SERVICE QUALITY OF HOTELS IN UDON THANI'S TOWN, THAILAND

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Abstract- The objectives of the study of Service Quality of Hotels in Udon Thani's Town, Thailand were 1) to study SERVQUAL of hotels in Udon Thani's Town, Thailand in 5 factors which were tangibles, reliability, assurance, responsiveness and empathy and 2) to study the comparison between customers' expectation and customers' satisfaction. The samples were Thais, domestic tourists who received service from hotels in Udon Thani's Town by using the stratified random sampling of 400 samples. The research method was questionnaires and hypothesis testing statistics or t-test to make a comparison analysis between services from customers' expectation and level of satisfaction from customers' perception. The result revealed that the respondents expected tangibles at a highest level; empathy, responsiveness at a high level. The respondents satisfied tangibles and empathy at a highest level; responsiveness and assurance were at a high level.

Keywords- Service Quality, expectation, satisfaction

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an important industry to the economic development of many countries. The government give precedence to improve destination competitiveness and to draw attention from tourists around the world to travel in Thailand. The tourism mission is amalgamating with countries development in every dimension. Therefore, the government has stipulated the strategic development plan in order to integrate tourism into a part of economic development plan, if which country has explicitly clear strategic development plan based on strong economics, excellent infrastructure, plentifully natural resources and potential tourism staffs; those factors push forward the competitiveness to the country and able to develop its tourism to grow securely. (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2016)

Tourism Authority of Thailand develop a marketing plan for year 2017 and has designed under the concept of Tourism Authority Enterprise Plan between years 2017 – 2021 by emphasizing strengths domestically and then link Thailand's economics with global economics by using "Thai Ways of Life" campaign via unique local experiences delivery, which create values to Thailand's Tourism. So this is a mechanism to build up strengths on economic foundation and spread income locally. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2016)

Service quality is a concept that has aroused considerable interest and debate in the research literature because of the difficulties in both defining it and measuring it with no overall consensus emerging on either (Wisniewski, 2001). There are a number of different "definitions" as to what is meant by servicequality. One that is commonly used defines service quality as the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations. Service quality can thus be defined as the difference between customer expectations of service and perceived service. If expectations are greater than performance, then perceived quality is less than satisfactory and hence customer dissatisfaction occurs (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Lewis and Mitchell, 1990).

Udon Thani is a large city of Thailand and is a hub for transportation and tourism in North-eastern region of Thailand. One of the oldest civilization is here in Udon Thani, especially Ban Chiang Civilization around 5,000 years B.C. Moreover, there are many natural resources, interesting local handicrafts making villages i.e. silk cloth, cotton cloth and pottery which are unique and originally and Buddhism attractions. Udon Thani has the convenient transportation, the tourists can travel to Udon Thani by roads, rails, or air. It makes hotel industry in Udon Thani growing rapidly.

The researcher interested to study the service quality of hotels in Udon Thani's town by using the SERVQUAL measurement to improve the service quality in hotels and in order to help local hoteliers in Udon Thani's town.

II. DETAILS EXPERIMENTAL

2.1 Objectives of study

1. Study to the service quality in Udon Thani's town, Thailand.
2. To study the comparison between customers' expectation before service and customers' satisfaction after service.

2.2 Scope of study

1. Population Scope

The population used in this research was Thai domestic tourists who stay at the hotels in town of Udon Thani at least one night and the accommodation cost at least 1,000 baht per night.

The sampling was the Thai domestic tourists who received services from hotels in Udon Thani's

town which cost at least 1,000 baht per night and collected from 400 respondents because no data of amount of tourists visit Udon Thani launched in 2016 so the researcher used Taro Yamane's criteria to define the sample size with 95% confident interval and not more than 0.05 deviation using stratified random sampling.

2. Variable Scope

Independent Variables were the demographic data of respondents such as sex, age, occupation and income. The independent variables also compiled with objectives of staying in hotels, frequency of using service, factors that affect the service usage and total hotel's service satisfaction.

Dependent Variables were the comments about hotel's service expectation and hotel's service satisfaction after received.

3. Timing Scope

The researcher has collected and analyzed the data between July – October, 2016

2.3 Methodology and Data Analysis

1. The researcher has collected and analyzed the data between July – October, 2016 Research Design.
The researcher reviewed the primary and secondary data, also previous researches, theories and concepts in service quality for a guideline to improve the instrument and then designed the questionnaires adapted from "SERVQUAL" measurement of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry because this has been accepted internationally. After that, the questionnaire was proved with the index of items objective congruence by specialists.

2. Data Collection

The research collected the data from 400 respondents and the area scope was 10 hotels in Udon Thani's town which at least cost 1,000 baht per night. There were 22 items about service quality in questionnaire.

3. Data Analysis

The researcher collected data from questionnaires, re-checked for errors and data integrity. The SPSS program was used to analyzed the data which are percentage, means, and standard deviation and also t-test the difference statistics significant at 0.05

III. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The respondents' demographic data revealed that the Thai domestic tourists who received the services from hotels' in Udon Thani's town, Thailand were aged between 31 – 40 years and most of them were female. They were the business owners and receive income around 30,0001 – 40,000 baht monthly. They were educated with bachelor degree. The objectives of staying in hotels' at Udon Thani's town were for business meeting or government meeting and have used the hotels' services. The most respondents knew the hotels via online information. The factors to choose hotels were responsiveness and satisfied with hotels service at a high level.

The expectation and satisfaction of respondents to use hotels' service found out that

1. Tangibles: the respondents were expecting the tangibles factor in SERVQUAL at the highest level and also have satisfied with tangibles at the highest level. When looked in details, the result showed that they expected in facilities of hotels (buildings, places and rooms) to be full furnished and good decorations at the highest level.

2. Reliability: the respondents were expected and satisfied the reliability in SERVQUAL at the high level especially about the actual service when the customers have arrived the hotels and satisfied with the service on time.

3. Assurance: the respondents have expected the assurance factor in SERVQUAL at a high level and also satisfied at a high level. When looked in details, the respondents have most assured with the expenditure correctness and satisfied with hotels' staff in order to provide information to them.

4. Empathy: the respondents have expected the empathy factor in SERVQUAL at a high level but have satisfied at the highest level especially the intention of hotels' staff to serve the customers.

5. Responsiveness: the respondents have expected the responsiveness factor in SERVQUAL at a high level and also have satisfied at the high level.

CONCLUSIONS

The total of expectation of service quality of hotels in Udon Thani's town was at the high level. Considering of the findings that 1) the tangible factors were the facilities of hotels which fully furnished and good decorations, besides the neat and clean grooming of hotels staff and the lowest level was the brochures. 2) the reliability factors were at a high level which the hotels staff have made the service action on-time 3) the assurance factors were at the highest level of expenditure correctness and knowledge of hotels staff 4) the empathy factors were that the hotels staff intend to serve the customers and paid attention to customers at the highest level 5) responsiveness factors were at the highest level especially about the time information. These results were agreeably with Sunisa Pensap (2015) about the study of service quality and intentions of tourists to stay in hotels at Ranong province. Her researched revealed that the respondents perceived service quality of hotels and resorts at Ranong province in tangible, reliability,

assurance and responsiveness factors at the high level.

The comparison between the expectation before service and satisfaction after hotels service found out that for the tangible, empathy and responsiveness factors have affected the determination to stay in hotels at Udon Thani's town and declared that the factors of reliability and assurance were not likely affected the customers determination to stay in hotels at Udon Thani's town. The result concordantly with SERVQUAL of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) and harmonized with Nattakarn Chinwongamorn (2016) the study of Airline' s strategy affecting the choices of passengers for international airlines at Suvarnabhumi airport. Her study showed that the service quality of the empathy factor in SERVQUAL was at the highest level such as the willingness to serve of the flight attendants, good knowledge of staff, and factors at the high level were passengers' baggage management, the miles rewards and on-time service.

RECOMMENDATION

1. From this research found out that the intention to repeat visit the hotels from the respondents occurred within service satisfaction and service quality was most influenced to customers' satisfaction. The managers, service providers should offer the policy that harmonize with service quality to alert the customers repeat visits.

2. For future research, should have in-depth interview with the respondents to find more details about service quality for improvement.

3. Should continue study the same hotels group for evaluate the service quality after some improvements and re-check the quality of services.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express sincere thanks to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for kindness and support to this paper.

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