu items, value for money, health-related & traditional characteristics.

**Culinary challenges faced by travelers**

Travelers’ motivations to experience a destination’s culture through its cuisine may be fraught with certain barriers. Even the more adventurous travelers may be reticent to completely immerse themselves in the local cuisine due to concerns relating to food safety, cultural differences in eating habits and customs, unusual ingredients and preparation styles, and language constraints. While such issues may be faced at any foreign destination, travelers travelling to Third World destinations may be particularly prone to face culinary challenges. Some of the most common culinary challenges relate to food safety, different cultural traditions, styles of cooking and ingredients, and language barriers.

Food safety can be viewed as the “probability of not contracting a disease as a consequence of consuming a certain food” during travel (Grunert, 2005, p. 381). The issue of safe food in tourism was highlighted by a *Travel Weekly* study conducted in 2000 which revealed that 63% of adult international travelers had experienced illness resulting from unhygienic food (MacLaurin, 2001). In a U.K. based study it was found that 14 percent of infectious intestinal diseases were acquired during international travel (Burusnukul et al., 2011). According to Hill (2006), 20 to 60 percent of travelers to resource-poor regions succumb to traveler’s diarrhea.

In India, food safety is a critical concern as often these foods are prepared and sold by street vendors, at roadside food stalls, and in some cases, in restaurants, under unhygienic conditions (Choudhury, Mahanta, Goswami & Mazumdar, 2011). Issues of limited access to safe water, garbage disposal facilities, and sanitary services are endemic throughout India. Furthermore, many vendors are unaware or have inadequate knowledge of basic hygiene considerations (Chandrasekhar, Kowsalya & Ladha, 2003; Bhasin, Shruti, Rahul & Singh, 2009; Sheth, Gupta & Ambegaonkar, 2011). Therefore, travelers are wary about contracting a food-borne illness lest being compelled to forego anticipated experiences, the discomfort of being ill notwithstanding (Cohen, 1986; Cohen & Avieli, 2004). Even though hygiene-related fears may
not be unfounded, Ungku Fatimah, Boo, Sambasivan and Salleh (2010) argue that often these may be perceptual and a result of a broader set of determinants that influence travelers’ behavior and purchase choice.

Cultural differences exist in the way food is served and portioned, as well as the constituents of each meal. In many African and Asian cultures, food is served and consumed off a communal plate as opposed to individualized servings (Cohen & Avieli, 2004). In India, dinner is usually consumed late in the evening as opposed to the 5 to 7 pm timeframe which is the customary dinner time at most Western countries. The implements used to incorporate food into our mouths also vary. In India, eating with hands is the custom; the fingers are used to deftly transfer foods as varied as vegetables, rice, and curried lentils from the plate (or a banana leaf) to the mouth. Chopsticks are used in much of South-East Asia, whereas in the Western world, knives, forks, and spoons are the customary implements. Additionally, every culture has definite ideas regarding table manners, how food should be served, and meal times (Murcott, 1982).

Cultural differences also exist in the way food is prepared, cooked, and preserved (Hegarty & Mahony, 2001). The use of unusual ingredients in food (from the traveler’s own cultural perspective) may also indispose the traveler from local foods (Bardhi, Ostberg, & Bengtsson, 2010). At the extreme, the usage of ingredients such as the mopane worm, fish head curry, snake, and duck tongue, may invoke feelings of disgust and repulsion (Fischler, 1988; Gibson, 2007; Mkono; 2011; Rozin, 1999). Thus, travelers may be prompted to seek more familiar or less authentic versions of local dishes.

Language barriers represent yet another impediment that travelers may face in culinary settings (Chheang, 2011; Cohen & Avieli, 2004). It has been proven that for many travelers, language barriers are a key factor in a destinations’ attractiveness (Chen & Hsu, 2000). The finding can be extended to culinary settings too. With a multitude of other uncertainties that travelers have to contend with, the ability to make an informed meal selection, which includes knowledge of ingredients, cooking method, and taste, can help assuage their anxieties. Referring to restaurants in India, Lahiri and Stancati (2011) allude to staff’s inability to explain dishes on the menu as a major deterrent for travelers wishing to patronize traditional establishments. Therefore, the availability of culinary establishments that offer menus in English (as it is
considered to be the most universally accepted language) or staff that is capable of interpreting and explaining dishes, may be a key factor for travelers to regard a destination’s cuisine favorably.

Methodology

This chapter discusses about the methodology used and discuss result obtained based on qualitative research methods. It involves personal semi-structured interviews. The personal interview is a commonly used research method and has two immediate advantages: (1) good response rates and (2) interviewers are able to interact as they can observe interviewees expressions while they answer questions and modify the questions according to the reaction. However many researchers has advised that the personal interview needs to be established on a mutual trust relationship between interviewers and interviewees (Oakley, 1981). This method provides the researcher with substantial volumes of data which can be problematical to analyse and it can be difficult to prevent generalizations and bias in answers. However, it still is one of the most widely used qualitative research methods. Patton (1990) asserts that there is no fixed rule regarding the sample size for qualitative research. Frost and Braine (1967) suggest that one should be more concerned with data redundancy than to worry about an appropriate sample size. The term data redundancy refers to a point where respondents stop contributing new information, which according to Frost and Braine should happen after 20 to 40 respondents. This study aims to conduct about 20 personal interviews, which should provide enough information to achieve data redundancy.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Personal Interviews

The main advantage of the personal interviews is the interviewer can adapt the questions as necessary, clarify them and ensure that the question are properly understood, by repeating or rephrasing them. Any discomfort, stress and problems answering questions, that the interviewee experiences can be detected through change in body language exhibited by the person. This would be impossible to detect in a survey. Thus personal interviews help interviewer to get the preferred answers, through evaluating the facial look of the respondent, the interviewer can be flexible and easily understand what the interviewee is trying to tell him.
The semi-structured interview requires interviewees to discuss a few predetermined topics in any order which interviewers or interviewees feel comfortable with. The unstructured interview is often just two people having a conversation without any guidelines. The nature of the unstructured interview may, of course, result in the discussion deviating from the research topic. However, the unstructured interview allows the interviewees to answer the question much more flexibly than in the structured interview (Miller and Brabtree, 1999).

The main disadvantages of the personal interview are the geographical limitations because distribution of the surveys and the vast resources needed if such surveys need to be done in different regions otherwise locations in different part of country. Given that the intention of this study is to assess the dining out behavior and images of Indian cuisine among International tourist in Thailand, it is highly unlikely that interviewing just a few respondents would be able to give satisfactory outcomes. The significance of personal interview is ability to detect those factors or expression that may not show in the questionnaire.

Results

International tourists were strongly agreed on Indian food attributes as follows: traditional characteristics, value for money, appearance, and variety of choice. Some of the feedbacks by International tourist are as follows:

“the food is spicy”
“the Indian food is hot”
“the Indian food is made of real herbs”
“the Indian food is not oily”
“the Indian food is made of low fat, low calorie and it’s sugar free”
“the food represents Indian culture”
“the Indian food is affordable and it’s not too expensive”
“the food has a awesome taste”
“the food gives an different feeling”
and “the Indian food smells good”
This finding found taste or flavor as the most important component in Tourist perception on high quality ethnic restaurant. Tourist seeks for high quality restaurant as they believe in the usage of authentic ingredients in the cuisine. Taste, appearance and smell are also considered to be the most important factors in judging the food texture. However, texture creates strong effects about perception and liking. The food price of each meal in different Indian restaurants is considered reasonable by foreigners which might be the reason of why international diners perceive the Indian food as value for money.

In the case of healthiness, the main issues were oiliness and lightness because healthiness is one fundamental purchase motive and compared to taste. Healthiness element of the food became the most crucial consideration especially for specific food (Karen et al., 2002) such as regional food. Health concept involves two main elements: eating healthily, which relates to nutritional aspects, and avoiding unhealthy foods, which relates to food safety.

Asian and Non-Asian tourists also have the different images and acceptance on appearance and value for money. Different nationality relates to different culture, which in turn affect food familiarity, however, as the research settings took place in Khao san road which offer many variety of full service and good decorated restaurants with nice ambience as well as high price, therefore most diners relate food healthiness with those restaurants’ environment. The food safety indicators in the restaurant are e.g. clean kitchen, quality, and appearance. They further Tourist especially Americans, seek for high quality restaurants to ensure food safety and avoid food poisoning. Indian food has variety of choice and healthiness attributes as it offer mixture of goat meat, fish, and vegetables in many variations. Various vegetables had in the food are considered healthy, especially for Asian and non-Asian international tourist who cannot found such vegetables in their home country. Thus, culture plays determinant role in the food evaluation, therefore it might explain why the first travelers, who are considered the ‘first-time’ experience to new culture of Thailand or India, found different food experience.

However many Tourist indirectly mentioned regarding cooking demonstration and food ingredients information on the menu instead of only food name might enhance their confidence to try new food and evaluate the healthiness of Indian food.
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Details of tourist and there frequency for eating local cuisine

The results of the interview with 17 interviewees were classified interesting knowledge, escape from routine, health benefits, learning knowledge, genuine experience and sensational appeal.
Stimulating experience

Participants showed their interest and were excited in consuming regional food and beverages. They mentioned that eating local food that they have not eaten before, or that they have seen the images in different travel guidebooks or not available in their respective country. “When you see or eat food that you want and you were waiting for long time, you must be excited” (Respondent E). “It was very exciting. I always enjoy food, I searched travel information in the Internet, and I saw the local cuisine images. It looked very delicious. It was make me excited, and decided to eat that food, and it was really nice” (Respondent K).

Escape from routine

One interviewee expressed that travellers may eat Indian and other regional food and beverages as they want to escape from daily routines or experience different things. Although most of tourist seemed to be happy after having meal. “Manchester is really cold. So when I was in a restaurant, maybe. . . I could feel very warm and it makes me feel relaxed. Actually, I went there after my exam finished, I was stressed, because I could forget my study and everything. So, this situation was very relaxing to me” (Respondent M).

Health benefits

Health concern was found as to be a motivating factor in tourist’s interest towards Indian and Thai food and beverages. Some of the respondents believed eating fresh seafood means of improving their health either mentally or physically. Tourist had perception that Indian or Thai or any other regional food made with local ingredients should be fresher and better for health. “It is not produce in another country, because it have from another local farm or city in Thailand” (Respondent G). “Because I believe that local food is made by wonderful herbs or spices, and regional food has its own traditional cooking style” (Respondent C).

Learning knowledge

The Tourist also thought that tasting Indian food was one way to learn and understand about their culture. They also assumed eating Indian food was enabling them to get Indian experience. Many Tourists desired to know more about India. “While holidaying, different nationals response to even how food is prepared, it tells you about people and culture”
Tasting regional or ethnic food in Thailand can help to understand about local people. For example, in Thailand the main food are related to pork, chicken, fishes and other sea foods. Food tells us about culture, society and how many people get employment” (Respondent I). “every country have its own national cuisine, with lots of variety, if I will visit India, I will enjoy Indian food during my trip as this is important part of travel to understand the Indian culture and learn about people” (Respondent C).

**Genuine experience**

Some Tourist expressed that the exotic and genuine experience can be experienced as exclusive experience of travelling. Most of Tourist wants to enjoy local food and beverages in terms of its uniqueness. Some interviewees described their authentic experiences of local food eaten in the original place. “Food available here is something that you cannot get at home, and even if you can get some of the dishes, it will be expensive and taste different” (Respondent F). “It was good to flavour food with local element, and my feeling is ‘Oh, being here’” (Respondent L). “I can eat Japanese food, Indian food, and chinese food in Germany but I think it is so different when you eat them here and when you eat them there. Local food here might be localized as English people want, and it is for English’s taste. So, I think you can really experience about local food when you are in that original place” (Respondent E). Moreover, one Tourist mentioned her interest regarding table manners while eating Indian food. “While Indian food in states, spoon, fork and knife are used to eat Indian food such as bread and curry, but when we went to India, we have to eat curry just using our hands. It is the original manner, and it is an important thing during holiday” (Respondent D).

**Sensational appeal**

Many Tourists felt that sensational attractiveness can lead to their local food choice. However most of tourist had experience through the smell, taste and visual image of Indian food. The aroma and flavour was considered a starting point to attract the tourist walking through the streets. Furthermore, visual images of local food such as food well displayed and cooking performance may play a key motivational role in providing sensory pleasure to tourists. “The aroma was really pleasant and it made me passionate, when we saw that meal, it was well and
looked nice and quite tasty” (Respondent N). “When you ordered, they began cooking it and did it in front of you and give you “(Respondent O).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The current study was undertaken in the context of to understand the image of Indian cuisine and ever increasing consumption of regional (Thai, Chinese, Indian etc.) food and beverages on vacation. However semi-structured personal interview approach and study as well as review of academic articles as well as reports published in journal, websites on Tourist perception on ethnic food consumption as well as motivations, this study not only trying to understand the factors influencing the increasing popularity of Indian food consumption identified the on trips and holidays. The popularity of Indian cuisine depends upon stimulating experience, to try something new, wellbeing concern, awareness, genuine experience, reputation, sensational appeal, and physical atmosphere. These were developed through investigation of participants’ experiences of local food and beverages and the mixture of a linkage between existing literature on food choice and travel motivation theories. This study is a first of its kind to provide or gathers information on Indian food consumption by International Tourist.

This study also explains influence of Thai and Indian food and beverages on Tourist destination. The current research demonstrates that eating Indian food and beverages satisfy tourists’ hunger and cultural experiences. Tourist participants also suggested that people in a tourist destination consider local food not only for sake of eating something but it should be assumed as a life time experience during a holiday. Although the answer are not generalize to all vacationer in a destination, this study represents an initial foundation, and has developed an thoughtful of what people on holiday think about local food and beverages.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Studies

This study was limited with some factors. Firstly, the current research was related to images of the foreign customers toward Indian cuisine. Hence, further study should emphasize on the satisfaction and expectation of both Thai and foreign Tourist toward Indian Cuisine.
satisfaction and expectation from Thai and foreign Tourist will give more details and benefits to restaurant businesses. Secondly, this study was limited in collecting and analyzing data of only 16 foreign Tourist and one restaurant owner of Siam India located at choenkrung road, Bangkok, however other interview with Tourist was done at Khao san road, as respondents and the survey location were limited, comparatively availability of large number of tourist destination as well as million of tourist coming to Thailand.

References:


Razzaque M. A. (2009), Indian Restaurants and Sydney Siders: A Perceptual Study. In Dr Dewi Tojib (eds.) Proceedings of the ANZMAC 2009 Conference held in Melbourne, in December 2009
Interview questions

RO1 = what you really like about Indian restaurants:
RO1 = what you dislike about Indian restaurants:
RQ1 & RQ2 = would you eat more often at Indian restaurant or at local restaurant?
RO3 = what you think Indian restaurants should know/be aware of?
RQ3 = what is Indian cuisine’s image on travelers?
RQ4 = How is Indian cuisine perceived when compared to Thai, an Asian cuisine that is well established and popular globally?
RO3 = what are some of the problem faced by travelers while dining at Indian restaurant?
RO2 = any other comments about your experiences in Indian restaurants
RQ6 = would you as a travelers recommend Indian food to other travelers?

Title: A STUDY OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PRICE PERCEPTIONS AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS IN THE BAKERY PRODUCTS IN BANGKOK

Author: Gorragot Poolgird

Abstract

The paper represents a study about the demographic factors that effect on price perception of bakery products. It is neither a culture nor traditional style of Thai people to have a bread or croissant as a breakfast. It is interesting to study the perception of the people in this kind of product and since it became more popular, the manufacturers and the bakery shops would study for the price perception versus the quality of products. The study based on a survey questionnaires which deliver to the samples who step out of a bakery shop in Tops Supermarket in Bangkok in order to receive a fresh memory on price. The perception measures by feeling of the samples on price of bakery products: Sandwich bread, Savory bread, croissant, Danish, and cake in Bangkok.

The result of an independent study on the knowledge of price of bakery products classified by demographic factors; gender and age, as well as studying about the effect of demographic factors on price perception of Bakery products in Bangkok. The demographic factors are gender, age, and education level due to they are the main importance influences in price perception. It shows that the most of the sample in Bangkok who believe they check on the price cannot remember the exact price of bakery products. Demographic factors have an effect on price perception especially gender, age, and education. The awareness in terms of price is different for individual as well as the perception on a specific product.

Keywords: Price perception, bakery products, Demographic factors

Introduction

The price is very important for daily life. Everybody, from rich to poor, use money to buy or to pay for something every day so one should have price awareness and price perception on each
product. Thailand has a freedom and never be a colonial while the bakery products are influence from Western countries. It is neither a culture nor traditional style to have a bread or croissant as a breakfast.

The research is specific on price perception of bakery products due to its growth and its potential to growth in Bangkok. The image of bakery products in the past is an expensive and luxury product. Recently, bakery product is popular in Bangkok. One of the reasons is because of the widespread of Western culture and the influence of a culture from Japan. Previously, the price of Bakery product in Bangkok is high but when it became more popular, the price is decreasing. It is interesting to know when people purchase bakery products, do they really know the exact price of what they are buying and from their point of view, it is over price, low price or moderate price which means do they feel that they are buying expensive, cheap or reasonable price for the products, how they willingness to pay. Therefore, it might be useful to gain some insight into market-specific consumer price knowledge as a basis for improving pricing in practice.

As one of the marketing mix variables, price plays an important role in influencing consumers’ perception of products, increasing demand, attracting customers, and promoting brand loyalty, among other things. Price of a product has a major influence on the buying decision (Alba et al., 1999; Monroe, 1973). Price management does not only determine how prices perceive and value but also influences consumers’ purchasing decisions (Binkley and Bejnarowicz, 2003; Dolan, 1995; Mesak and Clelland, 1979; Monroe, 1973, 1992; Shapiro, 1968; Simon, 1989; Turley and Cabaniss, 1995; Vanhuele and Dreze, 2002).

A research from Rosa-Diaz (2004) shows that while a buyer may not able to remember explicitly the price that he or she last paid for an item, he or she might be very capable of judging a new price for products in the item category as “too high” or expensive, “a good deal” or reasonable or “inexpensive” or cheap and worth to buy. Consumers do not easily recall the exact price they paid for a product, memory distortion is smaller when consumers are asked to evaluate price (expensive or inexpensive) rather than to remember the exact price (Xia, 2005). Consumers can easily indicate
whether the service received was under-priced, just-priced, or overpaid for the value received. To be capable of such a judgment, the buyer must have some knowledge of prices of similar items in the category. It can be noted that consumers not only demonstrate low price knowledge, but they also tend to overestimate prices. An important implication of these results is that product pricing can be modified. Since, the actual price generally overestimate, retailers have room for price variation. Moderate price increases would not convince consumers that the product is “expensive” and they would still buy the product even at a higher price. German retailers, in particular, could improve their low revenue by increasing prices moderately for products with low price knowledge.

Therefore, the traditional role of the housewife has become increasing diluted. Consequently, it would be reasonable to predict that gender would not generate significant differences in price knowledge (Brown, 1971; Chanson et al., 1986; Estelami, 1998; Otnes and McGrath, 2001). However, part of the empirical evidence available on this subject indicates that women have a better knowledge of prices than men (Estelami and Lehmann, 2001; Fady and Seret, 1985; Maynes and Assum, 1982; Zeithaml and Berry, 1987, cited in Zeithaml, 1988). Additionally, most studies on price knowledge have used frequently-purchased consumer goods intended to cover the needs of the family (Estelami and Lehmann, 2001), which again, would be in line with the female role discussed above.

H1: Women have better knowledge of bakeries price than men.

Similar to gender, the empirical evidence available on the impact of age on price knowledge is contradictory. While some studies find no significant effect (Chanson et al., 1986; McGoldrick and Marks, 1987; Turley and Cabaniss, 1995; Zbytniewski, 1980), others show a clear influence. For example, Brown (1971) and Urbany et al., (1996) observes that older consumers have a better knowledge of prices. A possible explanation is that this age group tends to have more spare time, which allows them to spend more time studying the prices. In the case of Spain, older age groups tend to have, on average, low income levels (Instituto Nacional de Estadistica de Espana-INE, 2003b), which could make individuals pay more attention to prices.

In contrary, Zeithaml (1982) research provides an additional perspective on this issue. The result of her study shows that the older the participants, the higher the price recall error. This result
could be due to their lesser ability to memorize and perform mental calculations, as well as to their lower educational level (Gabor, 1988; Zeithaml, 1982; Zeithaml and Fuerst, 1983).

On the basis of the previous discussion, it would be reasonable to predict that middle-aged people would demonstrate a more accurate knowledge of prices, since they are able to process and retain this information and they generally assume the responsibility for the household.

**H2: Older consumers have better knowledge of bakery prices than younger consumers.**

**Price-influence and age segments**

The construct of price knowledge consists of two parts. One is deals with the “knowledge concerning a price”, which include accurate, figure-oriented content, and the other is it deals with “price feeling”. A consumer for instance, only has vague (ordinal, or nominal) price knowledge expressed as a price judgment such as expensive or inexpensive.

It shows that consumers’ reference prices depend on a range of prices for a particular product. The magnitude of the price range influences by the highest price and the lowest price, and these endpoints along with the reference price influence the consumers’ judgment of prices (Kalyanaram and Little, 1994; Monroe, 2003).

Brown (1971) conducted a study in which consumer confidence is operationalized as the assessment of one’s own shopping ability. The researcher found that there was a negative relationship between consumers’ confidence about their own price awareness and their actual knowledge of prices. As a possible explanation for this result, the author states that “those who think they are better shoppers have a false sense of security, perhaps not recognizing the complexity of the situation, and so do not perceive price as validly as others”. Additionally, in contrast with Brown (1971), Zbytniewski (1980) found a positive (although weak) relationship between consumers’ confidence about their own price awareness and the accuracy of their actual knowledge.

**H3: The demographic of Population in Bangkok has an affected on Price perception in Bakery products.**
Objectives

1. To study the knowledge of the price of bakery products classified by demographic factor of gender.
2. To study the knowledge of the price of bakery products classified by demographic factor of age.
3. To study about the effect of demographic factors on price perception of Bakery products in Bangkok.

Research Methodology

The method would be quantitative or deductive method, collecting primary data using convenient structure survey questionnaires with some images of the bakery products in Tops Supermarket. Since there are a lot of support theories and researches, the fact could be found out to confirm the theory, and seeking for the facts or causes of social phenomena under controlled measurement. The questionnaires attach in appendix part at the end of this paper.

Due to the limitation of time for only 4 months, and budget, the target samples are Bangkok population for 30 persons who buy bakery product at Tops Supermarket in different area of Bangkok, Tops at Union mall Ladprao and Tops at Central Rama 2 department store, the data were collected from people who come out of the shop due to they should have fresh memory if they check and concern for the price. Since the title of this research is related to demographic factors so the questionnaires are separated for men and women equally. Price knowledge / awareness need to study prior price perception.

The analysis method is using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) statistical program. The research use ANOVA to investigate whether there is a difference in price perception between demographic factors. The kind of testing uses varied from cross tabulation independent – sample T – test or, one-way ANOVA analysis to find out if one who check the price can be remembered the exactly price or not and the perception on quality of bakery products with its price.
Result / Conclusion

Table 1 Different opinion between groups of gender ANOVA

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>.033</td>
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<td>Within Groups</td>
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<td>.248</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>change mind to buy discount</td>
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<td>.300</td>
<td>1.167</td>
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<td>1.105</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ANOVA method in table 1 shows the different opinion between groups.

Table 2: The relationship between gender and check on sale price Crosstabulation Count

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<td>Male</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that men do check the price of bakery products more than women.
Table 3 The relationship between gender and check on price of sandwich bread

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<th>count</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>gender Female</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that both male and female who check the price can’t remember the exact price of Sandwich bread.
Table 4 The relationship between gender and check on price of a piece of cake

<table>
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<tr>
<th>gender</th>
<th>check on sale price</th>
<th>don't check</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows number of male who check the price of a piece of Cake is 10, only 1 person can remember the exact price while number of female who check the price is 9, 2 of them remember exact price.
### Table 5: Different opinion between groups of age

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<th>Sum of Squares</th>
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<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>.150</td>
<td>.598</td>
<td>.622</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
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<td>.251</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>change mind to buy discount</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Within Groups</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>.724</td>
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<td>Within Groups</td>
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<td>1.279</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>34.967</td>
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</table>

The ANOVA method in table 5 shows the different opinion between groups.

### Table 6: The relationship between age and check on sale price

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<tr>
<td><strong>age</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows that the population at the age of 31-40 is the highest group that check the price of bakery product follow by 20-30, and below 20 and above 40 are equal.
Table 7 The relationship between age and check on price of sweet bread

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>age * check on sale price</th>
<th>diffsweetbread</th>
<th>check</th>
<th>don't check</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows that 1 sample of each group of age below 20, 20-30, and 31-40 remember the exact price of Sweet bread.
Table 8 The relationship between age and check on price of danish

Table 8 shows that 1 sample of the age 20-30 and 1 sample of 31-40 remember the exact price of Danish.
Tables 9 Relationship between age and feeling for price of sandwich

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>unreasonable age</th>
<th>neutral age</th>
<th>reasonable age</th>
<th>very reasonable age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 20</td>
<td>N=3</td>
<td>(21.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>(100.0%)</td>
<td>N=7</td>
<td>(63.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>(100.0%)</td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>(7.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 40</td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>(100.0%)</td>
<td>N=11</td>
<td>(100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The feeling of price of sandwich distinguished by age; all of the age below 20 feel reasonable price, most of the age between 20-30 feel reasonable price, followed by neutral price, and very reasonable price. Most of the age between 31-40 feels neutral price, reasonable price, and unreasonable price, age above 40 equally feel neutral price and very reasonable price followed by reasonable price.
### Tables 10 Relationship between education and feeling for price of cake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>very unreasonable education</th>
<th>unreasonable education</th>
<th>neutral education</th>
<th>reasonable education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high school</td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>(10.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diploma</td>
<td>N=7</td>
<td>(87.5%)</td>
<td>N=8</td>
<td>(80.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>master degree</td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>(10.0%)</td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>N=8</td>
<td>(100.0%)</td>
<td>N=10</td>
<td>(100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The feeling for price of cake distinguished by education; High school level feels the price is neutral and reasonable equally, Diploma level feels the price is very unreasonable and unreasonable equally, most of bachelor degree level feels the price is unreasonable followed by very unreasonable, neutral and reasonable price. Most of master degree level feels the price is reasonable followed by neutral and unreasonable price.
### Tables 11 Relationship between gender and feeling for price of croissant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling for price of croissant</td>
<td>very unreasonable</td>
<td>unreasonable</td>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>reasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check on price</td>
<td>Check on sale</td>
<td>Check on sale</td>
<td>Check on sale</td>
<td>Check on sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check on price</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t check</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100.0% of male who check on price of croissant feel the price is very unreasonable. Male who check (66.70%) and do not check (33.30%) for croissant price feel the price of croissant is unreasonable. Male who check (50.00%) and do not check (50.00%) for croissant price feel the price of croissant is neutral equally. 100.0% of male who check on price of croissant feel the price is reasonable. 100.0% of male who do not check on price of croissant feel the price is very reasonable. 100.0% of male who check on price of croissant feel the price is reasonable.

100.0% of female who do not check on the price of croissant feel the price is very unreasonable. Female who check (83.30%) and do not check (16.70%) for price of croissant feel the price is unreasonable. 100.0% of female who check on price of croissant feel the price is neutral. 100.0% of female who do not check on price of croissant feel the price is reasonable. 100.0% of female who do not check on price of croissant feel the price is very reasonable.
Male who check on price (83.30%) and who do not check (16.70%) the price of danish feel the price is very unreasonable. Male who check (66.70%) and do not check (33.30%) for price of danish feel the price is neutral. Male who check (50.00%) and do not check (50.00%) for price of danish feel the price is reasonable.

One hundred percent of female who check on price of danish feel the price is unreasonable. Female who check (62.50%) and do not check (37.50%) for price of danish feel the price is neutral. Female who check (33.30%) and do not check (66.70%) for price of danish feel the price is reasonable. One hundred percent of female who do not check on price of danish feel the price is very reasonable.
Tables 13 Relationship between gender and feeling for price of cake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gender</th>
<th>feeling for price of cake</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>very unreasonable</td>
<td>check on sale price</td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=3</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=5</td>
<td>71.40</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unreasonable</td>
<td>check on sale price</td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=3</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=5</td>
<td>33.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=1</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>check on sale price</td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>28.60</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>66.70</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reasonable</td>
<td>check on sale price</td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=3</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>N=4</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Female   | very unreasonable         | check on sale price | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 66.70 |
|          | unreasonable              | check on sale price | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 66.70 |
|          | neutral                   | check on sale price | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 66.70 |
|          | reasonable                | check on sale price | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 50.00 |     | N=2 | 66.70 |

One hundred percent of male who check on price of cake feel the price is very unreasonable. Male who check (71.40%) and do not check for cake price (28.60%) feel the price is unreasonable. Male who check (50.00%) and do not check (50.00%) for cake price feel the price is neutral. Male who check (33.30%) and do not check (66.70%) for cake price feel the price is reasonable.

Female who check (60.00%) and do not check (40.00%) for cake price feel the price is very unreasonable. One hundred percent of female who check on cake price feel the price is unreasonable. Female who check (50.00%) and do not check (50.00%) for cake price feel the price is neutral. Female who check (33.30%) and do not check (66.70%) for cake price feel the price is reasonable.

Discussion / Recommendations

The result of the research support Hypothesis 1: Women have better knowledge of bakery prices than men. Even though the result of checking the selling price shows that men do check the price more than women but in reality, when collecting information of the memory, women scores more than men.

The result of the research partial support Hypothesis 2: Older consumers have better knowledge of bakery price than younger consumers, the population at the age of 31-40 is the highest...
groups that check the price of bakery product follow by 20-30, below 20 and above 40 are equal. The result supports hypothesis 2 by considering that the age group of 31-40 and above 40 are elder but when collecting information of the memory, the age of 20-30 (score: 2) and below 20 (score: 6) scores higher than 31-40 (score: 6) and above 40 (score: 0), the younger are able to remember the price more than elder.

The result of the research confirms Hypothesis 3: The demographic of Population in Bangkok has an affected on Price perception in Bakery products. The demographic factors in the research represent gender, age, and education level shows there are the different in the price perception as shown in the tables in H 3.

In conclusion, it shows that the sample of Bangkok population who check the price, most of them don’t remember the exact price of bakery products. Some of the bakery consumers are able to remember the price but maybe for only short period of time as the information from literature reviews. If the bakery sellers increase the price because the raw material price is increase consumer may not remember or notice the exact price of the products. Consumers tend to remember the price of one own interest while indeed, they should have a price awareness for regular basis.

Demographic factors have an effect on price perception especially gender, age, and education. The awareness in terms of price is different for individual as well as the perception on a specific product. Moreover, there are a lot of factors to create price perception for one, for example, the income, specific knowledge, experience, family background, etc.

Price perception is a marketing strategy used by businesses to increase total sales. Although the practice does not necessarily misrepresent the products being sold, it is often considered a covert, or slightly undercover, approach. The success of this strategy is dependent on consumer psychology because the message must convince customers that expensive items are not that far away in price from less costly products. Ultimately, it is up to customers to decide whether or not products warrant their investment.

A business can sometimes benefit from downplaying the value of high-end products instead of treating expensive items as though they are special. This type of psychology could work because of
price perception, which is the way that consumers interpret the cost for items despite the price tag that might be attached to the products. Positioning pricey products in the same area as less expensive inventory could alter a consumer's price perception so that there appears to be less of a discrepancy between high-end and low-end items.

When a costly product is marketed to fulfill a similar purpose as less expensive items, it may be more acceptable to consumers. Without even knowing it, customers might equate costly items with their less expensive counterparts simply because of the way the items are marketed and placed in a retail outlet. Subsequently, consumers might be more inclined to pay more for an item simply as a result of price perception. As long as customers understand a price to be acceptable, even if it is a result of strategic marketing efforts by a retailer or manufacturer, they may be convinced to make a higher-priced purchase that would otherwise be ignored.

Price perception could work against an organization if a customer feels deceived. For instance, bait and switch is another marketing tactic that businesses can use when performed ethically. It is the practice of advertising an inexpensive item but later attempting to sell inquiring customers a higher-priced item. Retailers can bolster sales by using the customer's inquiry as an opportunity to switch the cheaper item for a more expensive product. Savvy consumers might not fall for this strategy and price perception could be a less convincing tactic when customers have already decided to pay a certain amount for an item.

Businesses who are not seeking to capitalize on price perception would focus instead on providing consumers with transparency. This is a marketing approach that attempts to provide as much information and context about a purchase as possible, including the potential risks associated with an item. Subsequently, consumers are less likely to make selections they may later regret.
References


Title: Factors Influencing to Hotel Selection as a MICE Destination by MICE Organizers in Thailand: A Case Study of Amari Hua Hin Hotel, Prachaup Khirikhan Province, Thailand

Author: Miss Natthichapat Chiawkit

Abstract: Amari Hua Hin provides accommodation, restaurants and meeting and banquet facilities. Hua Hin is the favorite destination for MICE Group that many customers selected to hold their MICE event and there are many hotels where have capacity for MICE in Hua Hin, so MICE market segment in Hua Hin has high competition. To investigated and identify important factors of hotel selection by MICE segment. The aim is to study the factors involving decision making in hotel selection of Amari Hua Hin. The tool use in this research was the questionnaire developed by the author. Some 80 sets of questionnaire use to survey opinions of samples. The samples in this study were a group of organizers who organized MICE and stayed at Amari Hua Hin in 2013-2014. Thai Tourism industry has important due to it is a major economic factor in Thailand. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) played a significant role in bringing great success to the business. Other places nurturing tradition and convention programs having government marketing included Vietnam, Malaysia, along with India. With these places, the facilities usually are owned along with operated through the government, along with promotional routines are backed by several government businesses.

The factors are influencing to decision making of MICE to select accommodation. Price, accessibility, facilities, cleanliness, service quality, safety and relationship
between sales and customers are the important factors that affect to accommodation selection.

**Keywords:** Influential factors, MICE segment and Customer satisfaction

**Introduction**

Tourism is a key contributor to the economies of the nation and it is one of the most important industries that generated high income to country. As a result, MICE industry is regarded as one of the most buoyant sectors of tourism industry. It is the least responsive to price changes and helps to reduce “peak-trough” seasonal patterns (Spiller, 2012). Moreover this industry not only contributes the income only for MICE industry but the revenue is distributed to other business sectors such as hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops, transportation services and telecommunications (Sirirassamee, 2005).

In 2012, Spiller (2012) stated that key infrastructure improvements facilitated are growing about demand. Growth may well continue from the Asian tradition industry, that still in its infancy. Increasing rivalry will stem from newly emerging tradition destinations. On the whole, the competing situation from the Asia-Pacific region in the next few years will be strongly afflicted with the establishing Chinese tradition industry, the particular renewed marketing and advertising activity by Japan, and also the competent marketing and advertising and professionalism of the Australia along with New Zealand business (Spiller, 2012)

Amari Hua Hin is the first new property that shows the identity of Amari brand through the facilities and service. According to Hua Hin is the favorite destination for MICE Group and there are many hotels where have capacity for MICE
in Hua Hin, so MICE market segment in Hua Hin has high competition. Amari Hua Hin is the one of MICE hotel in Hua Hin area also and many times that we lost bidding with other hotels in various reasons.

This study aims to find key factors that affecting to decision making of a hotel by MICE. In order to Amari Hua Hin can improve its strategies and services to achieve more market share of MICE from other competitors.

**Objectives**

1) To study factors influencing customers to select hotel in MICE Group.

2) To examine the level of satisfaction of customers with MICE center and its facilities in Amari Hua Hin.

3) To promote guidelines to develop and improve the hotel to be the potential of MICE center in Hua Hin where provide services and facilities that important to MICE segment

**Literature Review**

1. **Introduction**

   Thai Tourism industry has important due to it is a major economic factor in Thailand. It can make more revenue that contributing an estimated 6.7% to Thailand’s GDP in 2007. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) played a significant role in bringing great success to the business. In 2012, Thai tourism industry achieved huge income from foreign tourists at 889.571 billion Baht, show excellent achievement that higher than target at 7.70% and greater than the performance in 2011 at 17.39%. Furthermore, revenue of domestic tourism is increasing at 556,925 billion Baht, which
showed 14.71% higher than the expected target and 20.44% larger than the performance in the in 2011 (TAT, 2011).

2. Definition

The Convention Industry Council's was defined the definition of MICE as Meeting is an event where the primary activity of the attendees is to attend organized events. Incentive, a travel reward given by companies to employees who stimulate productivity. Convention is an assembly of persons who have met for a common purpose. Exhibition is an event at where products and services are displayed. (The Convention Industry Council's, 2005);

3. MICE Segment

Tourism is a key contributor to the economies of the nation and it is one of the most important industries that generated high income to country. MICE industry is regarded as one of the most buoyant sectors of tourism industry. It is the least responsive to price changes and helps to reduce “peak-trough” seasonal patterns (Spiller, 2012). Moreover this industry not only contributes the income only for MICE industry but the revenue is distributed to other business sectors such as hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops, transportation services and telecommunications (Sirirassamee, 2005).

4. Factors

This study has identified the seven factors, which are deemed important to decision making by MICE. The seven factors are ‘Price’, ‘Accessibilities’, ‘Facilities’, ‘Cleanliness’, ‘Service Quality’, ‘Safety’ and ‘Relationship between Sales and Customers’ respectively, and are considered to be the influential factors in determining MICE organizers by satisfaction (Lockyer, 2002).
Price: Price is the important factor that affect to accommodation selection. Choi and Chu (2000) indicate that at the present, the hotels must propose the reasonable price to the guests included offer services and facilities to meet guest’s requirements.

Accessibility: Location of the hotel influences to the hotel purchase decision (Albazzaz et al., 2003; Frosgren and Franchetti, 2004; McIntosh and Siggs, 2005). Zhang, Ye and Low (2011) indicated that Location where nearby facilities and tourist attractions, convenient and easy to access will be considered the first factor of accommodation selection.

Length of stay: Lockyer and Roberts (2008) comprise that Length of stay divided to 3 levels; “Minimalist” is the level of the overnight stay and no need more services and facilities, “Essentials” is the level of the tourists who stay two-four nights and require only necessary facilities, and “Enhancers” that is the level of the tourists who stay longer than four nights, need services and facilities to increase their comfort more than the basic needs.

Cleanliness: Callan (1996) identified that cleanliness is the one of important factors that influences the accommodation selection. Lockyer, 2002; Lewis, 1987; Knutson, 1988; Taninecz, 1990; Weaver and Oh, 1993; Atkinson, 1998; Poon and Low, 2005 agreed that cleanliness also is the most important factors for the guests. Dolnicar and Otter (2003) extracted 173 attributes such as previous experiences, recommendation, external rating of a hotel, location, price and so on that determined occupancy rates by reviewing 21 journals undertaken between 1984 and 2000.

Service quality: Service quality is the most influential factor that the customers decide in prior (Barsky and Labagh, 1992; Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988;
Oberoi and Hales, 1990; Wilensky and Buttle, 1988; Aggett, 2007; Zhang, Ye and Low (2011). Aggett (2007) comprises that the hotels have the significant component is service and service quality indicates standard and image of the hotel (Mohsin and Lockyer, 2009). Service quality not relevant with the size and sector of the hotel, but related with nonexistence of the staff performance (Briggs et al., 2007).

Safety: Weaver and Oh (1993) stated that safety of the hotel is the important factor for the tourists. Knutson (1998), Atkinson (1988) and McCleary et al. (1994) agreed that safety affected to accommodation purchase decision as well, particularly female tourists.

Sales and customer satisfaction are the most important factors in every business (Briggs et al., 2007). If hotel wanted to become successful and get rid of possible issues, better find some ways on how hotel can improve hotel products and services to improve the level of customer satisfaction and boost hotel business sales (Mohsin and Lockyer, 2009).

Satisfaction: Berry et al. (1994) concluded that SERVQUAL can be used as a diagnostic tool to suggest management to improve its service quality by concentrating the most needful areas.

5. Hypotheses

5.1 Price is an important factor affecting decision making of a hotel by MICE

5.2 Accessibilities is an important factor affecting decision making of a hotel by MICE

5.3 Facilities is an important factor affecting decision making of a hotel by MICE
5.4 Cleanliness is an important factor affecting decision making of a hotel by MICE

5.5 Service quality is an important factor affecting decision making of a hotel by MICE

5.6 Safety is an important factor affecting decision making of a hotel by MICE

5.7 Relationship between sales and customers is an important factor affecting decision making of a hotel by MICE

Research Methodology

1. Research Method

This is a quantitative research study on the topic of “Factors Influencing to Hotel Selection as a MICE Destination by MICE Organizers in Thailand: A Case Study of Amari Hua Hin Hotel, Prachaup Khirikhan Province, Thailand”. Convenient Sampling was used, by using a questionnaire which collected a total number of 80 participants from MICE organizers at Amari Hua Hin.

The project aims to find key factors that affecting to decision making of a hotel by MICE. The study is segmented into different parts, focusing on areas such as the method of collecting information.

2. Population and Sample

People for this investigation were being MICE organizers who organize the events at Amari Hua Hin through October 2013-March 2014. The researchers sent out
questionnaires to organizers who utilized the hotel to set up their functions. There have been around 80 organizers from various kinds of business.

This specific investigation usually is satisfied the email address details are third party the slightest bit.

3. Research Instrument

The research used a questionnaire survey to interpret guests’ satisfaction with their stay at the hotel, focusing only on MICE organizers. Its secondary objective was to extract data regarding influencing factors on a guest’s decision in selecting Amari Hua Hin for their MICE events. The questionnaire survey includes: multiple choices questions and ranking questions. The researcher used the questionnaire which derived from concepts, theory and related research, to collect the data. This questionnaire consisted of 3 sections as follows;

Section 1: Organizer’s Demographic Characteristics. These were gender, type of organization and number of staff in organization. Each question is multiple choices question.

Section 2: MICE Behaviors. These were budget of accommodation per night, number of time of MICE per year, favorite destination and length of stay per event. Each question is multiple choices question.

Section 3: The factors influencing the decision making when select the hotel of MICE with Amari Hua Hin. Each question is ranking question.

3.5 Data Collection

For this section, researcher employed the use of multiple choices questions and ranking questions. Question number 1-7 in Part 1 and Part 2 are multiple choices questions asked about Organizer’s Demographic Characteristics and MICE behaviors.
Question number 1.1 to 7.4 in Part 3 asked about factors that are influence to decision making to select the hotel for MICE events. Question number 8.1 and 8.2 asked whether or not they satisfied with Amari Hua Hin, and whether they would return to Amari Hua Hin.

The researcher asked permission to conduct the survey from Director of Sales & Marketing at Amari Hua Hin. The researcher was allowed to give out the questionnaire to organizers who are MICE customers at Amari Hua Hin by email and present to customer when visit them at their office.

3.6 Analysis of Data

The total small sample made up 80 questionnaires. The data accumulated through In-depth appointment approach is going to be on a detailed schedule. The examination may focus on the influential factors to decision making to select the hotel for MICE events at Amari Hua Hin. The data accumulated over the list of questions review approach is going to be looked at along with modified with regard to completeness. After that, the data examination within this exploration utilized SPSS (Statistical Package for your Interpersonal Sciences). First, the specialist looked at the list of questions inside each and every dilemma with regard to examination course of action. The results in the research are going to be presented inside stand formatting. The formatting helps the reader to be aware of the results easier.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research found that facilities, service quality and relationship between sales and customers have impact on decision making to hotel selection by MICE. At the meantime, other factors such as price, accessibilities, cleanliness and safety are
still important to MICE organizers to select the hotel. Furthermore, satisfaction of customers also affect to returning of MICE events at the hotel.

The findings are considered useful to the hotel industry as they provide a clear indication on how to improve their service provisions in MICE industry. This study provides useful and effective ways for the management to identify the potential problems that are likely to occur, and understand cause of its. Once the hotel attributes in relation of customer’s requirements are clearly identified and understood, the management is more likely to be able to anticipate and cater to their customer’s desires and needs, rather than merely reacting to their dissatisfaction.

However, there are some limitations in this research due to survey from previous customers since September 2013 to get feedback and survey from customers of only one sales representative. Hence, the further study the researcher could design different type of questionnaire and other factors to investigate customer’s satisfaction and returning in order to get more accurate data. In addition, the sample group should be customers of several sales representatives to find the different of service performance and relationship with customers.

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Increasing Customers’ satisfactions towards Waiting Time Management

: A Case Study of Government Saving Bank in Thailand

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CHAPTER 1

Abstract: This research aims to investigate level of customer satisfaction during their waiting time in a bank. It focused on two areas: 1) satisfaction level of the process to open a bank account and 2) satisfaction level of the distractions used by the bank. The paper also would like to identify ways to improve the working process in the Government Saving Bank in order to reduce the waiting time. This research used both qualitative and quantitative to investigate this topic. 100 customers who open account at the bank were distributed with survey. Data from questionnaire are analyzed by descriptive and Anova in SPSS program. The findings indicate there is different of satisfaction between age and occupation. People aged above 60 and students are satisfied with the process and distractions. On the other hand, government officer, employee and business are satisfied with distractions, but, not satisfy with the process. As for improving of working process, this research had interviewed two managers from deposit and loan sections. The results showed that technology improvement (software and the computer system) could help to fasten the working process and hence, reducing waiting times.

Keyword: Working process management, waiting time management, customer satisfaction, customers’ distraction, Improve service quality

Introduction:

Government Saving Bank or GSB is a state enterprise which was established by King Rama VI 6 under the Ministry of Finance. The bank becomes one of top five banks in Thailand to serve financial products and services for Thais especially in rural area. Throughout the past Government Saving Bank has improved the operational systems and services in all aspects of a dynamic, in order to maintain customers base of more than 26 million accounts by mobilizing all sides. However base on the process of the bank there are many processes in each transaction, so it increase great amount of waiting time for customers. As waiting lines have been associated with reduced service evaluations (Taylor, 1994), negative perceptions of service quality (Dube-Rioux et al., 1989), and reduced satisfaction (Katz et al., 1991), having to wait makes a customer's. First experience of a service is a negative one (Baker and Cameron, 1996; Dickson et al., 2005; Maister, 1985).
Consequently, waiting-time reduction has been a major objective of service providers. Waiting time is often encountered as part of the leisure experience. Customer satisfaction is conceived as one aspect of customer behavior and evolves over the duration of the customer experience. Waiting time can affect customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is conceived as one aspect of customer behavior and evolves over the duration of the customer experience. To analyze its operational system impacts customer’s satisfaction, the interview is made with the managerial staff based on their point of view regarding customer waiting time and distraction.

The effectiveness of recovery strategies depends on the situation and is influenced by such factors as importance and type of service. Effectiveness is also dependent on the way in which the service provider handles the problem; responsiveness, empathy and understanding improve the effectiveness of the strategy (Bitner et al., 1990; Hart et al., 1990). Consequently, process changes can bring about improvements in the operational performance in reduction of waiting time. In this study, we examine the effects of process on perceived waiting time and find recommendations to improve the process.

This study shows that process changes can have significant impact on improvement in customer perception of waiting time. Researchers have explored various ways to improve customers’ perception during waiting time, including changing service environment, engaging customers by distraction. The paper also investigates feedback towards expected waiting time from both customers and bank managers. Process changes such as the deployment of express lines may on the one hand reduce the perceived waiting time by making the waiting environment.

In brief, this research paper will reveal the effect of operation system of the bank on customer perception of waiting time and the improvement of the system in order to create customer’s satisfaction. The essential recommendation is also provided in this paper.

**Objective:** To examine customer’s satisfaction of their waiting time during receiving services from Government Saving Bank. Moreover, the research aims to find a solution to decrease the working process, and to improve on the usage of distractions by the bank.

**Company Background:**

Government Saving Bank or GSB is a state enterprise was established by King Rama VI 6 under the Ministry of Finance. King Rama VI, Rama 6 sees the benefits of savings. So that people know how to save a storage facility for saving public money. Safe from crime, and he initiated the establishment of individualized experimental corpus. The King signed the Bank’s "Leaf Theatre" in 2450. To set up a "warehouse bank" in the Department of the Treasury Thailand with permission promulgated "Treasury Savings Act 1913” in 1 April 1913.
A bank for retail customers Focused on lending to rural development. Development of small enterprises the form of loans and many types of retail deposits. It also created a revolving fund in the community. The people’s bank by short-term credit small entrepreneurs (To the public debt in the system. That can be verified and collecting interest after the fact) to channel and pay the loan of Housing and Urban Fund. They are also investing in developing countries. Of government agencies and state enterprises provide a variety of deposit. Currently have more than 900 branches all over the country. Savings Day falls on April 1 of each year. Set up to commemorate the event annually by the Bank to the habit of saving money for kids. The Bank has a nationwide deposit. By depositing from 50 baht to get gifts, annually

GSB is the only one in Thailand with Deposit Protection Act which is State if the bank is falling Government will be paid to you pursuant to the act. Announced that in case bank. State bank guarantees 100%, as if falling. State already has 10 million deposit was paid 10 million. However due to the times government bank nowadays have to log in combating to commercial bank. Government Saving Bank is almost 101 years with mission to “Established financial institutions to savings and to be leadership in support of economic foundations and individual clients with effective management and governance principles.”

Throughout the past Government Saving Bank has changed improve the operational systems and services in all aspects of a dynamic. The Bank has adapted to the situation. To maintain a customer base of more than 26 million accounts by mobilizing all sides. Also to improve the image and patterns to provide a more modern and comprehensive and to support services consistent with the needs and covers all professions and all ages with 1,121 branches.

CHAPTER 2
Literature Review:

1. Consumer satisfaction:

Consumer satisfaction has been typically conceptualized as either an emotional or cognitive response. More recent satisfaction definitions concede an emotional response. Customer satisfaction is important because it provides marketers and business owners with a metric that they can use to manage and improve their businesses. In a survey of nearly 200 senior marketing managers, 71 percent responded that they found a customer satisfaction metric very useful in managing and monitoring their businesses. (Ross Beard, 2014) Customer satisfaction is the best indicator of how likely a customer will make a purchase in the future.

In any high contact services where customers must be present, waiting is inevitable due to uncertain and fluctuating demands. Conceivably, service providers can increase capacity by employing more people and investing in more facilities to reduce waiting time but it still would not be economically feasible to completely eliminate waiting. Increased competition in the marketplace, however, demands service providers to continuously improve service quality and customer satisfaction. The
amount of waiting time has been shown to negatively correlate with customer satisfaction.

In case of Hui and Zhou conducted a laboratory experiment in which university students were instructed to use an online course registration system with system delay. Under one condition, students were informed about how long the delay was going to be and under another there was no delay information. The results showed that delay information did not change students’ perceived waiting time but students felt they had more control over the wait. Providing delay information also reduced students’ dissatisfaction with the delay.

However, the effectiveness of delay information is related to the length of the wait. When the wait was very long, the information tended to become less effective because the information appeared to raise students’ concern with time loss incurred by the delay. Debe and Schmitt divided a typical waiting experience into preprocess, inprocess, and post process phases. They found that customers who encountered an inprocess wait perceived the duration of wait to be significantly longer than those customers who encountered the same length of wait during the preprocess and post process phases.

In most service operations, customer expectation and satisfaction with respect to waiting are dependent on many factors including:

- Customer prior experience. The customer’s prior experience with waiting and the perceived wait incurred is an important contributor to customer satisfaction (Behara and Gundersen, 2001)
- The number of customers in the service facility. Customers normally are more tolerant of longer waits when an operation is very busy. (Behara and Gundersen, 2001)
- Criticality of time to the customer. During weekdays (as compared to weekends), for example, time spent waiting would probably be more critical to working customers than it is for other types of customers, or at other times of the day. (Robinson, 1999)
- Other distractions, intended or otherwise. Slot machines can be installed next to waiting lines in casinos and bars in restaurants. Mirrors are found adjacent to lifts in hotels.
- The banking industry is one such application that we have chosen to depict. (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994) Customer satisfaction is the cornerstone of manufacturing and service industries. While measures of customer requirements are usually clearly defined in the manufacturing setting, they are no so quantifiable in the service sector. A major reason for this is that human factors and behavioral characteristics which play a role in influencing customer satisfaction in service industries are difficult to measure. Service systems usually have to go a step beyond the requirements of a manufacturing system. (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994) In addition to meeting the functional requirements of the customer, they must also ensure acceptable delivery of the service, which is influenced by the behavior of the employee performing the service. Customer perception of time may differ from the objective, measured time (Hirsch et al., 1950; Hornik, 1984; Barnett and Saponaro, 1985). Intuitively, we have experienced the situation where the wait seemed to be much longer or shorter than it actually is. For example, customers may
perceive objective waiting time as longer when it is unfilled or empty than
when it is filled (Larson, 1987; Maister, 1985). Reading old magazines at the
dentist’s office may shorten the patient’s perceived waiting time. Consumers
adopt the common strategy of reading paperback books to fill and thereby
shorten the travel time on airplanes.

Stress management theory suggests that people under physical and/or emotional stress
tend to feel any wait to be longer than usual. Several studies have included stress level
as a potential mediating factor between perceived waiting and customer satisfaction.
However, its impact on perceived waiting has not been conclusive.

2. Waiting time:

Another stream of research examines the waiting line problem from a psychological
perspective. It suggests that customer service experience is affected not only by the
actual waiting time but also by the perceived waiting time. Hornik (1999) explored
the relationship between perceived and actual waiting times with different types of
waiting lines in various service outlets, including a supermarket, a department store,
and a bank. He found that customers tended to overestimate actual waiting time
across different types of lines. Personal characteristics such as enjoying shopping and
frequency of using a service did not change their perception of waiting. In a study of
bank branches, Katz et al. (2002) found that perceived waiting time and “reasonable”
waiting time increased as actual waiting time increased. Their study also showed
that overall satisfaction decreased as perceived and actual waiting times increased.
Tom and Lucey compared customer perceived waiting time and its impact on
satisfaction under different store environment (busy vs. slow) and server quality
(faster vs. slower) conditions in a supermarket chain. Consistent with Hornik, Tom
and Lucey found that customers tended to overestimate the actual waiting time. It
showed that customer satisfaction was determined by perceived waiting time not
actual waiting time and perceived waiting time influenced satisfaction with the server
but not the store.

Waiting-time reduction has been a major objective of service providers. Waiting time
is often encountered as part of the leisure experience. Customer satisfaction is
conceived as one aspect of customer behavior and evolves over the duration of the
customer experience. This mathematical approach is based on an operations
management viewpoint which focuses on customer waiting time distraction and the
process of service system.

Sometimes waiting times are unavoidable, even in small on-site clinics. Usually the
time spent in the waiting room is at the same time boring for the patient and not
productive for the employer. Furthermore, the wait is added to the entire check-in
time at the beginning of the process, even where an online scheduling system is
present, there for increasing the perceived total wait.

Davis and Vollmann (1990) reported that customer satisfaction with service in a fast-
food restaurant declined as actual waiting time increased. Katz et al. ’s (1991) study of
bank teller lines showed that perceived wait time also influenced customer
satisfaction. Davis (1991) linked shorter perceived waiting times to higher satisfaction
with speed of service and to higher levels of customer service in a fast-food operation.
Taylor’s (1994) study of airline boarding lines found that although delays decreased customer satisfaction, filling empty waiting time with distractions reduced anger and uncertainly experienced by customers. Similarly, Houston et al. (1998) reported that bank customers found the waits will less acceptable as wait duration in the teller line increased.

3. To solve waiting time there are two area of solving the waiting time: customer distraction and working process improvement

A. First method: customer distraction

Customer perceived waiting time is influenced by various factors in a service environment. Baker and Cameron (2008) advanced an integrative model that provided a comprehensive list of service environment variables that might affect customer perception of waiting. It was suggested that service environment variables could influence the perception of waiting time by either changing customer perception of time or their perception of queue. They proposed that spatial layout, queuing progress, and social justice were the variables that might impact customer perception of queue. Variables related to time perception included music, lighting, color, employee visibility, filled time, and social interactions. Playing music was found to have positive effects on customer emotional response to the wait and the service organization although positive valenced (mood) music resulted in more positive response than negatively valenced (mood) music. However, playing music did not change customers’ perceived waiting duration, which was negatively correlated to customer satisfaction. Katz et al introduced a clock and a newsboard into a bank branch waiting line. The results showed that neither the newsboard nor the clock significantly changed customer perception of waiting although customers tended to overestimate their wait less when there was a clock.

In the case study of Disneyworld consists of three main visitor attractions – the Magic Kingdom, the Epcot Center and MGM Studios – covering a large area to the south west of Orlando. Attached to the parks is a range of hotels and restaurants providing convenient accommodation for the Disney visitor. This study is based on a visit to Disneyworld in late March 1994 which coincided with the spring break in the USA, a time when thousands of Americans head south to catch the Florida sun. As Disneyworld is a major attraction or, perhaps, even one of the principal reasons for visiting Florida, all the parks were very busy and it was of particular interest to study the way in which Disneyworld tackles the problem of managing heavy demand with particular emphasis on queue management.

The pressure of the large numbers of visitors at peak time at Disneyworld is manifest in the queues for the attractions. Guidebooks to Florida warn their readers that visitors to the parks may have to queue for up to two hours for popular attractions such as “Space Mountain”. (Space Mountain is a space-themed indoor steel roller coaster in Tomorrowland at Disneyland in Anaheim) Organizations in the service sector have the choice of either shortening queue lengths or attempting to influence how the customers perceive the waiting time when confronted by lengthy queues. Disneyworld has little if any scope for the first option since the number of attractions is fixed. It is how customers perceive their time spent in queues which is likely to
guide their overall perception of their Disneyworld experience. Bateson argues that the physical characteristics of the environment are believed to influence the consumer’s internal state, which in turn drives their behaviour within the setting. The physical environment should “orientate” consumers to allow them to feel in control of the situation, enabling them to receive clear signals from their surroundings. Good queue management aims to reduce the amount of uncertainty experienced by customers and needs to ensure that the queuing or waiting time is seen to be equitable.

Another suggestion of distraction is apart from operations management, previous studies on waiting and its effects on customer satisfaction have tended to focus on customer perceptions of the wait and how this might be affected by: filled wait time (Taylor and Claxton, 1994); service provider control (Taylor, 1994; Tom and Lucey, 1995; Baker and Cameron, 1996); waiting duration or queuing information (Hui and Tse, 1996); lighting, color, music, temperature (Baker and Cameron, 1996); music (Chebat and Filiatrault, 1993; Baker and Cameron, 1996). The effect of time fillers on perceived waiting time is generally small and dependent both on the context studied and whether a field or laboratory experiment is used (Antonides et al., 2002).

Music acts on the limbic system, the seat of emotions in the brain (Gard, 1997). Previous research has demonstrated a relationship between the use of music and the perception of time (Tom et al., 1997; Antonides et al., 2002). Previous research in this area has generally not accounted for the relationship between music and emotions and the consequent effect on customer evaluations. For the present research it is suggested that music, which is familiar to most customers and is fast, appears to be an appropriate choice for research on waiting (Milliman, 1986; Yalch, 1986) since unfamiliar music has been found to create a perception that time is slowing down (Yalch and Spangenberg, 1988). Of course what is considered to be familiar music depends on the demographic. In this case, the most popular radio station was selected since the music mix was likely to be familiar to many customers.

Ambient scent in the marketing environment in the literature on waiting for service. A great deal has been published on the effect of the sense of smell on evaluations and behaviors, but little in the marketing environment, especially regarding ambient or environmental scent, as opposed to the scent attached to a particular object (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001). For many years, retailers have enhanced their sales by the aroma of freshly ground coffee or freshly baked bread and bakery goods. Humans have come to depend on other senses with the result that smell has become rather neglected, and consequently poorly developed. While smell is taken for granted by humans, it can still be quite sensitive. The journal Nature Genetics reported that women can smell out the man that will make the best father of their offspring by detecting the odor of a man's genetic make-up. “Women can actually smell genetic differences (in men) ... as small as a single gene. It's like being able to see the difference in a snow flake with your bare eyes. People say humans don't have a good sense of smell. What we've shown is that humans do have an exquisite sense of smell, and they can pick up the difference of a single gene” (Jacob et al., 2002)
B. Second method: Working process improvement

Service providers are paying more and more attention to service process design and experimenting with alternative service configurations. For instance, retail stores have widely adopted the express checkout system in which one or more checkout lines, designated as express lines, are converted to serve only those customers with small number of items, typically less than 12 items. The express lines can serve more customers in any given time period than regular checkout lines. By cutting down the waiting time for customers with fewer items, the express checkout system helps to reduce the average waiting time of the system, as well as the average length of the waiting line. The focus of such process redesign has been the reduction of average customer waiting time partly because it is relatively easier to measure and model. Process redesign may not only change the actual waiting time but also have significant impact on perceived waiting time. Recent studies on psychological aspects of waiting line suggest that perceived waiting time is a more accurate predictor of customer satisfaction and it is often quite different from the actual amount of time customers spent in waiting, depending on why, how, and what customers are waiting for [4]. In Disney World, for instance, a number of popular rides make visitors wait for at least 45 min to take a 3-min ride but most visitors are quite satisfied with their experience. This is because the distractions employed by Disney make visitors feel that they did not wait that long.

Customer waiting time for service typically represents the first direct interaction between customers and most service delivery processes, so the importance of properly managing waiting times is of significant interest to most service operations. In recent years, service managers have made efforts to reduce customer waiting times and, and in some cases, totally to eliminate waits by improving processes or by adopting faster service technologies.

“Process improvement” means making things better, not just fighting fires or managing crises. It means setting aside the customary practice of blaming people for problems or failures. It is a way of looking at how we can do our work better. (Durrande-Moreau, 1999) When we take a problem solving approach or simply try to fix what’s broken, we may never discover or understand the root cause of the difficulty. Murphy’s Law comes into play and our efforts to “fix” things may actually make things worse.

However, when we engage in true process improvement, we seek to learn what causes things to happen in a process and to use this knowledge to reduce variation, remove activities that contribute no value to the product or service produced, and improve customer satisfaction. A team examines all of the factors affecting the process: the materials used in the process, the methods and machines used to transform the materials into a product or service, and the people who perform the work. More recently, new technology offers even more opportunities to improve service process and thus customer service in various industries. For instance, the practice of “e-ticketing” in the airline business has definitely made a huge impact on ticket purchasing as well as airport check-in processes. Other examples include electronic check-in and check-out systems in the hotel industry, automatic toll booths in
Transportation, collating copy machines, electronic funds transfer in financial services, wireless order from waiters to the kitchen in restaurants, optical checkout scanners and self-service checkout in supermarkets and telephone switching systems in communication, etc. (Collier, 1994; Haksever et al., 2000).

The way in which the service process is designed determines, to a large extent, the wait that customers experience. Any reductions in customer waiting time by better management of process design can certainly help lower both customer dissatisfaction and defection (Davis and Heineke, 1998; Taylor, 1994). Often, managers have a number of alternatives to choose from when shaping the design of their service delivery process.

A more recent and cost-effective approach to reduce waiting-times has been to introduce self-service technologies (SSTs) into the service delivery process. SSTs have been defined as technological interfaces that allow customers to produce services without a service employee’s involvement (Meuter et al., 2000).

Service process design and perceived waiting time

Service process design is an important way that businesses use to improve service operations and reduce customer waiting. Process design decisions such as the number of lines to be formed, how customers join waiting lines, and how each line is served play a major role in determining how long customers have to wait for service and consequently its service quality. For each service, there are some alternative process designs that can be used to deliver the service. Different service process designs may exhibit varying abilities of dealing with server exibility, demand fluctuation, and customer arriving patterns.

In addition to waiting time, it is also conceivable that service process designs may have an impact on customer expected and perceived waiting time. Thus, when considering service process change, we should not only evaluate its effect on actual average waiting time but also consider its impact on customer perceived waiting time. In this paper, we report the results of a study that compared customer perceived waiting time and their satisfaction before a process change and time that they satisfy for the process of open bank all type of account. From the related article above accordance with our research which it will be referenced in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology:

According to the literature review, there are many factors to resolve delays in the process of service for government saving bank and to help promote customers satisfaction. Base on methods found in literature review, the research will apply two parts including qualitative and quantitative methods to collect as much information as possible.

The research use quantitative method by making questionnaire to survey GSB customer’s opinion concerning to “Customers satisfaction and customers distraction”. The questionnaires were distributed to government officers, private company employees, business people, retired staff and student who are the main customers of Government Saving Bank.

To focus on the process of open the account the research also use qualitative interview from with two head manager of two departments of the bank. The research used qualitative method because the researcher want to find out the new finding that can create customer’s satisfaction in Government Savings Bank.

Overall, the quantitative method is use to find factor influencing customers’ satisfaction and the proper distractions base on customers opinion and behaviors. While, the qualitative method is employed to find recommendation relating to solution of the problem of working process which has existed before.

Questionnaire:

Compose of 3 parts and 25 questions; basic information, customer’s satisfaction and recommendations;

1. Demographic (Gender, occupation and ages)
2. 5-likert scale questions were formed to investigate customer’s satisfaction. Use descriptive and Anova analysis during the data analysis.
3. Open-ended questions for customer comment and recommendation.

Interview Questions for Improve Process:

The interview questions to focus on working process from the two of bank of managers in two section; loan and deposit in two points of question.

- The suggestion for improve the workflow process of open bank account.
- How can reduce the waiting time for customers.
CHAPTER 4

Findings and recommendation:

To examine customer’s satisfaction on the waiting time and to resolve delays in the process of service for the Government Savings Bank, the findings demonstrate why customers become satisfied with the distractions and services of Government Saving Bank at Rajdumneun branch.

Customer’s satisfaction and distraction

Results from questionnaires, the study showed that most of customers use services from both Government Savings Bank and other banks. Most of them dissatisfied with the working process and documents of the bank. Times that customers satisfy is about 11-15 minutes to open an account.

Secondly, this section presents the customer’s satisfaction results of statistical analysis based on service and officer: customers satisfied with the dress of officers, officer knowledge, relationship between officers and customers and officer’s politeness. As for the working process of the bank, customers are not satisfied with document, process and time of process because of mean lower than 3 from scale. From the research suggest that bank should reduce the papers and documents because, it take a lot of time to complete the form by customers. To fasten the process and to reduce amount of documents, technology can be used such as the usage of smart identify card to open an account or using the old data for existing customers. If in the busy time bank should open the express teller for opening the account because in the busy time some of clients have to wait more than half an hour for open the account. However from Anova analysis shown that there was a significant different between age and occupation groups in their satisfaction opinions. The statistical data showed that only senior people satisfied with service and officer, work process and distractions. This might be because there are long process which takes time such as filling many pages of documents during their application causing the dissatisfaction to occur with those who are working or have time constraint. However, senior people might not have time constraints, they do not mind of that process. For occupation the result shows that retired persons and students are satisfied. This confirms the finding from the Anova with different age groups people who are working requires the process to be short and fast as they might be time constraints.

Lastly most important factor is distraction, customer satisfied with drink corner, Television and music, bank greeter, place and the museum respectively. Overall, customer’s satisfaction level of distractions is average. There are two respondents complained about museum because they didn’t know that GSB have a museum so GSB have to tell clients and promote it.

Process improvement

The interview focus on improvement of working process from the two department managers. Results showed that to improve the workflow process of open bank account; 1) Improve the software and the computer system. This could help the process to be more easy and to cut some useless processes in order to reduce the
waiting times. Employees do not have to walk around the bank to use computers. As
the improve process suggestion potential software and computer system can reduce
10-15 minutes of waiting time of the normal process and link small process to one
stop service.
Consequently, usage of data base program for customers in the further transaction, so
they can use old data base and do not waste time to fill in new document. 2)To reduce
waiting time by distractions, both of managers agree that the bank Greeter is very
important because, greeter is the first contact point when customers came in the bank.
They should provide good services and should have good knowledge of bank. When
customers ask they have to answer and bring customers to the right counter for the
transaction.

Discussion:

To examine weakness of the study, research does not include an interview operating
staffs in Government Saving Bank due to time limitation. For the future study
improvement, it can incorporate operating staffs in the bank. The research limitation
is time limit of the customers who answer questionnaires because of in busy time, it is
not convenient to push customers to answer questionnaires suddenly.
References:

Title: Investigation of the physical environment impact on purchase decision making: A case study of JW Marriott Hotel Bangkok

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Abstract:

Normally, the five star hotels can make customer satisfaction by high standard of service and the good meal when clients come for meeting, event and wedding. Because of the literature review, the physical environment of the function room image also affect on customers purchase decision making. These kinds of factors can help the hotel to get more customers.

The objective of this study is to examine the physical environment elements lighting, décor/design, color and layout which might affect on function room surrounding image and which function room image has a positive influence on purchase decision making when customer going to purchase the function room for meeting, event and wedding.

This research was studied by using qualitative method. Namely, researcher collects the data by using personal interview. The result reports that all of the physical environment elements have an effect on function room image and layout is the most effective one which effect on function room image. Décor/design, lighting and color is respectively. And the function room image has a positive influence on customer purchase decision making.

Keywords – physical environment, room image, purchase decision

Introduction

Company Overview

Marriott Hotel is one of the most well-known hotel, lodging, and hospitality brand names throughout the world. Currently located in over 72 countries world-wide, Marriott has nearly 3,700 lodging facilities in operation today (Marriott.com). JW Marriott Bangkok is one of the properties of Marriott hotel chain which we can call Marriott International. Marriott offers the broadest and most diverse portfolio in the lodging industry. (Global Data, Marriot.com) JW Marriott Hotel Bangkok, situated on the fashionable Sukhumvit Road offers its guests a fantastic central location. Perfect for business or leisure, our award-winning 5-star Bangkok hotel is close to business and entertainment centers, embassies, the convention centre, shopping districts and the SkyTrain. Choose the award-winning Marriott Café for exceptional buffets, teppanyaki and sake at Nami, sushi at the award-winning Tsu, fresh bakeries at our famous Bangkok Baking Company or a steak at NY Steakhouse. When planning a wedding or conference, there's no better choice. Hotel can accommodate up to 600
guests and the event planners and catering staff make events memorable. (www.marriott.com available on 4 Mar.2014)

As we know JW Marriott hotel Bangkok is located at the business center of Bangkok, the Sukhumvit area. JW Marriott hotel has a long reputation, standard of service, good food and the full of the facility. As for these points are very strong issues for the hotel. But In this area also have a lots of hotels. Sheraton Sukhumvit, Westin, Hyatt and intercontinental are the competitors of JW Marriott. And there are many new hotel established this time, also the increase number of hotels was established and the high competition. The five star hotels can provide the same high standard of service for customer and the good meal when they come for meeting, event and wedding. When I see the compare of the package price of hotel (meeting, event and wedding) is lower than the competitors. The new function room “Manhattan Studio and Bar” in the hotel, the package price is higher than other function room. (information from sales and marketing department of JW Marriott Hotel Bangkok).

Also hotel decides to renovate the ballroom. Therefore, researcher sets up hypothesis that the physical environment elements lighting, décor/design, color and layout have an impact on the function room image. Also, the function room image has a positive influence on the customers purchase decision making. So a suitable lighting, good décor/design, color and layout are important for the function room. To improve the physical environment of the function room image might have the positive effect on customers purchase decision making. It can help the hotel to get more customers.

The objectives of this paper:

1. To identify the physical environment has an effect on function room
2. To identify what is the most important physical environment elements effect on function room image
3. Examine function room image have a positive influence on purchase decision

From the upper information, the next chapter will provide the information of literature review of physical environment which affect on function room image; and the effect of the function room on purchase decision making. Also it will provide the research model of this study.

Literature review

The increased number of hotels for consumers has fostered heightened competition establishments. Today, good service, good food and full of facilities may not be enough to attract consumer come to the hotel to host their meeting, event or wedding. Consumers seek for a good place with good physical environment to host their meeting, event or wedding. Normally, hotel makes customer satisfaction by intangible method; however, physical environment can be considered as a particular tangible tool to add the image of the function room and effect the purchase decision making.

The definition of purchase decision is the decision making processes undertaken
by consumers in regard to a potential market transaction before, during, and after the

**Physical environment**

The intangible processes means that people can not see, so we need to use the
tangible surrounding elements to describe the capabilities of the hotel, as Biter.J (1990)
conclude that “expect the intangible of service customers are more use the tangible
cues to determine the place firm” (Biter.J sited in Shostack 1977). According Kotler,P
(1973-1974) said that “the physical environment of one place have more effect than
the product that the place provide” Because today, consumers want to get a exotic
experience when they are stay at a place.

Kotler,P (1973-1974) said that “buyer can feeling of being rich, important, special
when they stay at the place with a good physical environment”. Grayson and McNeill
(2009) suggested “atmosphere objectives can creating the environment, as well a
influencing purchasing, a manipulating physical environment can keep consumers
stay longer”.

Kotler,P (1973-1974) said that “physical environment can describe the quality of
the place and describe the sensory of surrounding”. He also said that “physical
environment can be defined as the cue that effect the emotion of customers when they
enhance to purchase something”.

Grayson and McNeill (2009) said that “physical environment can be considered
as one of the most important cue when managing business objectives and customer
expectations”. Some research found that the physical environment/ atmospheric effect
emotion of consumers, their feeling and create their mood. Liu and Namkung (2011)
pointed out that “physical environment can leads the positive emotions”.

In another study by Bitner.J(1992) concluded that “the physical environment can
help to create the image of the business, such as hotel, office retail store...( Bitner.J
So its mean the physical environment may also create the image of the function room.

Indicated that physical environment such as noises, sizes, shapes, scents and
colors could help create attention, convey messages, and create feelings that might
increase the image of the function room and its effect on purchase probability. Some
study divide physical environments elements by many part. This study is separate and
distinct the elements such as layout/equipment setting, design/décor, color or lighting.
The elements are very important to the function room where have to host the meeting
and wedding.

The physical environment elements which affect on meeting and wedding
function room are:
- Lighting
- Layout
- Décor/Design
- Color
**Physical environment elements**

Physical environment elements are lighting, layout/equipment setting, décor/design and color.

**Lighting**

Lighting is one of the important physical environment factors which can effect on the function room image. Different lighting can build up different feeling. Sharma and Stafford, (2000) said that “soft lighting always use with a higher quality environment”. Heide and Grønhaug, (2006) said that “bright light can provide a liveliness and sociability physical environment, but dim light will increases the relax feeling”. Slåtten, Mehmetoglu, Svensson, Sværi, (2009) said that “lighting can put more texture, charm, and beauty to a building or a landscape”. Effective lighting attracts attention and creates an impression of the atmosphere inside.


It is very easy to see that people stay cant without of light. If people without light the world will be changing like black. Not only bar need light, the function room for host meeting, event or wedding also need to use the right way to open the light, soft, dark or bright. So based on the literature the hypothesis is below.

H1a. Physical environment such as lighting has significant effect on function room image

**Layout**

Bitner, (1992) said that “layout accessibility refers to the way in which furnishings and equipment, service areas, and passageways are arranged, and the spatial relationships among these elements”. Some architectural design books define that the layout is including the size of the hotel, grade or standard, how many people join the place, tour and convention bookings, length of stay, and seasonality. Baker.J and Grewal .D (1994) suggested that “the manager can setup the layout to improve the environment”.

Bitner. J(1992) suggested that “changes in the equipment and facility can encourage particular forms of interactions between and among customers. This study also point out that “the floor plan, layout of equipment, and equipment design have a impact on user and help them to achieve the service goals”.

Wakefield, and Blodgett, (1996) said that “an suitable layout will provide for easy of entry and exit in the function room, and will make the service areas such as concessions, restrooms, and souvenir stands more easier access. A good layout may also effect on the pleasure needs.”

H1b. Physical environment such as layout has significant effect on function room image
**Décor/Design**

Design is one element of physical environment and it has the effect on the function room image. Design describes the future of the room and it related to the of how to décor your entire space to fit the room. Kotler (1973) said that “the whole surrounding design of space can create certain effect on buyers”. Accordingly, one can label design as an attention-creating medium.

Wakefield, Blodgett, (1996) pointed out that “Design such as ornamental signs, banners, pictures, and other fixtures, may affect on the quality of the place. The appearance of the facility can affect on the first impression of the customers. Architectural design would be a major decision. It is well known that physical design is able to attract customers’ attention”. Like Disney parks the fantastic designs of the buildings. Hard Rock Café authentic rock-and-roll memorabilia.

Jaksa Jack Kivela, (1997) concluded that “the growth of “theme” or “physical environment” design of places, where consumers are seeking exclusive physical environment, rather than simply a good service, meal. This replication of “theme” has a very strong attraction to customers, who are searching for expectations and experience in transforming design”.

H1c. Physical environment such as décor/design has significant effect on function room image

**Color**

Color is light carried on wavelengths absorbed by the eyes. Different color has different affect on people. Psychologists have intensive the colors as warm (red and yellow) and cool (blue and green) colors. Singh (2006) said that “color related to many things. Like color and culture,(e.g. when people see red and yellow they will think about China/ Chinese New Year). Color and religion (e.g. Christian like white purple and white; Muslims like green).Singh, (2006) also said that “warm colors, especially red, can make people feel exciting, distracting. Cool colors, especially blue, make people feel relaxing, peaceful, calm, and pleasant”.

Bellizzi, Hite (1992) pointed out “color can contribute the mood and emotional feeling and link the buyer’s responses”. Color is also important for a place image. If the restaurant choose a wrong color customer may feel don’t want eat the food. So I guess this also have affect on the function room image. From Singh, (2006) suggested that “before produce a product people must to conducted how to choose the right colors”. The use of color to draw not only the attention of the customer but also the physical presence of a customer is an important distinction to retail managers.

The physical environments also mean the physical surrounding. The surrounding represent the function room image, all of these elements contribute the whole function room image. So all of the elements is important for and affect on the function room.

H1 d. Physical environment such as color has significant effect on function room image
Function room image

People defined image like “image is the way to described as the overall look of a place. Function room image is the surrounding atmosphere of the function room or the overall look of the function room which host the meeting, event or wedding. Not because of the service, store image is also important for consumers to get a good experience. Like some airline industry. They hope their consumers get different feeling, so they put some lights and color into the lounge when consumers are waiting for the flight. Some airline decides to make more comfortable and more space of the seats in the airplane. Smith. P and David. J(1996) said that “the image of the place is consists of both intangible and tangible factors that present to the consumers”. So the physical environment is the factors which effect on the function room image. So develop the image of function room is important.

Some previous studies Nguyen and Leblanc(2002) found that “the physical environment can significantly influence place image”. Nguyen and Leblanc (2002) also said that “physical environment had a significantly positive impact on place image”. Kotler(1973-1974) said that “ more and more competitor are try to increase their physical environment of their product. Physical environment becomes one of the tools for attract the consumers and impact on the product image”. The physical environment also present the image of the function room. Bitner.J(1990) concluded that “physical environment such as décor, design can help to build the place image”. Bitner.J (Bitner.J sited in Baker 1987; Booms and Bitner 1982; Shostack 1977. Baker.J and Grewal .D 1994) concluded that “the environment has been found to be that to put into the store to contribute the image”. A good physical environment influence the image and the nice image like a suitable color, good lighting and the tidiness equipment setting is much better than a place without anything, mess setting, no light.

Purchase decision
If the hotel can provide same standard of service, price and food when consumer host their meeting, event or wedding at this function room. The physical environment is one of the most important factors make the consumer make their decision. According Bitner.J (1990) noted that “physical environment can make the different between a business success or failure”.

Kolter.P (1973-1974) explained the purchase behavior of the consumer as below: “1. Sensory qualities of space surrounding purchase object. 2. Buyer’s perception of the sensory qualities of space. 3. Effect perceived sensory qualities on modifying buyer’s information and affective state. 4. Impact of buyer’s modified information and affective state on his purchase probability.” Therefore, the physical environment builds a role that can play in the buying process. So, the marketing goals have the relationship with the physical environment. As the below literature review is regard about the physical environment elements and the effect on the function room image. Also regard the function room image have positive image on purchase decision making.
The store image is important for part for guest make the choice decision. Kolter.P (1973-1974) said that “the entire image can create people’s specific feelings, it has an important impact on purchase”. Another study Baker.J (1994) concluded that “physical environment is an important marketing tool which can influence consumers’ purchase decision”. When the hotels want to get more consumers they might need to improve the physical environment of the store image.

The overall function image is relate to the specific purchase behavior. The study of Kotler.P (1973-1974) said that “the growing number of product entire image can effect the feeling and the emotion of customer. It has an important effect on purchase”. And the physical environment can create the feeling of the consumers.

H2: Function room image has a positive influence on the purchase decision

So its important to contribute a good function room image of physical surrounding. Bitner.J (1992) concluded that “physical environment create the image of the service business such as hotel”. So the physical environment elements are influence the image of the service business, its also influence the function room that host the meeting, event or wedding. So the managers have to plan to create the physical environment.

This study is going to do the research about the physical environment have effect on the function room image and service quality, and function room image and service quality finally have effect on the purchase decision. Below is the research model which design depends on the literature review.

**Research Model**

![Figure 1 research model](image-url)
Methodology

Research method
This paper use qualitative approach. The questions were developed to research about the impact of the physical environment on purchase decision.

Research simple
This research use qualitative way, the research population will decide by 2 parts. And there are will be 5 person to be the simple. They are staffs and customers.
- 1 Catering sale manager
- 1 Catering sale executive
- 3 customer

Research instruments
Researcher collects of data using the convenience sampling approach and interview questions. The questionnaires were conducted over three weeks and use face to face interview. This study aims to understand the impact of lighting, décor/style, color and layout on function room image, and the function room surrounding image have a positive affect on the purchase decision. Then aims to understand how physical environment affect on the purchase decision. The data analysis is to determine the result of each factor.

Data collection
The research date will collect from sales and marketing department at JW Marriott Hotel Bangkok. Will do interview with the catering sale manager and the exclusive sales. Then, choose 3 customers to do the interview. To record their idea and answers and analysis the questions.

Analysis
After completing analysis process, lighting, layout, décor/design, color and their effect on function room image. And the final answer the function room image with purchase decision.

From the answer, we can see how important of the layout. People mind it. And the space and how to set up have an effect on how many people can come to join the meeting or their wedding. If clients could not access, people would not prefer. People prefer the function room which is quite easy to access and big space. Furthermore, they need to close to the restroom. Different equipment setting can provide different kind of meeting. Customer might like classroom or U shape for meeting. In case of wedding room, it depends on how they choose their wedding style. The answers also show that the layout have an effect on the function room. Customer need the function room with an good location and suitable equipment set up.

Yes, customer minds the décor/design of the function room. The key informant person said that they can sell more money of the new style function room than the other one. And they also mention that some theme of wedding they could not provide because of the original décor/design of the function room. As a result of this, we can see people mind the décor/design. It depends on people lifestyle, they will like
different style of decoration of the function room. For meeting people prefer modern, normal décor of function room. For wedding, people more prefer elegance, classic, modern and can easy transfer with the event theme as 1st key informant persons said. Or put some flower to décor. Customers agree that the decoration/style of the function room have effect on function room whole surrounding. Its can affect the mood of people who come to the hotel. The whole décor/style of function room also has effect on party theme.

Both of the sales person said that customer mind the color. For meeting, people prefer cream color, earth tone. For wedding event, they prefer pink, pastel, blue, red and cream colors. So different color can make people have different feeling. Color shows the basic style of the function room. Some color can motivate people, some color make people feel uncomfortable. It shows the feeling of people. Therefore, researcher concludes that color has effect on function room image.

Different people will give different idea with the effect of how strong is the effect of function room image. People think the whole surrounding image can affect the first impression of them. But the sales person experience, we can see it is not that strong. Also, it is more important for wedding not meeting.

The function room image should suitable the meeting/wedding. The function room image can affect on the first impression of the customer. The image of function room is also the mainly idea that client can image their event, if the hotel has nice image that will make client easily to make decision to buy. And it has positive effect on purchase decision.

The number of percentage that customer require of each factor. After rank of these four factors we can see which one is the most important one for image of function room. Layout is the most important one. Then décor/style; lighting and color was respectively.

**Conclusion**

**Discussion**

The result indicates that physical environment factors have a positive effect on function room image and the function room image have positive effect on purchase decision making of customer.

From the result, the most important factor which effect on function room image is layout. But other factors also have an effect on the function room image. Other factors décor/style, lighting and color also have the effect on function room image. For the lighting, people prefer bright and day light for meeting; warm and dim lighting for wedding. So when the hotel do renovate, they can choose the light which can change when people needed. For décor/style, hotel can choose modern or classic style which people like. For meeting, people do not mind much of décor/style; however, décor and style play the major role of part of wedding or party. In term of color, people prefer earth tone, cream and warm color for both meeting and wedding.

When hotel is going to renovate, the physical environment factors are the points
that they need to consider. What kind of lighting, layout, décor/style and color customer prefer. Choose the right option which can help improve the function room image.

Limitation

Although the limit of time and the small sample size. It provides the useful information from the sales person and customer. The physical environment factors affect on function room image and the function room image have positive effect on purchase decision.

Previous model of this research have tested and achieved result related to the four factors of physical environment, function room image and purchase decision. However, this model introduce the ability of each factor have effect on function room image and the purchase decision. Color and lighting are not strong effect on function room image. But layout and décor/style have more effect on function room image. This research focused on the function room of meeting and wedding. However, this model also applies to restaurant and other service industry.

Reference


Website: http://en.wikipedia.org
www.marriott.com
Title: Constructing Key Performance Indicators: A Case Study of the Food and Beverage Department, Melati Beach Resort and Spa, Koh Samui, Thailand

Authors: Mr. Sorin Gligore, Dr. Ardiporn Khemarangsan, Dr. Wallop Lipiphan

Abstract

In order to thrive in the spinning-fast shifting context of today’s marketplace there is an ever growing need to focus on performance, developing any edge that would lead to competitive advantages and outsmart the competition.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the construction process of a performance management system tailored to fit the needs of a high-end hotel group, the focal point being represented by the development of key performance indicators.

The study researches the relevant literature and employs the qualitative analysis through the use of semi-structured interviews with the management team as methodology. Presented here is a snapshot into the service side of one of the hotel’s group Food and Beverage departments. A step by step approach to the making of KPIs is outlined, giving decision makers an empirical model for consideration.

The results of the semi-structured interviews show that the objectives are the same throughout the F&B department the aim is achieving continuously a greater degree of control and improvement in key areas. The KPIs chosen to perform towards achieving the objectives, need modifying as to fit the attributes of individual job descriptions and level occupied on the corporate structure. As there is a mixture of financial and human factor predominant indicators that are drivers of financial success but challenging to measure, we found ways to measure and positively impact them, increasing their relevance and reliability. The construction of KPIs built on a functional framework and inherent weighing method.

The KPI design process presented is the incipient stage of a workable performance management system. Further development and testing is needed to complete the cycle, successfully leading to the next stages of implementation, data gathering and reassessment.

Keywords: Performance measures, key performance indicators, hotel industry, Food and Beverage management, performance management framework
Chapter 1: Introduction

Heraclitus, a pre-Socratic philosopher states an immutable natural truth: "There is nothing permanent except change". Ever increasingly seemingly so, the rate at which adaptation must crystalize in order for an entity to survive in the modern environment would surpass the comprehensive abilities of anyone living half a century ago.

The nature of the top game is not to survive thou, but to thrive. Competitive advantage in most industries is “gained by operating through a quality-driven management philosophy” (Fuller, 1997). Therefore success is not random, it is planned; and “improving the quality of an organization’s products and services is fundamental to business success” (Liu and Xu, 2004). As a well-known adage says, “If you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it” (Hamel and Prahalad, 1994), the need to accurately measure every relevant aspect of a business activity has been born.

The nature of the hospitality industry yields complexity due to its interconnected multi-layered facets. Performance management systems have long evolved into effective tools for measurement and improvement. Yet in order for them to be applicable, a great deal of resources need be spent in addressing the intricacies of this industry. The selection of performance indicators presents itself as quintessential for this process.

This study follows the construction process of key performance indicators using qualitative analysis through the employment of semi-structured interviews with the management team of Melati Beach Resort and Spa, Koh Samui, Thailand. The resort is a 5 star property with 79 rooms, mostly private villas, two restaurants an award winning Spa. Together with Chaweng Regent Beach Resort, Melati is part of Hapi Hotel Group, the company employing 485 staff members inclusive of a Bangkok Sales and Marketing office. The entity is transitioning from a family run business to a six level corporate type structure, requiring the necessary tools of measurement and control as to maximise efficiency and competitiveness. The corporate goal is to become number one resort in its class on the island.

The KPI project stretched on a time period of four months. It is comprised of equally developed elements for all departments, interconnected to generate synergy, cohesion, thought to serve as driver for change and growth. However though, due to time constraints, only the service side of the F&B department is highlighted here.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 1 describes the research background and explains criteria for selecting KPIs. Section 2 introduces the employed methodology presenting the steps of KPI construction on a real study case. Section 3 presents the results of the process. Finally, in the last section, conclusions implications and limitations of the study are set forth.
Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1. Performance measurement and management

Starting with the early nineteenth century, performance measurement has been making a name for itself as the need to improve processes leading to increased efficiency became widely recognized. It has been the start of a “revolution” and since then, it has been consistently been built upon being adopted and implemented in many fields and industries today becoming a critical aspect of management, and a multi-million dollar industry (Hamel and Prahalad, 1994; Paranjape et al., 2006; Enoma and Allen, 2007; Meng and Minogue, 2011; Yadav et al, 2013).

Performance can be defined and understood as a contributory act either internal or external of an individual or group working towards achieving the organization’s goals, leading to the delivery of desirable outcomes to the stakeholders (Atkinson, 2012; Blasini and Leist, 2013).

According to Haji-Kazemi and Bjørn (2013) measurement gives the management information on why the system performs the way it does, where it can be upgraded, and also imperative information to when the system is stable or unstable. Ferreira et al. (2012), mentions performance measurement to be comprehended and comprised of “three interrelated elements: 1. individual measures that quantify the efficiency and effectiveness of actions; 2. a set of measures that combine to assess the performance of an organization as a whole, and 3. a supporting infrastructure that enables data to be acquired, collated, sorted, analysed, interpreted and disseminated” (p. 674).

Performance measurement at different levels within the organization made a huge difference on how companies organize their work processes, and became “key” in today’s business environment being comprehended as the regular collection and reporting of data to trace the work done and results achieved (Atkinson, 2012; Del-Rey-Chamorro et al., 2003). A step forward from here has been observed as enterprises stated to shift from just measurement and control, to an integrative, holistic approach represented by measurement and management. The role of the created performance management systems is to effectively bring the entire organization in alignment, centralizing communication of the strategic intent throughout the ranks, and creating common business values (Yadav et al, 2013). It is what gets done with the information created from measuring performance, focusing on what is important, managing more effectively and efficiently and promoting continuous improvement and learning throughout the organization (Atkinson, 2012).

According to Tyagi and Gupta, (2013), the corporate performance measurement and management system must be conceived as to a. encourage change rather than stagnation; b. promote risk-taking rather than process preservation; and c. challenge for growth rather than leaning for profit. In addition the companies need to consider:
“maximizing shareholder value, achieving process excellence, improving organizational learning and delighting the stakeholders” (p.957) (Yadav et al., 2013).

Along these lines, there have been numerous performance models that have been developed, all based on specific market conditions, opportunities and type of enterprise. (Busi and Bititci, 2006). As each of these models are tailored on a specific concept and build around a framework that would support the strategic decisions, it is imperative to structure or design the chosen performance measurement system on a suitable model that would deliver the appropriate performance management solutions (Ferreira et al, 2012).

2.2. Models for performance measurement and management

Research indicates that a wide array of performance measurement and management models and tools have been created and applied in different fields and industries. A successful and leading trend in the performance measurement field, are the systems that encompass measurement from a 360 degree perspective. These are able to go beyond the traditional performance measurement systems based on financial metrics alone that have been deemed insufficient, focusing on non-financial metrics (Paranjape et al., 2006). Resounding examples of frameworks that are considered to have a dynamic and holistic view on business management include the Balanced Scorecard (BSC), the Business Excellence Model (BEM) and the Baldrige Criteria. (Beatham et al., 2005; Yadav et al, 2013). Incorporated are the tools of measurement that provide the feedback needed to assess if the implementation and progress unfolds accordingly. Two widely adopted metrics are the Critical Success Factors (CSF), and the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) (Ferreira et al. 2012).

These performance measurement models or frameworks usually incorporate the combination of complex indicators that are at “the heart” of the created control and measurement system, helping the executives conclude valuable decisions that enhance affectivity, create strategies and the afferent business actions (Carlucci, 2010; Kumar et al., 2013).

2.3. Measures of performance

Feedback is what every system or organism uses for continuous learning and adaptation and is a key factor in boosting productivity (Shahin and Mahbod, 2007). The role of the performance indicators is to provide it (Beatham et al., 2005, Chae, 2009). There are various types of performance indicators frequently utilized by businesses and organizations in their performance management systems,
differentiating themselves according to stakeholder’s specifications: KSF (key success factor, or CSF – critical success factor), and the KPI (key performance indicator) (Ferreira et al., 2012).

2.3.1. Key success factors (KSF) or critical success factors (CSF)

It is considered to be the most relevant vector from a key stakeholder’s perspective; being a driver in stakeholder’s strategy and success, it supports the established objectives, therefore receiving the most attention (Ferreira et al. 2012; Kumar et al, 2013). When designing a measurement and control system, business objectives are broken down into CSF, and measures or key performance indicators are being allocated to each of these (Beatham et al. 2005).

2.3.2. Key performance indicators (KPIs)

The KPI is “the industry-recognised term that encompasses all” other types of measures, the generic performance measurement factor commonly used by different stakeholders and is considered to “represent the overall performance of an organization or system” (Beatham et al. 2005, Ferreira et al. 2012). KPIs are traceable process metrics that center the action on CSF, reflect from the company’s goals, and focus on critical aspects of outputs or outcomes (Chan and Chan, 2004; Shahin and Mahbod, 2007; Meng and Minogue, 2011; Kumar et al, 2013). It is designed to bridge the gap between the top level management and the functional, operational level, being at the very centre of any performance management system and guide decision making towards increased efficiency, the best resource allocation, building of strategy and action plan (Enoma and Allen, 2007; Carlucci, 2010; Yadav et al, 2013).

Performance measures can generally be classified as: lagging and leading indicators (Kaplan and Norton, 1996; Kumar et al, 2013). Lag indicators are the most recognized measures, provide a rear-view perspective and cannot be changed, are extracted from the business objectives, and are easy to measure but hard to improve or influence. They are “generic”, output oriented, and confirm long term trends (such as corporate profits and labour cost per unit of output, financial indicators) (Beatham et al. 2005; Haji-Kazemi and Bjørn, 2013). Lead indicators are performance drivers in the operational level, typically input oriented, hard to measure and easy to influence (stakeholder satisfaction and employee commitment are often leading indicators in the sense that they are highly predictive of financial performance; operational indicators) (Del-Rey-Chamorro et al., 2003; Stenstrom et al., 2013). They are receiving increased interest from the performance systems designers as they have the ability to predict fault before it occurs, predicting future performance (Enoma and Allen, 2007; Haji-Kazemi and Bjørn, 2013). The performance measures or indicators can also be classified as “hard” and “soft”. “Hard” measures or indicators are easier to obtain, as they are extracted from databases (such as energy per unit of consumption). In
contrast the “soft” ones are affected by the “human factor” therefore their measurement can be difficult due to their lack in reliability and objectivity; They measure “perception” such as stakeholder satisfaction or commitment, are highly predictive of financial performance and tracking them is extremely significant (Kumar et al, 2013). The service industry is classified as market oriented i.e. customer focused and labour intensive relaying heavily on the human factor, the resulting conclusion is that the human resource based indicators are determinants, while the financial indicators are classified as results. Therefore some indicators are the results of action, and others are the actions themselves (Harris and Mongiello, 2001).

Selecting the right amount and the most relevant performance indicators can be a daunting task for the performance management systems designers (Carlucci, 2010; Wadongo, 2010). The KPI prioritization and choice process must result in the most important and relevant, usually limited, amount of measures that must be identified as to prevent overload and confusion (Del-Rey-Chamorro et al, 2003; Shahin and Mahbod, 2007; Kumar et. al, 2013). Kaplan and Norton (1996) suggest that when the indicators are balanced, their number is irrelevant; a number between 16 and 24 measures are identified though as being ideal. The set of KPIs must be understood throughout, dynamic and able to evolve and displayed into a simple graphic design, easy to update and manage (Chan and Chan, 2004).

2.3.2.1. Characteristics of effective performance measures

A. Carlucci (2010) identifies four main characteristics of effective performance indicators:

1. Relevance; It is a performance measure’s characteristic to offer feedback as to confirm or correct prior expectations and so predicting the outcome of past and present actions. In order to be effective, the information has to be available so a proactive stance can be employed.

2. Reliability; In order for a performance measure to be effectively participating in the decision making, it is imperative that the information it offers is fairly error and bias free, measuring as close as possible the result it intends to measure.

3. Understandable and representational: A performance measure’s applicability and usability is greatly enhanced once it is presented in a concise and appealing manner. The simpler and unsophisticated an indicator is designed to be, the greater its appeal and ease to communicate and apply it throughout the organization; its simplicity is directly proportional with its applicability.

4. Comparability and consistency; Comparability is the characteristic of a performance measure to offer similarities and differences between two sets of data,
giving the same policies and procedures are being employed. Its usefulness increases greatly when it can be benchmarked against best practice.

Performance measurement allows benchmarking (Haji-Kazemi and Bjørn, 2013), “a strategic planning tool (Enoma and Allen, 2007). Consequently in order for benchmarking to happen, relevant key performance indicators must be identified and data gathered (Fuller, 1997). The process of comparing the data derived from performance measurement against a point of reference is termed benchmarking. The point of reference is represented by industry standards and major competitors as well as other organizations (outside the industry); therefore it can be classified as internal and external (Enoma and Allen, 2007). According to Broderick et al., (2010) there has been identified a strong connection between benchmarking and quality improvement, and has been “actively defined as a method of process analysis in which best practice is identified and compared” (p.327) in order to establish achievable goals to gain competitiveness (Beatham et al., 2005).

Seen et al., (2001) describe Best Practice as not having a universally applicable definition, most scholars terming it as the sum of different components. Therefore “Best Practice is the cooperative way in which firms and their employees undertake business activities in all key processes; leadership, planning, customer, suppliers, community, relation, production, and supply of products and services and the use of benchmarking. These practices, when effectively linked together, can be expected to lead to sustainable world-class outcomes in quality and customer service, flexibility, timeliness, innovation, cost and competitiveness” (p 266).

At strategic level benchmarking is used to compare performances between companies establishing standards against which judgement can be passed. At functional or operational level comparison can happen within large organizations, countries and subsidiaries (Fuller, 1997). Beatham et al, (2005) describes benchmarking as having three levels: 1. Internal within the company, used to identify best internal practices, realize comparisons between departments and checking progress towards set goals. 2. Internal within the same industry, comparing against major competitors; across a sector. 3. Comparisons against other industries; this is thought to be determining most change in regards to process development. Prevalent in the service industries, process benchmarking focuses on best work processes and has been best described and associated with efficient client handling (Broderick et al., 2010).

B. Goal setting theory indicates that establishing clear and challenging goals normally result in higher performance of outcome than when the goals set were easily attainable, vague, or no goals at all (Shahin and Mahbod, 2007). A well balanced performance management system incorporates a wide array of complex indicators. Some can be connected directly through a quantitative, “SMART” goal setting criteria– such as cost or time, others involving the “human component” –such as client
satisfaction or employee friendliness towards guests are qualitative by nature and more challenging to quantify, but crucial for predicting financial performance (Kumar et al, 2013).

A clear link has been established between incorporating a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound) goal setting criteria and creating successful performance measuring systems throughout an organization (Yadav et al, 2013; Kumar et al, 2013). Performance indicators can be both quantitative and qualitative and still be complying with the “SMART” criteria (Shahin and Mahbod, 2007).

**Specific.** Goals should be clearly detailed and simplistically formulated. They need to answer the What, Why and How in the SMART model. When goals are specific, it is much easier to hold someone accountable for their completion.

**Measurable.** Goals should be measurable so that you have tangible evidence that you have accomplished the goal. Usually, the entire goal statement is a measure for the project, but there are usually several short-term or smaller measurements built into the goal. The measure may be quantitative or qualitative, but measurement should be against a standard of performance and a standard of expectation.

**Attainable (but aggressive enough).** Goals should be achievable; they should stretch you slightly so you feel challenged, but defined well enough so that you can achieve them. The appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to achieve the goal must be there and it must possess a large enough degree of challenge so to present a big enough challenge.

**Realistic and result-oriented.** Goals should be realistic in a particular working environment, and aim for an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work. Being realistic in the choice of goals is helpful in examining the availability of resources and selecting KPIs. A high goal is frequently easier to reach than a low one because a low goal exerts low motivational force.

**Time bound.** A goal should be grounded within a time frame as to create a sense of urgency. A time line of completion should be attached to the goal; that creates the possibility to measure progress towards success. It also assists in developing a realistic action plan, including setting intermediate objectives and strategies for reaching the goals. (Shahin and Mahbod, 2007).

**C. The weight of each performance measure**

Designing a performance management system would need identifying which of the indicators are more important or useful in establishing the overall wellbeing of the organization. Having acquired a certain “weight”, an indicator brings its contribution.
to the total score of the system, therefore this is a characteristic that needs to be assessed and assigned with care and proper thought (Sanger, 1998). Assigning a weight or base significance to each measure is attributed to management’s perception on its relative importance (Tyagi and Gupta, 2013), and it establishes priorities between indicators (Carlucci, 2010).

2.3.2.2. Steps in creating performance measures

“When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don’t adjust the goals, adjust the steps” Confucius.

Effective performance management systems are not quick to identify and design. They take constant work from senior management, strategic thinking and planning, perseverance plus open communication and collaboration across the organization (Barkley, 2001). Performance management systems are dynamic, as what is applicable today may be obsolete tomorrow therefore the system needs constant reassessment and upgrading as to keep pace with the ever changing business climate (Wadongo, 2010, Ferreira et al., 2012). Barkley, (2001) pinpoints two critical steps in creating a balanced scorecard of KPIs: 1. defining objectives that align with corporate business drivers; and 2. determining the primary and secondary measures of these objectives. Ferreira et al., (2012) explain a generic performance measurement process where the first step is for the management identifies the objectives, followed by setting up the target indicators and values of the performance measurements. Seen et al., (2001) recognize that the management team needs to engage in preparatory work with the employees explaining the purpose and establishing the process for the performance measurements development and future use. The next step is identifying the critical success factors for the organization, followed by selecting the KPIs engaging the whole team in the process. Finally in the building stage is the framework or scorecard design for all levels of the corporate structure. According to Tyagi and Gupta (2013) the following steps are identified when designing performance measurements: 1.Leadership intervention; 2.Strategic alignment with the business objectives; 3.Scorecard architecture and associated measurements; 4.Goals and benchmarks for each measurement; 5.Validation and fine tuning.

Designing a performance measurement tool is best approached using a bi-directional method where the formulation, structure and planning involved top management and first line managers. This way everyone will take ownership of the work, in a collaborative project where linking strategy to action, defining perspectives and selecting the KPIs is performed through the ranks (Agostino and Arnaboldi, 2010). Therefore for an efficient process and the creation of usable measures, everyone concerned must synergistically collaborate in the making (Beatham et al, 2005; Broderick et al., 2010). The development of KPIs are to be conducted using the
methodology of semi-structured interviews with employees at various managerial levels (Janes and Faganel, 2013; Tyagi and Gupta, 2013).

2.3.2.3. Barriers in creating performance measures

Although there is great benefit with the successful delivery of a performance management system, most of the attempts to create one accounted as having failed. The reasons for that can be categorised into three sections: political barriers, infrastructure barriers and focus barriers (Beatham et al, 2005).

1. **Political barriers** are encountered as the employees perceive the new performance management tool as a threat. Resistance to change, threat of being monitored closely, having their workload increased and fear of failure to perform accordingly resulting in loss of job are commonly accounted throughout the design phase (Beatham et al, 2005). In order to mitigate this aspect, management has to take proactive roles educating the managers and employees and making them part of the process from the embryonic stages of performance measurement system development (Agostino and Arnaboldi, 2010; Ferreira et al., 2011).

2. **Infrastructure barriers** are identified when channels for data storage and access are not clearly available. The existing information is in various formats or in different databases therefore making the creation and integration of new performance measures difficult. The need for reliable reference points for effective benchmarking and goal setting is imperative for usable KPIs to be born (Sanger 1998; Barkley, 2001; Beatham et al, 2005; Broderick et al., 2010; Ferreira et al., 2011; Atkinson, 2012; Kumar et al, 2013).

3. **Focus barriers** are registered as occurring due to time and labour intensive work that the performance management system needs to develop. The benefits of such project for the organization are long term therefore the relatively short term effort put into designing might not be perceived as justifiable. Leadership must ensure during the project that the energy levels are kept high and the full engagement and of protagonists is reached. Participating in the making ownership is inoculated into those involved. Further commitment can be obtained by connecting the control system and the results achieved to the reward system within the business. Transparency and cohesion within the organization can also be emphasized when synergistically and collaboratively developing the performance measurement system. (Beatham et al, 2005; Broderick et al., 2010).
Chapter 3: Research methodology

Research instruments. The current paper follows a Qualitative research methodology, employing semi-structured interviews with the management team for the identification and development process of performance measures. Both the literature review and the aim of the data collection justify the reasons for choosing this method. This provided the opportunity to probe for answers, giving the interviewees the chance to explain and build on the subject, finding the optimal measures and establishing indicator values. Another reason for choosing this approach is due to the delicate nature of building a control and measurement tool, the interviewees needed to feel at ease.

Data collection. The initial meetings with the managers were held formally, having set the time and date at least one day in advance. The average time spent in this initial meeting normally surpassed one hour in length, the time was recorded and included in the weekly “KPI meeting” with the Group General Manager. Notes were taken, the data being transcripted, encoded and summarized into themes. The total time spent with every manager concerning this subject averages in excess of two hours. As the channels of communications were kept opened, a multitude of emails were exchanged concerning the progress of the work throughout the whole process.

The performance management system design project at hand has been developed to encompass the whole hotel group. As this is a rather complex, multileveled subject, for edification purposes the focus on this present paper is on the Food and Beverage department, the service aspect only, incorporated within one of the two properties. The main reason for choosing this particular partition to magnify and analyse is due to the fact the Food and Beverage department is a “classic” department for the hotel business and the service industry at large, a major revenue producer, therefore representative for this organization and project. Also we found fit to treat the individual departments throughout the two properties as independent businesses, each having its special requirements. Although there are numerous indicators integrating the whole organization, the F&B Department in focus here can be considered as “stand alone” business, making the analysis pertinent.

Sample size. The Food and Beverage department is structured on four levels respectively level 3, 4, 5 and 6 on the corporate scale. Level 3 is represented by the Food and Beverage Manager. Level 4 is represented by the Assistant Food and Beverage Manager, Restaurant Managers and the Service Manager. Level 5 includes the supervisors for the Restaurant, Bar, Beach Boys. Level 6 encompasses the Waiters, Barmen, Beach Boys, and the Food and Beverage Outlet Cashier.

The performance measures for the Food and Beverage Department were identified and developed with the active collaboration of the Group General Manager (1 position), Operations Manager (1 position), F&B Manager (1 position), Assistant F&B Manager (1 position), Restaurant Managers (2 positions), and Service Manager (1 position).

The meetings had the following structure and the following questions were answered:
Introduction:
What are Key Performance Indicators?
Why do we need KPIs?

Technical aspects:
How to work with the dashboard?
Who “owns” the KPIs?
When and how often to report? (time frames linked to colour codes)
How will the linked in reward system function?

KPI adjustment, negotiation and validation:
What are the objectives that we follow?
How do we aim at achieving the objectives?
Is each measure relevant? Attainable? Challenging enough? Representative?
What adjustments need be made to each KPI?
Which KPI needs excluded and which new KPI needs added?

The channels of communication were left opened throughout the design process for necessary adjustments. The results of the meetings and suggested adjustments to the KPIs were noted and communicated to the General Manager and Operations Manager for approval. Feedback was then relayed to the concerned managers. The process followed a cyclical pattern and adjustments to the KPIs made throughout system expansion.

The steps taken towards completion of the performance management system can be broken down as thirteen in number, interrelating synergistically, incrementally addressed as the project was progressing.

1. Research organization’s strategic intent and fundamentals extracting inherent objectives and related CSF.
2. Receive initial input from the Group General Manager having as starting point an embryonic set of KPIs for corporate level 2, 3 and 4, echoing from the organization’s strategy. The support for the project has been also stated and communicated to department managers.
3. Research existing software and frameworks aiming at finding one to fit the project at hand.
4. Build proprietary framework to best encompass the required specifications (ease, straightforwardness, etc.) as none of the available infrastructures proved satisfactory.
5. Create an approved prototype measurement system for corporate level 2, 3 and 4.
6. Hold individual meetings with the management team discussing performance measurement benefits and debating each KPI’s viability to help optimize the efficiency of their departments by increased control over staff, financials and operations.
7. Constant adjustment to the measurement system as agreed with the management team, to best encompass and represent the company’s corporate, business and functional strategies.
8. Develop KPI weighing pattern collaboratively with concerned managers to suit the purpose of the system.
9. Hold seminars and workshops for and with the management team having as main aim identifying KPI’s for corporate level 5 and 6, the positions under their control.
10. Identify KPIs for auxiliary positions that were not initially comprised within the main project.
12. Help finalize the development of KPIs for corporate level 4, 5 and 6 through talks with the individual department heads.
13. Fine tune the measurement system’s overall “feel” addressing foreseeable issues, ensuring readiness for the forthcoming stages: implementation and reassessment.

Chapter 4: Data analysis and recommendations

The process of constructing the tailor made performance management system spanned across four months. The results of the semi structured interviews with the management team led to the development of key performance indicators that address the specific needs of this organization. Within the F&B department targeted for analysis in this present paper, the managers that took an active role in the KPI construction process occupy the following positions: Food and Beverage Manager (level 3), Assistant Food and Beverage Manager (level 4), Restaurant Manager (level 4) and Service Manager (level 4). Their collaboration led to the following FINDINGS:

1. The objectives are the same throughout the F&B department. The aim is achieving continuously a greater degree of control and improvement in the following areas:

   - **Guest Satisfaction.** A critical success factor for the hotel industry that determines the degree of prosperity for this business. The objective is efficiently measuring this factor as to constantly devise new ways and strive to improve guest’s perception as by doing so it will positively impact the revenue stream ensuring long term organization survival and prosperity.

   - **Human Resource.** Closely linked to the guest satisfaction and with the overall performance of the organization, the objective here is to have highly skilled employees, empowered and “owning” the work, able to provide a great quality of service.

   - **Financial.** The aim is to increase revenue ensuring constant growth and optimized efficiency in monetary management.

   - **Costs.** The goal here is reducing resource dissipation – both financial and non-financial, increasing overall efficiency focusing on work processes, promoting discipline, developing analytical thinking and fostering inventiveness.

   - **Promotions or Revenue Creation.** The objective is increased financial growth, stimulating innovation and creativity.

   (GGM, interview on July, 20, and August 19, 2014; F&B Manager, interview on August, 9 and August 11, 2013; Assistant F&B Manager, interview on August, 12, 2013; Restaurant Manager, interview on August, 14, 2013; Service Manager, interview on August, 15, 2013)
2. The key performance indicators chosen to perform towards achieving the objectives, need modifying as to fit the attributes depicting the individual job descriptions and the level occupied on the corporate structure.

Example: Achieving the objectives in the “Costs” area will result in reducing unnecessary resource expenditures. “Costs” is all about Time and Cost management, a generic term depicting both accounting costs and time savings by making the work processes more efficient. Therefore, both financial and non-financial indicators have been agreed upon.

- Finding alternative ways to operate would translate directly into financial savings; normally attributed to the management team of the department, these measures have as secondary objective developing analytical thinking, inventiveness and acquiring multilateral intellectual growth.

- Non financial measures aiming to increase performance of the work processes through good planning and disciplined work; this approach will save time resulting in less monetary expenses for the department in labour costs (eventual paid overtime).

- Altogether a multileveled set of KPI’s have been attributed down the chain of command all designed to fit with the individual’s understanding and job title:

  - Food and Beverage Manager (level 3) and Assistant F&B Manager (level 4):
    KPI 1: Develops at least 6 cost reducing ideas and implements them and tracks the savings to the company, quantifies savings in Thai Baht
    KPI 2: Formulate and implement a garbage segregation plan.

  - Restaurant Manager (level 4) and Service Manager (level 4):
    KPI 1: Control breakage and report it monthly

  - Restaurant Supervisor (level 5) and Bar Supervisor (level 5):
    KPI 1: Monitor and ensure that the Cleaning Schedule is respected daily
    KPI 2: Monitor and ensure that Opening and Closing check list gets respected by individuals daily
    KPI 3: Control breakage and report it monthly

(GGM, interview on July, 20, and August 19, 2014; F&B Manager, interview on August, 9 and August 11, 2013; Assistant F&B Manager, interview on August, 12, 2013; Restaurant Manager, interview on August, 14, 2013; Service Manager, interview on August, 15, 2013)

3. There is a mixture of lagging – financial, easily quantifiable indicators, and leading –human factor predominant, drivers of financial success, that are challenging to measure. As the leading indicators are quintessential for this business’s success, we found ways to measure and positively impact them, increasing their relevance and reliability.

Example: Measuring Guest Satisfaction, gathering feedback and increasing the perception on excellence through constant employee multileveled training. These are
interlinked processes designed not only to decrease the gap expectation-perception, but to create the “Wow” experience.

To measure, two main methods have been chosen: Trip Advisor and the in-house guest feedback questionnaire. An additional method collecting guest direct feedback through the front line staff has also been set in place. These methods combined, would give a broader, more reliable picture, strengthening the grip on this crucial indicator. Furthermore, the way these measures are thought, in order for the KPI to become fulfilled, the employee needs to cleverly interact with the guest, carefully delivering the best service possible, and automatically increasing the guest’s perception on quality.

-In house feedback questionnaire: often disregarded or hastily filled in by guests. To increase their relevance by having access to a higher number filled in, the Service Manager and F&B Cashier received related KPIs adding to the guest-staff interaction.

-Trip Advisor: although the rating criteria is difficult to comprehend and influence, it is an invaluable tool that must be considered. We agreed to “Increase the “Excellent” rating on Trip Advisor with at least 30 points per consecutive quarters. This is a “team effort indicator “, a KPI included throughout the ranks. To increase this rating, front line employees and managers need to constantly create rapport with the guests.

-Staff preparedness and direct feedback: “Ensure daily pre and post shift meetings to increase awareness of staff and specials and check set up, thus ensuring guest satisfaction”. A logbook recording time and the main discussion points must be kept; this also serves as a “front line” feedback collector detecting issues in the work process and relaying additional direct guest feedback increasing the control on this important factor.

To further the positive impact on Guest satisfaction, other measures have been created that would give the employee the right tools, enhancing their ability and preparedness to properly interact with the guest and deliver the service:

-English language skill: “Increase the English language skills with 1 level per year, based on IELTS or TEFL (measured by the English teacher)”, KPI included with level 5, 6 and most of level 4, together with compulsory attendance in class. Consequently the English Teacher owns the KPI relating to testing and meeting the necessary level of preparation.

-Aiming to enhance creative thinking and facilitate a stronger rapport with the guest, department heads received the following KPI: “Ensures strategies to increase departments overall satisfaction by a general 3% from the same period last year as per the feedback provided by the guest questionnaire”.

(GGM, interview on July, 20, and August 19, 2014; F&B Manager, interview on August, 9 and August 11, 2013; Assistant F&B Manager, interview on August, 12,
2013; Restaurant Manager, interview on August, 14, 2013; Service Manager, interview on August, 15, 2013)

4. Construction of KPIs for each corporate level according to employee held job position.

4.1. Restaurant manager (level 4). (Example of KPI for one level)

4.1.1. Guest Satisfaction. One key performance indicator was chosen at this level to directly aid in accomplishing the objective.

KPI 1: Increase the “Excellent” rating on Trip Advisor with at least 30 points per consecutive quarters.

As stated, this is a department’s and resort’s common effort indicator and will be found throughout the ranks assigned to positions that can impact the rating (primarily front line staff and management team). Trip Advisor is used as a tool (found at www.tripadvisor.com) to probe guest satisfaction and find more necessary feedback. The target is to increase resort’s overall rating with 30 points on the Trip Advisor scale benchmarked on consecutive quarters. The reporting time frame is “Every quarter” and it is weighed at 20 points for completion. This metric has been assigned partial point award (as long as at least 50% of the total target gets fulfilled): “Trip Advisor 15 “Excellent points” = 10 Check Sheet points – Minimum allowed for the count. Trip Advisor 20 “Excellent points” = 13 Check Sheet points. Trip Advisor 25 “Excellent points” = 16 Check Sheet points. Trip Advisor 27 “Excellent points” = 18 Check Sheet points. Trip Advisor 30 “Excellent points” = 20 Check Sheet points – Maximum possible.

Any other score that falls in between from Trip Advisor just award the number of points that is closer, if in the middle go to the highest one (Example: Trip Advisor 17 “Excellent points” = 10 Check Sheet points, Trip Advisor 18 “Excellent points” = 13 Check Sheet points)” (KPI reference manual - Food and Beverage Manager & Assistant F & B Manager).

4.1.2. Human Resource. Four key performance indicators were chosen as being representative for directly accomplishing the objective. As described in “point 3” from this chapter, these measures aid in fulfilling the goals attributed to “Guest satisfaction”.

KPI 1: At least 45 hours of training per quarter (15h per month). The training can be formal or informal but must be recorded (training attendance sheet: topic, time, employee name and signature) and is inclusive of language training.

This metric although similar to the one found at the F&B Manager’s level, is different as it refers to the employee having to attend the necessary training hours in order to fulfill it. It is reported quarterly and receives 15 points when completed. It also allows
partial point award as follows (as long as at least 50% gets completed): 23-29h training=8p, 29-35h=12p, 35-40h=14p, 40-45h=15p.

KPI 2: Increase the English skills with 1 level per year based on IELTS or TEFL (measured by the English Teacher).

This measure is designed to help develop the employee in this area triggering a set of chain reactions such as a boost in confidence resulting in a higher will in approaching and interacting with guests. The target is one point a year increase in their skill measured according to the standards of the mentioned certification bodies. Consequently the English Teacher owns the KPI relating to testing and meeting the necessary level of preparation. It is measured on a yearly time frame and receives 60 points for completion.

KPI 3: Obtain a minimum of Good on the 360 degree evaluation by peers and subordinate

The “360 degree evaluation system” is an internal feedback tool that allows the employees to assess their peers and subordinates. The set value is obtaining a mark not lower than “Good” on the scale. The evaluation is held once a year therefore this metric is reported once a year also, weighing 40 points awarded for completion.

KPI 4: Conduct daily briefs to staff and record the topic of discussion in the log book.

This is an operational metric and aims at keeping staff knowledgeable and updated with the necessary details portraying to excelling at their job. The procedure is recorded in the meeting logbook and subjects of the discussion stated. It is reported “Weekly” and is weighed at 1 point.

4.1.3. Promotions or Revenue Creation. One key performance indicator was chosen at this level as being representative for accomplishing the objective. Following negotiations, their values and targets were agreed.

KPI 1: Inform guests of daily and weekly events and achieve at least 50 sales per week (6-7 guests per day – or- romantic dinners and in villa barbecue are worth 10 sales each) and keep weekly records as proof.

Beside the obvious role as revenue creator, this metric also contributes to “guest satisfaction” as it promotes a higher involvement of the employee with the guest. It has a weekly reporting time frame and is worth 1 point for completion.

4.1.4. Costs. One key performance indicators was chosen as being representative for accomplishing the objective at this level.

KPI 1: Control breakage and report it monthly.
This is an operational metric that helps monitor and reduce a key factor that contributes to high monetary costs in this department. It has a monthly reporting time frame and it receives 4 points.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

The KPI construction process is at the heart of any performance management system, being laborious and resource consuming, requiring people skills, analytical and creative thinking. To galvanize in success, the active participation of the whole management team is a must. The role of the performance management system has to be understood beyond its measurement and control attributes. It is an enabler of a higher purpose that serves the organization and its people in achieving cohesion, continuous growth and resounding accomplishments.

From the results, it can be concluded that:

- The corporate strategy and strategic intent have been transmitted throughout the whole department’s structure. The created key performance indicators comprised within the performance management system are adapted to suit each position’s attributes, all contributing in its own way to achieving the goals of the organization and inherent critical success factors.

- There is balance between financial and non-financial indicators chosen to represent the department’s performance. The overall focus is well divided between the four areas: Financial, Customer, Learning and Growth, and Internal Business Processes.

- The attention on determinants of future success –leading indicators- has been emphasized being woven into a matrix that would gather information and deliver progress. The human factor is especially an essential and sensitive element for this type of business. Gathering feedback from the customers, designing and redesigning the products and adequately preparing the employees in order to proficiently deliver these, embodies an on-going cyclical process. The intricacies of which, are reflected in the modalities chosen to inter-correlate and interconnect the measures.

- The financial indicators have a multi-faceted focus, also eliciting analytical thinking and creativity. The management team is not only trained to follow and implement orders from the top, but is also constantly encouraged to think and rethink modalities to reduce costs and increase revenue. This attitude of empowerment is desired to be passed throughout the structure, as the employee that “owns” the work is proven to be more effective and feels to belong therefore reducing the high turnovers associated with this type of business as well.
- The performance management system has been thought with functionality and ease of use in mind, from comprehensive measures to a modular straightforward infrastructure. As the need to include the whole organization, it had to be user friendly to a broad range of employees, that might not have the time nor the inclination to take in a complicated system. Also the design had to be able to withstand easy and fast modifications as desired by the ever-changing business climate requirements.

Giving the short time available for developing this project, it has satisfactorily encompassed the key success factors both in design and being able to address the requirements of this organization. It has been well received by the Group General Manager and the Board of Directors.

Implications

The present performance management system has been developed for and with the collaboration of the management team of a high-end hotel group. However, there are a considerable number of elements that are applicable to other organizations within the hospitality industry and with some adjustments, to other industries. Other organizations can employ: 1) The same method of channelling the corporate goals and the critical success factors through balanced financial/non-financial measure design focusing on the main areas: Financial, Customer, Learning and Growth, and Internal Business Processes. 2) The process of KPI construction using the action research methodology, semi-structured interviews. 3) The way to exhibit the leading indicators, determinants of future success, the functional modular infrastructure and KPI weighing system.

Other organizations found in the same industry but on the different categories or class, can use all of the above as a model as well, most likely simplifying the number of indicators and integrating a few departments to suit the size and requirements they possess. The organizations should 1) focus on creating balanced financial/non-financial measures having the corporate goals, the industry and organization specific critical success factors at heart, 2) use the action research methodology, semi-structured interviews as it results in a product that is best “owned” by everyone, 3) put principle of adapting the measures to suit the different levels of corporate structure and understanding.

Limitations of the study

The created performance management system is comprised of equally developed elements for all departments, interconnected to generate synergy, cohesion, thought to serve as driver for change and growth. Due to time constraints, the present paper offers for analysis only a snapshot into the constructed performance management system. The process of KPI construction and performance management system design stretched on a time period of four months, considered as high season. The participating management team was highly engaged with daily business therefore the access to invaluable information and direct expertise was sometimes hindered.
The study presents the creation of key performance indicators for a particular organization therefore it is addressing the specific needs inherent here, being subjected to factors from this certain cultural background. The non-confrontational attitude displayed by most Thai managers is a cultural trait that might of inhibited establishing precise values for the indicators.

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Title: Selection process development of qualified student trainees in hospitality industry, case study of Amari Watergate Bangkok

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Abstract

Research on the topic: selection process development of qualified student trainees in hospitality industry: a case study of Amari Watergate Bangkok. The Purposes of the Study: 1) To select appropriate student trainees in accordance with hotel and help the companies to find quality student trainees who are qualified and profitable in any department. 2) To find out problems which usually occur and affect the organization by employing student trainees. 3) To find out what are the important steps of the recruiting process. The research requires a variety of concrete observations to create an efficient selecting process of student trainees inside the hotel industry. This research concentrates on studying concepts and facts that are keys to establish procedures which could be use in management to develop their processes. The research is qualitative in its methods and includes the investigation of factors related to recruitment process and its characteristics. The research has been designed at the Amari Watergate Bangkok during 3 months of internship in the Learning & Development department from 1st October- 31st December 2013 where the researcher has observed and participated in the student trainee’s selection process. The method of data collection was based on qualitative process. The qualitative method includes observation (Participation), research actions and depth Interview. With this research the author found the confirmation that the selection process is vital for internship, during the interview the researcher had the chance to see all her theories approved and even more. This study has proven that an efficient process benefit for parties, hotel and students. The interview helped to emphasize what makes a quality service which is necessary to understand for create appropriate tests and interviews for all the departments the candidates are applying for. The author has been able to prove that the combination of efficient application forms, tests and interviews are necessary for create a performing selection process.

Keyword: recruitment, selection process, internship, qualification
Background of the Study

In hospitality industry, internship program represents the best way to connect theoretical knowledge to work experience. It is a way to experience real working situations and apply scholarship knowledge as no books could ever replace the real experience. During their training courses, students will have the possibility to meet new people, learn from them and find out if they are willing to choose their careers inside the hospitality industry. Naturally any internship requires passing through a critical process which is the selection of qualified student trainees. The trainees will be temporarily a part of the organization and will represent its values and qualities and that is why their behaviors have to be beyond reproach as they could affect the business quality in both positive and negative ways. The selection have to made conscientiously by the organizations which will host the internship and to do so, organizations have several tools and process which will help them to aim the most qualified candidates. As Scholarios and Lockyer (2004) said, most of the best practices can only work if they are correctly applied and continuously improved. The Amari Watergate Bangkok hires dozens of student trainees every year but the selection process of student trainees has been underestimating leading to unavoidable recruitment mistakes.

Statement of Problem

The Learning & Development department is a part of Human resources department, Learning & Development manager and coordinator jobs are to find student trainees and create training courses. As the researcher had been working in learning & development of the Amari Watergate Bangkok during my internship, the author could noticed that the organization did not have the student trainees selecting flow chart which is the perfect tool to describe the wheels of the selection processes and how they interact which each others. In order to master selection, it is important to understand how the selection processes are set up, which processes can be classified as operational or strategic. Moreover, the department did not hold documents of student trainee qualifications. The previous process of selecting student trainees was usually made by filling up an application form, an interview with the head department manager and English tests which clearly needed to be updated making the trainees process ineffective. The lack of quality in the selection made the organization face the problem of having non-qualified students trainees performing in real situation. It brought into the researcher intention to sort this situation out by implanting a student trainee process, an appropriate English test and to create any suitable other tests that would match the company requirements.

Objective

1) To select appropriate student trainees in accordance with hotel and help the company to get the best quality student trainees who are qualified and profitable in any department.
2) To find out the problems which usually occur and affect the organization by employing student trainees?
3) To find out the important steps for recruiting and selection process
Literature Review

1. Hospitality Human Resource evolution
The tourism and hospitality became the world’s largest employer regarding their high number of employees. During the past 80 years the Human Resource vision employee's welfare as evolve and is now consider as essential to reach high quality service. The key themes are now the human capital and knowledge management for organizations. (Davison et al., 2011) In the future outsourcing will play a more significant role and may cause the disappearance of HRM in the future. HRM will have to focus on individual careers development, careers management and human resources role in managing the health and safety of employees (Davison et al., 2011). The creation of the ASEAN in 2015 will also have a direct impact on the hospitality industry and the Human Resources departments.

1.1 Human Resource and AEC
To prepare for the liberalization of trade among ASEAN Community (AEC) in 2015, Human resources managements will have to be ready to handle the numerous changes. Organizations will have to develop considerably the language ability inside the corporation as several countries in the incoming ASEAN are well known for practicing excellent English, such as Malaysian, Philippines or Myanmar. The companies will slightly tend to have multicultural workforces and that is why they need to be ready to handle this new situation. Organizations will also have to remain competitive on penalty of facing brain drain (Thongklanlaya, 2012). The Human Resource will have to handle different nationalities and this cross cultural management will also impact the internship programs.

2. Internship program
Internship been created in 1906 in the University of Cincinnati in order to give a chance to students to gain experience in their specific careers and obtain financial support for their education. E.M. Statler, was the first man who mentioned that the real world experience is needed for hospitality students (Zopiatis, 2007).

The internship will provide a better understanding and knowledge of the duties and tasks which are necessary in the industry. It can help to develop the relevant skills necessary in their careers (Zopiatis, 2007). The internships are clearly and advantages for both educational and hospitality industry but also have to face several problems due to the divergence of needs of both parties.

2.2 Problem
During their internships, hospitality professionals fail to provide meaningful works to the interns. The expectations of the students regarding the learning opportunities are not fulfilled. The second most important problem was the identification of the qualified interns by the hospitality professionals (Zopiatis, 2007). Interns need to have positive attitudes in order to success. Professionals confessed that they're lacking of time to handle properly internship and guide the trainees (Zopiatis, 2007). In order to help to reduce problems and difficulties, it is important to select the best candidates that could fulfill the organizations needs.

3. Recruitment and selection process
The recruitment is an important process for the personnel function of an internal organization as the personnel input will determine its performance. The
importance to hire the quality people is to primary save budget and time as hard to compensate though training. (Campbell and Sumners, 1995). To recruit right person it will help to satisfy the organization’s needed (Palazzo and Kleiner, 2002). Selection activities include applications, interview, pre employment testing, background checks and references. The selection process is the way of narrowing down the candidates applying for a job (Christensen Hugues). Testing is also part of the selection process which will help to check attitude and psychological disposition, aptitude, knowledge or even medical condition. The last step of the selection process is the reference checking (Christensen Hughes). The selection process always starts with the application form.

Recruitment and selection process

3.1 Application
The application form will help the company to aim and shortlist candidates (Humphreys and Elvin). The short listing reduces considerably the likelihood of selecting non-relevant people for interview's (Torrington and Hall, 1998). Following the application the candidates will have to pass the testing part of the selection process.

3.2 Testing
Tests are used to determine the suitability of the candidates applying for a job. Regarding their scores, it is possible to know if the applicants will suit to the profile and be economically viable for the company (Selecting Winners). Tests are standard series of questions and problems that will help a company to check the knowledge, skills and abilities of participants. However, decision to hire an employee cannot only be based on test and must be complete with other verifications such as interviews (Selecting Winners). The kind of tests will depend on the kind job they are made for (Employee selection test). There are variety of tests including language, numeric, job knowledge, personalities and attitudes etc (Employee selection test). The selections and all these steps are made and aim to find whether or not the candidates are qualified and could fulfill the companies' needs. In order to find the best candidates, it is important to understand what makes a "qualified" student trainee.
After the testing part, the candidate will have to pass an interview which is used to assess the communication skill and attitude of candidates.

3.3 Interview process

The interview process is the main step in the recruitment procedure and can often make a huge difference between failure and success (selecting winners). Interviews can vary in their content but are always used to discover if the candidates have rather or not certain mandatory skills such as interpersonal skills, communication skills, and teamwork skills. Interviews are usually conducted face to face or over the phone (Types of Employment Tests). In order to create efficient selection process, it is important to master what makes qualified candidates and what qualifications are required for the concerned job.

4. Qualifications

Hospitality sector is what we call a human business as it is based on services, and on the development of all staffs tending to high quality and skills in order to reach the full business potential (Warhurst et al., 2004; Hai-Yan and Baum 2006). The service sector is flirting with the term of "product" as it not only the product itself that matters but also the way it is deliver to the customer. Successful organizations as Ritz-Carlton, Mariott or Disney have earned a strong reputation by recognizing the important role that the employees play in meeting customer expectations (Nickson et al., 2005). It’s divided in to 2 parts, qualities and skills.

Qualities which include: flexibility, commitment, enthusiasm, thorough etc…

Skills which include: language skills, communication skills, interpersonal skill, leadership skill, computer skills (Top 10 Qualities of a Great Hospitality Employee, 2012) (Hcareers.com, 2013). A qualified team or workforce is necessary to reach quality service, it is main purpose is to aim and target the customer satisfaction which is the key to financial benefits inside the hospitality industry.

5. Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is often defined as a judgment to evaluate the use of a post about a particular product or service (Holjevac et al.,). Churchill and Suprenant (1982) said that in hospitality the foundation of the business are build up customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, influencing the intention to repurchase and a positive word of mouth. (Holjevac et al.,). Akon (1995) discovered other factors that are also important to the guest satisfaction, the behavior of employees, their cleanliness and timeliness. The customer satisfaction is directly linked to the employee performance. With the help of an effective employee measurement program, the guest will be allowed to judge employee’s performance individually and help him/her to have an objective measurement of their service delivery. Managers will then set out personalized training in order to make them more effective in their duties and helping them to blossom (Hanks).

Research Methodology

The research requires a variety of concrete observations to create an efficient selecting process of student trainees inside the hotel industry. This research concentrates on studying concepts and facts that are keys to establish procedures which could be use in management to develop their processes. The research is qualitative in its methods and includes the investigation of factors related to
recruitment process and its characteristics. The Selection process development of qualified student trainees in hospitality industry has been designed at the Amari Watergate Bangkok during 3 months of internship in that same department from 1st October- 31st December 2013 where the researcher has observed and participated in selecting student trainee process. The method of data collection was based on qualitative process. The qualitative method includes:
1. Observation (Participation)
2. Research Actions
3. In-Depth Interview

Sample
The sample used in this study is based on 3 different departments including 2 people from Human Resource department holding the position of HR director and L&D manager as they are main actors of the selection process and are in charge of the selection of the student trainees. 2 people from Front Office department holding the position of Front Office manager and Reservation assistant manager, 2 people from Food and Beverage holding the position of F&B director and restaurant manager as these 2 departments are operation departments and need high number of students with high qualifications. The researcher decided to interview the managerial levels due to their role of selecting the student trainees and as they work closely with the student trainees.

Research Instrument
1. Observation (Participation)
During the internship inside the Learning and Development the author could noticed that all the positions were granted in advance. Only few of the candidates were asked to pass tests and were directly send to the last step of the selecting process which is the interview with the head department they were applying for. It came to the researcher mind that something was definitely missing, that it was too permissive. Following this observation the author decided to handle the renewal of the process, she firstly noticed that the application form was only provided in Thai language and lacked of information requests. Concerning the English tests, only English specific tests regarding the different departments and their vocabulary were available, no tests checking the general comprehension of the English language were at disposal. The tests were approximately aged of 5 years and clearly needed to be updated. The researcher decided then to renew, update and optimize the recruitment process to make it more efficient.

2. Research Actions
The author has decided to use the job recruitment form of the hotel to improve the one for the student trainees. She created a new form in both languages, English in Thai. Secondly she decided to request important information that was missing in the old application such as training history and which number should be contact in case of emergency.
Once the researcher had finished the application form, she started to collect information regarding English inside the hospitality industry to replace the English obsolete test. She created a new English test that could be used to assess the grammar level of the applicants and she also created 5 new English tests which could be used in...
5 different departments of the Amari Watergate Bangkok. All these new applications and tests were checked and approved by all the respective managers and are now currently used by the organization.

3. In-Depth Interview
The researcher has contacted Amari Watergate Bangkok to make appointments to interview 4 head departments, 1 manager and 1 assistant manager.

To prepare her in-depth interview, the researcher has prepared a list of questions concerning the selection process of the student trainees of The Amari Watergate Bangkok. The sample consists of 4 heads of different departments, 1 manager and 1 assistant manager inside the Amari Watergate Bangkok who will represent the hotel. The researcher will later interview the 4 heads department, 1 manager and 1 assistant manager and collect the information by recording in order to analyze them and help the research.

Findings

1. Benefits of internship The internship benefits to both hospitality properties and educational institutions which provide the students. It provides cheap workforces without any long-term employment obligations to organizations and a chance to educate the next generations of the industry leaders. There are many benefit of having student trainees, including extra manpower, PR, improve team members to be good trainers, save costs and exchange experience.

2. Problem of hiring student From the literature review, the main problem of hiring student trainees is usually the learning expectations of the students which are not completely fulfilled. The second most important problem is the identification of the qualified interns by the hospitality professionals as it hard to detect the most competent students in order to provide them with responsible duties (Zopiatis, 2007). From the interview respondents, the researcher found different type of problems regarding the student trainees due to an incomplete selection process including lack of creativity, absenteeism, personalities, lack of maturity, lack of motivation, communication problem, lack of flexibility, lack of confidence and misbehavior.

2.3 To solve the problems There are several ways to solve the problems according to the advice of interviewees, the use of communication which will help to avoid critical situations, rules that give strong structure to the student trainees and make them feel they are real part of the organization and of course motivation which is necessary to keep the students committed and efficient during their internship.

3. Importance of selection process The selection process is very important in order to select the right man to the right job. This brought to the researcher the idea of developing new process of selection. An effective selection process helps the organization to get suitable students for all departments, especially in operations where the student trainees will have to meet the guests and that is why having qualified persons can help departments a lot, especially if they are creative.

3.1 The selection process has been developed by the researcher by adding English test before interview to complete it and make it more efficient. With the only use of interview, company only learns about the personality and ideas of the candidates. The lack of control, especially the English skill can cause errors of recruitment. The ad of more tests in the selection process clearly makes it more efficient.
3.2 The new application form of student trainee has been developed by the researcher to make it more efficient in both Thai and English languages, the researcher also added more important information that were missing in the previous forms.

3.3 With the globalization, English language became very important as it is the main international language. The hospitality industry requires speaking English as most of the hospitality organizations are diversify, hire different nationalities and deal with customers from all around the world. Therefore English language is the main language to communicate not only with the customers, but staff and boss as well. To assess the student trainee English level’s, the only way is to test them, especially for the front line departments such as Front Office and Food & Beverage department.

3.4 The new English test has been created by researcher as the organization was using an old English test which needed to be update. The researcher created grammar test, general hotel vocabulary test and specific English for each department.

3.5 The interview part is very crucial and that is why it should be prepared and handled as it were an interview for permanent staffs. The interview helps to know more about candidates in term of personality, background, attitude, ideas and personal interest, to find out that if they are suitable for the department or not by asking questions related to the job or the department as well. As the interview is the way to know personally the candidates, the interviews should be conducted by the one working closely with the student trainees (mostly managers) as it would help to create bonds.

**Compare the selection process before and after developed**

![Comparison diagram]
3.6 Strong qualification is necessary for students to success in their internship. It is their tool to achieve their own expectation and the one from the company. Some of the qualification can be learned, trained or developed but some of them are directly coming from the trainee inner personality which makes them hard to modify. Knowing which qualifications are critical and important, companies will have to target those during the selection process in order to hire the most qualify candidates. Needed qualities in the organization are flexibility, good attitude, maturity, and punctuality, sense of responsibility, enthusiasm and teamwork. Needed skills in the organization including English skills, other languages skill such as Chinese, Japanese, French and Russian, computer skills, specific hotel knowledge, communication skills, creativity and interpersonal skills.

4. Impact of AEC Regarding the incoming AEC, the biggest impact on the selection process will be regarding the English skills as it’s going to reach high competition among AEC members who want to come to work in hospitality in Thailand. As their language skills are quite better than Thai students, the companies will have a wider choice of students, this is why student trainees have to develop their skills and be well prepared for the coming AEC. To prepare for the AEC, companies need to have proper English tests.

Future Researches
The researcher would like to give recommendations for further research regarding this topic. If future researches are made, the author would advice to use a larger sample than this research. If the research uses more samples, for example several different hotels, it would help to have a better understanding of the selection process, of the way it is handled in different establishment and make the result more reliable. Another recommendation would be regarding the method, the researcher would advice to use a different, survey for instance, which could help to asses more factors and have a wider understanding of the situation. Surveys are not going as deep as interviews could but would able the researcher to target and investigate about more information and factors and are way easier to use in different hotels. Following these recommendations and the previous researches, the future researches will surely have a better comprehension of the complexity of the selection process.

Recommendations
The author would give some recommendations for any establishments which would like improve their internship and make them more efficient. As the research proved it, some tests such as attitude tests that are not usually used in internship could help to assess more about the trainees and reduce the issues encountered regarding misbehavior. During the internship it is important to have regular follow up regarding the trainees experience in the organization. It is important to keep in mind that all internees could be potential employees in the future and help their development with purpose of hiring them after their internship could help the companies to avoid costing recruitment.

1. The Learning and Development division or Human Resource, depending where the trainees are doing their internship should also have a regular follow up of the internship progress as they could help to fill up the lacks of the students.
2. The use of systematic referee during all the internship could help to have a better view of the work accomplished by the trainees. It would help them to have perpetual help, encouragement and close up training.
3. The interviews should be systematically conducted by the managers that will be in charge of the trainees during the internship as they will be the one in charge of their training. Their decisions should be important in the selection process.
4. The specific tests of each different department (including English tests) should be approved by the respective managers of these departments as once again they are at the better place to know what is required in their departments.

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Title:
Factors Affecting Tourists’ Decision Making to Purchase An Accommodation: A Case Study of Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp and Resort, Chiang Rai

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Abstract
The research aims to study factors which affect tourists’ decision making to purchase an accommodation. It is studied on the high-end guests who stayed in the five stars resort that reflects their intention. The case study is chosen with a particular luxury resort, which offers their customers all-inclusive package which includes room rate, meals, activities, transportation and other fees. Moreover, the study would like to study concerning the importance of other factors which might attract the customers’ intention to purchase a room in this resort. Other factors are hotel attributes including hotel room (cleanliness, in-room amenities and decoration), facility and services, activities provided in the resort, loyalty program, the information sources which they receive, a reputation of hotel or chain, hotel location and the in-house security.

The study is completed with 56 sample size of the guests who stayed at Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp and Resort. Most of guests visited the hotel for their leisure and adventure purpose according to the location and the activities which the resort provides. The result of a study indicates that the most important factors in purchasing an accommodation are 1) cleanliness of room, 2) security system in a resort and 3) service quality of staffs. These factors affect their decision to purchase a particular accommodation for their stay.

Introduction
When people plan for their trips both domestics and international, while they are considering for destinations where they want to travel so an accommodation is one of plan for staying during their trips. Travelers choose accommodations concerning their personal life styles or own interests. There are many choices of hotels for travelers choosing. Hotel managers have to understand their guests’ requirement for holding their current guests and attracting new customers during the rapidly competition for travelers (Ananth et al., 1992; Howell et al., 1993; Sammons el al., 1999).
According to a study, Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp and Resort is the interesting accommodation which its brands, hotel attributes, attractive uniqueness or management. Anantara Golden Triangle promotes itself as Asia’s premier Elephant Camp of the world with the location in the northern border of Chiang Rai province by Mekong River meeting as three countries as Thailand, Myanmar and Laos. Including an excellent accommodation, the resort attributes are presented with a combination of indigenous art and culture.

Objective

The study attempts to define the factors affecting tourists’ decision making to purchase an accommodation of the tourists both Thai residence and foreigners by doing a case study of five star resort in Thailand.

Literature Review

When the travelers plan to visit any destinations then they will list many conditions to apply and choose an accommodation. The consumer thinks about several characters for judging the service quality which perceive when they stay in one accommodation (Wilkin et al., 2007). Mohsin and Lockyer (2010) mentioned that those standards or determinants can be concerned both intangibility of service component and another part of visible facilities. There are 6 factors which are determined as 1) Hotel Attributes, 2) Hotel Marketing, 3) Information Sources, 4) Reputation of hotel or chain, 5) Location and 6) Hotel environmental security.

1. Hotel Attributes

Alpert (1971) and Kivela (1996) mentioned viewing consumer products and services as a set of attributes, features and benefits. Alpert and Kivela claimed that attributes which have direct effects on consumer choices are called “determinant” attributes that might be different from those provided by competitors could be important factors determining consumers’ intentions related to future purchasing.

Customer service, understanding and caring in terms of hotel management, assurance and convenience of transaction control during staying are considered “intangible elements.” Contrarily, physical facilities such as in-room (e.g. coffee maker, bathrobe etc.), and entire hotel facilities’ availability (e.g. swimming and fitness centre) and quality are termed “tangible elements” (Ramanathan, 2011).

1.1 Room – When travels plan for their trips, a hotel preview is a significant reason for choosing a hotel or resort. They might consider on the room allocation, amenities, or room facilities that meet with their requirement.

1.1.1 Cleanliness - Weaver and McCleary (1991) mentioned that cleanliness is the most significant standard. In addition to the quality in-room
amenities, these are very necessary to guests’ demand. The important hotel attributes have been considered by cleanliness of room, mattresses are comfortable and towels’ quality (Taninecz, 1990). Comfortable beds and quality of towels are considered as an importance of room quality (Knutson, 1988; Weaver and McCleary, 1991; Weaver and Oh, 1993). The room quality was the important to clarifying the level and influences the business guests to visit the hotel again (Kashyap and Bojanic, 2000).

1.1.2 In-room Amenities - The television in room is additional application providing for the guests, includes guidebooks for activity, reservation, room service, local maps, weather forecasts and others (Bilgihan, 2012). Furthermore, nowadays most of hotels and resorts provide in-room facilities by developing technology to fulfill the guests’ requirement. Bouks (2007) mentioned there are some improvements of multimedia entertainment for previous years which has been resulted by customers’ requirement, which significantly enlarge in in-room entertainment facilities that the hotels offer as current luxury then will be new expectation for next day.

Technology is a key component of hospitality organizations for their advantage in competition (Hansen and Owen, n.d.). So the guests might anticipate for amenities in guest room which will be available choices at home and offices (Amdekar, 2006). For examples, 59 per cent of the luxury hotels have DVD players providing in their guestrooms and there are 35 per cent of hotels providing in-room iPod docking station (AH&LA, 2008). Entertainment system in guestrooms consist of welcome messages on TV screen, VOD, WIFI, advance TV system, video games, fitness station, etc. Nowadays, investing in in-room entertainment system devices is a way to increase market share (Bilgihan, 2012). Anantara Golden Triangle Room Features provides king or twin bed, internet access via lan and WIFI, IDD telephone with voicemail, international satellite TV, DVD player, iPod docking station.

1.1.3 Room Decoration – Room typically is the element which attracts the guests’ perception with its own furniture, in-room features and completes with other components such as decorating style which reflect to a local culture to fulfill the guests’ demand and their satisfaction. First impression when guest entre the guestroom has influences on their satisfaction. They look at the condition of prominent furniture and built-in furnishing instantly (Cesarotti and Spada, 2009).

1.2 Facility and Service – Currently customers of hotel did not only find for basic services and facilities which hotel provided but the quality of services and facilities themselves are expected. When they are not meet by a guests’ expectation or more than the guests’ recognition about a quality of service then it affect to their satisfaction (LeBlanc, 1992). Customers seek for both intangible service and physical products to define a service quality at a time (Radder and Wang, 2006). Expectations of hotel facilities and services are different in which cross-cultural (Hoon, 1992). Anantara Golden Triangle offers infinity-edge swimming pool with Jacuzzi.
overbooking the Makong Valley, including restaurants, fitness centre with gymnasium, squash court, table tennis, sauna, stream room and outdoor tennis court.

1.2.2 Staff Services - The competition is high in hotel industry and the similarity of services and facilities, if there are available options providing the customers which are considered as significant quality for their purchasing next time (Burton, 1990; Knutson, 1988). The concept of service includes into two terms, between how about operating capacity and what the marketing capacity by combination of these two capacities and service attribute (Goldstein et al., 2002) and fulfill the customers’ requirement and strategic planning mentally (Victorino et al., 2005).

SERVQUAL is a tool to evaluate the quality of service in hotels for considering criteria (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Fernandez and Bedia (2004) have applied SERVQUAL measurement to standardize hotels’ service quality in Spain, this clarified that the system of star rating does not correlate to the quality of service level. Many studies indicated the relationship both service quality perceiving and the loyalty of customers (Ramanathan, 2012). The service quality of employee was an important to define the level and the purpose of leisure guests to stay again (Kashyap and Bojanic, 2000).

1.3 Activities in resort – Shu (2002) referred both characteristics of customer lifestyles and traveling favorites can be grabbed by special interest tour, to establish a proper marketing plan determining of area of direct market. Okello et al. (2001) indicated Kenya with its natural atmosphere elements which appeal priority evaluation by travelers, consist of wild life, birds, beautiful scenery, and palm fringed, nice beaches and Swift moving rivers/waterfalls. Similar to Awaritet (2004) that the tourists in Nigeria extremely concern in the natural ambience, particularly in wild life/natural existences, eco-tourism/parks, geographical area and other environmental supply which are usable of tourists’ consumption, hence it is significant for establishing the attractions, physical environment and activities by cooperating tourism preference in developing plan, agenda/marketing and design.

It is totally significant for its part considering on tourist’s destinations and activities are linked with the environment which is natural, historical and cultural legacy of specific area (David, 2011). The activities are offered considering on the guests’ interesting. The consistency of favorite of activities, destinations, atmosphere and the linkage emotions of friends are known as “specific interest” (Hall and Weiler, 1992; Trauer and Ryan, 2005). The elephant camp cooperates with the resort to offer memorable experiences for the guests and provide authentic mahout training and work with elephants in such truly natural environment. According to these dominants of natural environment and elephant camp, the resort can provide one stop service to provide the guests to achieve their intention to stay at the hotel. Moreover, Anantara
Golden Triangle offers the Spa on the elephant, three countries excursion (Thai, Myanmar and Laos), rice planting, mountain biking and Thai cooking class program.

2. Hotel Marketing

2.1 Pricing – The significant part can be played by price for service recognition. Ugboma et al. (2004) mentioned the consumers usually accept about the exceeding price provides a higher quality. The price which is lower can lead the consumers to beware the company’s capability for providing good service and equivalently the realistic basis of service perceive.

2.1.1 All-inclusive package – The all-inclusive package was included all drinks, taxes, roundtrip transfers and sports activities with no tipping. People had known in advance concerning their prices for a package holiday but not include for their personal expenditure as telephone costs, washing items, rent a car, outside meals and buy some products. According to a package, excursion is included to visit a local market and craft village so it is important promoting for the visitors and local hosts (Tourism Intelligence International, 2000a; Issa and Jayawardena, 2003). Poon (1998) mentioned a package of all-inclusive it was not only specifically used in the closed accommodation which was attractive by many travelers, but also the installation of vacation scenery in a higher destination’s number that the fuels consumption of customers expand and developing product to fulfill current tourists’ requirement.

People who have the same interesting and concept then they might select such a similar traveling idea and making decision based on their homogenous characteristics (Woodside and Dubelaar, 2002). In 1950s, all-inclusive holiday club, Club Mediterranee or Clubmed were opened in Mallorca for providing a uniqueness of traveling from the difficulty of after war Europe so the Balearics where was very well-known in Mediterranean was the earliest model of all-inclusive presenting (Issa and Jayawardena, 2003).

People have different motivation to decide and choose for their holiday styles that demographic factors are the important factors to determine different reasons for all-inclusive package selection. People who traveled to make their first experience then they decide to reserve as AI more than people who revisit during the holidays (Wickens, 2002). According to Tourism Intelligence International (2000a) referred UK tourists’ motivation for traveling as AI, defining 57 per cent of them consider on the packages are worth for money, there are 42 per cent which prefer to manage their pre-paid expenditure before traveling, 39 per cent indicate that it is suitable their families and around 37 per cent of them are attracted by a variety of facilities and entertainments which are included in package.

However, the degree of motivation and individual reasons are different concerning their age differences. Anderson and Langmeyer (1982) noted the people...
who decide to buy packages as safety reasons are the age range higher than 50 years old, as same as Horneman et al. (2002) mentioned about the elder tourists considered on “reliable package” than younger tourists think about. In contrast, the travelers are mature want to make sure for their traveling about program information, preparing and dealing with unexpected situations (Foster, 1986). Enoch referred about the factor of social level affecting the selection of package. Higher class and middle status are attracted by AI reducing their personal managing time for their traveling.

Anantara provides Golden Triangle Discovery Package which includes Accommodation in a Deluxe 3 Country View Room, Anantara Suite or Anantara 3 Country View Suite with daily buffet breakfast, lunch and dinner, Beverages (select range of non-alcoholic drinks, house wine, beer and spirits), in-room mini bar, an internet access, roundtrip transfers from and to Chiang Rai Airport. Moreover the package is included one activity for every night stayed from a choice of: Spa Treatment, Elephant Camp Experience, Golden Triangle Private Excursion, Cooking Class and optional activity of visiting Hall of Opium Museum.

2.2 Loyalty Program – The hotels determine the success of their services by the people who revisit and usually stay in the properties. Guests who revisit the places expect for higher satisfaction than previous visiting then building guests’ loyalty is the way to keep the current guests with exceptional services to fulfill their requirement, more than new customers. Anton (1996) mentioned a higher simultaneous accessing, then the consumers who are satisfied were determined their mental state about their requirement and anticipation that their expectation of products and services are met or not that influent them to buy again and become loyalty. Anantara provides own member which is known as Anantara Vacation Club for the guests who would like to do pro-long engagement with the brand and creating their loyalty. Besides, a group of hotel alliance of Anantara joins to GHA (Global Hotel Alliance) which is one of well-known hotel loyalty program which there are leading hotels around the world as the memberships

3. Information Sources

Baloglu and McCleary (1999) noted the sources of information are defined as motivating factors that Gartner (1993) mentioned for building channel of image. The information sources can be categorized into 3 functions;

3.1 Organic – there is no bias forming the sources, as know that it is not information which derives from tourists concerning the attractions, There are many examples such as books, documentaries and news on television, newspaper, radio, revolving, plays, novels and friend or family’s experiences (Jenkins, 1999). Priority experience, outside communication, word-of-mouth transmission and image could be concentrated as the principal motivation in building of expectation (Ignacio, Hector, Jesus and Maria, 2009). It is similarity to the situations are typical in a context of
tourism, personal communicating usage from their families and/or companions to forecast the next attraction experience very well (Ignacio et al., 2009).

3.2 Induced sources – it is a message which referring to marketing communication directs to target customers (Stephenskova and Marrison, 2006). The messages are conveyed by non-visit persons, images of attraction are built through induced representatives (Gartner, 1989). Persuasive websites are used to communicate and warn the consumers of services and providing by a company (Hairong et al., 2002; Kuster and Vila, 2011). Ip and Law (2011) explained one of the fast expanding industries is hospitality and in the highest of competition, adopt websites conveying to their target market about the services. The new communication between e-travelers and providers of products and services are served on the internet which is channel of distribution (Law et al., 2004).

3.3 Modified induced – an advance compound images which derive from actual visitors with their experiences in the attractions as priority holding of images (Prebensen, 2000). For examples, online booking channels such as Trip Advisor, Orbitz, Kayak, and other websites, the travelers can criticize their previous staying that they had in an accommodation. The online reviews on websites which are not good by customers essentially influence the reservation ratio of the guests’ expectation who consider on the previous criticizing then they decide to make a reservation, as well as Facebook and Twitter, individual online forms in which everyone can cite their own views concerning they had rested at the hotel to many consumers in potential more than a thousand just click to search for (Jayawardena et al., 2013).

4. Reputation of hotel or chain

Hotels which are members of chain are available of knowledge sharing management from other hotels in the chain (Ingram and Baum, 1997). The optional brands and franchises create the concepts to specifically draw attention, and the brand able to focus particular service hotels on their reasonable marketing share of their competitors (Jayawardena, 2013). The chain lodge can be accessed a transformation, in according to offer a proficient service (Briggs et al., 2007). Hence, Briggs et al. (2007) referred Ingram (1996) researches and explained the chain hotels are anticipated about the better service attribute emphasizing than individual hotels.

5. Location

Bull (1994) emphasized on how exact the attributes of location about how far from one destination, and how to visit there, particular destinations and the vicinity of neighbors’ attractiveness influence motel room prices in Balina, Australia. Room rates of luxury hotel session are affected by location and service. Thus, the variable treat which reflect in strategic planning of a business is location (Zhang et al., 2011). The convenient location and hotel service are examined to achieve the best rating (Rivers et al., 1991).
5.1 Accessibility – The hotel’s entrepreneur might emphasize on their preference about the accessibility, how far from the attractive places or downtown, similar to the advantages including of their neighbors’ attributes like a peaceful or outstanding geography (Zhang et al., 2011). The convenience of transportation is one of necessary to access the attractions and hotel location, in case of hotel, provides the transportation to pick up the guests to/from the airport or other area is the significant reason for guest makes decision to select an accommodation. Guilherme (2003) explained the example of case study in New Zealand concerning the transportation by Ferry which connects both Wellington and South port, the passengers can visit both attractions. Hence, it is a convenient source to attract the travelers to go there.

5.2 Infrastructure - means the basic standard of local systems such as transportation, power supply, telephone or internet, the development of tourism depends on the infrastructure development that might improve the facilities in advance. In addition, the activities cannot run unless there is no infrastructure network to settle in that area (Promotion of investment, 2001). For example, the long distance islands where there is rarely fresh water for tourists then they do not decide to visit and stay overnight there and change to make a day trip instead of that (Richard, 2006).

6. Hotel environmental security

The security of guest in an accommodation is the measurable requirement of keeping a peaceful, it is about life protection and hotel, in addition to reduce disasters and crime. Accommodation security according to new update standards which refers to law are persistently update with the justice process for explanation clarifying to “reasonable care” about the problem of guest protection (Short and Ruy, 1994). Ulph (1996) clarified that the hotel industry presents itself about the friendliness, viewpoint of welcoming for the customers. In fact, the idea of “home-from-home” of their “open-door” accessing comfortably, convenient and private atmosphere for guests. In contrast, obvious security, such as CCTV, blind and security locks are usually though as refusing around hotel atmosphere and expectation of customers about their private moment and guest caring in the high level.

Moreover, the old methods of security about guarding and protection of unexpected situation to both hotel and customers, they do like managers on duty are responsible for specially observe and in-charge for hotel security and investigate for any issues (Gill et al., 2002). The security environment is an important key element to investigate the guest’s loyalty that defined safety perceiving, significantly influence the loyalty of attractions (Joseph and Dogan, 2001). It means guests might consider their safety condition, if they do not select to revisit that attractions, the people who travel several time experience that they tended to trust in the safety of those places (Sonmez and Graefe, 1999).
Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Cleanliness has an impact on the customer choosing a hotel.
Hypothesis 2: Service quality is a significant factor that affects people to choose an accommodation.
Hypothesis 3: Hotel security is a significant factor that affects people to choose an accommodation.
Hypothesis 4: All-inclusive package is a significant determinant in choosing a resort.
Hypothesis 5: Leisure guests agree with modified induced information (online review) from previous guests more than induced information (hotel advertisement) before choosing an accommodation.
Hypothesis 6: Reputation of hotel or chain is a significant determinant in choosing a resort.

Research Methodology

The instrument

A questionnaire is selected for an instrument, the questionnaire comprises two sections. The first is designed to capture on the samples’ demographic data as the gender, age, occupation, monthly income, information sources, traveling frequent, and the purpose of stay in the hotel. By select a matching data which indicate on the questionnaire and check on “other” in case of special data which is not mention there. To examine the relationship between the demographic data and the influencing factors.

The second part is rating from lowest rate as 1 to the highest 5 onto the related factors about the hotel attributes, hotel marketing, information, reputation, location and security which how much these factors affect on their decision making to choose a particular resort, Anantara Golden Triangle in Chiang Rai, Thailand. Then bring the data in the first part to conclude with the second part and analyze concerning the relationship.

The sample

In this study, to focus on the guests who stay at Anantara Golden Triangle Resort during March-April, 2014 as a number of 56 participants in any demographic. This is the measurement of the different intention that affects their decision making to choose and stay in a particular hotel. The pre-test is focused on following idea which could be different in terms of personal demand and expectation.

The sampling procedure

The questionnaire will send to Anantara Golden Triangle, Chiang Rai that the collection will be responsible by Front Office Department, to launch the
questionnaire to in-house guests and the departure guests during check-out process for 56 people. The questionnaire will be collected at front desk that will be guideline the instructions and following questions by receptionists in a particular shift. The period of collecting data is since March to the middle of April, 2014.

Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed by SPSS analysis by using Descriptive Statistics of frequency to analyze demographic data. The section of factors analysis is investigated by Descriptive Statistics of mean to determine the average data of each factor. Then regression will used for summary data.

Result

This part clarifies the objectives of people who decide to select an accommodation including hotel attributes (room, facility and service, activity), hotel marketing (all-inclusive price and loyalty program), information sources, hotel reputation, location (accessibility and infrastructure) and hotel environmental security. Then the data will be analyzed in each part of questionnaire.

An analysis of demographic data of respondents used of a sample size in this study as a number of 56 people, Regarding to gender, the study indicates the male respondents with a number of 36 people as representing 64.3 per cent, while female respondents with a number of 20 people and percentage of 35.7. The number of people who are between 25-35 years old are 9 people and is calculated as 16.1 per cent, there are 17 people for people aged between 36-45 years old as represent 30.4 per cent. Lastly, there are 30 people who are higher than 45 years old calculating as 53.6 per cent. Most of guests are couple as 31 people or 55.3 per cent, 22 guests travel with their family as 22 people and the percentage of 39.3. The guests who travel with their friends and tour group are 2 and 1 person in order to 3.6 per cent and 1.8 per cent.

Normally, guests visit Anantara Golden Triangle because of their leisure purpose for 52 people representing 92.9 per cent and another 4 guests who visit for their adventure purpose as represents 7.1 per cent. From 56 sample size, the same numbers of 22 people in each group, they travel 1 time or another 22 people as calculate for 39.3 per cent they usually travel more than 3 times a year. Then there are 12 guests who travel around 2-3 times per year which represents 21.4 per cent.
Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of Estimate</th>
<th>R Square Change</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig. F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.477</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td>.199</td>
<td>.25247</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td>7.122</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>.23485</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.503</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>.007</td>
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<td>.244</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>.25691</td>
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<td>.046</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.831</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>.033</td>
<td>.512</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data from model summary of regression analysis indicates all factors (significant level of 0.024) are important to choose a resort. Apart from factors, cleanliness of room and hotel environmental security for 39.7 per cent, which is not high percentage to investigate these influencing factors. Other than 6 factors (hotel attributes, hotel marketing, information sources, reputation of hotel or chain, location and hotel security), there might be another factors and conditions affecting the tourists to make their decision. The table indicates the most significant factor is hotel room as 22.8 per cent, especially; cleanliness of room is an important factor that the tourists consider before choosing an accommodation. Moreover, there are other factors including in-room amenities and room decoration which influence the guests’ requirement. The result in regression analysis indicates that the significant factors are cleanliness of room and hotel environmental security (8.3 per cent).

The coefficient table can interpret each factor closely; cleanliness of room is the highest significant level of 0.002 that means the result also supports the hypothesis 1 that cleanliness has impact on the customer choosing the hotel. The second highest significant level of 0.024 is hotel environmental security for 8.3 per cent affecting tourists to make their decision and supports the hypothesis 3. Then the third highest significant level of 0.028 is service quality of hotel staffs that supports the hypothesis 2, the guests also expect on the knowledge of staffs, services to determine their satisfaction and become a loyalty. The resort can develop their standard in terms of cleanliness of room, security system and service quality to attract the customers by following the regression analysis as above table.

From hypothesis 4: All-inclusive package is a significant determinant in choosing a resort is not supported by using Regression Analysis because a level is not significant (0.438). Hypothesis 6: Reputation of hotel or chain is a significant determinant in choosing a resort. So the statistic level (0.616) is not significant which the result does not support the hypothesis as an important factor to influence their decision.

Likewise, the result of ANOVA indicates the most significant level of 0.001 as a hotel room including cleanliness of room, in-room amenities and room decoration. Apart from hotel room, service quality and facilities are significant level of 0.006 that the guests emphasize on these factors to fulfill their experience. The third
significant level of 0.013 is the activities which the resort provides are important to attract their perception. Generally, the significant level of 0.076 supports the importance of all factors.

**Descriptives of Information Sources (Compare Mean)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>4.24 - 4.64</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic advertisements</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>4.57 - 4.93</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>4.70 - 5.23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis 5:** Leisure guests agree with modified induced information (online review) from previous guests more than induced information (hotel advertisement) before choosing an accommodation.

The above table indicates the mean of the guests who stay for their leisure purpose, they agree with modified induced information (reviews on internet) of actual guests who have been stayed in the hotel as the mean of 4.44. As well as, they are also interested in induced information as mean of 3.94 (hotel advertisement) to collect the information before they make a reservation in a particular accommodation. Obviously, the mean of modified induced information is more than induced information then the hypothesis 5 is supported. However, the more important is the way to improve and develop the hotel standards, to fulfill guests’ experience when they are satisfied with a service quality then they will have positive feedback which affirms the hotel reputation both their word-of-mouth and reviews to another guest. Moreover, some hotels can develop the reviews of actual guests to highlight their strength and convince those customers with a good rating from previous guests for example Agoda.com is a online travel agency which provide hotel information, gallery, rating and guests’ comments. This is very good channel that there are both advertisement part including promotions, room rates and necessary information. Moreover, reviews part of actual guests who have had experiences then hotel should pay more attention on that.

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

This research is collected data of the factors affecting the tourists’ making decision to choose an accommodation. This is the case of Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp and Resort, Chiang Rai. Most of guests are couple and family who buy the all-inclusive package for their leisure. The study indicates that the significant factors influence the tourists’ decision are hotel room, hotel environmental security.
and service quality of staffs. The most important factor is cleanliness of room, the
tourists always consider on the proper room and hygiene of accommodation.
Cleanliness is a significant key to consider a resort’s quality. Moreover, people are
satisfied with room decoration reflecting the style and local culture, as well as they
also expects in-room amenities which is necessary for their life-style such as LCD TV,
DVD, iPod docking and others. These factors are more important for them to evaluate
the room quality and they are satisfied with it.

In addition, another supported factor is hotel environmental security which
the guests generally emphasize on the security system of the hotel. They are satisfied
with a current system that the hotel provides including manager on duty, around
the clock security guard service, CCTV and other functions. This environment can
convince them to stay at a resort. Service quality of staffs is a significant factor
influencing people to be satisfied and choose the hotel. The knowledge of staffs and
standards are the important key to attract their intention, then they can evaluate their
satisfaction and revisit as a loyalty guest in the future. Besides, a variety of resort
facilities (e.g. health club, spa, swimming pool, sauna, etc.) attract their intention to
make a reservation through a resort because these facilities can fulfill the requirement
during they stay. Most of the guests meet their expectation about the staff services and
resort facilities of Anantara Golden Triangle.

According to a result, the analysis results indicate the recommendation for
the resort to develop their resources including the way to maintain and improve the
housekeeping standards about cleanliness. Similar to the renovation and design of
room decoration and hotel facilities are very important to attract people’s intention. In-
room amenities are very necessary to fulfill the guests’ life-style that Anantara should update and develop technological items to be
complete functions which can offer and satisfy guests. The standard operating
procedure is a significant key to control and improve the service quality, the staffs
should be trained and there is the system to check the following standards such as
survey, mystery shopper or observation. These processes can apply and implement
how to develop the staffs that the hotel can learn from the study.

The guests are satisfied with the quality of resort including hotel attributes,
service quality, security system, price and other factors. Then they will have a good
memorable experience that they might pass their satisfaction in forms of any
information sources such as organic information through their family and friends
(word-of-mouth) and they can write the reviews and give rates via social networks,
traveling websites (e.g. facebook, Trips Advisor, Agoda, etc.). The information
sources are mechanical ideas to keep as a tool affirming their consideration toward the
accommodation choices. Positive recommendation from the actual guests, who have
been stayed before can support the decision easily. Moreover, marketing departments
can monitor on the guests’ comments both advantages and disadvantages which are important reviews to improve and develop a resort to attract the new guests and maintain return guests revisiting a resort.

Furthermore, other factors in this study can be applied to improve and develop the hotel. Hotel marketing is one of important tool to propel the business. For example, all-inclusive package is provided in a bundle price including room, meals, activities and transportation. The package attracts customers to consider on this worth expenditure and they can trust with a reliable package and control their traveling costs. Loyalty program is interesting for a hotel to create the valuable program for maintaining the current market in the long terms. The program should offer customers with reasonable and special benefits which can attract their intention. In addition, the hotel should emphasize on promote location which generate the ideas of attractions, distance to the airport, how convenient there is and any local infrastructures which are necessary during their stay.

Implication

About managerial implication, this study indicates the significant factors of room quality include cleanliness, in-room amenities and decoration which the guests prefer. Moreover, the guests also consider on security system about emphasizing on internal security management for protect guests and their assets. Service quality, the hotel can be applied this factor to implement the standards, the training courses of staffs, motivate their competence and adapt some criteria to suit with the hotel style. The hotels might develop their systems, standards and staffs’ motivation to prepare for fulfilling the guests’ stay. If there are any hotels or service providers, would like to attract the customers to choose in a particular hotel so they should pay attention to above criteria. Therefore, the finding shows quality of room, hotel security and service quality that are the most importance of basic factors that all service providers could be applied for their business and develop in the long terms.

Limitation of Study

Regarding to the study, the result indicates the highest significant level of 0.024 with the percentage of 39.7 which is not high. This means another remaining 60.3 per cent, might have other conditions and factors which influence the tourists to choose an accommodation wider than 6 factors following this study.

This study is collected the data during low season which influence the numbers of sample size, only 56 people to complete this questionnaire. Next research should be collected during high season that they are many guests and the data might be different and wide range to conclude the study. While it is during high season, the resort might be busy that the study can check how the staffs provide and perform their services to the guests during this peak season.
**Reference**


Title: Effective Manual Point Collected for membership program. A case study of So Fan Club Membership Program at Sofitel So Bangkok

Authors: Ms. Teewara Warachanon, Dr. Adiporn Khemarangsan

ABSTRACT
In this fierce competition, there are many organizations try to adopt themselves focusing on customer by using customer relationship management, which one of the tools is the loyalty program. In order to achieve enhancing the guest loyalty, service blueprinting is needed to form up the in order for the front line staff to understand more on the service process. It is very important tool for the firms since they need to have well-understanding before deliver the service to the clients, to make them satisfy and be loyalty.

The aim of this paper is to form a service blueprinting to improve the overall services before approaching to the customer by using case study of the five star hotel in Bangkok, Thailand.

A qualitative method is used to form up the service process flowchart. The samples are the hotel staffs who involve with this membership program. In-dept interview is used to get more information since the company has never form any service process for this membership program.

The result from the in-dept interview found out that having clear service process helps staff to work smoother, and have more improvement on service process. Standard Operation Procedure is needed for every step of service process. Timeline and back up documents are considered as an important issue when communicate with the clients. In this paper, it presents a new process modeling method for a membership program with Standard Operation Procedure, in which came from the interview result.

Keywords: Hotels, Process Improvement, Blueprinting, Service Design, Service Blueprinting, Loyalty Program, Service Delivery
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 LOYALTY PROGRAM

In the past decade, there are many firms adopt themselves focusing on customer by using customer formal program of customer relationship management (Pepper and Roger, 2000). One of the tactics of customer relationship management is to build a customer loyalty program, which is now spreading widely into many business sections (Capizzi and Ferguson 2005). Typically these programs offer financial and relationship rewards to customers. Two objectives of customer loyalty program are stand out (Uncles, 2003). Uncles (2003) suggested that one is to increase sales revenues by raising purchasing level, and/or increasing the range of products bought from the suppliers. Second is aim to build relationship closer between brand and current customers. Business nowadays has been tried to enhance customer retention, to find approaches to increasing customer spending and encourage customer to act as advisor.

There was a study from Duffy (2003) mentioned that building customer loyalty program requires a business strategy, not only just a marketing program. The significant approaches are, first, the business has to focus on what they do and who they are. Secondly, the business creates marketing program that enhance customer’s experience with the brand. Plus, this marketing initiative is emerging as the most effective means of finding and retaining brands’ most profitable buyers (Banasiewiez, 2005). Several studies reveal an importance of a program design. Roehm and Pullins (2002) stated that the loyalty of customers will be increased when the incentives are closely connected to the brand.

Therefore, before embarking on a loyalty program design, company should wise to set long and short term goals to drive the initial strategy. Implement a strategy from top to bottom across the organization. Data and customer engagement are the most important elements to focus on (Kerr, 2009). The business should have a clear process design and a good plan of doing the loyalty programs; otherwise, it might not be effective and unsuccessful. One approach to representing a service is called “service blueprinting”, which was initially developed by (Shostack, 1984; Shostack, 1987).

In this paper, the researcher used a case study of membership program named “So Fan Club”, which operated by Sofitel So Bangkok Hotel in Thailand. The program mainly targets a corporate booker and event organizer to be eligible. This program offers their valued customer
for a selection of rewards and privileges. Members can earn point and exchange to rewards offering by the hotel and hotel’s partners. Since Sofitel So Bangkok is situated in the heart of Bangkok, surrounding by business district, to operate a loyalty program will enhance them many benefits, especially from the corporate bookers. It helps to remain competitive with the clients, to create loyalty customer from corporate and event organizer segment, to improve productivity on the hotel direct booking channel, and to generate more revenue from restaurant and spa from the membership database.

The problems happened since Sofitel So Bangkok is the first Sofitel So under Accor group, and newly opened in early of 2012. Plus, in Accor group, So Fan Club program is operated only in this hotel. Thus, the hotel has never formed up Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) for the staff to follow, which it affects to the operation section and the clients. For instance, the hotel has never had a well-communication with the customers. No timeline setting of communication. Therefore, the service process of this program needs to be developed so as to provide more understanding to the hotel staff, and to enhance client’s satisfaction.

**Purpose of research**

The purpose of this research paper is to propose a blueprint process, which more specifically aim into these objectives below:

- To form and develop blueprinting of a membership program, before approach to the customer
PART 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1) SERVICE BLUEPRINTING AND ITS BENEFITS

Service blueprinting, a technique for services management, focusing on the issue and provides a practical framework for improving core and support processes (Coenen, von Felten, and Schmid, 2011). It is a method that firstly introduced by Shostack (1982) and further developed by Kingman-Brundage (Kingman-Brundage, 1989; Kingman-Brundage et al., 1995) to visualize service processes.

Blueprinting gives management the opportunity to improve their process steps and dependent interrelationships between core and support processes (Coenen, von Felten and Schmid, 2011). Furthermore, blueprinting offers helpful technique to visualize the most relevant process steps that create value for the customer. It can contribute insights into the integration of main and support processes within organization (Coenen, von Felten and Schmid, 2011). The customer-focused perspective of blueprinting is very useful in understanding the critical touch points driving service satisfaction. Service blueprint can be effectively used in tandem by service organization desiring an improved service outcome. (Milton, S. and Johnson, L., 2012).

2.1.1 Service Blueprinting Components

Service blueprinting is essentially represent the crucial aspect of a repeatable service process involving many actors and a customer (Bitner et al., 2008). Mentioned by Zeithaml et al. (2006), a service blueprint visually displays the activities by showing the process of service delivery. The points of customer contact, the role of customers itself and employees, and the physical surrounding of the perceived process are the component during the service process.

According to Fliess and Kleinaltenkamp (2004), service blueprinting can be described as two dimensions of service process. The horizontal axis represent the chronological of action, which conducted by customers, while vertical axis is represented the action in different action of service provider.

The structure of the organization will be made clear by the way the actors are ranked vertically on the left hand side of the blueprint. The customer’s path is starting-point of notation of the process. The one goes from left to right on the process map. A simplified example showing the structure of service blueprint is given in Figure 1.
There are 4 lines in service blueprinting: the line of interaction, the lines of visibility, internal interaction, and implementation. Bitner et al (2007) described the line that separates the actions of five components as below:

The “line of interaction” separates customer action area from service provider area, representing the direct interaction between customer and supplier. (Bitner et al, 2007).

The “line of visibility” differentiates between action visible and invisible to the customer. Above this line, actions and decisions carried out by front stage employees are shown (Bitner et al, 2007).

The “line of internal interaction” shows the correlation between front stage and back stage employee activities. Support processes which are necessary to aid front stage employees in delivering the service are carried out beneath the “line of internal interaction” (Bitner et al, 2007).

The “line of implementation” distinguishes between planning, managing and controlling support activities (Fliess and Kleinaltenkamp, 2004). The groups of people within the organization that are directly involved in the business processes will be easily recognized as a result of this line (Verboom, Van Iwaarden, and Van der Wiele, 2004). Anyway, blueprinting approach can be adjusted depending on the type of service for which the technique is used. (Kostopoulos, G. Goubaris, S. and Boukis, A., 2012)
Thus, service blueprinting facilitates a top-down, bottom-up approach to quality management. It enables managers to identify channel and support quality improvement effort of employees working in both front-line and support teams. Employee work teams can create blueprints and thus more clearly apply and communicate their experience and suggestions for improvements.

2.1.1.1 Customer Action Area
Many companies often modifies processes to for the needs and wants of different target customers, and thus it is important to specify which segment of customers is the focus of the specific blueprint. The actions of customers should be drawing up first, because this component serves as the basis for all other elements of the blueprint. According to Gummesson and Kingman-Brundage (1991), most importantly, it illuminates the customer’s role in the service process and provides an overview so that employees and internal units can relate what they do the entire, integrated service system. It is also able to identify potential failure points of service activities, which can be the target quality improvement. The line of interaction illuminates the customer’s role and demonstrates where the customer experiences quality.

Blueprinting focuses on service plan which the outcomes and processes must be effective. It should be involved between the customer and the firm that how the customer gets a clear understanding, and how experience builds via touch points with the firms.

2.1.1.2 Employee Action Area (Front & Back Stage)
All employees that involved during the service delivery process must understand their role and coordination successfully (Bitner et al., 2008). There can only be achieved, if these employees keep customer service as their main priority, which implies a service-oriented climate in the company. (Kostopoulos, G. Goubaris, S. and Boukis, A., 2012). Furthermore, the employees have to understand needs and wants of the customer, so they will know what action should be during the process.

2.1.1.3 Physical Evidence Area
Service Blueprints has physical evidence as front-stage indicators to customers of service quality and to constrain customer actions by carefully designing the service process. (Milton, S. and Johnson, L., 2012).
2.1.4 Management Area

Management activities are also related to the specific service process, but can also be used to direct numerous service processes. In the management area, activities such as the allocation of resource, the conduct of employee surveys or the preparation of revenue reports can be found. These activities also take place while the service operations are being conducted. It is very important for this component since the question can be raised up from the management is “how is the organization performing?” (Verboom, Van Iwaarden, and Van der Wiele, 2004). Thus, the result of the business service process will be in this stage, which the company should have the criteria to measure whether the strategic being used during the blueprinting is effective.

2.1.3 Antecedents of Service Blueprinting Effectiveness

1) Market Orientation

In order to have a successful service delivery process, the organization must explore and get customer’s information as much as possible (Randall, 1993). The information should be analyzed and disseminated to all function within the company (Baum, 1990). The company must collect all necessary information on customer’s potential behavior and interaction with front line employees in order to include it in the blueprint. (Vargo and Lusch, 2004)

2) Design Formality

From the Martin and Horne (1993) and Edvardsson (1995) studied, the degree of formality in all steps of a new service development process, including the service design stage, influence positively the effectiveness of the process. An accuracy during the process is necessary in order to ensure that necessary standardize of resulted service delivery process, which is one of the dimension of Service Blueprinting effectiveness.

3) Service Climate

A service-oriented climate is not only necessary in the service blueprint design stage but also in its implementation from customer contact employees. Any information included in a blueprinting, no matter how detailed is it, it cannot offer value to customers unless is implemented by employees that are aware of how important delivering value to customers is and are willing to do their best in order to accomplish it (Bitner et al, 2008). Thus, the outcome of service blueprinting process can only be successful if front line employees work in climate that promotes and valued the provision of high quality of customer service.
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1) RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The methodology applied for this study is a qualitative method. In order to acquire information and deduce conclusions about this quality process of blueprinting, which this method has been chosen to find out the answer in-dept whether those factors in literature review is relevant. The reasons of choosing this method are; qualitative methodology is used when little is known about a topic, the research context is poorly understood, the phenomenon under investigation is not quantifiable, or the nature of the problem is not clear.

Another reason why qualitative method has been chosen is that it provides much more detailed information. Furthermore, there is an ability to ask some spontaneous questions are sensitive to participants needed to express themselves. They also may provide a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect information – people may feel more comfortable having a conversation with the interviewer. Therefore, qualitative method will be the best way to find out the information of the way of having effective service blueprinting process in business.

Moreover, since this loyalty program (So Fan Club) is operated only in Sofitel So Bangkok, and there is no any other hotel or the hotels in Accor group is being used. Therefore, in-dept information is required in order to reach the objective of this research.

The technique of personal interviewing is undertaken in order to reach the mentioned objectives since it is the most versatile and productive method of communication, enabled spontaneity. For the purpose of this project semi-structured face to face interviews will be contacted. The samples will be the hotel staff who involves with this loyalty program.

3.2) DATA COLLECTION

Data was gathered from semi-structured interviews with the respondents on an individual basis. The interview guide will be focusing on the factors of how effective service blueprint should be, which indicated in the previous section. The interview was conducted with one respondent at a time within the hotel. All interviews were conducted by one interviewer. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes, and sound recorded by mobile phone. After recorded, the researchers also did the script of each respondent, and analyzed the information by coding. Thus, the researcher can summarize of what is happening in the script.
3.3 THE SAMPLING METHOD

Total sample is 8 persons, which there are two departments with different levels as below:

3.1.1 Sales Department (6 persons)
- Director of Sales – Corporate
- Assistant Sales Manager – Corporate
- Sales Coordinator – Corporate
- Sales Manager – Corporate
- Sales Executive – Corporate
- Assistant InspiredMeetings Planner

3.1.2 Reservation Department (2 persons)
- Senior Reservation Supervisor
- Junior Reservation Supervisor

Here below are the reasons why the researcher selected the samples from Sales and Reservation department

- All these sales persons is direct contact with the clients
- All of them need to present and introduce So Fan Club program to the clients, so they will involve since the first step until the end.
- As position mentioned in sales department, there are two different sections, which are Corporate and InspiredMeetings. Corporate Sales have to deal with corporate bookers, while, InspiredMeetings Planner will be a main contact person with event organizer, which both of them are the target member of this program
- Reservation department mainly involves in the reservation process
- Reservation is the main area for point collected (without them, the clients will not be able to get the points)
4.1) DATA ANALYSIS

4.1.1 CURRENT SERVICE PROCESS

According to the observation from the researcher, the current process shows in Figure 2 does not specific in details of each process to the staffs. The figure 2 can explain as details below:

- Firstly, the **enrollment process**, sales person promotes SFC to the bookers, and collects customer general data, such as full name, position, email address, and telephone number. Then, sales person pass client’s data to SFC leader via email. Later, SFC leader creates profile in Opera system. Finishing by send the email to booker, informing SFC number and benefits

- Secondly, the **reservation process**, once the reservation team got a booking request from the clients, they will attach booker’s name into the booking system (sometimes they do not attach)

- Then, **point checking process**, if there is any request from the customer to check their point, SFC leader will inform them back either by email or verbal with no details

- Lastly, the **redemption process**, once got a request from the bookers that they would like to redeem the points, SFC leader will coordinate with purchasing department. Then, hand the reward to sales person in order for them to hand it to the clients

Figure 2: Current Blueprinting Flowchart of So Fan Club Program
4.2) DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

To accomplish the purpose of the research, which is “To form and develop blueprinting of a membership program, before approach to the customer”, here below is the description from what the researcher found by using qualitative methodology.

By half of them have been working at this hotel for more than one year, and the rest was just started for a few months. Plus, all of them already familiar with SFC program since their work scope are dealing directly about So Fan Club. Their work concerning with the program mainly is to promote the program, to enhance client’s loyalty, etc. Here below is the summarize suggestion of each process. Then, the developed service flowchart will be shown in Figure 3.

4.2.1 Enrollment Process

During the enrollment process, all of the respondents agreed that the sales person needs to promote the SFC program only in generally. Next, once agreed to enroll, the information that should collect from the client mainly is name, position, company name, telephone number, address and email address, and what to add more are marital status, anniversary date, and hobbies. Furthermore, all respondents agreed that the response time to the client should be within 24 hours by email.

One of them said that:

“I think for the first step, we only need to introduce in general. For example, the overview, who is eligible for the program?, how they can get the points, and examples of rewards they would get. We don’t need to go deep in details since SFC leader will send all information to them again.”
Another said that:

“It should be within 24 hours because they will feel that the hotel already responded on their request. If it’s more than 1 day, I think they might feel that they are not important since we have delay response”

4.2.2 Reservation Process

For the reservation process, the researcher also interviewed the reservation members, so that the details will be more specifically. From the interview, all the respondents agreed that reservation members are able to encourage the client to enroll to this program. However, the staff has to understand the overview of the program, so as to deliver the correct information. Moreover, all agreed that, it would be great, if the member could mention their SFC number when make reservation. The reason is that the staff can save the time. They do not need to verify whether this person is being a member or not.

The clients will get the points or not, it depends on this process. Every respondent agreed that reservation members should not forget to attach booker name into the booking system. Otherwise, it will be affected both the hotel and the clients. The hotel may lose trust, and lose opportunity to get more business, while the client will upset since they lose something that they are supposed to get. One of them said that:

“It’s totally affect. No booker’s name attach means no SFC points. No SFC points, but they send us the room night means that we are cheating on members. Means that we could not deliver the promise as we talked in the beginning or follow the information we gave. It’s such a trouble for them. Therefore, we need to make sure that all corporate bookings or the booking from any other channel should attach the booker name”

Another important thing that the researcher got during the interview, they suggested that it is better to inform in e-confirmation letter that the booker already received the points from this certain booking. Hence, this is another way for staff to make sure that they will not forget to put the booker name in the booking system.

“Right now, we have not done anything for the clients, like to inform them that we already collect the points for them. But however, what I would suggest if we could do is that we mention in the booking confirmation letter that we send them. We could inform the things like we already collect the SFC point for this booking, and also need to inform them that if this booking is cancelled, the points will terminate automatically.”
4.2.3 Point Checking Process

For the point checking process, the respondents prefer the clients to have an ability to check by their own, such as online website. However, since the hotel still does not have the supported system, so SFC leader will be another choice for the client to check the point. To let the client check by their own seems to be the best way actually. Mentioned by all of the respondents, said that sales person or SFC leader may not be reached at all the time. Therefore, if the members would like to check the points during the holidays, so it is better for them to have this tool to access and go through whatever they want.

Therefore, when the clients request for checking the point, SFC leader should respond the clients by email within 24 hours. In additions, point balance of each member should be sent and updated to the client quarterly by email. However, some of them stated that it should be by monthly; so that the member will get updated from the hotel more frequency.

“Personally I believe quarterly basis is good because it’s also not every individual member books the hotel so recently or so high room night every month. Hence, quarterly is good enough for the hotel to communicate back with the member about the point, but if the hotel could make it by monthly basis also would be good. Some bookers, they might not be interest or not be contact the hotel for the redemption, but it would be good for them to have the information and then accumulate to double check with the hotel once they redeem. Therefore, to me, quarterly is enough, but if monthly is possible, it’s going to be good”

4.2.4 Redemption Process

For the redemption process, the researcher found out that there are some forms need to be raise up, for instance, redemption request form, sign form when receive the prize, etc. The reason of having this form is that to be a supported document for the hotel that we respond on the client request, to be ensure that they already received the prize.

“Yes I think it’s important to have document from the redemption. It could be the redemption request form that has a signature of the person who redeem this prize. So this could be evidence that this redemption is made by the certain person, by the certain time, on the certain date”
Then, the sales persons need to deliver the prize by themselves, so as to gain more and maintain the relationship with the members. Plus, the prize should be delivered to them within 3 weeks after they requested.

“It’s again very up to case by case. If the guest’s not in Bangkok, in that case somehow mail will be the best way. But somehow if the members are in Bangkok, sales person can deliver to the client, so that could give us a chance to strengthen the relationship, and visit the client more as well. And give us a chance to communicate even furthermore apart from SFC, which is any special promotion from the hotel. Again, if the prize could not be deliver like big size, so that could be delivering by the deliver service.”

Therefore, a new service blueprinting of SFC has been developed in Figure 3. The structure of the organization is ranked vertically on the left hand side of the blueprinting. There are three section concerns which are sales person, reservation member, and SFC leader. The customer path shows above of the way in which the client thinks and behaves. The process will be gone from the left to the right of the process.
Figure 1: Flowchart of Service Process of So Fan Club Program

Customer's Path

Customer
- Visited from Sales Person
- Call-in to make a booking
- Agreed to enroll
- To send a booking
- To check points balance
- To redeem points

Sales Person
- Visit client at store office
- To promote the program
- Make reservation
- Send e-confirmation letter
- Enroll in the system
- Send Email to the client

Reservation Manager
- Pick up a call/Received email
- Verify Booker
- Make reservation
- Send e-confirmation letter
- Enroll in the system
- Send Email to the client

SFC Leader
- Inform point balance by email (copy sales person)
- Prepare prize & create sign form
- Hand prize to sales person with form

Enrollment Process
- Reservation Process
- Point Checking Process
- Redemption Process
According to the flowchart in the figure 3 that identified the steps of the activities of enrollment, reservation, points checking and redemption process to be developed. However, it may not enough to have this flow chart without any guideline of each step to follow. Therefore, Standards Operation Procedure (SOP) is raised up to specify further details of each process. This guideline can be followed by both front and back line staff, so that to enhance more understanding in each process. The criteria were from the interview result.

4.3 STANDARDS OPERATION PROCEDURE (SOP)

The SOP describes below is from the interview result, which it can separate into 4 processes. In each process, it explains step by step for the staff to follow. In addition, there are some sections that also specify the details needed from the client, such as during the enrollment process and redemption process.

### 4.3.1 Enrollment Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Sales person promote SFC program to the client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Sales person has to inform general information and benefits to the clients at the first approach. Sales person should state below information to the client:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o SFC is free enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What’s So Fan Club Program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What’s benefits and privilege?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o What’s the reward?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o How to get the points?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o How to redeem the prize?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Sales person needs to mention client to inform their membership number every time when send the hotel reservation (if possible)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(2) Sales person gets client’s information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Once client agreed to enroll, sales person must get client’s information as much as possible in order to key in Opera system, for instance,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Company name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Email address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Birthday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anniversary date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potential for sending the booking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Sales person asks the client to fill in the application form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(3) Input in Opera system &amp; hand a hard copy of application form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Sales person must put client’s information in every blank tab in Opera system (use the information from application form)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Sales person needs to input all the information by themselves (or Sales coordinator)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o After finished, sales person must capture screen of this Opera system and send email to SFC leader to make enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Sales person must hand an application form that already filled to SFC leader for a record</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(4) SFC leader makes an enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o SFC leader need to make an enrollment within 24 hours after received the request either from sales person or reservation member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o SFC leader needs to keep the record of application form as a reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**4.3.2 Reservation Process**

(1) Make a reservation
- Reservation staff needs to verify whether this client or booker is a SFC member or not.
- If not, they need to inform Sales Person to introduce themselves and SFC program (or they can encourage the client to be a member by themselves).

(2) Attach booker name in the system
- Reservation staff needs to attach client’s name every time in booking system.
- If the client mention their SFC number, reservation member needs to recheck again whether it’s the right person.

(3) Send e-confirmation letter
- Reservation staff needs to mention the membership number when send the client back for the booking confirmation letter.
- Also needs to mention that this their points has been collected from this booking. If the booking is cancelled, the point will terminate automatically.
- Confirmation letter should be returned to the clients within 24 hours.

**4.3.3 Point Checking Process**

(1) Sales person acknowledge back to
- Once sales person got a request to check their point, sales person should send email back to acknowledge and copy to SFC leader.

(2) Sales person hand the request to SFC leader
- Once SFC leader received the copied email, he/she must check the client’s name, membership number whether it is the right person.

(3) Inform point balance to the client
- SFC leader must inform member’s point balance within 24 hours by email and copy to that sales person.
- The email should include:
  - Client full name
  - Membership number
  - Point balance as of when
  - Prize list
### 4.3.4 Redemption Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Ask the client to send the email  
|      | - We should get the redemption request form from the client, when making redemption by email with their signature  
|      | - In the form, the client should provide the information below:  
|      |   - Full Name  
|      |   - Membership number  
|      |   - Point to redeem  
|      |   - Selected prize  
|      |   - Their signature |
| 2    | Hand the request to SFC Leader  
|      | - Sales person can forward form or the requested by email to SFC leader to process |
| 3    | Send an email back to reconfirm  
|      | - SFC Leader needs to send an email for the details of redemption back to the client every time they request.  
|      |   - It should includes:  
|      |   - Client’s name  
|      |   - Membership number  
|      |   - Point to redeem  
|      |   - Selected prize  
|      |   - Point balance after redemption  
|      | - Client is needed to be inform that the **prize will ready within 3 weeks** |
| 4    | Get reward and create sign form  
|      | - Once SFC Leader needs to create a form for Sales Person and Client to sign when receive a reward |
| 5    | SFC leader hand a reward to sales person  
|      | - Sales person need to sign on the form to acknowledge that they already received the prize from SFC leader |
| 6    | Sales person hand a reward to the client  
|      | - Sales person needs to deliver a reward to the clients by their own **within 3 weeks after requested**  
|      | - Sales person needs to ask for client’s signature to sign on the form when received the prize  
|      | - Sales person needs to deliver a prize by their own. If the client is not in Bangkok, they can deliver the reward by post mail. |
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

5.1) Conclusion
To conclude this research, we found out that having clear service process is very important for the service industry. It is an important issue that every service provider needs to focus on. In this paper, the researcher provides and develops a service flowchart of loyalty program based on service blueprinting. The researcher found out that service blueprinting give more details of service process for both side, which are customer and service provider’s paths. Every step of service also has the details for the staff to follow. By missing one step, the service provider may lose the opportunity to increase or maintain client’s satisfaction or their loyalty.

In this research, the researcher first identifies both internal and external analysis of the hotel and find out the problem. Secondly, blueprinting has been identified to be a model to support a service blueprinting creation. Then, a service flow chart is developed, plus, a Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) is created to specify more details of this service process.

In Standard Operation Procedure (SOP), it describes the details in-dept of each step in each process. Timeline, required documents and the details that should include during the communication between the hotel and the client are mentioned in the SOP. Therefore, the SOP makes the staff easy to find out what policies and procedures are in place to handle. It helps the hotel to standardize the staff in order to control service quality as well. Furthermore, when a key staff member is on leave or not be able to reach for some reason, by referring to the SOP, someone else can take over the urgent tasks and do them correctly. In this SOP, there are some new ideas that have been raised up from the respondents as well.

The researcher structures up the forms, which get the criteria from interview result. Those are application form, redemption request form, and sign form when deliver the prize. For example, during the enrollment process, the researcher got details that could be useful for the hotel. Hence, to have forms set up in each service process would have the hotel to have more ideas, to have an evidence when communicate with the customer.

Therefore, all mentioned above are the process that has been developed from what the hotel has in the beginning, Hence, having clearly service process is method that every service provider needs to have so as to increase and main client satisfaction. In this case, this will be one of the many methods that the hotel can maintain and strengthen the relationship with their clients.
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A Study of the Role of Human Resources Information System in Optimizing Human Resources Management (Case study of InterContinental Hua Hin Resort)

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Abstract

Due to role of human resources has increased rapidly in recent years as well as developed of technology, HRIS or human resources information system became an essential tool that assists human resource professional and improves potential of HRM in order to perform tasks that covers four functions as efficiency. The main purposes of this paper are, to study in Human Resources Information System (HRIS), to identify benefit and drawback including limitation of HRIS software and to identify factors that influence to making decision to select HRIS software. And to determine that, the company suitable and valuable for using HRIS software or not. This study uses qualitative method with semi-structured interviews and with five staffs in human resources department at InterContinental Hua Hin Resort in Thailand. As well as, approach and collage information by observation and participation during the researcher’s internship program. The reviews of HRIS will show that, HRIS is a significant system that provides many benefits such as time saving, convenience and increase data security to HRM and improves potential of HRM in all functions. In contrast, after collaged data by used the instrument as mentioned above, researcher will get factor that influence to making decision to select HRIS software in the organization. Furthermore, in this paper we will discuss about comparing between benefit and drawback after using HRIS software in the InterContinental Hua Hin Resort and we strongly believe that this study will help reader to understand the role of HRIS in hospitality as well.

Keywords: Human resources information system (HRIS), Human resources management (HRM), Information technology (IT), database.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, human resource is a major department in the organization which is very important and play as a major role in hospitality. And due to information technology (IT) has grown substantially in recent years also, Human Resources Information System which is the system that combine human resource and information technology together became a significant implement for human resources in order to assist and improve potential of HR operation as well.

Human Resources Information System or HRIS (Sometimes referred as human resource management system or HRMS) is “design to quickly fulfill the human resources management (HRM) informational needs of the organization” proposed by DeCenzo et al. (2013, p.123). DeCenzo et al., also defined, HRIS is a computerized system that assists in the processing of HRM information as well as is a database system that keeps important information about employees in central and
accessible location even information on the global workforce. According to Henderisk and Boudreau (1992, p.17), HRIS is the composite of databases, computer applications, hardware and software necessary to college, record, store, manage, deliver, present, and manipulate data for HR. In recent years, roles of HRIS have increasing and it is more complex of HR tasks. Therefore, HR professionals also decide to use HRIS in order to optimize their HRM’s potential. In many cases, HRIS could be the significant tool for HRM to gain a competitive advantage as well.

Due to role of human resource has increased and technology has developed, HRIS or human resources information systems became an essential tool for HRM in order to assists and improves potential of HR operation by benefits from using HRIS.

In this study, researcher chooses InterContinental Hua Hin Resort to be a case study of using HRIS software for this paper because there is properly organization that suitable to collages data and information. In addition, due to researcher was a trainee at there as well, therefore some information in this research come from experiences of researcher directly. Moreover, researcher also noticed some unstable of using HRIS software in InterContinental Hua Hin Resort so it could demonstrates problems or limitation of HRIS software when using HRIS software as well. The following questions are main questions these are leading of the study;

1) How HRIS is a significant tool for human resources management?
2) What benefit and drawback that found after using HRIS?
3) Is HRIS worthwhile or not after comparing the benefits and problems of HRIS? (Before and after using HRIS)

1.1 Objectives

The main purposes of this paper are, firstly, to study the role of Human Resources Information System (HRIS) in hospitality. Second, to identify benefit and drawback includes limitation of HRIS software. Finally, to determine, is the company suitable and valuable for the HRIS software or not? , and factors that influence making decision to select an HRIS software such as size of the price, feature, as well as organization’s size.

1.2 Company background

InterContinental is under InterContinental Hotel Group (IHG); a British multinational hotels company headquartered in Denham, UK. IHG is one of the world’s leading hotel companies which have 687,000 rooms in over 4,600 hotels in nearly 100 countries and territories around the world. InterContinental Hua Hin Resort is a luxury resort where is located in Hua Hin, Prajuabkirikhan, Thailand. The resort has 119 rooms including three beachfront villas with private plunge pools and a range of suites. There are six restaurants and bars at there. There are 220 employees in 9 departments in the organization, these are front office, housekeeping, food and beverage, human resources, sales and marketing, accounting, engineering, administrator and general, and spa.

2. Literature review

Nowadays, human resource is a major department in the organization which is very important and plays a major role in hospitality. Human resources management in hospitality is not performs just recruitment and selection as previously; personnel
department in the mid-1960s (Tanke, 2001) were often perceived as the health and happiness crews including hiring and employment practices, but today, they have become more technical and require employees with greater skills in training and developing skills according to Shani and Tesone (2010) that proposed responsibility of modern HR department that “manages the administrative aspects of the employees, such as recruitment, selection, training, labor relations, payroll, compensation, and retirement”

With the development of ICT, technology became to increasingly significant tool for organizations to increases efficiency of company’s operation in the twenty-first century that know as “digital era”. (Doc et al., 2012) According to Kassim et al., (2012) they proposed, the most impacting organizations and employees today is technological change, and they suggested more that “information technology (IT) has grown substantially in recent years and driven much of this change”. Many organizations adopt their strategies by apply new technology into their company for increase potential to achieve the goals.

As mentioned above, due to role of human resources and technology became significant factors to the organization, so HRIS or human resources information systems became an essential tool for HRM in order to assist and improve potential of HR operation by benefits from using HRIS.

2.1 HRIS in the InterContinental Hua Hin Resort (Orisoft)

Orisoft is the HRIS software that was establishment since 1987, there has been a leading Human Capital Management Solution provider through cutting-edge products and services such as Human Resource Management System, Time Management System, Payroll System and Employee Self Service solutions for both the local and international markets. (orisoft.com, 2014)

Orisoft has used by HR department of InterContinental Hua Hin Resort. Features of Orisoft assist HR professional in term of payroll system, human capital management and time management system etc.

2.2 Human Resources Department in Hospitality

Tanke (2001) said, “How do you get your employees, your people, your human resources, to be the best they can be?; The best dishwasher, the best front desk clerk, the best bartender, the best bell person, the best prop cook, the best housekeeper?” Therefore, to get those people to be our staffs, human resources skills increasingly became to the significant thing. Tanke (2001) suggest more, since the late 1980s human resources has been the single most important set of skills for a manager to have, and will continue to be as far beyond the year 2000 as we can see.

Human resource is a department that was established in organizations in hospitality for decades. In the past, before come to human resources people knows this function as man power, and personnel administration or personnel department. Human resources management in hospitality is not performs just recruitment and selection tasks but, to get advantage in competitive HR managers need to respond in term of training and developing skills of their employees with the new technology also. Moreover, they have to respond and manage their employees concerns by focuses on interpersonal relations skills, motivational techniques as well as legislative changes that became increasingly important (Tanke, 2001)
Role of human resources management in recent years including in the past has never been as important as nowadays (Raub and Alvarez, 2006) because today, HR professionals play a key role in making a business successful (Raub and Alvarez, 2006; Ulrich, 1998). According to DeCenzo (2013, p.31); today, human resources professionals are important elements in the success of any organization. Human resource department head, once a single individual heading the personnel function, today may be a senior vice president sitting on executive boards and participating in the development of the overall organization strategy. (DeCenzo, 2013, p.31)

Nowadays, traditionally, the HR department manages the administrative tasks of the employees, such as recruitment, selection, training, labor relations, payroll, compensation, and retirement. (Shani and Tesone, 2010) According to DeCenzo (2013, p.31); HRM consists of four basic functions: (1) staffing or hiring people, (2) training and development or preparing them, (3) motivation or stimulating them, (4) maintenance or keeping them. Another source, Tanke (2001) proposed similarly, “human resources management as the implementation of the strategies, plans, and programs required to attract, motivate, develop, reward, and retain the best people to meet the organizational goals and operational objectives of the hospitality enterprise.” As part of strategic HR responsibility, HR assists decision makers in evaluating where the organization currently stands, deciding where the organization wants to be in the future, developing a plan to achieve those goals, implementing the plan, and checking process toward those goals. A successful plan will achieve a competitive advantage and efficiently utilize organizational resources, including human resources, in achievement of those goals. The advantage is that with a specific goal and a clear plan, the organization and the HR department can make better decision regarding how to focus efforts on achieving the goal on daily basis, resulting in less wasted effort and resources. (DeCenzo, 2013, p.31)

2.3 Development stages of HRM

In order to understand role of HRM from the past to the present, there are development stages of HRM that developed when new era has changing;

2.3.1 Welfare and administration (1900 to 1940s)

The first stage of HRM, this stage represents an era prior to the establishment of the human resource management profession. (Davidson et al., 2011)

2.3.2 Welfare, administration, staffing and training (1940s to mid 1970s)

Second stage that moved to incorporate staffing and training as well as is beginning of specialist approach to personnel management. (Davidson et al., 2011; Nankervis et al., 2008) Human relations theory, scientific management as well as behavioral has emphasized by HRM in this stage.

2.3.3 HRM and strategic HRM (mid-1970s to late 1990s)

This is the third stage that focuses on quality and strategic outcome of HRM; influence of “excellence” theories, total quality management (TQM), strategic focus on organizations’ overall effectiveness, and increased employment legislation. (Davidson et al., 2011)
2.3.4 SHRM in the new millennium

This stage is the new millennium in HR that focus on high performance workplaces, more attention to international HR models as well as emphasis on talent management, knowledge management and human capital management. (Davidson et al., 2011)

2.4 Human Resources Information System (HRIS)

HRIS software is a computerized system that assists in the processing of HRM information as well as a database system that keeps important information about employees in central and accessible location even information on the global workforce. (DeCenzo et al., 2013, p.123) According to Henderisk and Boudreau (1992, p.17) they proposed, HRIS is “the composite of data bases, computer applications, and hardware and software necessary to collect/record, store, manage, deliver, present, and manipulate data for HR”.

Another source defined as HRIS is a dynamic database and performance information about each employee (Duc et al., 2012; Lippert and Swiercz, 2005) this HRIS database contains information on recruitment, applicant qualifications, job specifications, hiring procedures, organizational structures, professional development, training costs, performance evaluation, workforce diversity, and employee attrition (Duc et al., 2012; Harris and DeSimone, 1994; Miller and Cardy, 2000) Similarly, “HRIS is a systematic procedure for collecting, storing, maintaining, retrieving, and validating data needed by an organization about its human resources, personnel activities, and organization unit characteristics” defined by Iwu and Benedict (2013) that according to Kovach and Cathcart (1999)

Trend of HRIS has grown since the 1960s (Ngai and Wat, 2004; Lederer, 1994) A survey conducted in 1988 (Ngai and Wat, 2004; Ball, 2001) showed that 60 percent of Fortune 500 operations. “HRIS is now used not only administrative purpose but also for strategic and business decision- making purposes” suggested by Broderick and Boudreau, (1992); Kossek et al., (1994); Kovach et al., (2002).

Ngai and Wat (2004); Kovach et al., (2002) listed several administrative and strategic advantage to using HRIS that according to Becker and Bsat (2002) that suggested, at least five reasons why companies should use HRIS as the following; 1) Increase competitiveness by improving HR operation; 2) Produce a greater number and variety of HR-related reports; 3) Shift the focus of HR from the processing of transactions to strategic HRM; 4) Make employees part of HRIS; and 5) Reengineer the entire HR function of companies.

Moreover, HRIS packages including services and maintenance such as software, installation services, maintenance, training, and documentation. These are provided by vender. (Hosie, 1995)

2.5 Role of Human Resources Information System in human resources management

HRIS is a computerized system (DeCenzo et al., 2013, p.123) that composite of data bases, computer applications, hardware and software. (Henderisk and Boudreau, 1992, p.17) It plays a significant role as a helpful tool for human resources management. HRIS help and operates HR department in term of database and employees information such as administrative tasks; record, store including keep the important information for several purposes such as in order to making decision,
planning strategic (Broderick and Boudreau, 1992; Kossek et al., 1994; Kovach et al., 2002) including promote the employees and in term of payrolls.

The followings are role of HRM that relates with HRM’s functions. HRM consists of four basic functions; staffing, training and development, motivation, and maintenance. (DeCenzo, 2013, p.31) and HRIS is relevant and plays significant roles in these functions as well;

2.5.1 Staffing

There is an activity in HRM that concerned with seeking and hiring qualified employees into the organization. (DeCenzo, 2013) Candidates may be recruited using either internal or external strategies. Internal recruitment strategies e.g. promotion from current staff and transfers from other department) are often supported by career planning, skills inventories and internal job-posting systems. Many international organizations use sophisticated HRIS to aid in the matching of employee skills with job vacancies on a worldwide basis in recruitment process (Green et al., 2002)

2.5.2 Training and development

Activities in HRM concerned with assisting employees to develop up-to-date skills, knowledge, and abilities. (DeCenzo, 2013) HRIS is database software that provides features that relate with training and development function such as professional development, training costs, performance evaluation, and workforce diversity. (Duc et al., 2012; Harris and DeSimone, 1994) Traditionally, HRIS keeps information and details of employee (inventory report) such as name, education, training, prior employment, current position, performance ratings, salary level, language spoken, capabilities, and specialized skills, then manager uses these information for analysis and planning in term of training and development such as job analysis, training plan, and career development (DeCenzo, 2013, p.35, 123). In addition, HRIS provides HR professionals to evaluate core activities performance e.g. calculating return on training investment, turnover costs as well as human value added in order to planning strategic for achieve goals. (Shani and Tesone, 2010; Targowski and Deshpande, 2001)

2.5.3 Motivation

Activities in HRM concerned with helping employee exert themselves at high energy levels. HR professionals use database and information from “inventory report” to analyze and design benefits structure including welfare in order to inspire the employees in organization for work as great psychological. (DeCenzo, 2013) HRIS also plays a role of a computerize database to stores and manages compensation information in order to planning it on next step. (Beulen, 2008; Tannenbaum, 1990, p.27)

2.5.4 Maintenance

Maintenance is an activity in HRM concerned with maintaining employees’ commitment and loyalty to the organization. (DeCenzo, 2013) Since 1960s, role of HRIS was begin increasingly important on maintenance tasks, it used by personal management in term of automatic payroll, benefits administration including other transaction such as employee record etc. (Ball, 2001; Martinsons, 1994) Until now,
HRIS also improves administrative efficiency; faster information processing, improve employees communications, increase accuracy of information as well as increase overall HR productivity and reduce HR’s costs as well. (Kassim et al., 2012; Dery et al., 2009; Winlen et al., 2010) According to Shani and Tesone (2010); Danilewicz (1997, p.6) using computer software programs can improve efficient payroll processes with time saving, accurate payments, and cost reduction.

In conclude, HRIS can improve administrative efficiency through faster information processing, improve employee communications, greater information accuracy, lower HR costs and overall HR productivity improvements. (Kassim et al., 2012; Dery et al., 2009; Wiblen et al., 2010)

2.6 Advantage and Barriers of HRIS

Broderick and Boudreau (1992) identified how HRIS can be effective cost reductions tool, as well as can increase quality and customers’ satisfaction through innovation. Similarly, “HRIS can improve administrative efficiency which comprises faster information processing, improved employee communications, greater information accuracy, lower HR costs and overall HR productivity improvements” (Troshani et al., 2011; Beadles et al., 2005; Dery et al., 2009; Wiblen et al., 2010).

Moreover, HRIS is “a characterized by the time and efficiency saving in computerization of the HR function” (Ball, 2001) According to Sadri and Chatterjee (2003) they proposed, “when the HRIS function was computerized, faster decision making can be carried out on the development, planning, and administration of HR because data can be much easier to store, update, classify, and analyze.” In addition, they noted that HRIS can strengthen an organization’s character.

In contrast, HRIS also has barriers in order to implementation, according to Beckers and Bsat (2002) they suggested that first barrier can be the cost of setting up including maintaining a HRIS. Similarly, “a lack of money and support from top management were the biggest barriers to achieving the full potential of HRIS”. They suggested more, other challenges were a lack of HR knowledge by system designers and the lack of applications and solutions for HR users. Another barrier that is one of the biggest problems to managing a HRIS is lacking of information technology (IT) support. (Kovach and Cathcart, 1999)

3. Research Methodology

This study uses qualitative method because the contents of this finding are specific only for human resource professional such as benefit and drawback of HRIS that other people in different department might not know because they may not have experience in using this system. So, researcher would likes to collage the information that could response by staffs in human resources department who are the persons that used to using HRIS. Qualitative research is largely exploratory; perhaps, researcher might get new finding from do the interview as well, while quantitative research tends to be conclusive (Simmonds and Gibson, 2008). Therefore, the data that received from those persons by interview might be the most suitable information in order to making information analysis as well as develop the hypothesis also.

Research instruments which researcher used for collage information are 1) observation; as researcher was a trainee in human resources department at InterContinental Hua Hin resort in the period July-October, 2013 (4 months), researcher had a chance to observe and experience in term of activities of human
resources management which including using HRIS systems in order to completed HR’s tasks in human resources department, 2) participation; during researcher was a trainee in human resources department at InterContinental Hua Hin Resort, researcher participated with the HRIS software directly by used it every such as time attendant record and compensation calculation etc., 3) In-depth Interview; researcher designs thirteen questions for interview five staff in human resources department of InterContinental Hua Hin Resort for collages information about using HRIS software in.

3.1 Data collection
As mentioned above, this research requires variety of primary and secondary. The primary data of this research had collected the information from in-depth Interview, observation, and participation. The secondary data collected from both internal and external, for internal, researcher collages information from human resources data. Another is external, researcher collages information from journal and human resources management books as well as journals and researches.

3.2 Sample size
This study decides to use semi-structured interviews with five staffs in human resources department in InterContinental Hua Hin Resort as following:

Respondent 1: Director of Human Resources
Respondent 2: Talent Development and Quality Continuous Improvement Manager
Respondent 3: Assistant Human Resources Director
Respondent 4: Human Resources Supervisor
Respondent 5: Training Coordinator

Researcher choose this sample for in-depth interview because, This study focuses on HRIS software which is specific software that design for human resources management so researcher cannot interviews staffs in other areas because they do not have enough experience in this software and system as well.

4. Results and analysis
4.1 HRIS improves potential of HRM
Major role of HRIS is to keep and storage important information of HRM, “Major role of HRIS system is efficacy of storage information and easy to call it when we need” said by respondent 5 and according to Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 3; Respondent 4.

Therefore, this is a key factor that improve potential of HRM when using HRIS because HRIS helps HR to save time, convenience, increase data security, and be a tool for calculation and estimation. (Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 3; Respondent 4. Respondent 5) For instant, “we don’t need to put the information as manual or keep as paper anymore. We can put the personal profile of employees including tax deduction then we keep this information for estimate to pay salary in each month. So, it’s easier for HR to working.” Said by Respondent 1 and also gave another example, “we put the information into the system already then next month our employee has child, they will get more tax deduction so the system will update the data automatic”
4.2 Factors influence making decision to select HRIS software

To choose the most suitable HRIS software for using in human resources department, factors that influence to making decision are;

4.2.1 Price

Price is the most significant factor that influences making decision to choose HRIS software because to set up new HRIS system is rather expensive cost so it very important to making decision before selects any software. (Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 3; Respondent 4; Respondent 5) And price is also the primary factor that HR should consider. (Respondent 1; Respondent 2). “We compare the price first then consider our tasks that does it suitable?” said by Respondent 1.

4.2.2 Feature (fitting with organization’s demand)

Feature is a factor that has much emphasized by HR, the properly software should fitting with demand of user. (Respondent 1; Respondent 3; Respondent 4; Respondent 5) “First factor that we emphasize is the software can meet our need, we have to know what we need and what the software can provides.” Suggest by Respondent 3, similarly, Respondent 1 said “it can provides type of report that we need as well” said by Respondent 1.

4.2.3 Easy to use

Easy to use is a significant factor that influences making decision to select HRIS software. Such as the software is not too complicate, interface is clear and easy to understand. (Respondent 1; Respondent 2;)

4.2.4 Support service

Support service is also a significant factor that HR emphasizes as a primary factor influences to making decision to selects HRIS software. (Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 5) Respondent 1 suggested an example “when we have a problem, can we call to the customer support? And they can support us”

4.2.5 Size of organization

Size of organization is one of the most significant factor that influences making decision to choose HRIS software because HRIS software more suitable for medium and large company than small company (Respondent 1; Respondent 3; Respondent 4; Respondent 5) according to Respondent 5, “it’s not worthwhile for small size company in order to spend a lot of budget to set up the system if they have just few employees.” The properly amount of employees that suit for using HRIS software should over 50 peosons (Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 3; Respondent 4; Respondent 5) if less than 50 employees, there might not worthwhile for organization’s budget (Respondent 2; Respondent 4)

4.3 Benefits from using HRIS software

Benefits that HRIS provides to assist HR department for increase potential of HRM are time saving, convenience, storage information; estimation and calculation and data security. In addition, features these are major of HRIS that HR uses often are Time attendant, Pay roll, and Personal profile.
4.3.1 Time saving

Keep and storage data and information is a major role of HRIS so it can reduces time to keep and call the information of HRM (Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 3; Respondent 4; Respondent 5), similarly, “major role of HRIS system is efficacy of storage information and easy to call it when we need. It helps HR to save time for call information” proposed by Respondent 5

Moreover, “if we keep it in paper, we have to spend more time for find the information but if we use HRIS we just put the keyword into the system then the information that we need, will show on the desktop and ready to print out” In addition, whenever that we can cut off some process of working, we will save more time that we have to spend for the practice. According to Respondent 4 “In term of time attendant, we can check about day off, compensation and absent of our employees as well. It’s better that we don’t need to see it day by day.”

4.3.2 Convenience

It’s useful for HR because in HR’s tasks, it need to use employees’ information often, so it’s easier than keep it in paper. (Respondent 4) according to Respondent 1, “We don’t need to put the information as manual or keep as paper anymore.” Therefore, if we use HRIS we just put the keyword into the system then the information that we need, will show on the desktop and ready to print out (Respondent 5)

In addition, Respondent 4 suggested, “in term of time attendant, we can check about day off, compensation and absent of our employees as well. It’s better that we don’t need to see it day by day.” So it can cut off some process when using HRIS software. It’s improves more convenience in order to perform tasks. Moreover, we can access all information that maybe specific by very convenience way such as “we can call back the information to check compensation and employees’ working behavior such as when they start working; do they late? How many time they late or absent? etc.” proposed by Respondent 1.

Finally, HRIS assists HR in term of create a report as well, “It’s easier to create and export a report from information that we put into the system.” Said by Respondent 2, according by Respondent 4, “HRIS assists HR to create a good report for HRM tasks”

4.3.3 Estimation and calculation tools

Respondent 1 provided an example, “We can put the personal profile of employees including tax deduction then we keep this information for estimate to pay salary in each month. So, easier for HR to working such as we put the information into the system already then next month our employee has child, they will get more tax deduction so the system will update the data automatic”

4.3.4 Data security

HRIS system is a system that has back up of data and information so it provides HR to storages an important HRM data and keep it with high security. (Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 3) And “if we keep the information in paper then some page loss, it can make negative affect to organization” said by Respondent 1.
4.4 Drawbacks and limits of using HRIS software

4.4.1 Not support
Some function is not support the information that we need. (Respondent 1)
Some feature has no function that we need to use e.g. we need information for create
the report but information is not enough and we have to put the information follow the
process only; difficult to adapt or edit.” (Respondent 5)

4.4.2 Complicate
There are many functions in a feature so it might be difficult for new user.
(Respondent 3) Some function still complicate to understanding and using such as
“report that export from the software is too complicate and interface is not attractive
e.g. font is too small, few interface information. Moreover, we cannot edit back the
employees’ schedule so we have to edit as manual in another software” said by
Respondent 4

4.4.3 Cannot access data
After using HRIS software in InterContinental Hua Hin Resort, researcher
found some problem, that is, whenever the server was down, HR will not able to
access any database and need to wait for system reboots only. It can be a big problem
if at the moment, we have to use the information for urgent tasks (Respondent 1;
Respondent 5), according by Respondent 1 “Whenever the system was down, we
could not access the information that we need at the moment, it was a big problem if
the thing that we did was urgent task.” Similarly, Respondent 3 also said, “In
generally, it’s a good system and has no a problem except server down or error.”

4.4.4 Software error (some function)
Mostly were payroll problems, the report that we exported was not show
information that we put. Respondent 4 proposed an example, “when we put the
information into the system already then our employees had movement or promote,
the report that we exported was not show that information, someone left our company
but still have their name in the system. Therefore, we had to spend time to recheck it
in order to protect wrong payment.”

4.5 Comparing the benefits and problems of HRIS (before and after using HRIS)
HRIS system is a system that has back up of data and information so it
provides HR to storages an important HRM data and keep it with high security.
(Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 3) And “if we keep the information in
paper then some page loss, it can make negative affect to organization” said by
Respondent 1.

HRIS is a system provides many benefits to HRM, these are; time saving,
convenience, storage information; estimation and calculation and data security. These
are benefits that improve potential of HRM; assist HR to perform and complete
HRM’s tasks as efficiency. The most significant benefits are time saving and
convenience. These benefits come from efficient data storage such as using HRIS
software will help HR to save time to keep and call information or data, and increase
more convenience by automatically function such as automatic data update and
calculation.
In term of drawback, limitations and problems of using HRIS, there are not much because, actually HRIS is a useful system that launch specially for HR and different software has different drawbacks and limitations also. Therefore, any drawbacks and limitations are not same. In this case, drawbacks and limitations are; not support in some function that HR’s need, complication of software as well as the problem of using HRIS software, these are; unable to access data if server has down whereas we can access data if we storage it by manual or paper using. Another is error of some function of the software.

Although, HRIS has drawbacks, limitations and problems but if the organization does not use it, the organization will encounter with many lacking of efficient management as well, these are; time consuming, inconvenient, low data security, and higher expense cost. Therefore, to keep potential of HRM, HR should have HRIS in the department and avoids these problems by solutions such as training program that provides by vender and training program that relay from manager or supervisor to new staff, customer support and adaptation.

5. Conclusion and recommendations
5.1 Conclusion

This research provides understanding of HRIS in hospitality industry, the case study of InterContinental Hua Hin Resort, the study including how HRIS improve potential of HRM, benefits and drawbacks including limitations as well as factors that influence making decision to select HRIS software. Moreover, this research provides comparing of its benefits and problem of using HRIS in the company in case study. And finally, identify solutions in order to handle with drawbacks, limitations and problems of using HRIS software as well.

Human resources management in hospitality is not performs just recruitment and selection tasks but, to get advantage in competitive (Tanke , 2001) HRM consists of four basic functions; (1) staffing or hiring people, (2) training and development or preparing them, (3) motivation or stimulating them, (4) maintenance or keeping them. (DeCenzo et al., 2013, p.31)

HRIS software is a computerized system that assists in the processing of HRM information as well as is database system that keeps important information about employees. (DeCenzo et al., 2013, p.123) HRIS help and operates HR department in term of database and employees information such as administrative tasks; record, store including keep the important information for several purposes such as in order to making decision, planning strategic (Broderick and Boudreau, 1992; Kossek et al., 1994; Kovach et al., 2002) including promote the employees and in term of payrolls. Factors that influence to making decision to select HRIS software are price, feature (fitting with organization’s demand), easy to use, support services, and size of organization. All factors are same important level but feature and support services are the most significant factor that HR emphasizes as primary.

HRIS improves potential of HRM by play a major role to keep and storage important information of HRM. There are many benefits that HRIS provides to HR department, these are; time saving, convenience, increase data security, and is a tool for calculation and estimation.

In contrast, from case study, HRIM software has draw back and limitation also, these are; not support in some function that HR’s need, complication of software. Moreover, HRIS software that used in case study has problem as well, these
are; unable to access data if server has down whereas we can access data if we storage it by manual or paper using. Another is error of some function of the software.

Although, HRIS has drawbacks, limitations and problems but if the organization does not use it, the organization will encounter with many lacking of efficient management as well, these are; time consuming, inconvenient, low data security, and higher expense cost. Therefore, to keep potential of HRM, HR should have HRIS in the department and avoids these problems by solutions such as training program that provides by vender and training program that relay from manager or supervisor to new staff, customer support and adaptation.

Finally, after identified drawbacks, limitations including problems of using HRIS, researcher would give solutions for handle with problems of using HRIS, these are; training and learning including training program that provides by vender that provides training program to customer after set up the system and training program that relay from manager or supervisor to new staff in order to use HRIS software as efficiency as well as customer support is a significant factor that customer expect much from vender. Another is adaptation that user has adapt oneself to solve a basic problem by oneself.

5.2 Recommendation

The author would give some recommendations for using HRIS to increase potential of HRM as much as possible. And also give some recommendations to HR professional in order to making decision to select HRIS software for using in HR department as well.

To selects the most suitable software that fit for HR’s need, HR professionals have to estimate their demand that, what feature that the organization expects from HRIS software and which software fits with their need, because, although we require a cheap price of HRIS software, but actually, an expensive software is not certain that able to fits for our requiring, that mean, we can found the cheaper software but it can meet our need in the same time. Then, look at the customer support because if we have a problem, customer support is the most useful solution for us. Moreover, HR professionals have to look at the size of organization including amount of employees, that do their organization’s size suit for using HRIS or not, because, if using HRIS in a small company, it will not worthwhile for the budget that have to spend as well.

To use HRIS as efficiency, HR professionals should select the most suitable software as mentioned above, and then, learn and train how to use as efficiency as well as adapt oneself always for solves the basic problem that might be happen all time.

Finally if HRIS can achieve all recommendation that mentioned above, HRIS will be the useful system for assists HR to improve potential of HRM as well.

5.3 Limitation of the Study

Limitation of this study is there are several HRIS software in the market and any software have own different point such as advantage or limitation; some software can manages some task which is complicate whereas other software cannot. Therefore, in this study, researcher has a chance to test and use just a software of all; that is Orisoft (used by InterContinental Hua Hin Resort), so it might not clearly identify cover all HRIS software in the market, and the problem that happened during use HRIS software is, it cannot guarantee that, it is a real drawback of all HRIS
software because perhaps if the company switch to other software, the drawback that we saw might be an advantage as well.

Moreover, HRIS is specific software for human resources management that was used by only human resources department. Therefore, to college the data, researcher can do by deeply interview and the respondents are only staffs in human resources department so it is not diversity of perspective.

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Title  Factors Affecting Employee Engagement: A Case Study of Bangkok Marriott Hotel Sukhumvit

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Abstract

Nowadays, many companies use employee engagement survey, is the relation between employees and organization to measure their satisfactions. Thus many companies try to find the way or the tools to improve their employee engagement in the organization in order to keep their employees to be loyalty and dedicate in their job’s responsibility.

By studying journals many authors mentioned the same factors that can affect employee engagement as leadership skills, Goal Setting, Supporting, Participating (be the part of the organization) and the way to communicate within the organization.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors affecting employee engagement in the organization. Data for this study were collected by the questionnaire from 300 employees at Bangkok Marriott Hotel Sukhumvit. This results shows from SPSS Analysis by correlation coefficients can explained that all factors are related with the hypothesis that can increase the level of employee engagement score with the significant level 0.000.

In conclusion, factors are significant and supported the employee engagement. Consistent with the organization would like to let the employees feel engage, they should train managers to get more management skills, setting the goal for their staffs, coaching and let them know what the company expected them by sharing them the company’s culture and value. The good supporting from the manager and give the opportunities for them to learn and grow. Let them to participate within the team and the communication in the company have to be clear and one way and same information.

Keywords: Factors Affecting, Employee Engagement, Improvement, Human Resources Management
Introduction

Much has been written about the importance of employee engagement and its positive link between performances. But what should organizations and managers do to generate and more importantly, maintain engagement in their employees.

An employee engagement exercise has helped to reduce staff turnover, improve employee and customer satisfaction. (Training, 2011) In addition to Simeon (n.d.) mentioned that employee engagement has linked to reduce employee turnover, increase customer satisfaction-loyalty, safety and a degree, productivity and profitability criteria. Moreover the key drivers of employee engagement are reduced role conflict, training, autonomy, and personal power.

Marriott International is a global hospitality leader. There are over 3,000 Marriott hotels in America and others 67 countries around the world. The headquarter is located in Washington DC. There are about 250,000 employees working with Marriott international.

Marriott Vision: “To be the global Hospitality Leader”
Marriott Philosophy: “Take care of your associates, and they will take care of your customers”

According to the sample group the researcher chose Bangkok Marriott Hotel Sukhumvit, under Marriott international brands which is operated on 11 March 2013. This hotel is the 7th property Marriott Hotel in Thailand which is located in the center of the downtown, Thonglor and easy to access anyway by the convenient transportation.

As the hotel just operated around a year, the management team is formed in their team before the hotel open, but the rank and file employees who just join with this hotel at the first time and many employees came from different previous workplaces. The researcher found that there is the conflict in the workplace and some employees do not feel belong to the hotel. Hence the researcher would like to study the way to let the
employees to feel engaged more with the team and the way to suggest the hotel to improve to increase the employee’s satisfaction.

**Statement of Problem**

Due to there are many employees come from others hotel and they had their own experience and work background which are different. Moreover they also familiar with their previous standard, which they get used to from their previous hotels. Moreover they have high ego and hardly to trust their colleagues. According to this problem this study will find the way to improve their common ground and engage them to feel belong to this hotel.

**Objective**

1. To study how much the employees involve with their organization
2. Implementation what the results told and apply for the organization development

**Significance of the Study**

After get the result of this study, the researcher will send this study to the hotel and show what the relevant factor is affected on employee engagement improvement and find the way to increase the employees’ satisfaction. To let the employees feel belong to the organization and the management team and the employees will go through to reach the goal together.

**Literature Review**

**Human Resources in Hospitality**

Baum et.al (1997), mentioned that the tourism and hospitality area in human resource policy terms and faces fragmentation were subjects to the influence and frequency diverge priorities of a number of agencies with competing priorities and agendas. He suggested a model which could permit convergence of policy formulation
and implementation with respect to, on the one hand tourism and hospitality, education, training, development, and introduces examples of good practice in this respect.

According to Marija Rok and Matjaz Mulej (2014) are concentrating the components concerning directly human resources and with potentials to contribute to employees’ well-being as well as the companies’ success. Apart from traditional core HRM (e.g. resource planning, staffing, training, performance appraisal, compensation, safety and health) are also included talent management and diversity management. According to these factors are virtual for a long-term sustainability of organizations. In order to maintain high standard of services for staff’s deficits in labor supply has to be solved. They also recommended that HR could improve by caring employees, investing in people, empowering staffs and rewarding initiative and excellence could persuade the staffs that employers do care about well-being of their staffs.

**Hospitality and Tourism Labor Markets**

The Hospitality and Tourism industries are characterized by diversity on both the basis of intra-national and international criteria. The porous’ parameters of the sector which, at its margins, merges into a variety of other areas of economic activities is an important characteristic and impacts upon the identification, management and retention of talent within the sectors. The characteristics of the international hospitality and tourism industry have a major impact on the nature of work in the sector. Thus, the range of sub-sectors, the size of businesses, their ownerships, the markets that they serve and impact of variable demand, notably seasonality, illustrate the factors which contribute to determining, for example, the range of tasks which are undertaken, the numbers of employment and the skills required. However, while these associations are undoubtedly very important, they cannot be seen as the exclusive determinants of characteristics of the hospitality and tourism markets.

A labor market consists of all industry sectors, their personal requirements and skills needs, as well as those currently outside the actual workforce, whether unemployed, temporality unable to work because of illness or injury, or undergoing
specific vocational training or more general preparations for the workforce within the school systems. Economists and others who view labor markets from a macro or theoretical perspective tend to describe the environment as one akin to a well-oiled machine, driven by supply and demand within a free market. (Baum, 2006)

According to Hornsey and Dann (1984) classified labor in the hospitality industry as the Hospitality industry was diverse in terms of both types of jobs it offered and the nature of the individual it required. The spectrum of occupation ranges from the unskilled porter to the highly skilled manager. The majority of employed staffs in the industry was unskilled, of course. These were included many food and bar service staffs, uniformed staffs, and domestics. The hospitality industry was, in fact now the largest employment of unskilled labor are in many countries. Semi-skilled labors including those people with professional foodservice skills, clerical and commercial staffs, some cooking staffs, and some maintenance staffs.

Managing Cultural Diversity in Hospitality

The need to recognize and manage diversity appeared to have mainstream acceptance in the business and management literature (Kandola and Fullerton, 1998; Groschol and Doherty, 1999; Kreitner, 2004; Hearns, et al., n.d.). Diversity could be seen in terms of visible (for example, skin color and gender) and non-visible differences (for example religious affiliation and sexual orientation) and it was founded on the premise that harnessing these differences may create a productive environment in which everybody felt valued, where their talents were being fully utilized and in which organizational goals were met (Kandola and Fullerton, 1998). As an organizational concerned, working effectively in a diverse environment was particularly important because as D’Netto and Sohal, (1999) commented on the quality of workforce diversity management is only “mediocre”. Within the broad rubicon of diversity, cultural diversity creates significant opportunities and challenges for the hospitality industry.
Sustainable Human Resource Management

The sustainability of high performance work systems was predicted on organizations recognizing the needs of employees and implementing sustainable policies through greater employee involvement and participation. Only by acknowledging the importance of employee satisfaction and commitment through the development of integrated employee consultation, organizational change, work and life policies, workplace institutions and comprehensive career development programs, will the organization achieve greater efficiency, and productivity. Overall, what could be drawn from the research is that high quality communication and consultation between management and employees at the workplace was essential in improving organizational performance and sustainable outcomes for organizations and employees. (Gollan, 2006)

Employee engagement

The concept of employee engagement was developed by Kahn (1990) in his ethnographic work on summer camp employees and also employees at an architecture firm. He defined employee engagement as the “harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances” (Kahn, 1990, p.694). Engaged employees were fully present, and drew on their whole selves in an integrated and focused manner to promote their role performance. They were willing to do this because three antecedent conditions were met: Employees felt psychologically safe in that presence of others to apply themselves in their role performances, they had sufficient personal resources available to devote to such performances, and their work is sufficiently meaningful that such personal investment was perceived as worthwhile (Kahn, 1990, 1992). These conditions were called psychological safety, psychological availability, and psychological meaningfulness, respectively. The engagement concept put forward by Kahn (1990, 1992) was of an integrated, profound, and purposeful use of a person’s whole self in his or her role performance. This overlaps with other concepts that depict a cognitive, affective, and behavioral connection of the individual employee.
with the role and organization. Accordingly, some researchers proposed that other psychological concepts that connect employees with their work were also part of engagement. These concepts included motivation (Salanova et al., 2005), job involvement (Harter et al., 2002; Salanova et al., 2005), job satisfaction (Harter et al., 2002), organizational commitment (Macey and Schneider, 2008), organizational identification (Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2006), proactive behaviors (Macey and Schneider, 2008), and organizational citizenship behaviors (Macey and Schneider, 2008). Robinson et al. (2004) defined employee engagement as “a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its value. An engage employee was an awareness of business context, and work with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must work to develop and nurturing engagement, which required a two-way relationship between employer and employee.

Antecedents of employee engagement

It was understandable that organizations wished to increase employee engagement, gave that engaged employees were willing to make uses of their full selves in their work roles in a positive way (Kahn, 1990), had better well-being (Hallberg and Schaufeli, 2006), were more productive (Rich et al., in press), and remained in their jobs longer (Saks, 2006; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). The three antecedent conditions proposed by Kahn (1990), of psychological meaningfulness, availability, and safety, provided opportunities for intervention to increase levels of engagement. Psychological meaningfulness was influenced by work characteristics, such as challenge and autonomy (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Psychological availability depended on individuals having sufficient psychological and physical resources, such as self-confidence, to invest in their role performances (Hallberg and Schaufeli, 2006). Psychological safety stems from organizational social systems, with consistent and supportive coworker interactions and organizational norms allowing for greater engagement (Bakker and Xanthopoulou, 2009). This third antecedent condition, psychological safety, offered the most potential for leadership to influence engagement. Specifically, leadership that provides a
supportive, trusting environment allowed employees to fully invest their energies into their work roles. Kahn (1990) established theoretical and initial empirical evidence for a link between supportive leadership and employee engagement. In the next section, we investigated subsequent theoretical and empirical evidence, first from a leadership theory perspective, and then from an employee engagement theory viewpoint.

Fiona and Viki (2009) Employee engagement and motivation was much more than providing a job and paying people, even in these turbulent times. In the main, managers indicated that, while financial rewards were important, the more intrinsic aspects led to better employee engagement and higher levels of motivation. Also a case study of Kia motor showed the strategy to develop the poor levels of employee engagement to assess the goal (Gary, 2010)

Leadership

Leadership behaviors (supports team, performs effectively, and displays integrity) were positively associated with followers’ engagement, with leadership behaviors focused on supporting and developing the team being the strongest unique predictor of engagement among followers. Holding a leadership position was also associated with higher engagement, but tenure was not associated with engagement. These findings were in line with earlier research, and supported the link between the behavior of leaders and the willingness of employees under their guidance to fully engage in their work roles. (Jessica and Helen, 2011) also when the workers sought their leader’ willingness to listen to their concerns as well as their flashes of brilliance- there was a positive impact on employee engagement (Baumruk, 2004). Employee engagement required leadership commitment through establishing clear mission, vision and values. Unless the people on the top believed in it, owned it, passed it down to managers and employees, and enhanced their leadership, employee engagement would never be more than just a “corporate fad” or “another HT thing”. Employee engagement did not need lip-service rather dedicated heart and action-oriented service from top management. It required “Leading by Being example”. (Solomon et.al, 2010)
Setting Goal

Goal setting has been explored in terms of both motivational impact toward improving performance and as being integral parts of management systems or processes designed to improve performance. The results indicated that organizations that feature formal, structured goal setting processes led to higher levels of employee engagement. Higher levels of employee engagement led to increased employee optimism. Strong workplace optimism, in turn, led to improved employee performance. Thus improving individual performance of workers was a critical challenge for all managers. (Bobby et al., 2008 and 2009)

When employees were committed to these goals, received adequate feedback, possessed high self-efficacy and suitable task strategies, high performance will result. If high performance led to desired intrinsic rewards, employees would experience high levels of satisfaction. (Whittington and Galpin, 2010) as a structure with policies and processes that clearly link individuals’ work to the overall departmental or company values and objectives Fiona and Viki (2009).

Solomon et al. (2010) mentioned that most organizations did have clear new talent acquisition strategies. However, they lacked employee retention strategies. Effective recruitment and orientation programs were the first building blocks to be laid on the first day of the new employee. Managers should be careful in pooling out the potential talent of the new employee through effective recruitment. The newly hired employee should be given both general orientation which was related to the company vision, mission, values, policies, and procedures and job-specific orientation such as his/her job duties, and responsibilities, goal and current priorities of the department to which the employee belonged in order to enable him/her to develop realistic job expectations and reduce role conflict that might arise in the future. After the hiring decision was made, the manager had to ensure role-talent fit when placing an employee in a certain position and exert all managerial efforts needed to retain that talent in the organization. Then companies should promote a strong companies culture in which the goal and value of managers were aligned across all work sections. Companies that build a culture of mutual respect by
keeping success stories alive would not only keep their existing employees engaged but also the baptize the new incoming employees with this contagious spirit of the work culture.

**Supporting**

Encourage independent thinking through giving them more job autonomy so that employees would have a chance to make their own freedom of choosing their own best way of doing their job so long as they were producing the expected result. Manage through results rather than trying to manage all the processes by which that result is achieved. Also managers were expected to make sure that employees have all the resources such as physical or material, financial and information resources in order to effectively to their job. Moreover managers should help employees update themselves increasing their knowledge and skills through giving appropriate trainings. Generally it is understood when employees get to know more about their job, their confidence would increase there by being able to work without much supervision from their immediate managers which in turn builds their self-efficiency and commitment. (Solomon et.al, 2010)

**Participation**

Simon (no date) commented that employees were more satisfied when they believed they were responsible for identifying and satisfying the needs of management and the customers they served, and when they believed the organization had the best interests for employee and its customers on their mind. A management style that helps staff learn, develop and, most importantly, to experiment. No man was an island. A good team ethos was valued, with everyone sharing the highs and lows of the task in hand. A team that reviewed performance together was likely to be one that achieved targets and objectives. Fiona and Viki (2009)
Communication

Two-ways communications between management and employee, if management interested in employee in terms of well-being and giving more opportunities for employee to grow were the top driver of employee engagement. Employee engagement was closely linked with organizational performances outcome. Companies would engage employee to have higher employee retention as a result of reduction of turnover and intention to leave the company, productivity profitability, growth and customers’ satisfaction. It was impossible for an employee to engage without connection, consistency, and commitment in messages. Effective and engaging communication resonates with the employee in rationally, emotionally, and behaviorally relevant ways. This meant messages from leadership about business objectives, changes that were occurring, and what was required of employees need to put the employee at the center of the story. Corporate communications was the primary connection point between the majority of employees and executive leadership. Messages usually break down at the mid-management or immediate manager level. (Aon, 2012)

According to these factors above employee engagement have many factors to reach the business outcomes in terms of productivities, profitability, increase the employee satisfaction and reduce the employee turnover moreover the business will reach the goal.

Research Methodology

According to the literature review, there are many factors to support increasing employee engagement score then this research began with writing down the hypothesis that almost authors mentioned in the literature review. Secondly creating the research question in terms of the hypothesis as if the level of each factor is higher that means they can affect employee engagement in the organization.
Hypothesis

1. A good leadership support can increase the level of employee engagement. The employees will feel happy with the organization if their leader has good leadership’s skills.

2. The clearer the goals can increase the level of employee engagement. Higher level of employee engagement leads to increase employee optimism. Strong workplace optimism in turn leads to improved employee performance.

3. The good support of the materials and technology can increase the level of employee engagement.

4. Giving the good opportunities for an employee to be a part of the organization can increase the level of employee engagement. For example a good team ethos is valued, with everyone sharing the highs and lows of the task in hand. A team that reviews, performance together is likely to be one that achieves targets and objectives.

5. The good communicating between management level and employees can increase the higher level of employee engagement. In terms of the employees can share their ideas in the meeting.

Sample size

The sample group is a ranks and file employee, 300 persons at Bangkok Marriott Sukhumvit Thonglor. In divisions as front office, housekeeping, food and beverage, sales and marketing, engineering, human resource and loss prevention.

The purpose which choosing this group because the hotel just operated in 2013 and also many employees came from different hotels and have to work in the same organization which there are a new experience and the conflict in the workplace can be happened. Then this paper aims to study what is the important factor that the management level should utilize to deal with the conflict and let their subordinates feel engaged. Moreover the managerial will know what is their employee expect and how they feel by likert-type questions.
Research Instrument

This research is designed to use a quantitative method by using the questionnaire from Gallup Company (Gallup, 2011) this questionnaire is suitable to measure employees’ opinion concerning to “what factors are affecting employee engagement” with the leadership skills, the clearly goal, the good supporting, the participating and the communication with the permanent employees at Bangkok Marriott Sukhumvit Thonglor.

This research paper will produce 25 questions to ask about a demographics section. By asking about gender, age, education, position, salary and the employee’s working period and also use the likert-type questions on a five point scale, as 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3- Average, 4- Agree, and 5- Strongly Agree about the factors as leadership skills, the clearly goal, the good supporting, the participating and the communication which related to the hypothesis.

Data Collection

According to the large number of the sample group, launching the questionnaire is the suitable way to do this research. The researcher launch theses questionnaires in and also answer the employees’ question and explain them.

Data Analysis

Analyzing quantitative data by using the result of SPSS software. To analyze the information gained from likert- scale questionnaire into table to show the important main score and significant that support hypothesis in the research.

1. Descriptive Analysis for measuring the frequency to analyze the demographic data and get the results by percentage

2. Inference Statistics by using non-parametric inference in the function of Correlation Coefficient Analysis for analyzing the relationship between the factors and the outcomes in each factors based on the hypothesis.
Results

Almost factors are significant and supported the employee engagement score which are related on the hypothesis. As the organization would like to let the employees feel engage, they should train managers to get more management skills, setting the goal for their staffs, coaching and let them know what the company expected them by sharing them the company’s culture and value. The good supporting from the manager and give the opportunities for them to learn and grow. Let them to participate within the team and the communication in the company have to be clear and one way and same information.

Conclusion

This research has recognized the factors affecting the employee engagement in the organization in terms of what are these factors related on the hypothesis which the researcher created or not. As Bangkok Marriott Hotel Sukhumvit is the new hotel and it has operated around a year, then there are many employees from difference experience, workplace and common ground. The researcher found the problems are the conflict in the workplace by noticing the employees did not feel belong with the organization then the researcher will find the way to improve their satisfactions. The respondents of the study were composed of 300 permanent staffs of Bangkok Marriott Hotel Sukhumvit, by using the questionnaire.

To ensure impartiality on presentation, analysis and interpretation of data, the researcher used statistical tools such as: Frequency and Percentage Distribution, Correlation, and Regression Analysis. From this research can be summarized as below,

Demographic data of respondents

The sample group of staff in Bangkok Marriott Hotel Sukhumvit is 300 persons. Which the percentages 66.3 are female and 33.7 are males. The range of age is between 21-30 years old. For the education, 91.3 percent graduated bachelor degree. The average of salary include service charge is 20,001- 25,000 Baht per month as 90.7 percent and the working period is less than a year.
Data Analysis of Factors Affecting Employee Engagement Improvement

1. Leadership: The employee engagement score will higher by managers could work with the sub-ordinates who came from difference common ground and experiences, also always give the employee’s opportunities to learn and grow in their career path. Moreover managers should suggest the feedback and guidance to the employees if they show their potential to grow up in the future.

2. Setting Goal: Managers should let what they expected the employees to do by improve individual performance if managers see their potential, the organization should provide the training program to the employees to know what the company want them to do, first building block to encourage the employee understand the process, mission, vision and the goal of the organization, then the engagement score will higher.

3. Supporting: If managers provide the materials and technology to support the employees, they will feel happy with the organization and engage more. Furthermore managers have to care about employees and help them to increasing their knowledge and skills by general training, specific training, coaching and empowering, the employee engagement score will higher.

4. Participating: Managers should give a chance to the employees to be the part of the team, noticing their performance and guide them individually to reach their goal the employee engagement score will be higher.

5. Communication: Giving the chance to employees to sharing idea in the meeting, arrange the updating information in the board that employee can notice and managers always share the information on daily briefing, monthly meeting and annual meeting. If managers and the organization provide the good way communication to the employees, the employee engagement score will be higher.

Finally the organization should train managers to have strong management skills, provide the program to set the employees’ goal by training, coaching and let them know what the company expected them, sharing them about the company’s culture and value. Moreover the good supporting from managers and give employees the opportunities to
learn and grow and the communication within the company has to be clear and one way and same information.

Limitation of the Study

After doing the research the researcher found that some information are confidential, the hotel and employees, they could not share in the public because it concerned with the hotel policies. According to the employees who did the questionnaire some employees are fully to participate with this study but someone is not because this is the light questionnaire and also their answers some of the answers are from their emotions, facts and common ground because this questionnaire is not the questionnaire that the hotel provide for them, moreover they will not willing to participate because they are afraid that the hotel might know that who did the questionnaire and it will be the cause of they will lose their jobs. Then the researcher has to explain to the employees about purpose of the study and inform the employees that the hotel cannot find out that who did the questionnaire because all of the information are confidential.

Recommendation

The research is relevant to all business organization especially hotel Industry as It provided insights and methodology for measuring the factor as leadership, Goal Setting, Good supporting, Participating and Communication have been the important factors and predictor the employee engagement score. Also these factors can increase the level of employee engagement outcomes. Thus the study could help the organization to know the way to improve the lower score to increase in next period.
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