

# Antecedents and Efficiency of the Five-Star Hotels in Thailand

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## Abstract

Hotel industry is one of the leading industries globally. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the hotel business entrepreneurs have to face many problems. The main issue is lack of competitiveness both at the regional and global levels. In addition, there are many competitors which have superior potentials in terms of the business operations, especially the five-star hotels with branches from other countries. Due to intense competition, the efficiency of hotels is decreased in Thailand. Therefore, this study is an attempt to highlight this problem and propose various factors effecting hotel industry. The mixed method approach is used in this study in which survey questionnaire and in-depth interviews are used for data collection. Results of the study reported that operational management policy, corporate environment, leadership and employee satisfaction has central importance to enhance hotel efficiency. It is recommended to the five-star hotel's management to promote operational management policy, corporate environment, leadership and employee satisfaction to enhance the level of hotel efficiency.

**Keywords.** Five-star hotel, operational management policy, corporate environment, leadership, employee satisfaction, hotel efficiency.

## 1. Introduction

Enhancing the efficiency of the five-star hotel operators in Thailand represents a means to support the emerging trend in the hotel and tourism industry which continues to be recovered. Hotel business industry is facing several issues due to the COVID-19 (Kanyama, Nurittamont, & Siripipatthanakul, 2022). In last two years the business operations was closed or working at lower level due to the lockdown to protect people from the spread of COVID-19. In this direction, businesses face several challenges and face significant loss which causes to wind up the businesses. In this way, the hotel industry also faced number of issues because the physical movement of people was limited and emergency was announced in several nations. Nowadays businesses are started working again with normal conditions, however, still businesses are facing the issues related to the COVID-19. Hotel industry is also one of the industries which is suffered a lot along with other industries (Ranasinghe et al., 2020). In Thailand the hotel industry is also facing issues and the performance of this industry is decreased. In Thailand tourism is one of the major industry (Hongnual, Leelapattana, Thongma, Trakansiriwanich, & Sitthikun, 2021) and hotels are usually

connected with tourism, however, due to the less movement of tourist in last few years the hotel industry remain active with limited operations. Most importantly, five-star hotels remain closed in the years of COVID-19 (Karatepe, Saydam, & Okumus, 2021). Therefore, it is needed to promote hotel performance with the help of hotel efficiency. The hotel efficiency is one of the major problems facing by hotels as efficiency is decreased significantly.

The recovery of hotel industry is most important and it is one of the major challenges for the nations (Wang et al., 2022). For the management of hotel, the recovery of various operations in normal routine is not easy because the operations of this industry are disturbed significantly and due to the COVID-19 the trend has been changed. Still the movement of tourist is limited in five-star hotels and people are not moving from other countries. Therefore, with limited customers it is difficult to promote performance in five-star hotels. However, this can be managed through better management, particularly the efficiency of this industry is decreased which requires specific strategies to promote various factors which has influence on this industry.

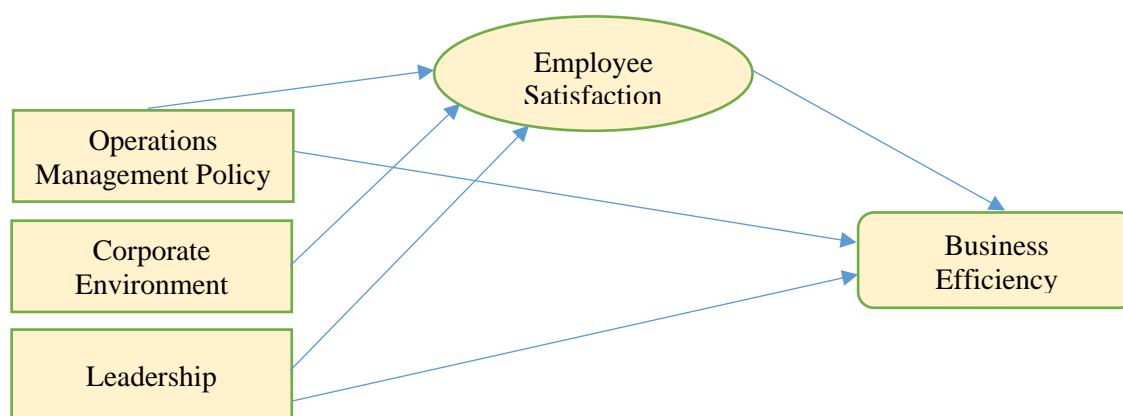
Although the number of factors influencing on the efficiency of hotels (Estevão, Duarte, Cabral, Campón-Cerro, & Yuliati, 2022), however, according to this study, there are four major factors which may help to recover this industry with the help of increasing business efficiency. Majorly operations management policy must be revised among five-star hotels to promote business activities. Furthermore, it is needed to promote environment of the hotels. Better environment to the employees of the hotels as well as to the customer may lead to increase business efficiency. Additionally the managers must lead their teams efficiently, therefore leadership also has central importance to promote business activities (Kaštelan Mrak & Grudić Kvasić, 2021). Operations management policy, corporate environment and leadership has the ability to influence employee satisfaction which may further lead to increase business efficiency. There are several studies available on hotel industry, however it is very rare that previous studies considered business efficiency particularly, in the era of COVID-19 in Thailand. Therefore, the current study developed the following hypotheses;

1. To study levels of antecedents and efficiency of the five-star hotels in Thailand.
2. To examine influences of the antecedents on the efficiency of five-star hotels in Thailand.
3. To develop a model for enhancing the efficiency of the five-star hotels in Thailand.

## 2. Literature Review

According to resource-based view (RBV), the business performance always required

significant resources. Resources can lead a business towards success. Therefore, better availability of resources among the hotels can lead business efficiency. In this direction, the current study proposed various resources which may have influence on business efficiency and recover the hotel industry. The current study considered various intangible resources of the company. According to the study, operational management policy development is one of the major resources. The development of operational management policy can lead the business and provide major sources to promote business efficiency. Furthermore, corporate environment for the customers as well as for the employees is also important. Effective corporate environment as well as friendly environment to the employees also leave the employees to work with satisfaction. Furthermore, leadership qualities such as skills and capabilities are also intangible resources of the company which can increase business efficiency. The current study proposed operational management policy, corporate environment and leadership the most influential elements to promote employee satisfaction and business efficiency among the five-star hotels. Although, there are earlier studies on employee satisfaction and business efficiency of hotels, however, these studies have not considered operational management policy along with corporate environment as well as leadership. Finally, the framework of the current study is based on the relationship between operations management policy, corporate environment, leadership, employee satisfaction and business efficiency which is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Theoretical framework of the study showing the relationship between operations management policy, corporate environment, leadership, employee satisfaction and business efficiency

## 2.1 Business Efficiency

Business efficiency denotes to how much a business or organization can produce as it relates to the amount of time, money as well as resources required. In other words, a businesses or organization efficiency measures how well it can alter things like materials, labor as well as capital into services along with products that produce revenue. The current study measured business efficiency in terms of goal achievement, customer, finance, process of learning and growth. Therefore, according to this study, the business efficiency can be measured that whether the business has achieved its goals are not and whether these goals are achieved in a specified time, before time or after the time. Furthermore, business efficiency is also related to the customers (Varadarajan & Kalaigannam, 2006). The efficient business always led to the customers and it causes to attract the customer. Business efficiency is also based that how much resources are utilized by the business to perform any operation. Additionally, it is based on the process of making various services. The delivery of services to the customers is one of the important processes which must be completed within the time. Additionally, learning as well as growth after business is also connected with business efficiency.

## 2.2 Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is the degree to which employees of the organization are happy or content with their jobs as well as work environment (KÜÇÜK & BENSHINA, 2021). It is based on the happiness of the employees that whether the employees of the organization are satisfied with the salary paid to them and various other rewards. It also includes working conditions and behavior of the management. There are several factors which effect on satisfaction of the employees and it led to the employee performance. Generally, it is based on internal satisfaction as well as external satisfaction. Both the levels of satisfaction are important to achieve in any business activity because the satisfaction has direct relationship with the performance. A significant level of satisfaction among the employees lead to the better employee performance. Therefore, in the hotel industry to perform various operations, it is important to have a significant level of satisfaction among the employees. The satisfied employees always perform up to the expectations and generally it has

positive effect on the business (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002).

## 2.3 Operations Management Policy

Operations management is the management of business activities to create the highest level of effectiveness possible within a company. It is concerned with changing materials and labor into goods as well as services as efficiently maximize the profit of an organization. All the business activities in any business organization depends upon the several operations. The performance of all the operations lead to the completion of any specific task (Hazen, Skipper, Boone, & Hill, 2018). The management of various operations in the business organizations are important to complete any task. In this way, the operations management are ways required a comprehensive policy. The policy to manage various operations is called operations management policy. Without the specific planning towards achievement of certain objective's success is not possible. In five-star hotels the various operations are based on management policies that how to achieve all in an allocated time and how to provide the services to the customer efficiently. Operations management policy is based on the goals of the organization and resources of the organization along with the communication of the organization. The management policy towards the goal achievement as well as allocation of the resources and communication between the organization and the customers has significant importance. All these elements required a specific policy to manage. Generally, better management of various policies in terms of operations has significant relationship with business efficiency. The performance of business is majorly based on the management of policies as highlighted by previous studies. As the achievement of goals, allocation of resources and communication between the organization has major importance to achieve business success (Golroudbary, Zahraee, Awan, & Kraslawski, 2019).

Moreover, better management of various policies towards our operations also has a significant effect on the employees. Because the management of policies towards operations also provide a specific way for the employees to work on various activities. A clear direction to the employees leads to the satisfaction in various activities. The assignments given to the employees always require clear direction as well as management policies to follow for the employees which has

direct influence on the satisfaction level of the employees. The satisfaction level of the employees is not only influenced with the financial rewards; however, it also influences through various assignments given to them. The assignments given to them must have clear policy document as well as clear instructions to follow which may have influence on their satisfaction level.

**Hypothesis 1.** Operations management policy has positive effect on business efficiency.

**Hypothesis 2.** Operations management policy has positive effect on employee satisfaction.

## 2.4 Corporate Environment

Corporate environment generally based on several factors which has influence on the employees working in the specific organization (Abdul Rahman & Alsayegh, 2021). The supportive environment for the employees always helps them to perform effectively and to complete with activities in specified time. However, inappropriate environment led to the dissatisfaction of the employees. Generally, a friendly environment at workplace encourages the employees to perform better. There must be a friendly environment between the employees as well as top management including the managers. This environment allowed the employees to present various innovative ideas and the acknowledgement of these ideas may lead to the better outcomes. According to current study, corporate environment is based on three major factors which include corporate atmosphere, corporate culture, and corporate technology. The atmosphere of corporate whether it is friendly or not and a supportive culture has central importance in employee satisfaction. Furthermore, the introduction of new technology within the corporation also lead to the satisfaction of the employees. As reported in previous studies that corporate environment has significant relationship with employee satisfaction (Meng & Berger, 2021).

**Hypothesis 3.** Corporate environment has positive effect on employee satisfaction.

## 2.5 Leadership

Among all the organizations, leaders always play most influential role (Chen, Ding, & Li, 2022). Among the business organizations the style of

leaders always has influence on business performance. Because leaders have a significant influence on various employees working in the organization which has direct link with the operations of the business having significant influence on the success of the activities. Leadership is the management of team, groups or individuals for a specific task. An effective leadership always influence the employees working in the organization. Better leadership style by the leaders or top management in any organization has direct influence on the satisfaction level of the employees. According to this study, leadership is based on reform leadership and action leadership. Both the reform leadership and action leadership as influence on business activities. Generally, it has direct influence on business efficiency, however, it also has effect through indirectly. Indirectly, it has influence on business efficiency with the help of employee satisfaction. Leadership increases the satisfaction among employees which causes to increase business efficiency. Literature provides various evidences show that leadership has significant effect on employee satisfaction (Wikaningrum & Yuniawan, 2018). It is also evident that leadership has direct influence on business performance.

The above discussion shows the direct effect of variables; however, this section shows the indirect effect of variables. According to above sections, it is proved that operations management policy, corporate environment and leadership has significant effect on employee satisfaction. Furthermore, these variables also have significant effect on business efficiency. Additionally, business efficiency also proved to be as significantly connected with employee satisfaction. Therefore, all paths are significant which allowed the current study to use employee satisfaction as mediating variable. According to the instructions of Baron and Kenny (1986), employee satisfaction could be used as mediating variable. Thus, along with direct effect, following indirect effects are proposed;

**Hypothesis 4.** Leadership has positive effect on employee satisfaction.

**Hypothesis 5.** Leadership has positive effect on business efficiency.

**Hypothesis 6.** Employee satisfaction has positive effect on business efficiency.

**Hypothesis 7.** Employee satisfaction mediates the relationship between operations management policy and business efficiency.

**Hypothesis 8.** Employee satisfaction mediates the relationship between corporate environment and business efficiency.

**Hypothesis 9.** Employee satisfaction mediates the relationship between leadership and business efficiency.

### 3. Methodology

Mixed method approach in business research has several advantages. Therefore, this research employed a mixed research methodology. In mixed methodology, this study combined quantitative and qualitative methods. To address the quantitative research, the research sample consisted of 300 entrepreneurs and executives of the five-star hotels in Thailand was used. Data collection is made through questionnaire. Questionnaire was based on two sections in which the first section was based on the profile of respondents and the second section was based on the key study variables; operations management policy, corporate environment, leadership, employee satisfaction and business efficiency.

Population of the study is the five-star hotels in Thailand. The respondents of the study were entrepreneurs and executives of the five-star hotels in Thailand. 650 questionnaires were distributed among the five-star hotels and 300 valid questionnaires were returned. The sample size was determined based on the criterion of 20 times the observed variables. Respondents were

selected by using stratified sampling. Data were collected with the use of a questionnaire and analyzed with a structural equation modeling. As for the qualitative research, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 key informants consisting of entrepreneurs and executives of the five-star hotels in Thailand.

### 4. Results

Before data analysis, the current study carried out data screening to fix errors in the data. Various errors such as missing value as well as outlier in the data are managed and finally the data statistics are provided in Table 1. After the assessment of data statistics, the current study examined the data with the help of structural equation modeling (SEM). SEM is important to manage the primary data. In this technique, this study examined factor loadings, reliability and validity (Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, & Thiele, 2017). This study proposes that factor loading must not be less than 0.5. Table 2 shows the factor loadings which indicates that all the variables have factor loading above 0.5, however, only one scale item of leadership has factor loading 0.4 which is less than 0.5, however, this item is retained because the other values such as composite liability and average variance extracted is achieved the minimum criteria. The achievement of minimum criteria of composite liability and average variance extracted confirmed the convergent validity and discriminant validity is achieved with the help of average variance extracted square root. Factor loadings are given in Table 2.

**Table 1** Statistical test of empirical variables (n=300)

Variable	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	%CV	Sk	Ku	$\chi^2$	P-value
goals	3.61	.66	18.28	-1.553	1.348	4.229	.121
resou	4.05	.48	11.85	.462	3.227	1.630	.005
commu	3.81	.68	17.85	-.726	.454	.733	.693
envir	3.84	.48	12.50	-2.553	3.775	2.768	.000
cult	4.08	.60	14.71	-.401	2.599	6.915	.032
techn	4.45	.56	12.58	-2.885	-3.038	17.552	.000
refor	4.11	.56	13.63	-.514	1.433	2.317	.314
acti	3.89	.56	14.40	-1.128	2.486	7.452	.024
inter	3.83	.72	18.80	-1.294	1.029	2.734	.255
exter	4.06	.61	15.02	-.731	2.677	7.700	.021
achi	3.97	.45	11.34	-1.245	5.040	26.951	.000
cust	4.14	.57	13.77	-.710	.849	1.225	.542
finan	3.97	.47	11.84	-.306	3.506	12.385	.002
proce	4.04	.54	13.37	-.414	2.196	4.993	.082
grow	4.00	.52	13.00	-.467	2.887	8.555	.014

**Table 2.** Factor Loadings (n = 300)

Variable	Factor Loading ( $\lambda$ )	Error ( $\theta$ )	t	R <sup>2</sup>
Operations Management Policy (OPMA)				
Goals (goals)	.52	.33	7.4	.67
Resources (resou)	.56	.38	7.87	.62
Communication (commu)	.79	.37	9.55	.63
$\rho_c = .76, \rho_v = .52$				
Corporate Environment (INEN)				
Corporate atmosphere (envir)	.56	.16	7.52	.84
Corporate culture (cult)	.71	.18	8.56	.82
Corporate technology (techn)	.54	.23	7.33	.77
$\rho_c = .85, \rho_v = .66$				
Leadership (LEAD)				
Reform Leadership (refor)	.92	.16	20.62	.84
Action Leadership (acti)	.40	.14	6.72	.86
$\rho_c = .85, \rho_v = .77$				
Satisfaction (SATIS)				
Internal satisfaction (Inter)	.95	.09	22.15	.91
External satisfaction (exter)	.98	.02	4.69	.98
$\rho_c = .97, \rho_v = .94$				
Efficiency (EFFIC)				
Goals achieve (achi)	0.60	0.34	9.87	0.66
Customer (cust)	0.51	0.34	8.16	0.66
Finance (finan)	0.73	0.36	12.21	0.64
Process (proce)	0.62	0.31	10.23	0.69
Learning and growth (grow)	0.52	0.33	8.26	0.67
$\rho_c = .84, \rho_v = .51$				

Finally, in the next step of SEM, this study used structural model to examine the effect of operations management policy, corporate environment and leadership on employee satisfaction and business efficiency. In this process, t-value and beta value are considered to check the significance of the hypotheses and the direction of the hypotheses, respectively. It is found that operations management policy has significant effect on business efficiency and

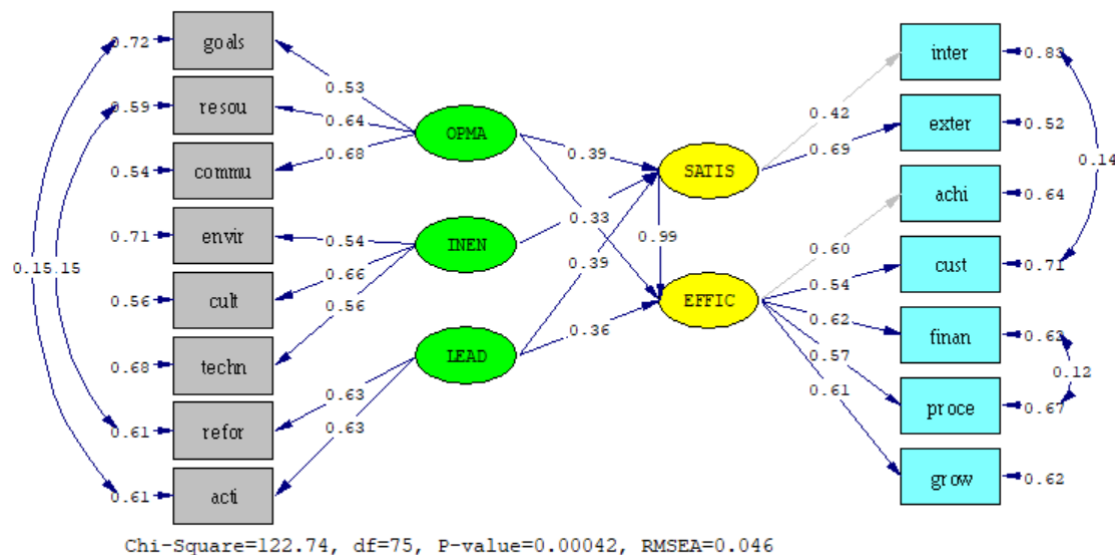
employee satisfaction. It is also found that corporate environment has significant effect on employee satisfaction. Furthermore, leadership has significant effect on employee satisfaction and business efficiency. Additionally, satisfaction has significant effect on business efficiency. Therefore, all the hypotheses are supported as the beta value of hypotheses is positive which shows direct relationship. Results are given in Table 3 and Figure 2.

**Table 3.** Parameter estimation result of direct effect coefficient, indirect effect, and total effect from adjusting model (n=300)

Dependent variable	R <sup>2</sup>	Effect	Independent variable			
			Satisfaction (SATIS)	Operations Management Policy (OPMA)	Corporate Environment (INEN)	Leadership (LEAD)
Satisfaction (SATIS)	.66	DE	-	.39*(2.86)	.34*(2.60)	.39*(2.95)
		IE	-	-	-	-
		TE	-	.39*(2.86)	.34*(2.60)	.39*(2.95)
Efficiency (EFFIC)	.91	DE	.99*(2.58)	.33*(3.05)	-	.36*(3.79)

IE	-	.39*(2.80)	.34*(2.66)	.39*(3.84)
TE	.99*(2.58)	.72*(3.46)	.34*(2.66)	.75*(3.88)

$\chi^2 = 122.74$  df = 75 p-value = .00042,  $\chi^2 / df = 1.63$ , RMSEA = .046, RMR = .015, SRMR = .045, CFI = .98, GFI = .95, AGFI = .92, CN = 261.29



**Figure 2.** Hypotheses Results Diagram

In addition to this, the current study also proposed three indirect effects based on employee satisfaction. First, the indirect effect of employee satisfaction between operations management policy and business efficiency is significant. Moreover, the mediating effect of employee satisfaction between corporate environment and business efficiency is also significant. Finally, the third mediation effect is examined between leadership and business efficiency which is also significant. Therefore, all the three indirect effects hypotheses are also supported. Finally, this study provided the r-squared value of business efficiency which is 0.91. It indicates that operations management policy, corporate environment, leadership and employee satisfaction are expected to bring 91% change in business efficiency.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

To achieve the study objective, the current study proposed various direct effect hypotheses and indirect effect hypotheses. The results of the hypotheses achieved the study of objective. As results of the hypotheses shows that operations management policy has positive effect on employee satisfaction. It indicates that better management of operations policy can have positive effect on employee satisfaction. It

has the ability to promote employee satisfaction which further lead to the business efficiency. Therefore, it has indirect effect on business efficiency with the help of employee satisfaction. Furthermore, it is found that, it also has significant positive effect directly on business efficiency. Thus, operations management policy has central importance to promote business efficiency directly as well as indirectly. Furthermore, it is observed from the results of the hypothesis that corporate environment also leading an influential role among five-star hotel businesses. It is found that corporate environment has positive role to promote employee satisfaction. The corporate environment among the five-star hotels such as corporate atmosphere, corporate culture and corporate technology has positive effect on employee satisfaction. It increases the employee satisfaction and employee satisfaction increases the business efficiency. Therefore, similar with operations management policy, corporate environment also has a significant positive influence to promote business efficiency among the five-star hotels directly and indirectly. Moreover, it is also found that leadership is also playing central role in business efficiency. It increases the employee satisfaction and business efficiency. Effective leadership causes to increase

employee satisfaction which further has positive effect on business efficiency. Therefore, to promote business efficiency among five-star hotels in Thailand, it is important to have effective leadership to promote employee satisfaction. It is concluded that operations management policy, corporate environment and leadership promotes employee satisfaction which increases the business efficiency.

More specifically, it is found that; organizational environment, leadership, employee satisfaction and operational management policy are most important to promote efficiency of the five-star hotels in Thailand. The organizational environment, leadership, satisfaction of employees, and operational management policy has influence on the efficiency of the five-star hotels in Thailand which could be focused to recover the hotel industry. The model for enhancing the efficiency of the five-star hotels in Thailand, developed by the study is called the LPESE Model, consisting of L (referring to Leadership), P (referring to Policy), E (referring to Environment), S (referring to Satisfaction), and E (referring to Efficiency).

### 5.1 Implications of the Study

The findings can serve as guidelines in formulating policies to promote the five-star hotels in Thailand by using the differences in providing services to create a unique identity for the hotels. Focusing on the policy of ensuring the highest safety of customers under the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic can promote business success. To recover the hotel industry, it is needed to promote organizational environment, leadership, employee satisfaction and operational management policy. Therefore, this study provided important insights for practitioners to enhance five-star hotel business performance.

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