

CUSTOMERS SATISFACTION AND CORE COMPETENCY ON SERVICE-MINDED AMONG FRONTLINE STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT:

Background: Regarding to the national strategies, the changing in public sector in order to promote innovative and effective response to public demand, to be trusted worldwide, to become good governance under public conscious and to sustain prosperity are the core competencies of Thailand 4.0 reform. Apparently, quality management system and individual development plan are tools that allow organizations to identify the environment both inside and outside in response to the changing in an increasingly competitiveness environment. This research focused on customer satisfactions on service-minded and core competencies of frontline staff in the Department of Medical Sciences, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. The evaluation depends on the scope of questions in order to measure both internal and external perspective.

Methods: The research was a cross-sectional descriptive study with 174 customers. Thirty frontline staff and 3 key executives of the Department of Medical Sciences, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand were recruited as participants. The questionnaires were separated into 2 groups of participants: customer and staff. The data collection was performed from May to June 2017. Descriptive analysis and Pearson's Chi-square test for statistic were used. Semi-structured questionnaire was used in the in depth interview for the core competencies of service-minded.

Results: There were 110 (63.2%) male customers and 64 (36.8%) female customers. Most of them were age 30-39 years old. About 118 (68.0%) of customers graduated at the university level. Most of customers 154 (89.0%) have been working for private sectors. The highest strongly satisfy was providing onsite services; and the highest strongly confidence to frontline staff was working faithfully. Out of 30 frontline staff, 25 (83.3%) frontline staff were female; and 5 frontline staff (17.0%) were male. Most of frontline staff were age 20-29 years old; and they obtained bachelor's degree. The most frontline staff 19 (63.3%) were government employees. From the in-depth interview of frontline staff, they should be encouraged to improve service mind.

Conclusion: Regarding to core competencies on service-minded, the highest level of customer satisfaction and confidence in quality of services in subject areas of process/provided procedure and service to the public interest were found. In addition, the highest level in satisfaction to human resources of frontline staff was found in subject areas of human resource (HR) efficiency. The customer satisfactions on service-minded and human resources satisfactions of frontline staff were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Regarding in-depth interview, key executives supposed that frontline staff should make service minded individuals as the priority task.

Keywords: Core competency; Customer satisfaction; Quality of service; Human resource management; Thailand

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INTRODUCTION

The development of human resources is important for the organization. At present, Thai civil

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service have revised classification system for human resource management positions according to the job description to improve the career path and to compensate works based on the value of responsibility[1]. Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) has 2 previous strategies: to develop and to improve the performance of civil servants' career paths. This is performed by 1) performing assessment together with the chief and subordinate 2) providing an evident career path and succession planning 3) showing transparency and fairness evaluation along with public communication efficiency [2]. Therefore, competency is extremely important. It can be defined in the vision, mission, goals associated with the responsibilities of personnel. Referred to the Prime Minister announcement of the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan, B.E. 2560-2564 (2017-2021. A.D.) the 20-year national strategy covered six sub-strategies. Two main purposes of those 6 strategies are to improve human capital with potential and to supplement the good governance of public sector for efficiency and effectiveness in Thailand 4.0 reform [3]. Therefore, OCSC has made a strategy in the period of 20 years B.E.2560-2579 (2017-2026. A.D.) to support the vision and national strategies. The strategies were defined by the change in human resource management.

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for human resource development has been prepared to evaluate core competency in 5 areas: 1) the achievement of organization 2) service minded 3) career expertise 4) adhering to moral state of mind and 5) ethic [3]. The bureaus of the Department of Medical Sciences were required to prepare a performance report evaluation. The strategic planning and core competency with the changes of organization and human resource for quality management system and good governance are tools that allow organizations to recognize and to understand the environment both inside and outside; it also adapt to the change effectively[4]. The core competencies are the involvement of staff at all levels according to the principles of strategic planning and the quality of public administration, with the analysis of the context and the environment both inside and outside the Department of Medical Sciences. SWOT Analysis is used to analyze and assess the state of organization including a focus on staff, customers and internal stakeholders and government policies. The evaluation depends on the scope of questions in order to measure the internal and external perspective. The service mind status of

the Department of Medical Sciences has been founded responsible for drug quality control, vaccine production, medical laboratory diagnosis, and food analysis. The Department of Medical Sciences realizes the importance of providing the quality of public service in order to satisfy quality of service, good relationship between public sectors, stakeholders and customers[5].

METHODOLOGY

Population and sample group

This research was a cross-sectional descriptive study. The inclusion criterion were customers, frontline staff, executive management who involved in the significant service operations of the Department of Medical Sciences, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. The sample size was determined at 95% confidence level, $\alpha = 0.05$ in the total number of 174 customers from the actual total number of 4,102 companies. Thirty frontline staff were selected from 2,291 staff who works in providing service department at the center. Fifteen Regional Medical Sciences Centers, and 3 key executives were selected from 39 executives who are working in providing service with potential criteria at department of the Department of Medical Sciences.

Measurement tool

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of 2 parts surveying 2 groups of participants; 1) frontline staff groups survey with competency of frontline staff questionnaire 2) customer groups survey with quality of service questionnaire at the Department of Medical Sciences, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. The questionnaire survey with post-intervention evaluation in service was gathered. It was pretested to evaluate the clarity and sequence of content before the actual survey among 30 persons with similar characteristics to the survey participants.

Data collection

Semi-questionnaire was used as research instrument to collect the data. In-depth interview was employed to gain additional information. Participants were frontline staff and customer of the Department of Medical Sciences, Ministry of Public Health. There were follow up/probe questions, closed-end and open-ended questions. Three key executives of the Department of Medical Sciences were selected from their work place. The data collection was done from May to June, 2017.

Table 1 Customer satisfaction and confidence in quality of services (N=174)

	Total sample	Level of satisfaction								p-value
		Strongly satisfy		Satisfy		Neutral		Dissatisfy		
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Gender										0.508
Male	110	30	27.3	42	38.2	23	20.9	15	13.6	
Female	64	15	23.4	31	48.4	13	20.3	5	7.8	
Age (years)										0.004
20 - 29	50	0	0.0	37	74.0	2	4.0	11	22.0	
30 - 39	75	36	48.0	10	13.3	21	28.0	8	10.7	
40 - 49	25	1	4.0	11	44.0	12	48.0	0	0.0	
50 - 59	24	7	29.2	15	62.5	1	4.2	1	4.2	
Educational level										0.000
Undergraduate	30	0	0.0	26	86.7	0	0.0	4	13.3	
Graduate	118	36	30.5	36	30.5	31	26.3	15	12.7	
Postgraduate	26	9	34.6	11	42.3	5	19.2	1	3.8	
Occupation										0.013
Government agency	10	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	100.0	0	0.0	
Private sector	154	43	27.9	58	37.7	33	21.4	20	13.0	
Educational institution	10	2	20.0	5	50.0	3	30.0	0	0.0	
Position										0.000
Employee/Officer	149	45	30.2	57	38.3	27	18.1	20	13.4	
Senior manager (above director)	10	0	0.0	10	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Middle management (head of group)	5	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	
Lecturer/Researcher/Academic	5	0	0.0	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	
Student	5	0	0.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Request of service										0.000
1 st time	10	0	0.0	10	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	
2-10 times/year	123	38	30.9	48	39.0	17	13.8	20	16.3	
>10 times/year	41	7	17.1	15	36.6	19	46.3	0	0.0	
Reason of request										0.000
Reliable result	78	35	44.9	23	29.5	20	25.6	0	0.0	
Law enforcement	60	15	25.0	25	41.7	30	50.0	0	0.0	
Provided by this department	20	5	25.0	10	50.0	5	25.0	0	0.0	
Others	16	10	62.5	5	31.3	1	6.3	0	0.0	

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to describe including frequency, percentage, mean, median, range and standard deviation. Chi-square statistic test with 0.05 statistical significance level was used to determine the relationship between customer satisfactions on service-minded and human resources satisfaction of frontline staff. SPSS statistics version 16 was employed for all data analysis

Ethical consideration

The proposal was approved by the Ethics Review Committee for Research Involving Human Research Subjects, Health Science Group no.097/2560 in 11 May 2017. This research acknowledged the Department of Medical Sciences' customers and internal stakeholders for the purpose of study before performing questions. The objectives wrote in the form of permission before

proceeding the study.

RESULTS

The customer satisfactions on service-minded

The demographic of customers are shown in Table 1. Out of 174 customers, 110 customers (63.21%) were male; and 64 customers (36.79%) were female. Most of customer were age 30-39 years old 75 (43.10%); and they graduated from the university, 118 (67.82%). Majority of most customers have been working for private sectors, 154 (88.50%); and they were employee/officer, 149 (85.64%). The first part was satisfaction with the quality of service customers; it showed the highest strongly satisfy in providing onsite services such as queue, etc. with frontline staff. The second part was confidence in the quality of service customers; it showed the highest strongly confidence to frontline staff in the area of working faithfully.

Table 2 Frontline staff survey on human resources satisfaction (N=30)

	Total sample	Level of satisfaction										p-value
		Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Unknown		
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Gender												0.047
Male	5	1	20.0	3	15.0	1	6.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Female	25	3	12.0	11	91.7	3	3.3	3	12.0	5	41.7	
Age (years)												0.553
20 - 29	19	4	21.1	9	42.8	3	7.0	1	5.3	2	9.5	
30 - 39	9	0	0.0	4	44.4	1	11.1	2	22.2	2	22.2	
40 - 49	1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	11.1	
50 - 59	1	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Educational level												0.553
Undergraduate	1	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Graduate	24	3	12.5	11	88.0	4	4.5	2	8.3	4	44.4	
Postgraduate	5	1	20.0	2	10.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	11.1	
Position												0.011
Government employee	2	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	11.1	
Temporary worker	9	0	0.0	3	33.3	0	0.0	3	33.3	3	33.3	
Civil servant	19	4	21.1	10	47.5	4	8.4	0	0.0	1	11.1	
Work experiences												1.000
Less than 1 year	5	1	20.0	2	10.0	1	10.0	0	0.0	1	11.1	
1-3 years	25	3	12.0	12	100.0	3	3.0	3	12.0	4	44.4	

However, the level of satisfaction was 0-5 levels which could be rated as 4.51 – 5.00 very high, 3.51 - 4.50 high, 2.51 - 3.50 moderate, 1.51 - 2.50 low, 1.00 – 1.50 very low, and 0.00 - 0.99 no confidence/unknown.

The human resources satisfaction of frontline staff

The demographic of frontline staff are shown in Table 2. Out of 30 frontline staff, 25 frontline staff (83.33%) were female; and 5 frontline staff (16.67%) were male. Most of frontline staff were age 20-29 years old 19 (63.34%) and obtained bachelor's Degree frontline staff, 24 (80.00%). The most frontline staff were government employee, 19 (63.33%). The satisfaction with human resource management frontline staff was the encouragement to career advancement.

According to the significant of Chi-square test, there was a relationship between customer satisfactions on service-minded and human resources satisfaction of frontline staff. Relationship between both variables was identified as statistically significant ($p>0.001$). The study found that there was no relationship between customer satisfactions on service-minded and human resources satisfaction of frontline staff with a statistically significant ($p>0.001$).

However, there was 0-4 levels of frontline staff satisfaction with human resource management could be rated as 3.51 - 4.0 very high, 2.51 - 3.50 high, 1.51 - 2.50 low, 1.00 – 1.50 very low, and 0.00 - 0.99 unknown.

In-depth interview with 3 key executives of the Department of Medical Sciences

In-depth interview, the key executives thought that frontline staff should be divided into two parts of service: external customers and internal customers. For external customer, the priority of core competencies was service mind. For internal customers, the frontline staff already had five competencies; but it had not been developed for 30 years.

DISCUSSION

In term of customer satisfactions on service-minded, customers rated the highest strongly satisfy on providing onsite services of quality of service such as queue with frontline staff and rated the highest strongly confidence of quality of service in frontline staff on working faithfully; followed by clean and suitable property, appropriate attire and provide service without discrimination. The requirement for the organization was to provide the service as convenience as possible which was consistent with the concept of satisfaction and confidence in quality of services [6]. The term of service refers to the heart of helping facilitate expenditure of work, to serve and provide great hospitality to others' needs. A heart above services allow others to benefit themselves and their work that serve the customers satisfaction [7]. The customers' dissatisfactions were ready and willing to help of frontline staff, the speed of service within the specified period and the open channels of

feedback on services due to the large number of customers with the low number of frontline staff and miscommunication.

The human resources satisfaction of frontline staff was the encouragement to career advancement [8]. The result was consistent with the concept of core competency management [9]. Human skill was the ability to work effectively as members of group and teamwork which was required in every level core competency in the incorporation of knowledge, personnel, monetary and non-monetary in an organization [10]. The concept of Enginoglu and Arikan [10] mentioned that these properties are bases of organization's strategic competitive situation. Organizational core competencies are important measurement for the organization strategic management procedure. According to the relationship between customer satisfactions on service-minded [11], the study found that there were statistically significant differences between age, educational level, occupation, position, request of service, reason of request and customer satisfactions on service-minded ($p > 0.001$). Besides, the relationship between human resources satisfaction of frontline staff on service-minded, there were statistically significant differences between gender, position and frontline staff satisfaction in human resources on service-minded ($p > 0.001$). The highest rate of satisfaction the encouragement to career advancement followed by human resources plans and policies, acknowledged skills of staff and welfare. Staff are satisfied with the benefits and facilities provided by the government. The lowest rate of dissatisfactions were database depicted in information system for human resource management followed by decisions of the senior management and evaluation of the performance.

Regarding to in-depth interview, the key executives thought that the core competency of frontline staff in service-minded should include service minded, integrity and expertise; and service-minded was the priority to be improved. The problem might be the frontline staff could not understand and response customer needs. The customer expectations about services from the Department of Medical Sciences was high in term of the staff's response to customers' needs and expectations in order to gain first impression from customers [12].

CONCLUSION

Core competencies on service-minded is based

on customer satisfactions. Majority of the customers were male between the ages of 30-39 years old, obtained education at graduate level and work as employees/officers at private sectors. Most of respondents received service 2-10 times/year for food, water, ice and drink. The highest level of satisfaction was found in subject area of process/provide procedure. The highest level of confidence in the quality of service was found in subject area of service to the public interest.

Core competencies on service-minded base on in human resources management satisfaction of frontline staff [13], the majority of the frontline staff were female between the ages of 20-29 years old, graduated from bachelor's degree and work as government employee for 1-3 years. The highest level of satisfaction was found in subject area of the HR efficiency. The outcomes of the level of satisfaction were different; and the database should be improved in term of accuracy, currently and practically. The decisions of the senior management in the areas of human resources, such as salaries, appointment, transferring and development based on the integrity, ability and work experience, and evaluation of the performance can be classified/ split-level performance clearly.

LIMITATION

A cross-sectional research was an observational study with biased sampling. As the sample size was small and not all information revealed by staff, this could create bias in the study. The data collection was done in such a short time, there could be missing information.

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