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THE IMPACT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY AT KIM THAI HOTEL

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Abstract:

Every hotel's satisfaction and loyalty depend on the quality of its service. As a result, the question of service quality has long been a key research topic in the hospitality business. The study used methods such as secondary data collection and processing, expert interviews to build evaluation models, customer opinion collection, and quantitative data processing to clarify the impact of service quality aspects on loyalty. The study used correlation analysis and linear regression to show how six service quality parameters influenced client loyalty when using various Kim Thai hotel services. Among them, the security element has the most influence, while the empathy factor has the least influence on consumer loyalty to the hotel service. Among them, the security element has the most influence, as the scientific foundation for the hotel to use when implementing solutions that improve service quality in order to promote customer return intentions.

Keywords: loyalty, service quality, empathy, assurance, price

1. Introduction

Quality of service is a top priority since it is critical in meeting needs and ensuring customer satisfaction (Kelly J. Mackay, 1988) [1]. In light of the strong development of the hotel business market, the problem of boosting service quality entails increasing each hotel's competitiveness. As a result, service quality has become an important research topic, attracting the attention of numerous scholars worldwide in the hospitality industry. Several research by Kevin K.F. Wong, Cindy Kwan (2001), and Brown, J. (2002) have indicated that "*the determinant of competitiveness is the quality of service*" [2, 3]. At the same time, a business's success is dependent on a high-quality relationship with the customer, which increases customer loyalty and satisfaction (Liang Kheng and Partners,

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2010), lowers the cost of attracting new customers (Kotler & Partners, 2000), and increases client repeat purchasing behavior (Gremler and Brown, 1996) [4, 5, 6]. Thus, consumer loyalty is regarded as the "bone" of the hotel industry.

According to Keisidou, Sarigiannidis, Maditinos, and Thalassinos (2013), loyalty is vital since it "*has the ability to attract customers*" and boosts the profitability of retaining them over time [7]. To increase loyalty, each hotel must ensure that its customers are satisfied with the service given. According to Omoregie *et al.* (2019), "*increasing service quality is crucial in increasing customer satisfaction and encouraging customers to continue to increase their use of the service without costing much*" [8]. As a result, there is a strong association between service quality and client loyalty, which has a significant impact on enhancing corporate efficiency. As a result, much study has been conducted in various areas, including tourism and hospitality, to determine the relationship between service quality and consumer loyalty [9].

In this article, the team of authors selected hotels in Kim Thai to study the impact of quality of service on customer loyalty. Kim Thai is a top 3-star hotel selected by many travellers among accommodations in Thai Nguyhn. Kim Thai is located in the heart of the city, close to tourist attractions, shopping and entertainment centers, and very convenient for the movement of tourists. The hotel is constantly striving to improve the quality of its services, offering its guests a unique experience. With the goal of improving the customer experience, the technical facilities are quite good, the Kim Thai Hotel has a stable number of loyal guests with 60% of returning guests, mostly business guests [10]. So this article aims to analyze and measure the relationship between quality of service and customer loyalty at the Kim Thai hotel. The measurement results aim to clarify the level of influence of service quality factors on the center that the hotel can refer to when building a solution to improve the quality of service, keeping customers back.

2. Theoretical basis and model of research

2.1 Theory of quality of hotel service

The hotel business belongs to the service sector, the products mainly belong to intangible, invisible elements to meet the needs of customers at any time [11]. According to Nguyen Van Manh and Hoang Thi Lan Huong (2013), the concept of hotel products "*is understood as all the services and goods that enterprises offer to the market in order to meet the needs of customers for accommodation, food and other additional needs to make a profit"* [12].

Many of the authors' studies have seen the quality of service from a customer perspective. Parasuraman *et al.* (1986) define quality of service as "the degree of difference between consumer expectations of a service and their perception of the result of the service" [13]. The quality of service will be felt by the customer as satisfactory if that expectation is met and will not be satisfied if it is not met, while if exceeded it will be very satisfactory. Therefore, quality of hotel service "is the ability to be judged by a customer for a product, hotel service offered, it satisfies the needs of the guests and their expectations" [11]. Or, according to the authors Nguyen Van Manh and Hoang Thi Lan Huong (2013) the quality of hotel service in a consumer approach "is the level of satisfaction of the hotel's customers" [12].

2.2 Theory of customer loyalty

In initial research on loyalty, the authors focused on the customer behavior approach [14]. Recently, scholars have argued that customer loyalty is a continuous process that affects consumer behavior. Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) expressed this concept from the point of view of behavior and attitude. From a behavioral perspective, the authors view loyalty as *"the behavior of acquiring a product or another product"*; from an attitude point of view, it is *"considered as a priority and dependence on the product of service"* [15]. Thus, customer loyalty encompasses both aspects, attitudes and behavior, as an organic unity between positive psychological tendencies and acquiring behaviors. The concept of Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) has generalized the basic sign of loyalty, which is *"the tendency of a customer to buy, use a brand's product/service in a set of competing brands present on the market and repeat this behavior"* [16].

2.3 The relationship between quality of hotel service and customer loyalty

Cronin J. J. *et al.* (2000) found that the quality of service perceived has a direct influence on the intention of use and customer loyalty [17]. Improved quality of service increases use intentions and reduces complaints (Mandhachitara R., Poolthong. Y, 2011) [18]. Wicks and Roethlein (2009) have analyzed that increased satisfaction increases loyalty, i.e. increased returns [19].

The study by the author Nguyen Thi Mai Trang (2001) affirmed two theses about quality of service:

- 1) This is an important factor leading to customer satisfaction, helping to strengthen their loyalty to service;
- 2) Is one of the prerequisites of loyalty, helps to attract more new customers, reduce costs and enhance the positive image of the business [20].

Chen Mung Dung (2022) has developed an experimental model of the impact of the quality of audit services on customer loyalty in an independent domestic audit enterprise with five factors: Reliability; Responsiveness; Service Capacity; Empathy; Visibility [21].

2.4 Expected study model

From previous research models combined with expert opinion synthesis, the paper established the projected research model consisting of six factors (6 independent variables) as an expression of quality of service and one factor (dependent variable) of loyalty (Figure 1). Of these, six independent variables are measured by 28 observed variables and the dependent variable includes 4 observed.

The research hypotheses are:

- **Theory 1:** The quality of the hotel service expressed through the visual means positively affects the loyalty of the customer.
- **Theory 2:** The quality of hotel service is reflected in reliability, which positively affects customer loyalty.
- **Theory 3:** Quality of hotel service expressed through assurance positively affects customer loyalty.

- **Theory 4:** The quality of hotel service expressed through empathy positively affects customer loyalty.
- **Theory 5:** The quality of hotel service expressed in responsiveness positively affects customer loyalty.
- **Theory 6:** The quality of hotel service expressed through price positively affects customer loyalty.
- **Theory 7:** Quality of hotel service positively affects customer loyalty.

Tangible Hotel location H1 H₅ Reliability H₂ Response Quality of hotel service Empathy The guarantee H₃ H7 H4 Customer loyalty Source: The authors, 2023

Figure 1: The projected study model for the evaluation of customer loyalty and service quality at the Kim Thai hotel

3. Research methods

3.1 Data collection method

Secondary data is collected to establish theoretical foundations, and research models on service quality, customer loyalty and the relationship between service quality and loyalty. Since then, the study has conducted in-depth interviews with 10 experts -- researchers, hotel managers, other prestigious hotel management, travel companies that are hotel partners -- on the factors (potential changes), turning observations to assess the impact of quality of service and loyalty. The study synthesized expert opinions to construct a theoretical research model with six factors of service quality that affect customer loyalty: tangible media-HH, reliability-TC; responsiveness-Y; assurance-B; empathy-C, price-GC with 24 observed variables and a reliability-dependent scale of 4 observed.

From the model and research framework envisaged, the questionnaire was set up to gather reviews of guests using the services of the Kim Thai Hotel. The Likert scale is used to measure and differentiate customer ratings on the impact of service quality factors on customer loyalty. Sample size calculated by Bollen's formula (1998): N=n*5 (where N is the size of the sample, n is the scale for the elements or criteria) to ensure a good EFA detection factor, i.e. it requires at least 5 observations for one measurement

variable and the number of observations is not less than 100 [11]. With n being 28 observations, the poll was 160 votes. The survey was conducted by a customer who used the service at the Kim Thai Hotel. Research using a purposeful random sampling method with the desire to add some properties to the sample that match the purpose of the researcher [11]. According to this method, the study randomly selected guests who used the service from October 2023 to January 2024 to clarify the assessment of the impact of the quality of service on customer loyalty at the Kim Thai hotel.

3.2 Data analysis and processing methods

Quantitative survey data is handled using IBM SPSS Statistics 23.0 software. After clearing the data and deleting 10 invalid responses, the survey results are entered into the program to perform the measurement scale analysis procedures with Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient and the EFA discovery factor (Exploratory Factor Analysis). Following these two processes, factors that do not guarantee reliability will be removed, resulting in the official research model. Correlation and regression analysis are used to evaluate the extent to which the quality of service influences loyalty when utilizing a customer's hotel service.

4. Results of research and discussion

4.1 Identify the factors of service quality that affect customer loyalty when using hotel services

The study develops a formal research model by using Cronbach's Alpha and discovery factor analysis. The model includes six aspects of service quality that influence customer loyalty at the Kim Thai hotel.

4.1.1 Calculate Cronbach's Alpha coefficient

Cronbach's Alpha test showed that six scales with total correlation were larger than 0,3 and Cronbah's Alfa was 0,6 or higher. However, out of the 28 independent and dependent observations, only one observation variable "HH2: *Good infrastructure, trust-building*" was excluded because of the total correlation of 0,23 (< 0,3) and the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.6 or below (0,579). Therefore, this variable does not guarantee reliability and is therefore excluded from the study model. With six independent variables and 27 observed variables, the study performed a second reliability reassessment. This assessment obtained Cronbach's coefficient in the range of 0,6 – 0,8, the variable correlation factor total is greater than 0.3 so qualify for the factor analysis step of discovery.

4.1.2 Identify Discovery Factor (EFA)

EFA factor analysis is performed simultaneously with independent and dependent variables. Analysis of EFA with independent variables through the following values: KMO is 0,8342 > 0,5 with a value of 0 (Sig = 0,000) suggests that the application of factor analysis in this scale is perfectly appropriate. The Eigenvalue value is 1.122, and the

Varimax rotation and the loading coefficient is greater than 0,5 allowing to extract six groups of factors with 23 observed variables, explaining 75,265% of the data set. So, research can completely use six factors to express the information provided by other variables. The factor loading coefficient of 23 variables is greater than 0,5 so it meets the factor analysis requirement. However, the observation variable "C3: *Employees understand customer's special needs*" with factor load coefficients less than 0,5 should be excluded from the study model.

With four dependent variables, the KMO value is 0.581 greater than 0.5 and smaller than 1, Bartlett Sig = 0,000 smaller than 0,05, At the same time, the factor load coefficient in the rotating matrix of the variables is greater than 0.5 so these four variables guarantee the requirement for factor analysis. With the Eigenvalue value reflecting the explanatory factor for the variable, the standard assurance is 1.282 > 1. At the same time, this one factor explains 82,052% of all dependent variables (the total factor load radius is 82,05%).

Second-factor detection with independent and dependent variables ensures that all measurement scales and observed variables meet the requirements. Thus, after doing a Cronbach's Alpha audit and an EFA analysis, the study model evaluated the impact of quality of service on customer loyalty using the remaining six independent factors, 22 observed variables, and a dependent scale of four observations.

		HH	TC	DU	DB	DC	GC	VT	TT
нн	Pearson correlation	1	0,470**	0,475**	0,486**	0,385**	0,440**	0,485**	1
	Sig. (2 tails)		0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	
	Ν	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
тс	Pearson correlation	0,567**	1	0,475**	0,469**	0,456**	0,440**	0,551**	0,567**
	Sig. (2 tails)	0,000		0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
	Ν	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
DU	Pearson correlation	0,375**	0,475**	1	0,398**	0,391**	0,482**	0,460**	0,375**
	Sig. (2 tails)	0,000	0,000		0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
	Ν	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Pearson correlation	0,569**	0,486**	0,518**	1	0,491**	0,381**	0,482**	0,569**
DB	Sig. (2 tails)	0,000	0,000	0,000		0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
	Ν	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Pearson correlation	0,486**	0,456**	0,391**	0,391**	1	0,482**	0,489**	0,486**
DC	Sig. (2 tails)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000		0,000	0,000	0,000
	Ν	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Pearson correlation	0,585**	0,555**	0,460**	0,472**	0,489**	0,553**	1	0,585**
VT	Sig. (2 tails)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000		0,000
	Ν	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
TT	Pearson correlation	1	0,470**	0,475**	0,486**	0,385**	0,440**	0,485**	1
	Sig. (2 tails)		0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	
	Ν	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
** A significant correlation at 0.01 (2 tails).									

Table 2: Person correlation matrix

Source: Results of SPSS survey data processing, 2023.

4.2 Assess the influence of service quality on customer loyalty when using Kim Thai hotel services

Prior to the regression, the study ran a correlation analysis to determine the association between service quality and guest loyalty at the Kim Thai hotel.

4.2.1 Pearson correlation analysis (r)

The results of the r correlation analysis (Table 1) show that the Sig value is 0,000. With this value, not only does the independent variable have a linear correlation with the dependent variable, but there are also correlations between independent variables. Therefore, the relationship between the observed variables is statistically significant. When Sig is less than 0.05, the Pearson correlation factor has the symbol * or **. Analysis results showed that this pair of variables has a linear correlation at 99% reliability (1% significance = 0,01). When the Sig value is assured statistical significance will continue to analyze the r correlation coefficient. The correlation test results showed that nine independent variables had r coefficients in the range of 0,3 to 0,5 and above 0,5, so the correlations of the variables in the study model were relatively tight, so there was no possibility of multi-linear phenomena. Therefore, the correlation between variables ensures the standard for regression.

4.2.2 Multi-variable regression model

Variables after being tested ensure that the correlation requirement will be included in the MVR multi-variable regression model (Multi-Variate Regression). The F test is taken from the ANOVA false analysis table to evaluate the regression model's suitability. The Sig value of F is 0,000 < 0,05, thus rejecting the hypothesis that all regression coefficients are equal to 0 [11]. Therefore, there is a relationship between independent and dependent variables, so the regression model is compatible with the survey data system collected. In addition, the matching measure of the linear regression model is commonly used as the determination coefficient R2 (R square) and R2 Adjusted (R2 calibrated). The results of the analysis show that R2=0,678; Calibrated R2 =0,874 (Table 2) the closer to side 1, the more independent variables explain the dependent variable.

Model		Coefficient is not standardized		Translate standardized coefficient		C' -	Multi-line	
		В	Standard deviation	Beta	t	Sig.	Stay tuned	VIF
1	(Constant)	0,088	0,097		0,906	0,00		
	HH	0,002	0,454	0,251	0,345	0,00	0,131	1,398
	TC	0,010	0,053	0,119	0,184	0,00	0,271	1,436
	DU	0,244	0,063	0,135	3,863	0,00	0,132	1,668
	DB	0,334	0,062	0,295	5,389	0,00	0,129	1,547
	DC	0,004	0,060	0,014	0,064	0,00	0,146	1,684
	VT	0,045	0,044	0,186	1,026	0,00	0,252	1,757

Table 2: Multi-variable regression analysis results

Source: Results of SPSS survey data processing, 2023.

The R-value of the corrected equator of 0,678 shows that the independent variables included in the regression analysis affect 67,8% of the variability of the dependent variable, the remaining 32,2% are due to non-model variables and random number errors.

Regarding error independence: the regression model's assumptions are evaluated for nonviolent results and no multi-line phenomena since the VIF phenomenon is less than 2. In line with the research hypotheses stated in the study model (Figure 1), the Sig values are less than 0,05, and the regression coefficients are all positive, matching the initial output. That is, independent variables have a positive impact on independent variables, i.e., service quality characteristics affect loyalty positively, albeit to varying degrees (Table 3).

Examine the standardized regression equation choices to determine whether variable X has a strong or weak influence on the Y variable based on the regression coefficient. The bigger the relative value to the normalized regression factor, the greater the variable's relevance to Y, and hence the stronger the influence [11]. So, in this type of equation, the regression coefficients show the amount to which service quality characteristics influence hotel customer loyalty. Thus, the regression model evaluates the impact of characteristics on loyalty as follows:

The results of the multi-variable regression analysis showed that all six factors of service quality included in the analytical model have a positive impact on customer loyalty at the Kim Thai hotel. However, the impact of each factor of quality of service on customer loyalty at the hotel varies.

No	Scale	Impact Level (Beta Level)
1	The guarantee (DB)	0,295
2	Tangible (HH)	0,251
3	Hotel location (VT)	0,186
4	Response (DU)	0,135
5	Reliability (TC)	0,119
6	Empathy (DC)	0,014

Table 3: The extent to which scales affect customer loyalty

Source: Results of SPSS survey data processing, 2023.

The guarantee component has the highest regression factor (0,295), indicating that this quality of service factor has the greatest impact on the hotel's loyalty. Of course, clients enjoy regular workers who are educated to ensure enough expertise and professionalism, as well as courtesy and sincerity, which gives them comfort of mind. Next, the hotel location factor (0,186) has the second highest influence on customer loyalty in the analytical model since the hotel is located in the city center and is easy for tourists to reach and travel to attractions. Sympathy has the lowest regression coefficient in the

analytical model, at 0,014, indicating that it has the least influence on customer loyalty to the hotel. As a three-star hotel, guest care and personalized services are limited.

5. Conclusion

Loyalty plays a crucial role in deciding a hotel's existence. The research considers both theory and practice in order to contribute specifically to determining the variables of service quality that influence customer loyalty at the hotel. The study used a variety of methodologies to create a model for evaluating this link. Simultaneously, the study assessed the impact of service quality parameters on Kim Thai hotel loyalty. According to test results, the majority of scales are reliable. The matching variables and scales are then included in the factor analysis (EFA). The study analyzed regression and obtained the regression equation with the standardized Beta coefficient:

TT = 0.251*HH + 0.119*TC + 0.135*DU + 0.295*DB + 0.014*DC + 0.186*VT

Thus, using regression analysis, the study developed a regression equation that quantifies the impact of six service quality factors on customer loyalty to the hotel. Confidence has the greatest influence, whereas Empathy has the least influence. According to the findings of this study, the reference hotel facility provides solutions for raising the factors influencing service quality, hence contributing to improved service quality, increasing guest loyalty, and so increasing hotel profitability.

However, the results of the new research reached a certain level, if continued implementation the author will combine in-depth interviews with the management, and the staff of the Kim Thai hotel to have in-depth, specific explanations of the factors belonging to the quality of the service affect the loyalty of the customer when using the service here.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

About the Author(s)

Pham Thi Hong Nhung and Phung Thi Kim Anh are working at University of Science, Thai Nguyen University, Vietnam. They are currently doing research on the impact of service quality on Customer Loyalty.

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