

# THE INFLUENCE OF POSITIVE WORK ATTITUDES TOWARDS SERVICE QUALITY OF FRONT OFFICE AND INDEPENDENT HOTEL IN THAILAND

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## ABSTRACT

*This research was developed to study the influences of positive work attitudes of front office's employees towards service quality of independent hotels in Thailand. Populations in this research include 178 employees who are operating in front office of independent hotel in Thailand. The Influence of positive attitudes toward physical attribute was expectation towards goals and optimism. The influence of positive attitudes toward reliability was optimism. Influence of positive attitudes toward responding to customers was optimism and mental restoration in crisis. The Influence of positive attitudes toward confidence toward customers was mental restoration in crisis. And, the Influence of positive attitudes toward recognition and understanding of customers was optimism. The research finding of this research is demonstrated the influences that those variables were affected. Therefore, it was the development of new theoretical knowledge and it could be utilized as the guidelines of employee development by the hotel entrepreneurs who were implementing the independent management in order to promote the capabilities to compete continuously and sustainably.*

**Keywords:** Positive Work Attitudes, Service Quality, Front Office, Independent Hotel.

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past years, Thailand has various policies for encouraging tourism activities that are considered as an important source of national income. Importantly, it found that those policy implementations are successfully achieved. At present, Thailand is considered as an interesting country by foreign tourists throughout the world and local tourists from several provinces in Thailand. Furthermore, Thailand has been chosen to be the best destinations in the world that a huge number of tourists would like to visit (Yasmeen, 2019). So, it is obvious to note that tourism revenue is an important income of Thailand accounting for 17% of GDP in Thailand (Bank of Thailand, 2020). As a consequence, the policies for encouraging tourism activities has still been determined to be an significant governmental policy continuously along with promoting related service industry. Especially in hotel business, the number of guest rooms significantly increased from 515,087 rooms in 2012 to 743,107 in 2017 (Department of Business Development, 2019).

According to the growth of tourists' hotel demand in Thailand, Thailand has become an interesting investment area of hotel entrepreneurs from local people and foreigners. At the same time, it leads to intensively compete in hotel business. It always found that independent hotels are required to implement lots of effort and strategy in order to compete with chained-brand hotels. This is due to the fact that these chained brand hotels have various channels to conduct

public relations. Furthermore, these hotels are more well-known and reliable in service standard from their guests. Thereby, the development of service quality is a significant strategy that independent hotels can implement to compete in long-term. This would mean that it can build the impression to their customers by word-of-mouth and then these hotels can compete with chained-brand hotels in long-term.

Front office is a significant department that is required to develop the service quality in order to build the impression to customers. This is due to the fact that it is the first department which is responsible to welcome customers since entering and acquiring a service. Moreover, the front office is the last department which is responsible to send off the customers, listen to their opinions and build the impression to customers on last day that they employ the service. Thereby, all employees in the front office are playing an important role to be responsible these duties and then the hotels should pay attention. According to the study of related theories and researches, it found that positive work attitude means the employees' characteristics towards themselves and these employees are responsible to perform assigned duties in a positive way as well as have a mental state that is ready to take care of and help the customers in order to generate the impressions enthusiastically. So, this is probably one of important concepts that the independent hotels ought to implement as a selection guideline and employee development in the front office in order to have the capabilities to provide the service quality and build the impressions to the customers in order to acquire the abilities to compete continuously and sustainably (Dukas, 2003; Hoque, 2013; Rutherford & O'Fallon, 2011).

This research emphasizes on studying the levels of employees' positive attitudes that are responsible in the front office of independent hotel in Thailand as well as studying the levels of employees' service quality that are responsible in the front office and studying the influences of positive attitudes towards service quality. As a result, the research finding of this research is demonstrated the influences that those variables are affected. Therefore, it is the development of new theoretical knowledge and it can be utilized as the guidelines of employee development by the hotel entrepreneurs who are implementing the independent management in order to promote the capabilities to compete continuously and sustainably.

## **Research Objectives**

1. To study the relations of positive work attitudes of front office's employees towards service quality of independent hotels in Thailand
2. To study the influences of positive work attitudes of front office's employees towards service quality of independent hotels in Thailand

## **Related Theories**

### **Concepts and theories related to positive attitudes**

The concept of positive psychological capital is an essential concept that was proposed by Martin Seligman. Furthermore, it was studied from the psychologists' concept in the group of humanistic psychology such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. These psychologists emphasized on studying the positive views of human systemically and orderly. Later, Martin Seligman was regarded as the father of psychologist in this group.

Positive psychological capital means the characteristic of human's positive view that can observe, be specific and develop. Then, the organizations can utilize this attribute in human resource management of the organization to be ready, generate a good dedication and gain

effectiveness (Browning, 2018; Gordon, 2017; MacIntyre et al., 2016). Thereby, the positive psychological capital has lots of important attributes as follows;

1. It is generated from inculcating, learning and developing specifically and then these people have more valuable than other ordinary people.
2. It encourages these people to gain more valuable than ordinary people because these people have a social capital which means social network that are ready to aid and support
3. It is the concept of positive view that differs from original psychological concepts which focused on describing the problems or negative limitations of individuals.
4. It is the concept that acquires a specific attribute individually in terms of theories, forms and measurements that have a particular attribute and differ from normal psychological theories.
5. It is the concept that has an important base, obtain well-educated and have been developed from various psychological theories. So, it is considered as the concept that was derived from researches and developments.
6. It is the concept that can measure the levels by scales of measurement which are developed accurately.
7. It is the concept which was approved that can develop in different people. Then, it is one concept that has been accepted as a tool for developing organizational employees.
8. It is the concept that a large number of researches found the relations and operational behaviors in a positive way as well as supported the operational effectiveness in a positive way.

### **Elements of Positive Attitude**

According to the studies of related theories and researches, it found that positive attitudes has four main elements as follows (Anglin et al., 2018; Ashraf & Khan, 2017; Baur et al., 2018; Calheiros, 2018; Chhajer et al., 2016; Costa & Neves, 2017; Hur et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017; Soni et al., 2016; Zaman et al., 2017);

1. Confidence in potentials means a belief of individuals that he or she has an ability to handle and deal with several problems. Furthermore, it has a capability to find the guideline based on duties or assigned responsibilities in order to reach the accomplishment under lots of existing limitations as well as have the intention to implement based on duties in order to reach the success when suffering lots of unexpected problems or conditions that the implementations might not achieve as planned. When individuals have high confidence level in their potentials, they will have the intention to implement their assignments successfully based on defined objectives without any discouragements. However, if individuals have low confidence level in their potentials, they will abandon the efforts to intend in the implementations even though they suffer little obstacles.
2. Expectation towards goals means ideas and feelings of individuals that influence their implementation that can conduct based on defined objectives. Moreover, the research supports that if individuals have high expectation level towards goals, they will generate the intention in the implementation based on assigned duties to reach the accomplishment. It is important to note that they will have a positive feeling when suffering various problems and limitations. In addition, these individuals can reach the achievement based on the objectives effectively. The individuals who have high expectation level towards goals will be glad in their daily life and their implementations in high level as well.
3. Optimism means an individual view that affects various circumstances which are appeared in a positive way, a positive idea to describe the causes or origins of unexpected situations in a positive way and a capability to accept that occurred failures are not derived from their own failures only, but it might derive from environmental causes that cannot control. Importantly, individuals who are an optimist will view themselves in a positive way and various external circumstances in a positive way and will have a confidence in what will appear in the future in a positive way. When the problems do not occur as expected, it will demonstrate the possibility to find a new procedure in order to reach the success based on defined objectives.
4. Mental restoration in crisis means an ability to deal with individual feeling back to normal condition quickly when suffering negative or unexpected circumstances. And then, it gets back to solve occurred

situation by paying attention in whatever these individuals can handle in order to reach defined objectives.

## Concepts and Theories Related with Service Quality

The concept of service quality is a concept that has been continuously developed for a long time by many organizations, especially in service business. Importantly, the organizations which can develop their service quality will have an ability to respond customer satisfaction. This would mean that the opportunity of business's outcome will increase and reinforce the capability to compete in long-term to those organizations.

Service quality means an organizational capability to operate in various fields in order to respond the customers' requirements based on the expectations that are determined by the customers. If the organizations can respond the requirements of customers higher than the expectation level that are defined by customers, these customers will experience the impression and the organizations will gain higher level of service quality as well (Buswell, 2017; Koumenta et al., 2018; Litman, 2017).

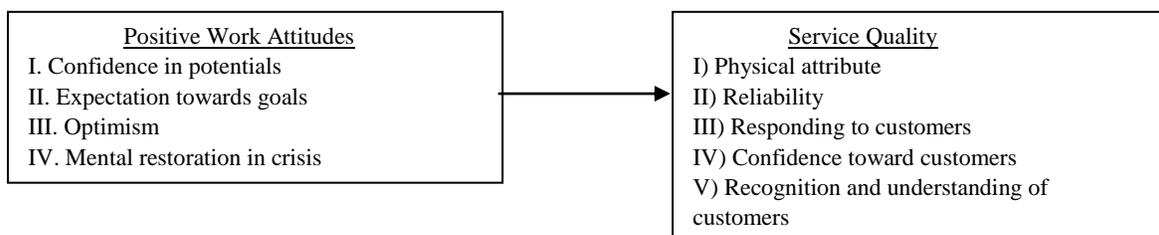
## Elements of Service Quality

According to related studies, theories, documents and researches, it can be concluded important elements into five components as follows (Akdere et al., 2020; Arguello et al., 2020; Basili & Rossi, 2020; Benitez et al., 2019; Brueckner & Flores-Fillol, 2020; De Oliveira Santos et al., 2020; Han & Xie, 2019; J. H. Hong et al., 2019 & 2020; Karlton et al., 2020; Khudhair et al., 2019; Malik et al., 2020; Vázquez Suárez et al., 2020);

1. Physical attribute means a characteristic that appears outside and the customers can touch such as equipment, tools, place and personality of service provider.
2. Reliability means customers' feelings towards service providers that can follow the agreement or respond the expectation of customer.
3. Responding to customers means willingness and rapidity of service providers to follow and implement the customers' requirements when requesting.
4. Confidence toward customers means an ability of service provider that the customers admire in his or her service and then the service provider develop the satisfaction towards obtained service.
5. Recognition and understanding of customers means the attention to respond different requirements or have a unique characteristic of each customer in order to provide accurate service to customers.

## Conceptual Framework

According to the theory, the conceptual framework of this research was developed (Figure 1).



**FIGURE 1**  
**THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research utilizes the research methodology as a quantitative method. The details are follows;

### Populations and Sample

Populations in this research include employees who are operating in front office of independent hotel in Thailand by calculating a sample. According to the concept of Cohen (Cohen, 1977 & 1983), all of 30 questionnaires were calculated and determined several values by G \* POWER program. The sample can be calculated as 178 sets (Cohen, 1983; Erdfelder et al., 2007).

### Research Tools

Tools that are utilized in the process of data collection are a questionnaire for expressing opinions about positive work attitudes of hotel's employees and service quality. In addition, this questionnaire is a closed question by rating 5 levels. This survey by using a questionnaire is an appropriate procedure for exploring many sources of information. Furthermore, there are lots of outstanding attribute such as saving times and the respondents can choose to answer the questionnaire any times when they are convenient. However, this questionnaire might have limitations if the respondents are doubt while they are answering. As a consequence, these respondents cannot inquire the researcher immediately (Christensen, 2015; Habib et al., 2014; Tonioli, 2018). To minimize these limitations, building tool in this survey attempts to use clear language and have a capability to communicate. Besides these, the researchers provide the source of information that the respondents can search for additional information about concepts that relate with this study as well as provide information that the respondents can connect and communicate with the researchers through mobile telephone and e-mail.

### Quality Testing of Research Tools

Tools that were utilized in this exploration were taken quality testing based on criterions in quality testing of research tools for the exploration such as content validity which means an instrument that can measure needed information (Christensen, 2015; Habib et al., 2014; Tonioli, 2018; Zikmund & Babin, 2007). Furthermore, tools were delivered to 5 specialists who have knowledge and understanding in human resource of independent hotel in Thailand. After that, the researchers developed and modified the questionnaire to cover all entireties. Besides these, the reliability was tested by employees who are populations in this study to do the questionnaire, but these employees are not a sample of 30 people. As a consequence, tools that were utilized in this research are qualified based on the criterions.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In the Table 1, it shows the correlation coefficient of variables in this study to achieve the first research objective of this study. Then, it found that the correlation coefficient of all variables has a level of statistical significance. This would mean that positive work attitudes of employees who are employed in 3-star hotels have relations to service quality in areas of Eastern Economic Corridor. Importantly, the highest correlation coefficient is variables of optimism and

mental restoration in crisis accounting for 0.647 while the lowest correlation coefficient is variables of expectation towards goals and clients' cognition and understanding amounting to 0.204.

	X1	x2	x3	x4	y1	y2	y3	y4	y5
X1	1								
x2	0.612**	1							
x3	0.383**	0.537**	1						
x4	0.445**	0.548**	0.647**	1					
y1	0.325**	0.394**	0.379**	0.316**	1				
y2	0.224**	0.290**	0.426**	0.362**	0.446**	1			
y3	0.257**	0.261**	0.389**	0.403**	0.441**	0.562**	1		
y4	0.372**	0.354**	0.362**	0.431**	0.490**	0.420**	0.566**	1	
y5	0.254**	0.204**	0.348**	0.335**	0.403**	0.550**	0.548**	0.521**	1

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

In the Table 2, results were analyzed the influences of variable by multiple regression analysis to achieve the second research objectives. In addition, the analysis was conducted for finding the influences of independent variable including variable of positive attitude towards dependent variable which is service quality. Therefore, analysis results are as follows;

Variable	Physical attribute	Reliability	Responding to customers	Confidence toward customers	Recognition and understanding of customers
	Adj-R <sup>2</sup> = 0.484	Adj-R <sup>2</sup> = 0.478	Adj-R <sup>2</sup> = 0.477	Adj-R <sup>2</sup> = 0.316	Adj-R <sup>2</sup> = 0.338
Confidence in potentials	0.112	0.025	0.094	0.195*	0.155
Expectation towards goals	0.199*	0.036	-0.050	0.041	-0.113
Optimism	0.219*	0.315**	0.221*	0.098	0.236*
Mental restoration in crisis	0.016	0.127	0.245*	0.258**	0.175

Note: \*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Influence of variable in terms of positive attitudes toward service quality of physical attribute. It found that it can describe the fluctuation of independent variables to dependent variable amounting to 48.40 percent (Adj-R<sup>2</sup>=0.484). Furthermore, the variable of positive attitude that affect service quality of physical attribute has statistical significance at 0.05. There are 2 components including expectation towards goals and optimism. Importantly, it found that the component of optimism has higher influence than other variables or accounting for 21.90 percent followed by the component of expectation towards goals amounting to 19.90 percent, respectively.

Influence of variable in terms of positive attitudes toward service quality of reliability. It found that it can describe the fluctuation of independent variables to dependent variable amounting to 47.80 percent (Adj-R<sup>2</sup>=0.478). In addition, the variable of positive attitude that

affect service quality of reliability has statistical significance at 0.01. There is only one element including optimism. Importantly, it found that the element of optimism has higher influence than other variables or accounting for 31.50 percent.

Influence of variable in terms of positive attitudes toward service quality of responding to customers. It found that it can describe the fluctuation of independent variables to dependent variable amounting to 47.70 percent ( $\text{Adj-R}^2=0.477$ ). Moreover, the variable of positive attitude that affect service quality of responding to customers has statistical significance at 0.05. There are 2 elements including optimism and mental restoration in crisis. Importantly, it found that the element of mental restoration in crisis has higher influence than other variables or accounting for 24.50 percent followed by the element of optimism amounting to 22.10 percent.

Influence of variable in terms of positive attitudes toward service quality of confidence toward customers. It found that it can describe the fluctuation of independent variables to dependent variable amounting to 31.60 percent ( $\text{Adj-R}^2=0.316$ ). In addition, the variable of positive attitude that influence service quality of confidence toward customers has statistical significance at 0.01. Then, there is only one component including mental restoration in crisis. Furthermore, the variable of positive attitude that influence service quality of confidence toward customers has statistical significance at 0.05. And then, there is only one component including confidence in potentials. Importantly, it found that the element of mental restoration in crisis has higher influence than other variables or accounting for 25.80 percent followed by the element of confidence in potentials to 19.50 percent.

Influence of variable in terms of positive attitudes toward service quality of recognition and understanding of customers. It found that it can describe the fluctuation of independent variables to dependent variable amounting to 33.80 percent ( $\text{Adj-R}^2=0.338$ ). Moreover, the variable of positive attitude that affect service quality of clients' recognition and understanding has statistical significance at 0.01. There is only one element including optimism. Importantly, it found that the element of optimism has higher influence than other variables or accounting for 23.60 percent.

## **Recommendations for the Implementation**

From research results in this research, it can be concluded in five main suggestions for the implementation as follows;

1. Direction in the development of service quality in terms of physical attribute among employees who are responsible in front office of independent hotels should encourage positive attitudes of optimism. Then, these employees should have reasoning and explanation in various circumstances with a good view frequently. It is important to note that these employees ought to be supported in expectation towards goals by encouraging all employees to have intention and willingness in the implementation based on their defined objectives clearly.
2. Direction in the development of service quality in terms of reliability among employees who are responsible in front office of independent hotels should encourage positive attitudes of optimism. So, it is obvious that these employees should always have reasoning and explanation in various circumstances with a good view.
3. Direction in the development of service quality in terms of responding to customers among employees who are responsible in front office of independent hotels should encourage positive attitudes of mental restoration in crisis. Then, these employees ought to be supported to have an ability to adjust their own emotional and mental conditions into normal conditions quickly when suffering lots of unexpected and unsatisfied crises. According to the optimism, these employees should always have reasoning and explanation in various circumstances with a good view.

4. Direction in the development of service quality in terms of confidence toward customers among employees who are responsible in front office of independent hotels should encourage positive attitudes of mental restoration in crisis. Then, it is important that these employees ought to be supported to have an ability to adjust their own emotional and mental conditions into normal conditions quickly when suffering lots of unexpected and unsatisfied crises. According to confidence in potentials, these employees should have a confidence to implement their assignment that can be achieved the defined objectives effectively. For the optimism, these employees should always have reasoning and explanation in various situations with a good view.
5. Direction in the development of service quality in terms of customers' recognition and understanding among employees who are responsible in front office of independent hotels should encourage positive attitudes of optimism. So, these employees should always have reasoning and explanation in various circumstances with a good view.

### Suggestions for Next Research

This study utilized the research methodology as quantitative method. The qualitative research may be applied for developing methods to enhance positive work attitudes with the context of employees who are responsible in front office. In addition, a comparison research as size of hotel, location and the type of hotel might be developed. Furthermore, this study should be conducted in other business in order to compare with the next research.

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