The Factors Affecting Employee Satisfaction And Employee Retention In The Hotel Industry In Chiangmai, Thailand

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Abstract

The current research study explores employee satisfaction factors and the relationship between employee satisfaction and employee retention in the hotel industry. The research data for this study was collected from 94 employees from several hotels in Muang Chiangmai, Thailand. In addition, the data was collected through a survey questionnaire personally handed to the sample selected for this research. The study results indicate a positive relationship between employee satisfaction and employee retention. The result also finds that work environment and teamwork affect employee satisfaction; however, leadership does not. In addition, satisfied employees are productive, and loyalty enables the organization to retain their employees, leading to higher employee retention leads to higher employee retention in the hotel industry. It is recommended through this research that more factors that affect employee satisfaction be analyzed and researched thoroughly. The management/leaders should build a stronger team, focus on teamwork, provide a safe work environment and conditions and respond to hotel employees' needs to increase employee satisfaction and retention.

Keywords Hotels in Chiangmai, Hotel employees, Employee satisfaction, Work environment, Teamwork, Leadership, Productivity, Employee retention, and Loyalty.

I Introduction

Tourism plays an important role in Thailand's economy and brings considerable economic and socio-benefits annually. Tourism is also Thailand's largest source of foreign exchange income and an important pillar of Thailand's economy. Located in the far northern part of Thailand, 700 km away from Bangkok, Chiangmai is the second largest city in Thailand. Chiangmai is rich in history and Lanna culture and is a popular destination for both local and foreign tourists. Chiangmai is a famous destination for tourism and cross-border socioeconomic activities. surrounded by mountains, waterfalls, nature, and centuries-old temples. According to a report by Thailand's Ministry of Commerce, the service industry

accounted for the largest proportion of Thailand's GDP in 2018, up 9.2% from 2017. The number of tourists coming to Chiangmai is expected to grow every year. The hotel industry is an important provider of job opportunities and economic benefits. Because of this increase in tourism, this research focuses on employee satisfaction's impact on employee retention in Chiangmai, Thailand. Some researchers and academic gurus argued that the hotel's happy members/employees are the hotel's backbones that lead to a hotel's establishment's success. Without a good, strong, and driven team, a hotel organization will not survive in the long haul and retain its employees. The researcher wants to examine whether employee satisfaction impacts employee retention in the hotel industry and its factors. This understanding proposes that higher

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job satisfaction normally results in higher levels of employee retention. (Biason, 2020).

This research will focus on the work environment, leadership, teamwork, productivity, loyalty, employee satisfaction, and retention. This research study would bring significant values and benefits to the hospitality industry and provide support and assistance to management, managers, and leaders of hotel organizations to explore the relationship between employee satisfaction and employee retention Chiangmai. **Employees** stay or leave organizations for many reasons, whether personal or professional. Employees who are satisfied and happy with their work are more dedicated and work for the organization's growth and further development. This may be translated to employees satisfied with their job staying with the organization as many scholars have claimed that "the key to employee retention is having satisfied employees". (Alshurideh et al., 2020).

II RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research aims to answer two questions which are

- 1. What are the factors of employee satisfaction in Chiangmai, Thailand?
- 2. Are hotel employee satisfaction and employee retention correlated in Chiangmai, Thailand?

III Research Objectives

The main research objectives are below:

- 1. To explore the hotel employee's satisfaction in Chiangmai, Thailand.
- To analyze the relationship between hotel employee satisfaction and employee retention in Chiangmai, Thailand.

IV LITERATURE REVIEW

Lock and Lathan noted and agreed on a detailed definition of job satisfaction as a positive emotional state following one's job experience (Tella, 2007). Job satisfaction is a hotel employee's view of their work to see how far the company has met employee expectations (Silaban & Margaretha, 2002). According to Huang et al. (2016), safety and a safe working environment are closely related to employee satisfaction. McShane and Travaglione (2003) defined team-building performance as improving work teams. Toofany (2007) states that team building aims to enhance organizational efficacy. Moreover, satisfied employees can be viewed as empowered with the resources, training, skill, and experiences to perform their job effectively. On the other hand, unsatisfied/ unhappy employees often do not perform their job efficiently. (Ugboro & Obeng, 2000).

Keskes (2014) defines leadership as the relationship between an individual and a group, and they behave as per the directions of the leader. Chowdhury (2014) defines leadership as a dynamic process whereby one man influences others to contribute voluntarily to the realization and expresses leadership as "a complex topic with grief". Leadership has existed for civilizations as long as humankind knows about people and organizations. In summary, leadership has the capability of influencing others. According to research by Lucia Harbuláková (2018), leaders should adapt their leadership and management style in the hospitality sector to suit the needs of their followers. She concluded in her studies that the hospitality sector depends on quality relationships between the team and the leaders. According to Hampton in Lok (2004), leadership and job satisfaction did not correlate positively. The authors had contradicting views from their studies, mostly because different organizations have different leadership styles, and the research produced different results.

"Employees are more loyal and productive when satisfied," quoted Hunter and Tietyen (1997). In the research study, Allen and

Wilburn (2002)that employee noted productivity, absenteeism, and retention are affected by employee satisfaction. Harter et al. (2002), based on 7,939 business units in 36 organizations, the researchers found optimistic and significant correlations between employee satisfaction/engagement and the organization's outcomes of productivity, profit, employee turnover, employee accidents, and customer satisfaction. Additionally, the other findings supported evidence that satisfied employees displayed positive peer work attitudes and feelings that affected their productivity and performance substantively in the workplace (Matzler & Renzl, 2007). Hunter and Tietyen (1997) concluded in their research that when employees are satisfied, they are more productive and loval.

Johnson et al. (2000), retention is the capability to be committed to the employees that the company wants longer than other companies. Therefore, it can be thought that retention is a long-term relationship or promise between employees and the business. Employee retention is an tool for better performance. Denton (2000) has emphasized in his studies that happy employees who are satisfied with their work are more enthusiastic about their job and usually put their effort into improving their organizational performance. Das and Baruah (2013) defined retention as the process by which a business ensures that its employees do not quit their jobs."

Research by Kurdi et al. (2020) concluded that there was a high relationship between employee satisfaction and commitment, retention, and loyalty within the service business sector, and the relationship has been positive. To achieve this, many scholars have claimed that the key to employee retention has satisfied employees. Organizations that care about their employee's well-being and job satisfaction have a greater likelihood of employee retention and happier customers (Alshurideh et al., 2020).

Currently, some service organizations have provided good means and measures to retain their good employees because it has been found that minimizing employee turnover usually influences organizational performance positively, reduces operational costs, and increases profit and the net income between employees and customers (Ghannajeh et al., 2015). Murray noted in his study that employee satisfaction positively impacts employee retention. According to studies done by Carpitella (2003), an organization with high and excellent employee satisfaction reduces employee turnover by 50%, increases customer service satisfaction by 95%, and lowers labor costs by 12%.

Employees with higher experience and relationships with their team members tend to stay in the organization, are very productive, and provide a quality workforce that helps cut costs and provide quality services. (Reichheld, 2008). Locke (1976) emphasized that employee satisfaction is related to the success of an organizational aspect: loyalty, productivity, and retention. The topic of loyalty relates to how people feel about their company. (Malhotra, 2004).

V HYPOTHESIS

 H_{01} : Employee satisfaction is related to the work environment, teamwork, and leadership.

H₁₁: Employee satisfaction is not related to work for environment, teamwork, and leadership.

 H_{02} : Productivity is related to employee satisfaction.

H₁₂: Productivity is not related to employee satisfaction

 H_{03} : Employee satisfaction is related to employee retention.

 H_{13} : Employee satisfaction is not related to employee retention

H₀₄: Employee satisfaction is related to loyalty.

 H_{14} : Employee satisfaction is not related to loyalty.

 H_{05} : Loyalty is related to employee retention. H_{15} : Loyalty is not related to employee retention

VI Research Methodology

This study explores employee satisfaction and retention in the hotel industry in Chiangmai. This quantitative research uses a structured questionnaire based on literature reviews and conceptual framework. The research uses statistical analysis with collected data from the survey to test the frequency of occurrences (Shukla, 2008). The research uses a non-probability sampling method. The total numbers of samples are 94.

After collecting questionnaires, the data was coded, followed by data transformation and analysis. The primary data is interpreted using a descriptive statistical method such as frequency, percentages, mean and standard deviation (S.D.). ANOVA in SPSS is used to test the hypothesis to analyze the correlation between independent variables in employee satisfaction and dependent variables in employee retention.

VII Research Results

This research study showed the impact of employee satisfaction on employee retention in the hotel industry in Chaingmai, Thailand. The population of this research contains ninety fours hotel employees from various hotels in Chiangmai. The researcher conducted a survey method to explore employee satisfaction and employee retention.

Most study respondents are female (55.3 percent) and male (44.7 percent). The majority of respondents are from an age range of 24-28(26.6 percent) and 29-33 (26.6 percent), respectively, 34-38(19.15 percent), over 39 (19.15 percent), and 18-23 (8.5 percent). They are educated at the high school level (6.4 percent), college (13.8 percent), undergraduate level (31.9 percent), graduate degree (44.7 percent), and doctorate/PH.D. (3.2 percent). These respondents worked in the front office department (52

housekeeping department percent), (10.6)food & beverage department (18 percent), human resources department (12 percent), and others (7.4 percent). percent), respondents were from the management level: junior level/trainee/senior (62.8 percent) and manager/supervisor/team leader (37.2 percent). They worked for less than 1 year (27.7 percent), 1-3 years (23.4 percent), 3-5 years (18.1 percent), 5-8 years (19.1 percent), and more than 8 years (11.7 percent). The respondents' shifts are morning shift (39 percent), afternoon shift (6 percent), night shift (9 percent), swing (morning and afternoon shift) (33.0 percent), and all different types of shifts (13 percent).

The result was concluded after exploring hotel employee satisfaction and employee retention and their associated factors in Chiangmai, Thailand. It can be said that the findings reflect a positive relationship between hotel employee satisfaction and employee retention in Chiangmai, Thailand, and are parallel to previous studies. The most significant factors in the study for "employee satisfaction is work environment and teamwork, which affects productivity, employee retention, and loyalty. However, employee satisfaction is significant in terms of its relationship with employee retention in Chaingmai, Thailand.

The results confirmed that employees are very satisfied and agreed with the statements regarding job satisfaction and employee satisfaction factors. In terms of the work environment, the researcher asked some internal questions in which the results concluded that respondents strongly agreed with the work environment and were very satisfied. Regarding satisfaction over teamwork, the respondents also confirmed the results with the strong agreement and a high level of satisfaction with having support from team members and team building activities. Lastly, having very satisfied employees in terms of the leadership and the above factors in the participating hotel results in

overall very satisfied employees with strongly agreeing with employees. The study shows a promising result with productivity which is one of the important variables as this research study proves that satisfied employees are productive.

Employee retention: This study indicates a high level of employee retention as results concluded that employees showed strong agreement and satisfaction towards loyalty and retention.

Hypothesis 1, employee satisfaction, is related to the work environment and teamwork after conducting a regression test as the results showed acceptable significance values. However, employee satisfaction is not correlated to leadership as the results indicated the values of significance which were more than values of acceptance. Hypothesis 2, when tested, showed

that productivity is related to employee satisfaction, as the significance value was acceptable. Hypothesis 3 shows a relationship between employee satisfaction and retention after achieving an acceptable significance value. Hypothesis 4, employee satisfaction is related to loyalty, is accepted as the hypothesis showed an acceptable significance value. The final hypothesis, hypothesis 5, also showed a relationship between loyalty and employee retention, as the significance value was acceptable.

Hypothesis 1

 H_{01} : Employee Satisfaction is related to the Work environment, Teamwork, and Leadership.

H₁₁: Employee Satisfaction is not related to the Work environment, Teamwork, and Leadership.

Table 1 The correlation between employee satisfaction, work environment, teamwork, and leadership

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Coefficients								
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				
	Model	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.		
1	(Constant)	018	.428		042	.966		
	Work environment	.486	.105	.403	4.645	.000		
	Teamwork	.567	.108	.516	5.251	.000		
	Leadership	068	.106	068	646	.520		
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Satisfaction								

Hypothesis 2

 H_{02} : Productivity is related to employee satisfaction.

H₁₂: Productivity is not related to employee satisfaction.

Table 2 The correlation between productivity and employee satisfaction.

Coefficients									
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients					
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.			
1	(Constant)	1.051	.257		4.084	.000			
	Employee Satisfaction	.770	.057	.814	13.451	.000			
	a. Dependent Variable: Productivity								

Hypothesis 3

 H_{03} : Employee satisfaction is related to Employee Retention.

 H_{13} : Employee satisfaction is not related to Employee Retention.

Table 3 The correlation between employee satisfaction and employee retention

Coefficients									
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients					
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.			
1	(Constant)	2.031	.237		8.567	.000			
	Retention	.575	.055	.735	10.394	.000			
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Satisfaction									

Hypothesis 4

H₁₄: Employee satisfaction is related to loyalty.

H₀₄: Employee satisfaction is related to loyalty.

Table 4 The correlation between employee satisfaction and loyalty

Coefficients								
		Unstandardized		Standardized				
		Coefficients		Coefficients				
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.		
1	(Constant)	1.380	.267		5.159	.000		
	Loyalty	.712	.061	.771	11.624	.000		
	a. Dependent Variable: Employee Satisfaction							

Hypothesis 5

 H_{05} : Loyalty is related to employee retention. H_{15} : Loyalty is related to employee retention.

Table 5 The correlation between loyalty and employee retention

	Coefficients									
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients						
Model		В	B Std. Error Beta		t	Sig.				
1	(Constant)	1.287	.200		6.419	.000				
	Retention	.719	.047	.848	15.358	.000				
	a. Dependent Variable: Loyalty									

VIII DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

Employee satisfaction plays a crucial role in employee retention in the hotel industry in

Chaingmai, Thailand. The hotel employees are the backbone of the hotel industry and are responsible for bringing economic factors to the hotel. Employee satisfaction and employee retention are crucial for the hotel industry as satisfied employees tend to stay longer and are loyal, which is vital to the smooth operation of the hotel. The key to employee retention is having satisfied employees, as claimed by many scholars

This study is to explore hotel employee satisfaction in Chiangmai, Thailand. The results suggest that hotel employee satisfaction is affected by the work environment and teamwork, whereas the leadership factor does not affect employee satisfaction. It has also been found that satisfied employees are productive, productivity has a positive relationship with employee satisfaction. Regarding employee satisfaction and work environment factors, the participants showed an impressive mean value of 4.5638, indicating that employees are very satisfied and strongly agreed. They were satisfied with the hotels' policies and values that agree with their employees, safe work environment and conditions, and organizational environment leads to satisfied employees, which is supported by many studies and researchers. The effective management of human resources and ensuring an advanced work environment would affect job performance, satisfaction, and the overall economy. Badrianto and Ekhsan (2020) studies also support the research objective that the unstable work environment and job satisfaction positively and significantly affect employee performance partially and simultaneously. The study by Thabit et al. (2022) found that a good working environment positively affected staff satisfaction within press institutions in Yemen which supports the hypothesis of this study. The study results show that a better work environment and working conditions are attractive aspects of the job, stimulating a positive working atmosphere and satisfied employees are relevant to this study. Employee satisfaction is related to work environment and teamwork factors, not leadership.

The work environment and teamwork factors have been supported by previous literature research that the effective management of human resources and ensuring an advanced work environment would affect job performance, satisfaction, and the overall economy. Badrianto and Ekhsan (2020) and Klein et al. (2009) identified that several organizations benefitted from team-building activities in their research. Team-building activities within employees significantly influence employee satisfaction, which may be due to team-building activities helping foster stronger relationships within employees and build trust.

The null hypothesis that leadership does not affect employee satisfaction is validated by the research done in retail stores in the United Kingdom by Asghar and Oino (2018), which concluded that transactional leadership does not positively impact employee satisfaction. In other words, the null hypothesis is accepted as Chowdhury (2014) describes leadership as a complex topic, and there is a presence of different leadership styles in hotels that did not affect employee and their satisfaction with the leadership. The complex nature of leadership and its definition and style confuses an organization meaning the study should explore leadership and its effect in detail. A study by Harter et al. (2002) found positive and substantive correlations between employee satisfaction-engagement and the business unit outcomes of productivity, profit, employee turnover, employee accidents, and customer satisfaction. Hence this finding supports the factors of employee satisfaction, that satisfied employees are productive as employee satisfaction influences productivity, absenteeism, and retention. (Allen & Wilburn 2002).

This current research analyzed the relationship between employee satisfaction and employee retention in Chiangmai, Thailand. With the help of linear regression, it has been found that there is a positive relationship between employee satisfaction and employee retention. Satisfied employees stay longer in their organization. According to research conducted by Kurdi et al. (2020), the study concluded that" There was a high degree of connection between satisfaction employee and employee commitment, retention and even loyalty within the service sector and such relationship has been supported which supports the relationship between employee satisfaction and employee retention and loyalty.

The research explored the relationship between employee satisfaction and loyalty. The result concluded that satisfied employees are loyal. Previous studies by Khuong and Tien (2013)concluded that iob satisfaction, organizational environment, and incentives were related to organizational loyalty. It is important to care about employee satisfaction to have higher employee retention levels. (Alshurideh et al., 2020). Finally, the more satisfied employees are, the less turnover and absenteeism occurs. (Maloney & McFillen, 1986). The study by Adedeji et al. (2018) in Nigerian Banks showed a strong positive relationship between employee retention and loyalty in deposit money banks.

VIII RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends the following points. Every organization should develop strategies that strengthen the work environment and increase worker morale and employee satisfaction to enhance employee performance and productivity, which ultimately results in high profits, customer satisfaction, and customer retention. Future research may also wish to examine employee satisfaction and retention factors in the hotel industry. This research replication with a larger

sample size on the different levels of management in a service industry or other industries in Chiang Mai province is recommended for future research to identify if this study's finding is concrete or limited to the participating management level only.

Chiangmai hotel employees:

- 1. Build a career development plan for the hotel employees depending on their individual needs and goals.
- 2. Provide training according to the individual needs, strengths, and weaknesses.
- 3. Provides guidelines to the Chaingmai hotel employees in focusing on factors that affect their satisfaction towards work and improving these factors, such as work environment and teamwork, leading to increased productivity.
- 4. Create a safe working space and provide employees with working conditions, benefits, and values, resulting in employee satisfaction and retention.
- 5. Focus on strengthening the work environment for employees to increase/enhance their job satisfaction and performance.

Chiangmai Hotel Association and Management:

- 1. The leaders should focus more on building healthy relationships with their hotel employees and on their hotel needs.
- 2. The management should focus on providing a better and safe working environment and more team-building activities for better teamwork and fulfilling the hotel employees' needs and wants. The hotel policies and practices should reflect the management and employees'

- concerns for a nurturing and nondiscriminatory environment where employees feel they are treated equally and can perform their job well with maximum satisfaction.
- 3. Managers and leaders should adjust the training program or add optional courses for employees to improve themselves and team-building activities. In this way, employees can be inspired to better job performance and satisfaction.
- 4. Finally, organizations should articulate and implement human resource policies that enable their organization to strengthen employee retention.
- 5. In addition, the hotel industry's management should also ensure that appropriate measures are being taken to train their team and recruit and build a stronger and more satisfied team.

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