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Business Practices of the Hotels and Resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the business practices of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand along with marketing, human resource, and financial management. The outcome of the business practices was also looked into and the significant relationship between the outcome and the level of business practices of the hotels and resorts of the Khrabi Province, Thailand. The descriptive correlational method of research was used in this study, with a questionnaire checklist serving as the primary instrument. The data collection instrument was validated by business and industry experts. The study found that the level of business practices of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand is "High". The outcome of the business practices of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand is "High". There is a significant relationship between the outcome and the business practices of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province Thailand. The following conclusions were reached as a result of the findings: (1) The level of business practices is "High." (2) The level of the outcome of the business practices of Khrabi Province's hotels and resorts is "High." (3) In Khrabi Province, Thailand, there is a significant relationship between the outcome and the status of hotels and resorts.

Keywords: Human resource, Outcome, Environmental sustainability, Customer satisfaction, Marketing

INTRODUCTION

The hotel industry is a service industry that contributes significantly to the country's economic development. The hotel industry includes many different types of industries, such as tourism, transportation, and food service. Every country emphasizes the importance of this type of industry, with the belief that it is a source of employment, disseminates the country's income, and promotes the country's progress, particularly in developing countries such as Thailand. It is widely acknowledged that the hotel industry contributes significantly to the country's revenue. As a result, the government and public sectors should work together to promote this type of business. As a result, the public sector would invest, while the government sector would provide support. It is complacent that the hotel industry in Thailand is generally accepted internationally, owing to hotel modernization and excellent service. The Thai people's friendliness toward foreigners facilitates the growth of this type of business. Various hotels have expanded their networks and branches with the belief that the hotel business in Thailand is still thriving because people are still eager to visit this part of the world. Furthermore, the thriving tourism industry is enticing people to invest more. These factors would result in a large income for the country.

The world has changed in a matter of months. The COVID pandemic is a historic and rapidly spreading global crisis with devastating health, economic, and social consequences in every country. It is plunging the global economy into a historic recession. During the global pandemic, businesses faced a variety of challenges, and their responses to the interference impacted their resilience as well as their chances of overcoming the crisis. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are adapting their business models to this rapidly changing environment. Service industries were particularly hard hit. The strike of pandemic paved the way to the decrease in the sales and income of businesses particularly the hotels and resorts. This kind of business was greatly affected in terms of its operations. Lockdowns and retrenchment of personnel was done as a means to address increasing expenses and maintenance of the business. Hence, addressing these problems and issues is a priority concern in order to bring them back into the limelight. According to Martin and Practikto (2022), the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on MSMEs. According to the release of the Katadata Insight Center (KIC), the majority of MSMEs (82.9%) felt the negative impact of this pandemic, and only a small portion (5.9%) experienced positive growth. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed consumer behavior and the map of business competition, which business actors need to anticipate due to activity restrictions.

The study focused on the business practices of the hotels and resorts in Krabi Province, Thailand particularly on the status of functional management in terms of marketing management, human resources management, financial management, and operations management, which will show the current management output. It is hoped that the findings of the study would benefit and help the managers of hotels and resorts in Krabi province, Thailand realize the effects of business management practices and strengthen their business by establishing a more competitive environment. The study also serves as a guide for implementing programs and activities for the improvement of their operations. Moreover, the business can adapt and change business operations to make them efficient and effective in achieving set goals and objectives.

Objectives of the Study

The study sought to ascertain the business practices of hotels and resorts in Thailand's Khrabi Province. It further determined the level of business practices of hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province in terms of marketing management, human resource management, and financial management, as well as the outcome of the hotels and resorts' business practices in terms of better quality hotel and resource management, increased employment, increased revenue, improved hotel and resort standards and service, a sustainable environment, and customer satisfaction. Finally, it looked into the significant relationship between outcome and the level of business practices of the Khrabi Province, Thailand.

Literature of the Study

On Hotels and Resorts Business Management

Quebral (2020) mentioned that with the current trends and developments in both the local and global scene, hotels and is always one of the largest hotel operations sources, and the internal and external challenges require high degrees of innovation and customization without foregoing cost and quality, hotels need to transform or innovate their products and services development approach.

On Marketing Management

According to Vassilea (2017), the ultimate driver of such organizational re-invention could be changing consumer behavior and purchase decision making patterns. Market share, brand loyalty, and distribution strength are still important marketing metrics, but marketing management decisions should not be based solely on them. Sticking to tried-and-true practices may condemn organizations to fair market positions and low competitiveness. In their study, Fiore et al. (2013) stated that small restaurant owners must develop stakeholder strategies to support annual strategic initiatives and assist in capitalizing on opportunities for growth. Small business leaders should collect all marketing insights to help forecast growth and sustainability patterns). Managers, according to King (2018), should use social media to engage current and new customers, which may lead to word-of-mouth referrals and communications.

According to Kotler et al. (2000), price is the one marketing mix element that has the most significant impact on the product because company revenue is produced by price. Price level decisions are especially important due to the fact that they affect both the sales volume and the value of the product. According to Janicic and Jankovic (2014), training owners from stakeholder organizations in areas such as sales, services, and leadership is critical when implementing a marketing plan.

Evans and Lindsay (2004) stated that store location has a strong impact on both long term and short-term planning. For the long run, the choice of a location affected the firm's overall strategy. For the short run, store location influenced the specific elements of a retail strategy mix including product, price, promotion, and so on.

On Human Resource Management

In their study, Mehwish et al. (2019) stated that the success, survival, and competitive power of organizations are linked to the commitment of their members, which is their human resources. Employees must be satisfied with their jobs in order to be committed to their organization. Employee job satisfaction is thought to be a critical prerequisite for their commitment to their organization. Human resource management practices can help firms and their employees develop a mutually beneficial relationship based on shared trust and responsibilities. This relationship is based on the "social exchange theory," which states that employees offer their services to organizations in exchange for perks and other benefits from the organizations. Pivdee (2012) found that the political

problems in the country is a major cause for the tourist to decide not to visit Thailand. It has effects on the confidence of the tourists.

In his study, Mahadeva (2014) stated that the impact of human resource management on a company's performance has come to the forefront, and as such, it has become an area that requires more attention in the field of human resources (HRM). The study's findings revealed that training, compensation, and performance appraisal all play a significant role in employees' efficiency and effectiveness. According to Kehoe and Wright (2010), perceptions of high-performance HR practice use at the job group level are positively related to all dependent variables, and affective organizational commitment partially mediates the relationship between HR practice perceptions and organizational citizenship behavior and fully mediates the relationship between HR practice perceptions and intent to stay with the organization.

On Financial Management

According to DEMBA (2013), a good financial management practice system should ensure the following quantitative characteristics are met: understandability, significance, materiality, reliability, and substance over form, carefulness, completeness, comparability, suitability, and a balance between benefit and cost, which are still lacking in most private service companies.

Furthermore, Wolmarans et al (2015) stated that one of the most significant factors contributing to SME failure is a lack of financial management skills and the application of financial management practices. The study concluded that working capital and profitability practices are far more important than balance sheet or strategic finance practices. Similarly, financial practices involving cash flow and decision making are more important than those involving planning or analysis. It is possible that, due to the high risk and volatile environment of SMEs, as well as the often underestimated challenges, financial practices that academics regard as important are not always implemented by these businesses. Financial management is one of the most important management skills for a SME, according to Watsons (2004), as cited by Wolmarans et al (2015), because it affects every aspect of the entrepreneurial venture. Financial management entails minimizing costs, increasing profits, and planning and controlling the firm's financial assets.

Organizations require financial management on a consistent basis, so they hire the best minds prepared to handle accounts (Hendayani, N. et al 2022). Accounting and marketing must effectively integrate in order to contribute to strategic marketing efforts, which is a prerequisite for profitable customer satisfaction (Gleaves et al., 2008). Integration relevance may be interface dependent (e.g., Griffin and Hauser, 1996), and because humans are emotional beings, their ability to interact and work harmoniously is dependent on their emotional capacity. We contend that the viewpoint proposed in this study is critical to maximizing the benefits of accounting-marketing integration.

According to Pradeep et al. (2014), the majority of SMME owners had a post-Grade 12 qualification and had been exposed to some financial management training but lacked the expertise or willingness to apply it to their business. 80% of owners considered financial planning to be extremely important. More than half of SMMEs hired outside accountants to

prepare accounting reports, and more than 60% hired outside accountants to interpret and use accounting data.

On Outcome

According to Fang (2018), in her study on the Impact of Hot Spring Resort Hotel Attributes on Customer Satisfaction, researchers have long been investigating customers' perception of the quality of hotel attributes and the impact of such attributes on overall customer satisfaction (OCS).

Customer loyalty is the most important issue to measure in organizations. Due to stiff competition and saturated market conditions, it is necessary to create customer loyalty. As the most important aspect of today's businesses, the world is shifting toward loyal customers from satisfied ones. Customer satisfaction, which is a major determinant of customer loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth generally advance repeat sales (Gul, R., 2014). Measuring customer satisfaction is an essential component of the effort to improve product quality, resulting in a competitive advantage for a company. According to consumer behavior theory, the customer's background, characteristics, and external stimuli influence their purchasing behaviors and levels of satisfaction. Because the availability of customer services influences customer satisfaction, the provision of quality services has become a major concern for all businesses (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991).

According to Dubrovski (2007), the consumer satisfaction category holds the primary position in marketing theory and is based on the premise that profit is made through the process of satisfying consumers' demands, i.e. achieving their satisfaction.

Evans and Lindsay (2004) offer a more comprehensive customer-based definition of quality as "meeting or exceeding customer expectations." This definition is widely used today, and it is based on the idea that customers are the ultimate judge of quality, with no other customers involved in determining quality. Customers' perceptions and expectations were recognized as critical in defining quality. Users' perceptions should be higher than expectations in order to provide higher-quality services. However, if perceptions are significantly lower than expectations, a poor-quality service will be provided.

According to Chan (2020), the positive perceived effects of festivals on the city of Vigan have a multiplier effect, resulting in sustainable tourism. However, a reasonable balance should always be maintained because, because there are numerous opportunities for profit, the negative effects can easily outweigh the benefits of participating in festival and events tourism. Festivals attract visitors, which helps a city's tourism and other business growth. Despite all of the negative effects of festivals, it has a positive impact by increasing a sense of belonging and pride, using festivals as a cultural attraction in tourism, establishing city brands, creating community well-being, and boosting economic development.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive correlational research method was used in this study. This described the business practices of the hotel and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand and correlated them to the outcome of the business practices. A total enumeration of the participants of

the study comprised 20 hotels and 30 resorts, 50 managers, 261 staff and 437 customers. The researchers constructed the questionnaire for the study. The instrument has been validated by business and industry experts.

Statistical Range	Item Descriptive Rating	Overall Descriptive Rating
4.21-5.0	Very Much Implemented (VMI)	Very High (VH)
3.41-4.20	Much Implemented (MI)	High (H)
2.61-3.40	Moderately Implemented (Mol)	Fair (F)
1.81-2.60	Least Implemented (LI)	Low (L)
1.00-1.80	Not Implemented (NI)	Very Low (VL)

The researchers sought clearance from the Ethics Review Committee (ERC) before data gathering and all research protocol in the field of study thereby be strictly followed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following are the salient findings of the study on the business practices of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand.

Table 1

Business Practices of Hotels and Resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand along Marketing Management

Marketing Management	Owners/ Managers		Staff		As a Whole	
	Mean	DR	Mean	DR	Mean	DR
Product/Service	3.90	H	4.19	H	4.14	H
Price	4.18	H	4.01	H	4.04	H
Place	4.07	H	3.98	H	3.99	H
Promotion	4.18	H	4.12	H	4.14	H
Grand Mean	4.07	H	4.05	H	4.05	H

It can be seen from the table that the level of marketing management practices of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand is "High" as shown by its mean rating of 4.05. This means that there is a high regard for the practices along marketing of their hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand.

It can be noted that the highest mean rating of 4.14 is along product/service and promotion. This means that hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand had given due importance to the offerings of their products and services and in promoting their hotels and resorts and this may be because this can contribute to the success of their organization achieving their set targets. This backs up King's (2018) study, which stated that managers should use social media to engage current and new customers, which could lead to word-of-mouth referrals and communications. On the other hand, the lowest mean rating of 3.91

described as "High" is along the place, which may be because place strategies of hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand are least considered, and this may be because they can consider locating this business where space is guaranteed.

Table 2

Business Practices of Hotels and Resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand along Human Resource Management

HR Management	Owners/ Managers		Staff		As a Whole	
	Mean	DR	Mean	DR	Mean	DR
Recruitment and Selection						
1. Recruitment Methods	3.96	H	4.03	H	4.02	H
2. Hiring Employees' Factors	4.06	H	3.96	H	3.97	H
Training and Development	3.98	H	3.92	H	3.93	H
Compensation and Motivation	4.03	H	4.06	H	4.05	H
Grand Mean	4.01	H	3.99	H	3.99	H

Table 2 shows the level of business practices of hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand along with human resource management and it is "High" as reflected by its mean rating of 3.99. This means that all indicators of human resource management are highly practiced by hotels and resorts.

The highest mean rating of 4.05 described as "High" is along compensation and motivation. This implies that hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand are properly compensated and motivated. This may be a strategy for them to help the management to achieve its objectives and to retain its employees. This finding is consistent with the findings of Mehwish et al., (2019), who stated in their study that the success, survival, and competitive power of organizations are linked to the commitment of their members, which is their human resources. The lowest mean rating of 3.93 described as "High" is along with training and development. This means that hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand has a pool of employees that are trained and developed since this area is least considered and this may be because they are hiring individuals that are experienced and has sufficient training in line with hotels and resorts management and operations.

Table 3

Business Practices of Hotels and Resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand along Financial Management

Financial Management	Owners/ Managers		Staff		As a Whole	
	Mean	DR	Mean	DR	Mean	DR
Account Management	3.96	H	3.88	H	3.89	H
Capitalization	4.07	H	4.15	H	4.13	H
Budgeting	3.90	H	4.06	H	4.03	H
Grand Mean	3.97	H	4.03	H	4.02	H

It can be seen from the table that the level of business practices of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand along with financial management is “High” as shown by its mean rating of 4.02. This means that hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand properly manage their finances. As a whole, the highest mean rating of 4.13 described as “High” is along capitalization. This means that capitalization is prioritized by the hotels and resorts and this may be because this can affect the financial performance of the business. Meanwhile, the lowest mean rating of 3.89 described as “High” is along account management. This implies that account management is least considered since their transactions are only dealing with one account which is on a cash basis.

Table 4

Outcome of the Business Practices of the Hotels and Resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand

Outcome	Owners/ Managers		Staff		Customers		As a Whole	
	Mean	DR	Mean	DR	Mean	DR	Mean	DR
Better quality of hotels and resorts management	4.10	H	3.93	H	-	-	3.96	H
Increased employment	3.99	H	3.92	H	-	-	3.93	H
Increased revenue	4.04	H	3.96	H	-	-	3.97	H
Improve hotel and resort standards and service	3.83	H	3.99	H	-	-	3.97	H
Sustainable Environment	4.03	H	4.09	H	-	-	4.08	H
Customer Satisfaction	-	-	-	-	4.01	H	4.01	H
Grand Mean	4.00	H	3.98	H	4.01	H	3.99	H

As a whole, the level of the outcome of the business practices of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand is “High” as backed up by its mean rating of 3.99. This means that good management of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi province, Thailand could lead to a greater chance of having a higher outcome for both internal and external environments. When the items are taken singly it can be noted that “sustainable environment” yielded the highest mean rating of 4.08 described as “High”. This implies that having a good business operation can create a more sustainable environment that is conducive to doing business. In contrast, the lowest mean rating of 3.93 described as “High” is “Increase Employment” and this may be because the pandemic causes a decrease in employment since hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand were greatly affected.

Better quality of hotels and resorts management

It can be observed that on the level of the outcome of the hotels and resorts management practices in terms of a better quality of hotels and resorts management, the respondents as a whole obtained an overall mean rating of 3.96 described as “High”, 4.10

for the owner/managers, 3.93 for the staff both described as "High". This implies that there is a high level of outcome along with better quality hotels and resort management.

Increased employment

It can be observed that on the level of the outcome of the hotels and resorts management practices in terms of increased employment, the respondents as a whole obtained an overall mean rating of 3.93 described as "High", 3.99 for the owner/managers, 3.92 for the staff both described as "High". This indicates that there is a high level of outcome associated with increased employment.

Increased revenue

On the level of the outcome of hotel and resort management practices in terms of increased revenue, the respondents as a whole received an overall mean rating of 3.97 described as "High," 4.04 for the owner/managers, and 3.96 for the staff, both described as "High." This implies that good management practices of hotels and resorts in Khrabi province, Thailand could result in increased revenue and this may be because of satisfied and repeated customers.

Improved hotel and resort standards and service

It can be observed that on the level of the outcome of the hotels and resorts management practices in terms of improving hotel and resort standards and service, the respondents as a whole obtained an overall mean rating of 3.97 described as "High", 3.83 for the owner/managers, 3.99 for the staff both described as "High". This means that good management practices of hotels and resorts could lead to improved standards and service and this may be because the management had implemented means and ways of doing things in terms of its operation.

Environmental sustainability

It can be seen that on the level of the outcome of the hotels and resorts management practices in terms of environmental sustainability, the respondents as a whole received an overall mean rating of 3.98 described as "High," 4.00 for the owner/managers, and 3.98 for the staff, both described as "High." This means that the hotels and resorts in Thailand's Khrabi province have achieved a high level of environmental sustainability.

Customer Satisfaction

On the level of customer satisfaction with the management practices of hotels and resorts, the customer respondents as a whole received an overall mean rating of 4.01 described as "High." This means that there is a high level of satisfaction among customers of hotels and resorts in Khrabi province, Thailand, and this could be because the hotels and resort management satisfied and met their expectations, needs, and wants.

Table 5

Output of Simple Correlation analysis Illustrating Relationship between the Status and Outcome of the Hotels and Resorts Management Practices in Krabi province, Thailand

Variables	Pearson's correlation coefficient (r)	Sig
Overall (n=311) Business Practice vs Outcome of Business Practice	0.206**	.000
Owner/Manager (n=50) Business Practice vs Outcome of Business Practice	0.520**	.000
Staff (n=261) Business Practice vs Outcome of Business Practice	0.134*	.031

Strong positive associations between the status and outcome of the hotels and resorts management practices in Krabi province were detected in the analysis of both groups ($r = 0.206$, $r = 0.000$), owner/manager ($r = 0.520$, $r = 0.000$) and staff ($r = 0.134$, $r = 0.031$). The result implies that the relationship between the higher status of the hotels and resorts management practices drives a better outcome of hotels and resort management in Krabi province, Thailand. In any business, the outcome and the success generally are resulted from the level of business practices covering various considerations. Strategic management and innovation development have become emerging factors in the hospitality industry, particularly the hotel and resort sector. The new services with innovation are highly recommended for a new service development of hotels and resorts in terms of management innovation, communication innovation, service range innovation, and support innovation. This finding is supported by Chittihaworn et al. (2011), who stated that in the case of SME businesses in Thailand, business characteristics, management and innovation, products and services, customer and market, the way of doing business and cooperation, resources and finance, strategy, and external environment all influence business success.

CONCLUSIONS

The following were the conclusions of the study: There was “High” business practices of hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand. The outcome of hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand was “High”. The outcome and the status of hotels and resorts in Khrabi Province, Thailand, have a significant relationship.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following were the recommendations of the study: The hotels and resorts in Khrabi province, Thailand may send their employees to training programs and seminars in the field of hotel and resort operations and services. A design of training and development plan for the organization's employees may be prepared and this could be an avenue for them to increase and update their knowledge and know-how and could possibly contribute to the

improvement of services of the hotels and resorts in Khrabi province leading to more customers. Innovation of strategies to various pricing strategies to fit with different groups of customers and the strategies based on research or forecasting results may be considered. A regular launching of marketing campaigns and promotions using internet technology to increase visibility such as websites or social media that are popular among the target groups of customers. Along Human Resource Management, applying internet technology to support recruitment and selection for the job application may be considered such as online job interview for the convenience of both application and HR officers. For small-hotels where the budget for training is limited, a mentoring system could be applied. Along Financial Management, developing financial management systems for business practice and developing the guidelines and code of practice for the standard financial management may be considered. Regularly monitoring financial status of the business and evaluating the existing financial plans. Along Reviewing, the monthly performances and analyzing the problems are effectively solved. Creating or adopting internet-based platforms to engage with customers and retrieving feedback and recommendation for further improving services and operations. Enhancing collaborations among employees at all levels to support a smooth operation. Implementing to get certified by standardization agencies to elevate working standards and to build the hotels/resorts' image and reputation. They may have an approach to sustainability and this can be done through, first, saving cost and expense while remaining standard of service quality. Investing in better operational procedures and emerging environmental technologies can help with cost-cutting and efficiency strategies. Second, seeking for and creating economic incentives to engage and to strengthen partnership of hotel business. Third, becoming a 'green hotel' by incorporating environmental management practices into effective resource utilization, such as reducing power consumption, conducting CSR programs, reducing water use and plastic use in hotels, and so on, as well as pollution reduction through the establishment of waste and wastewater treatment facilities and handling. Also, environmental health and safety should also be involved. Lastly, maximizing customer's experience and satisfaction by maintaining standard of service quality and enhancing corporate good governance to build up brand recognition, image, and reputation as well as trust of partnership. A similar study should be conducted to other businesses in Khrabi province, Thailand to determine the status of their management.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

This study was reviewed and approved by the University of Northern Philippines Ethics Review Committee. Ethical principles observed in the study include the conflict of interest, principle of informed consent, principle of privacy and confidentiality, principle of vulnerability, recruitment, benefits, compensation, and community considerations.

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