

**INVESTIGATING THE FACTORS THAT DETERMINE
EMPLOYEES' LEVELS OF SATISFACTION AND THE EFFECT OF
COVID PANDEMIC ON HOTEL EMPLOYEES' MOTIVATION**



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entitled
**INVESTIGATING THE FACTORS THAT DETERMINE
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Ratsinee Taechaubol

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ABSTRACT

This thematic paper aims to explore the various factors that influence employees' satisfaction levels in the hospitality industry, with a specific focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on hotel employees' motivation. The paper reviews relevant literature on employee satisfaction and motivation, and also discusses how the pandemic has affected the hospitality industry and its workforce.

The paper employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing interviews using an in-depth interview technique and open-ended questions to collect data from hotel employees. The findings reveal that several key factors, such as the hotel's brand, salary, coworker relations, passion for hospitality, service-oriented work, and work itself, incentives and rewards, working conditions, career growth opportunities, and responsibility, significantly influence employees' satisfaction levels in the hospitality industry. The paper also identifies the challenges and changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, including reduced job security, increased workload, decreased compensation, and changes in work-life balance, which have affected hotel employees' motivation levels.

The paper further discusses the implications of these findings for hotel managers and provides recommendations for improving employees' satisfaction and motivation during and post-pandemic. These recommendations include maintaining a strong brand image, providing competitive compensation and benefits, fostering positive coworker relations, providing training and development opportunities, offering clear career paths and development plans, providing opportunities for advancement and promotion, as well as solving the employees' meal problem in the staff canteen. The paper concludes with suggestions for future research in this area, highlighting the need for ongoing investigation into the factors that determine employee satisfaction and motivation in the hospitality industry, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

KEY WORDS: Employees' levels of satisfaction / Motivation factor / COVID-19 pandemic / Hotel's employees

43 pages

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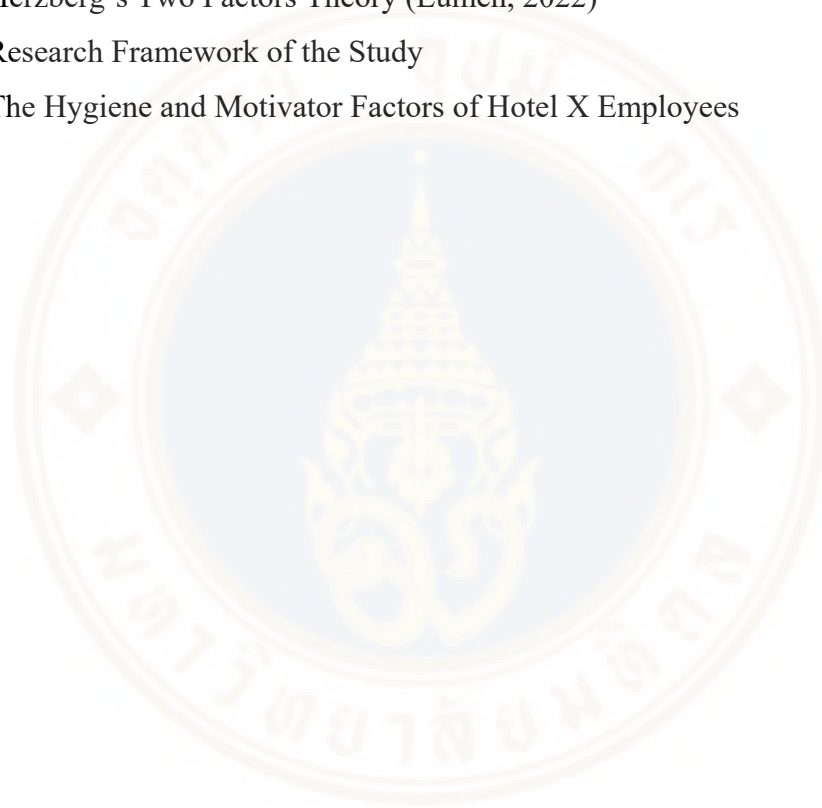
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Tourism and hospitality are significant sectors in various countries because they create jobs and lower the unemployment rate, which are crucial to the development of many nations. Thailand is one of the most well-known tourist destinations, especially Bangkok, which is the capital city, and also because of the recognition for amazing beaches and natural surroundings in the South and East of Thailand, a variety of ecotourism tourist activities in the North of Thailand, the friendliness of the Thai people, and its extensive historical landmarks. The hotel industry, which consists of hotels, resorts, and guesthouses, is closely related to and plays a significant role in the broader tourism industry, in which tourism is one of the key drivers in Thailand's economy. Therefore, evidently, a significant part of Thailand's GDP comes from the tourism sector, which in 2019 Thailand contributed THB1.03 trillion, or 6.1%, to the country's GDP. As reported by Krungsri Bank research data, the nationwide occupancy rate, including international and domestic tourism, increased to an average of 68.8% from 2015 to 2019 (Lunkam, 2021). However, in 2020, the hotel and tourism businesses globally were suddenly faced with the huge impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which paused the whole hospitality and tourism businesses, resulting in a sharp decrease in average occupancy rates among tourists.

Hotel X is a large luxury five-star hotel in the heart of Bangkok, Thailand. The hotel is positioned to provide high-quality products and services that exceed customers' expectations. As a result, the hotel's employees in each department are very significant because they are the ones who deliver premium service to the guests. Unfortunately, unfavorable conditions, including low compensation and labor-intensive work, are key characteristics of the hospitality industry. Acknowledging and comprehending the hotel worker's motivation is becoming an increasingly crucial issue, particularly in the hospitality

sector, where turnover is high, labor is intensive, and remuneration is poor (Kusluvan, 2021). Thus, low levels of job satisfaction make it even more difficult and challenging for employees to deliver quality service, which might lead to customer satisfaction problems in the hotel. The organization, in this case the hotel, should retain the hotel's workforce and deliver excellent services by inspiring and motivating the employees and keeping them satisfied (Hekman & Lashley, 2018). In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic can also lead to the heightened fear of hotel employees about health issues such as the COVID-19 infection, stress, anxiety, and depression, which have negative consequences for employee turnover (Teng et al., 2021).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of factors that impact the hotel's employees job satisfaction and employees' motivation during the effect of COVID-19 pandemic among luxury five-star hotel employees in different departments. Job satisfaction is an important factor in employee retention, performance, and overall organizational success, and it is essential for organizations to understand what motivates their employees. This study will examine the impact of various motivational factors such as salary, recognition, career advancement opportunities, job security, and work-life balance on job satisfaction, etc.

The scope of the study is "To identify the factors that impact the hotel's employees job satisfaction and motivation during the effect of COVID-19 pandemic" which the research questions will focus on:

Research questions 1: What factors motivate hotel employees to work in hotel X?

Research questions 2: How does the covid pandemic influence employees' motivation at hotel X?

To respond to the research question in this thematic paper, the qualitative method is used for collecting the data by interviewing the hotel's employees individually. The information that will appear in this paper will be the true story and direct experience of

the hotel's workforce. Numerous theoretical frameworks and concepts relating to the study topic are discussed in the literature review chapter to explain more about human motivation, which is based on the level of job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and employee turnover intention and retention. Finally, the last part of this paper will provide the conclusion and recommendation on how to motivate and increase the level of employees' job satisfaction in the hotel industry.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to provide information on the existing literature that is related to this thematic paper, including knowledge gathered from prior research such as academic journals and books. To understand more about the relevant fundamental knowledge and specific topics, including the hospitality industry, employee motivation, job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Herzberg's two factors theory, employee turnover intention, and employee retention.

2.1 Hospitality Industry

Slattery (2002) mentions that the primary goal and objective of hospitality is to create relationships between providers (hosts) and receivers (guests) that encourage the exchange of both tangible and intangible goods and services. Moreover, to have a better comprehension in hospitality operations and activities, we need to know the provision of accommodation, food and beverage which illustrate an act of friendship, forging associations that bind individuals, hosts and guests, involved in extending hospitality together (Slattery, 2002, pp. 1–3). According to the study by Brotherton (2008), it is difficult to identify the hospitality industry because of its size and its role in various communities. Even focusing only on the hotel sector, there are many types of businesses, for instance, luxury hotels, resort hotels, small hotels, and guesthouses, but the major hotel provision in the hospitality context is the business that can provide and meet the physiological requirements in terms of shelter and body comfort. Moreover, combinations of food and beverage services can be provided besides the accommodation (Brotherton, 2008, pp. 6–7).

2.2 Employee Motivation

Organizations should study employee motivation because it is a fundamental issue that can affect employee performance levels and turnover rates. Furthermore, the top managers in the hotel will be able to increase subordinate satisfaction over time if they can please their workforce by recognizing their fundamental motivations (Hekman & Lashley, 2018, p. 115). Dobre (2013, p. 54) describes motivation as an effective measure for enhancing behavior and tendencies in which the motivation is an inner human desire to fulfill an unsatisfied need and successfully achieve a certain specific goal. It starts at the basic level, which is the physiological desire for things such as food, water, air, shelter, clothing, and rest.

2.3 Job Satisfaction

The traditional concept of job satisfaction refers to a consequence of a non-regulatory mood tendency. Later, new research in an article called “Measuring the Job Satisfaction of Industrial Salesmen” by Churchill et al. explains that job satisfaction is a fundamental principle that requires characteristics of the job and aspects of the work environment. It has five dimensions of work-related affection, involving supervisors, job position, promotion opportunities, workmates, and compensation. (as cited in Zhu, 2013, pp. 293–294). According to Aziri (2011, pp. 77–80), job satisfaction is a combination of positive or negative worker attitudes. The levels of job satisfaction can range from the negative side or unfavorable attitudes, which indicate job dissatisfaction, to the positive side or favorable attitudes, which lead to job satisfaction.

2.4 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Lawler & Porter (1967) mentioned in their research that intrinsic rewards, extrinsic rewards, and perceived equitable rewards have a relationship with job satisfaction, Figure 2.1.

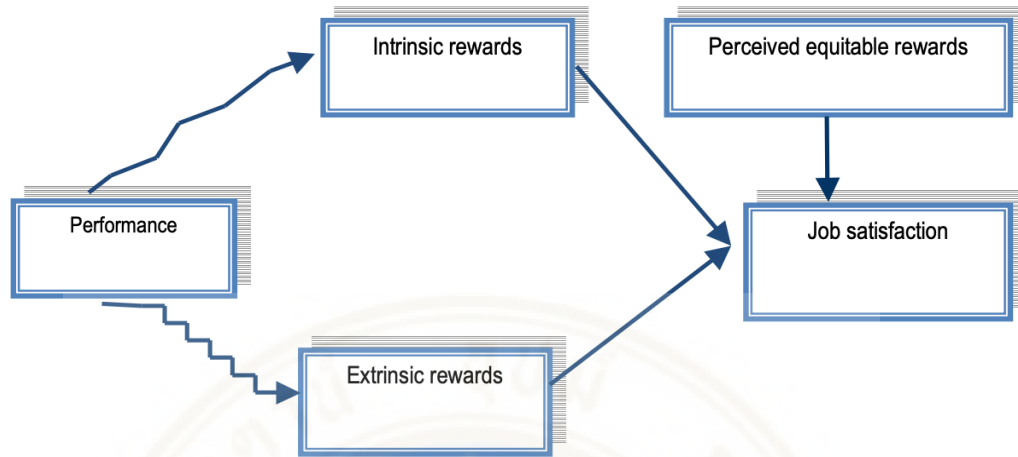


Figure 2.1: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Rewards (Lawler & Porter, 1967)

Intrinsic and extrinsic are the two types of motivational variables that might have an impact on employees. Intrinsic motivation occurs when people do the activity because it is internally rewarding, which is related to the interest and enjoyment of the task itself, such as fun, enjoyment, purpose, growth, passion, self-expression, and curiosity. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation occurs when people do the activity because they aim for external rewards in return, such as promotions, pay raises, bonuses, benefits, prizes, perks, and winning (Hekman & Lashley, 2018, p. 115).

2.5 Herzberg's Two Factors Theory

One approach for identifying internal elements that influence employees' levels of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction is Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, often known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory.

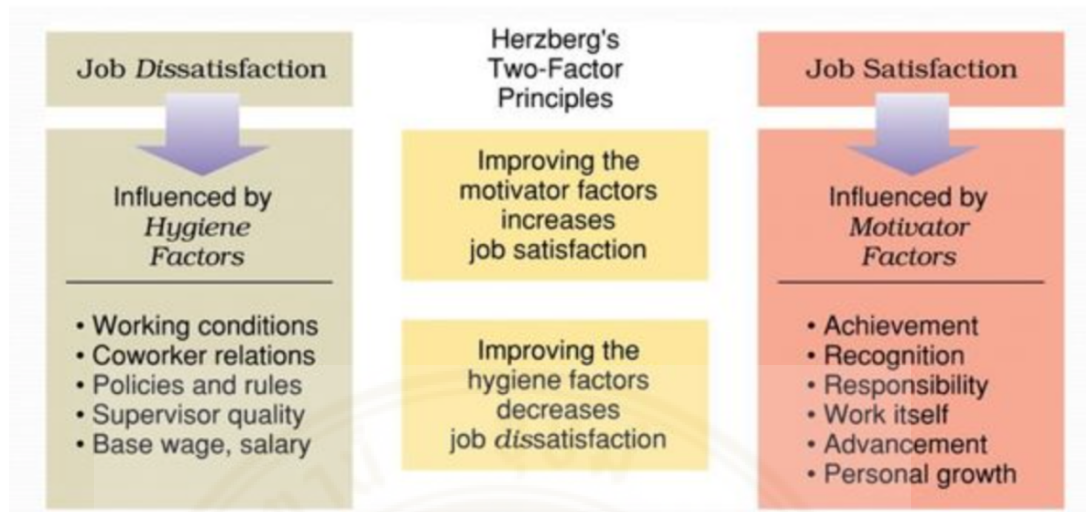


Figure 2.2: Herzberg's Two Factors Theory (Lumen, 2022)

According to Figure 2, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory divides into two parts, which are "Hygiene Factors" and "Motivator Factors". The job dissatisfaction side will be influenced by hygiene factors, which consist of working conditions, coworker relations, policies and rules, supervisor quality, and base wage and salary. Hygiene factors are considered essential for maintaining a reasonable level of job satisfaction and are necessary to prevent job dissatisfaction, but they are not sufficient to motivate employees to perform at their best. On the other hand, the job dissatisfaction side will be influenced by motivator factors including achievement, recognition, responsibility, work itself, advancement, and personal growth. The improvement of hygiene factors will decrease job dissatisfaction but cannot result in job satisfaction. In simple words, hygiene factors help employees have less job dissatisfaction, but it cannot make employees have job satisfaction. Therefore, to increase job satisfaction, employees need to have motivating factors to boost job happiness. Motivator factors are considered to be key drivers of employee motivation and can help promote engagement, productivity, and commitment to the organization. To obtain objectives like achievement, recognition, and development, people are encouraged to put in more work and perform at a higher level (Sabri et al., 2019, p. 15).

2.6 Employee Turnover Intention

Unfavorable conditions including low compensation and a labor-intensive nature are characteristics of the hospitality industry. Understanding and comprehending hotel employees' motivation is becoming a more crucial issue, especially in the hotel industry, where labor is intensive and turnover rates are very high, as stated by Hekman & Lashley (2018, p. 115-116). Turnover has negative consequences for everyone. The morale of the remaining colleagues will suffer, and they will have a decline in performance as a result. Low job satisfaction often causes an absence of incentive to give their best work, and the lack of motivation might increase employee turnover (Abdou et al., 2022, pp. 4–5). The possibility that a person will quit their current job within a short period of time is referred to as turnover intention. In other words, the workers intend to leave or change careers. The intention to leave a job might be described as a turnover intention. High turnover is typically justified as undesirable and is assumed to be costly since it directly impacts the quality and standard of the services provided by the hotel employees. The frequent continuous requirement for hiring and training new workers is another drawback. Moreover, the basic principle of labor turnover was considered to consist of two dimensions, with voluntary and involuntary turnover referring to when a person leaves one job and joins another organization (Salama et al., 2022, p. 4).

2.7 Employee Retention

As said by Edirisinghe (2019, pp. 40–41), it is very important for an organization to retain the necessary workers by keeping the best and most suitable employees in order to accomplish the organization's objectives and deliver high productivity, and that way, employee turnover retention, which is the opposite of employee turnover retention, needs to be applied to the hotel business. If retention strategies were implemented and adopted in the hotel industry, hotel staff would undoubtedly stay and work with the company, and the possibility of the worker leaving the company would be reduced. There are various employee retention factors, for instance, compensation and appreciation

of the accomplished work, promotions, healthy work-life balance, positive vibes among colleagues, etc., and these can be interpreted as encouraging employee engagement. When the aforementioned elements are present, hotel companies will be better able to retain their current workforce as well as recruit fresh talent (Edirisinghe, 2019, pp. 40–41).



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Qualitative Method

The research aims to investigate “the factors that impact the hotel’s employees job satisfaction and employee turnover during the effect of COVID-19 pandemic”. The respondents for this study are people who work at hotel X, which is a large luxury five-star hotel in the heart of Bangkok, Thailand. The hotel is positioned to provide high-quality products and services that exceed customers’ expectations.

A qualitative method is used for collecting non-numerical data such as text, audio, and video, which is gathered and analyzed to better comprehend theories, experiences and beliefs. It can be used to gain a better understanding of a circumstance or to develop new research ideas. (Tracy, 2019). To answer the research question in this thematic paper, an in-depth interview technique is adopted as the information collection approaches. Open-ended questions are used in the interview because it allows the interviewees to respond in free-form answers and gain a better understanding and also allows the interviewer to use probing techniques to ask extra questions after the interviewees reply for more in-depth detail.

3.2 Sampling Plan

There will be a total of 10 employees from different hotel departments, two persons from each department, which consist of the human resources department, sales and marketing department, front office department, food and beverage department, and housekeeping department. One of the interviewees from each department needs to work in a managerial or higher position.

Table 3.1 Interviewee List

Code	Position	Department	Experience of working in hotel industry	Nationality	Gender
A	Regional Director of People & Culture	Human Resource	30 years	Thai	Male
B	Assistant Director of People & Culture	Human Resource	10 years	Thai	Male
C	Director of Sales & Marketing	Sales & Marketing	28 years	Hong Kong	Female
D	Director of Sales	Sales & Marketing	24 years	Thai	Female
E	Guest Services Manager	Front Office	12-13 years	Thai	Male
F	Assistant Front Office Manager	Front Office	7-8 years	Thai	Female
G	Restaurant Manager	Food & Beverage	20 years	Italian	Male
H	Senior Hostess	Food & Beverage	7-8 years	Thai	Female
I	Director of Housekeeping	Housekeeping	30 years	Thai	Female
J	Laundry Manager	Housekeeping	42 years	Thai	Female

The respondents are also over 18 years old, which is taken into consideration because it indicates that the respondent is old enough to understand and recognize their own behaviors, and as they are over 18, there is no need to have parental consent to participate in the interview. Moreover, the interviewees need to have at least 1 year experience working in the hotel industry. The interviews were conducted with a face-to-face method, and each interview will take an estimated 20-30 minutes which consist of introduction, open-ended question, and probing question.

Table 3.2 Open-ended Question List

Interview Questions
<p><u>General Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your name? 2. Can you introduce yourself? 3. How long have you been working in the hotel industry? 4. Have you ever worked in other industry fields? 5. How long have you been with the current hotel? 6. How long have you been in this current position?
<p><u>Topic Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did you decide to work in this hotel rather than other hotels? 2. Why did you choose to work as ...(job position)..? 3. Could you please describe your job description and work environment? 4. Are you satisfied with your current job and responsibility? What do you most like about your career? What motivates you to come to work? 5. How was the COVID-19 pandemic effect on your job / career? 6. Have you ever faced coworker relations issues? What strategies have you used to overcome this problem? 7. Is there anything bothering or an obstacle to your job? In your opinion, what makes you discouraged, tired, or unwilling to go to work? Do you discuss the problem with your boss? 8. Does your supervisor/boss make you feel motivated, valued and appreciated? If yes, how? 9. If you could change 1 thing in your job, what would it be and why? 10. Do you need to work overtime? If yes, how often? and do you get additional pay for the overtime? 11. Does the company offer any special benefits or perks? 12. Does your current salary give you enough financial security, especially during COVID-19? 13. Does the company offer adequate opportunities for promotions and career development? 14. Is the company likely to promote the current employee to the higher position or hide the new employees for the position? 15. In your opinion, what is the most important achievement for you? 16. How do you feel when you have the opportunities to take on bigger project roles, more duties, and higher responsibility? 17. How do you encourage yourself or stay motivated to keep learning and growing professionally? 18. Does the company provide training support for the employee to improve their skill?

19. How do you feel after being recognized from your efforts and good performance?
20. Does your company have very strict policies and regulations especially during COVID-19 pandemic? 3. Do you agree and satisfy with the policies? Any additional suggestions?
21. What factors keep you continuing working in ...(job position / hotel X)...?
22. What issue or suggestion would you like to anonymously bring up to upper management in order to help improve the company's employee management?

3.3 Research Framework

Based on the literature review, there are a variety of relevant aspects and frameworks that can describe and explain the motivation of the employees and the factors that affect the level of job satisfaction. However, after analyzing the literature review, the theoretical frameworks that are suitable for this thematic paper are Herzberg's Two Factor Theory and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Herzberg's hygiene and motivator factor theory can describe the level of employee job satisfaction in various aspects. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can also apply and merge with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. The higher the job satisfaction level, which is influenced by the motivator factors, the higher the employee retention. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic is another issue that can affect the extrinsic motivations or be seen as part of the hygiene factors that cause the employee's job dissatisfaction, and the COVID-19 pandemic could also influence the motivator factors (intrinsic motivations) in terms of lack of personal growth, lack of achievement, work itself, and so on.

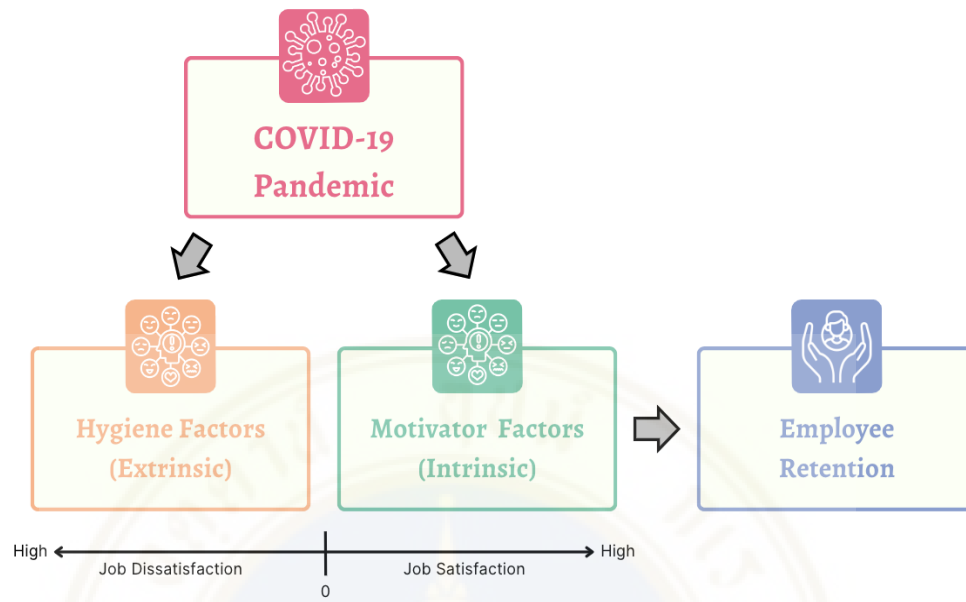


Figure 3.1: Research Framework of the Study

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected from conducting interviews using qualitative research methods will be analyzed to produce a summary of the findings. The semi-structured qualitative interviews involve open-ended questions that allow participants to express their thoughts, opinions, and experiences in their own words. There are various factors that can motivate employees to work in hotel X, consisting of salary, working conditions, incentives and rewards, coworker relations, passion for hospitality, service-oriented work, work itself, career growth opportunities, and responsibility. On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic affects and decreases employees' motivation at hotel X.

4.1 Hotel's Brand

According to the interviews, the most significant factor that motivates hotel employees to work at hotel X is the hotel's brand. All 10 interviewees are giving the same direction of the answer that the hotel's brand, hotel X, has a significant impact on their motivation and engagement. Ms. C, who is the director of the sales and marketing department, mentioned that "I have worked under the hotel X brand for 28 years. I started from a sales coordinator position at hotel X in Hong Kong and then moved to other hotel X in many other locations, such as Koh Samui, Chiang Mai, the Golden Triangle, and Shanghai. I have no idea of changing to another hotel." Ms. D said that "I decided to work with hotel X because of its strong and reputable brand. With the hotel brand, it can attract high-quality employees who are excited to work for a company with a good reputation. This means I can work with more talented people." Ms. H. also added that "I feel a sense of pride in the hotel X brand." Additionally, Mr. B explained that "The employees may feel a sense of pride and loyalty to a well-known brand like hotel X, which can motivate them to work

harder and perform better in their roles, and they can be motivated by the opportunities that come with working for a well-known hotel brand. As well as being motivated by the opportunities that come with working at hotel X, for example, the employees can have access to better training and development programs, more career advancement opportunities, and a wider range of benefits and perks.”

The COVID-19 pandemic didn't directly affect the hotel X brand itself. Hotel X may lay off some of its employees to cut costs during the peak of the pandemic. Despite this, many employees expressed their willingness to continue working with hotel X once the situation began to recover. The data collected can illustrate that hotel X has a very strong and reputable brand among the hotel employees. The employees are willing to work with hotel X.

4.2 Salary

The second important factor that motivates hotel employees to work at hotel X is salary. Salary can typically be defined as the amount of money or compensation that an employee is paid for their work. In the hotel industry, the salary can be divided into two parts: the base salary (a fixed amount), and the service charge, which is distributed among the employees. The amount of money will depend on the low and high seasons of the hotel. It's important to note that service charges are different from tips, which are voluntary payments made directly to employees as a gesture of appreciation for their service. All of the hotel employees (10 out of 10 participants) agree that the salary is one of their basic needs. In the context of hotel X employees, fair and competitive compensation is a significant motivator as it enables them to meet their basic needs, support themselves and their families, and achieve a certain standard of living. Ms. H, senior hostess of the hotel X mentioned that “The salary is very important to consider when you choose the hotel to work with, especially the service charge that we will receive in each month.” Mr. G also added that “This hotel has a very high service charge, even though it is during the low season

period; it is still higher than other hotels.” Ms. I said about the salary that “It is very normal for every employee to consider how much service charge they will get in each month; if the compensation is high, the more employees are willing to work and stay at the hotel.” Ms. F mentions that “The majority of base salaries or fixed salaries in many hotels are very comparable; however, the service charge fee is a significant component that influences employees’ decisions to work for the hotel. Mr. E also agrees that “Not only the hotel X brand that people want to work with, but also the compensation that we get from hotel X is high.” Mr. A, who is the regional director of people and culture explained that “The hotel workers rely on the service charge, which is 2 out of 3 of the total salary.” This information can support the understanding that salary, especially the service charge is one of the most significant factors that motivate hotel employees to work in the hotel X. Employees will choose to work with the hotel that gives the high service charge.

Some high position levels in the company didn’t affect much when the hotel faced the COVID-19 pandemic and needed to deduct some fixed salaries of the hotel staff without service charges. Ms. C stated that “During COVID-19, my salary has been deducted, but I am still fine and don’t have any financial problems.” She explained more in detail that “When in the higher position, we will get a higher salary than in the lower job position. During COVID-19, I understood and accepted the deduction. We all need to help the company.” Mr. E also supports the issue that “The top manager of the hotel X will have a salary deduction during the pandemic, but we don’t affect much because after the deduction, the salary is still high and it can cover our expenses even if we don’t get service charges paid.” However, Ms. D commented that “It depends on the expenses of each person. Even if we are in a high job position and have a high salary, if we have lots of expenses, such as paying the installment for home and car, paying tuition fees for children, and having a duty to take care of family or parents, it can be tough for us as well.” Furthermore, Ms. I mentioned that “The salary deduction and no service charges paid are effective for many housekeeping staff. 10-15% of the staff have to leave the job because the income is very low and does not cover the expenses. They need to find other jobs, such as doing online commercials, or go back to help their parents run a small restaurant.” Mr. J also added that

“Some of the staff can’t afford their car installment payments any longer, so they need to ask the dealer to agree to a voluntary repossession.” In addition, Mr. B explained that “The hotel workers rely on the service charge, and during the serious COVID-19 pandemic, there are no customers, so no one gets the service charge paid.”

4.3 Coworker Relations

Coworker relations are the third key factor in motivating employees at work. In total, there are 8 interviewees mentioned on the coworker relations issues. This topic is about the nature of relationships and interactions between colleagues within a workplace. This may include factors such as communication, collaboration, trust, respect, and teamwork.

4.3.1 Teamwork

There are 7 out of 10 interviewees talking about the teamwork topic. Ms. D, who is the director of sales for the hotel X said that “I’m very satisfied with my current career because I have worked for one of the top hotel brands in the world, and I’m also very happy with my team. I have a good boss and subordinate; this motivates me to enjoy working every day.” Ms. D seems satisfied with her supervisor and subordinate. Mr. B said that “When we hire new employees to work in our company, we should not only consider skills, qualifications, and job fit, but we also need to focus on considering the candidate’s ability to work well with others and contribute to a collaborative team environment.” Mr. E mentions that “We need to respect each other’s opinions, ideas, and differences, which is crucial for positive coworker relations. This means treating colleagues with kindness, being open to their perspectives, and refraining from disrespectful or discriminatory behavior.” Ms. F also added about coworker relations that “When we interview the new employees, we need to make sure that they have the ability to work with diverse groups of people in the team, and when we hire the right person, this makes the working relations among employees more easy.” Mr. G explains that “Having employees that have similar habits,

values, and ways of thinking in the same direction can create positive coworker relations, which can foster a supportive and productive work environment, while negative coworker relations can lead to conflict, stress, and reduced job satisfaction.” From the data collected, the hotel tries to recruit employees that fit the company culture and its people. Generally, every organization has positive and negative coworker relations, but when they become negative, they can lead to conflict, stress, and reduced job satisfaction. However, employees who work in hotel X are more satisfied with their relationships among colleagues because the hotel tries to recruit employees that have similar characteristics and tries to support the employee to build trust, respect, teamwork, and collaboration among employees. Ms. C added the information that “The hotel X allows the worker to speak up, comment, and give feedback. This building positive relationships with co-workers, collaborating on projects, and achieving team successes can create a sense of belonging and job satisfaction.” Ms. I also mentioned that “Promoting collaboration, communication, and camaraderie among employees can help employees feel connected to their colleagues and more easily coordinate with other staff in different departments; these can lead to higher levels of productivity and greater commitment to the jobs.”

Mr. G mentioned that “Our hotel installed the partition on the table to keep staff maintain social distance and ensure that tables and chairs are placed at a safe distance apart during eating to avoid COVID infection. The social distance and safety protocols may reduce the opportunities for informal interactions among coworkers to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission such as socializing during breaks.” Mr. E mentioned about the staff party that “Because of the risk of COVID-19 transmission, the hotel didn’t hold a staff party.” In this case, Mr. E explained that “The staff party can provide an opportunity for employees to socialize, interact, and bond outside of their regular work environment, which can help build team spirit, foster positive coworker relations, and boost overall morale. Without a staff party, it may demotivate some staff and hinder the staff from building relations within their company.” Ms. C mentioned that “Owing to the COVID epidemic, remote work and hybrid work models may apply to certain employees, such as those in administrative roles as well as in our sales and marketing team. We may have been required

to work remotely or in hybrid work models during the pandemic.” Ms. D, who is also a member of the sales and marketing team said that “While remote work can provide flexibility, it may also reduce in-person interactions and opportunities for team bonding and collaboration. Communication and coordination among team members may have been more challenging, leading to potential impacts on coworker relations and teamwork.”

4.3.2 Supervisor Quality

Some of the interviewees (4 people) mentioned that the supervisor’s quality makes them more satisfied to work in this hotel. Supervisor quality refers to the characteristics and attributes of a supervisor that contribute to their effectiveness in managing and leading employees. Ms. C shared her perspective that “A supervisor who possesses good qualities should be typically competent, knowledgeable, and skilled in their role, with the ability to communicate effectively with their team members, provide guidance and direction, and make sound decisions.” Ms. D mentioned about her team that “I’m very happy with my team. I have a good boss and subordinate; this motivates me to enjoy working every day. Moreover, my boss has a positive attitude, a strong work ethic, integrity, empathy, and the ability to motivate and inspire our team.” In addition, Mr. B said that “I like my boss; I have worked with him at the previous hotel, and I followed him to join hotel X, and I’m very satisfied to continue working with him.” Ms. J, who is a laundry manager, shared her story, saying, “I have known Ms. I since we have been working together at the previous hotel, and Ms. I invited me to join and work with her again here at hotel X even though I have already retired. I’m 60 years old now, but I am still able to work, and because Ms. I will be my boss so I agree to work at hotel X with her.” This information can illustrate that the employees are concerned and pay attention to the quality of their boss. The employees will feel more comfortable working with a boss that they trust and respect, and with a boss who can influence their job satisfaction and motivation.

4.4 Passion for Hospitality, Service-oriented Work, and Work Itself

There are 7 interviewees who are drawn to work in the hotel industry because they have a genuine passion for hospitality and enjoy providing excellent service to guests. The opportunity to interact with people from diverse backgrounds, create memorable experiences, and contribute to guest satisfaction can be highly motivating for those who are passionate about hospitality. Ms. H, who graduated from a hospitality college, said, “I graduated from a hospitality college and want to work in the hotel industry. I want to advance and grow in this career path.” However, it is not only people who graduated from a hospitality college who are willing to work in the hotel industry; Mr. E said that “I didn’t study hospitality at college, but I have a passion to work in the hotel and enjoy providing excellent service to guests.” The satisfaction that comes from helping guests have a positive experience, resolving their issues, and meeting their needs can be a motivating factor for hotel employees who have a service-oriented mindset, as Ms. H and Mr. E mentioned earlier. Mr. B explained that “There are many different types of jobs and roles within the hotel industry, consisting of front desk and guest services, housekeeping and cleaning, food and beverage, sales and marketing, maintenance and engineering, management and administration, and so forth. Each role will have a different job description and require distinct skills. It depends on personal preference and the knowledge and ability of who will fit into what position in the organization.” Mr. A mentioned that “I graduated from law school but was interested in working in the hotel business, so I went to study at Les Roches, Switzerland. After that, I worked in the hotel industry all along.” In addition, Ms. I stated that “Not only those who study at a hospitality college will work in a hotel, but passion for hospitality and enjoyment of providing excellent service to guests can motivate other people to work in this field. In hotel X, it’s not always that employees who have to graduate from the hospitality field can work in the hotel, such as marketing people who can work in the sales and marketing department, and housekeeping staff do not need to attend hospitality college; they can be trained to work as a housekeeper.” Ms. H also said that “I like my work; I like what I do right now, and I have no idea about changing jobs.” This can be

supported by the fact that when people like and are satisfied with their job, they will feel motivated to continue working at their current job.

Due to the status of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. G has mentioned that “The hospitality industry, which includes hotels, restaurants, bars, and tourism, has been severely affected by COVID-19. Lockdowns, travel restrictions, and social distancing measures have led to a significant decline in demand for hospitality services, resulting in reduced revenues, temporary and permanent closures of businesses, and job losses. Many employees in the hospitality industry have faced reduced working hours, furloughs, or layoffs, resulting in financial challenges and decreased job security.” Ms. F mentioned that “Some of the employees give up and quit the hotel industry and go to do something else, such as open an online shop on the e-commerce platform, because at that time, during the COVID-19 epidemic and no vaccine, frontline workers in service-oriented roles have also been impacted by COVID-19. The employees have faced increased risks of exposure to the virus, leading to concerns about health and safety.” Mr. E also stated that “The stress and uncertainty associated with the pandemic that employees face may impact the passion and motivation for service-oriented work, especially in the hotel industry, because we don’t know when the epidemic will end or when the economy and hospitality industry will recover.”

4.5 Incentives and Rewards

There are 7 interviewees mentioned on the incentive and rewards topic. The hotel offers incentives and rewards programs for their employees, such as bonuses, recognition programs, and employee benefits. These can serve as motivators for employees to perform well and achieve targets, as they see the direct link between their efforts and the rewards they can earn.

4.5.1 Commissions and Bonuses

Sales teams can earn a percentage of the room rate or a flat fee for each room they sell. This can motivate them to sell more rooms and generate higher revenue for the hotel. According to Ms. D, “Salespeople can receive commission and bonuses based on meeting or exceeding sales targets or achieving specific performance metrics. For example, they may receive a bonus for selling a certain number of rooms in a month or generating a certain amount of revenue. This motivates salespeople to sell more rooms or try to up-sell so that they will get more commission.” Moreover, not only sales teams will get the incentives, but other employees in other departments can get them as well. Ms. I also informs that “By being a trainer for new staff in the department, the talented trainer will receive some incentive if the results of the training are accepted by supervisors. For example, room attendants who have the ability and talent according to the hotel’s standards and qualifications can be the trainers. Therefore, the employees are motivated and try to become trainers so they are able to get the incentive as well as be recognized and appreciated by the boss and colleagues.”

4.5.2 Recognition

Recognition involves recognizing and valuing an individual’s efforts, contributions, or accomplishments. It is the act of acknowledging and appreciating what someone has achieved or done. It can take various forms, such as verbal praise, written compliments, awards, or promotions. Mr. E mentioned that “Our company has an EOM (employee of the month) program, which allows employees from all departments in the hotel to be recognized and rewarded if that person performs very well or is outstanding, and our team has a small board that can put written compliments for the staff.” As well, in the housekeeping department, Ms. I said, “In our department, I will give birthday presents to every single staff member; everyone will recognize who is the birthday owner; and colleagues will draw together happy birthday.” Ms. I explained that “It is just a small birthday gift, not expensive, but I give it to every birthday owner to show sincerity and show that they are important members of our team. We treat everyone as family, helping and supporting each other.” Mr. E said that “The people who perform well and get promoted

as employee of the month are satisfied and happy because they are recognized among the hotel's employees and also get some incentive." This can support the idea that recognition is an important aspect of employee motivation and can contribute to increased job satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty. It can also help to create a positive work environment and foster a culture of appreciation and respect.

4.5.3 Incentive Trips and Employee Discounts

The hotel's employees offered incentive trips to desirable destinations as a reward for working at the hotel. Mr. A mentions that "Our hotel has *The Discovery Night Program* that allows employees to have complimentary stays at the hotel or other affiliated hotels." The employees were offered discounted rates or complimentary stays at the hotel or other affiliated hotels, which can be in Thailand or other countries around the world, as an incentive for their working efforts. Ms. I also informs that "This can serve as a perk and motivate employees to promote the hotel to potential guests and observe the affiliated hotels about how those employees work and treat the guest, as a field observer." This can be a powerful incentive to encourage them to work for the hotel and earn the opportunity to travel.

Ms. C mentioned that "The pandemic may not affect the employees' recognition, but it influences the commissions and bonuses that the sales team will get. When the hotel experienced a significant decline in revenue and occupancy during the pandemic due to travel restrictions, cancellations, and decreased demand for travel. As a result, the hotel may have faced financial constraints, leading to reduced commissions and bonuses for employees." Ms. D also adds to this point that "Commissions, which are typically tied to sales performance, may have been impacted by lower sales volume, resulting in reduced commission payouts. Similarly, bonuses, which are often tied to financial performance metrics, may have been reduced or eliminated due to decreased revenue and profitability." In addition, incentive trips are a popular form of motivation and reward for high-performing employees in the hospitality industry. Ms. I said that "Due to travel restrictions and safety concerns during the pandemic, we have to postpone our

incentive trips. The travel restrictions, lockdowns, and social distancing measures have made it challenging and impossible to conduct incentive trips, particularly if they involve international travel.” Ms. F mentioned that “Now the COVID-19 pandemic is getting better, I plan to go stay at affiliated hotel X in Chiang Mai. Moreover, employee discounts are often provided by hotel X as a benefit to the staff, allowing employees to avail discounted rates or special offers on hotel services such as accommodation, dining, spa, and other amenities.”

4.6 Working Conditions

There are 6 interviewees who mentioned the working conditions at the company. Working conditions refer to the environment, circumstances, and factors in which an individual performs their job, including physical, social, and organizational aspects. This may include aspects such as the workplace environment, equipment and tools provided, safety measures, working hours, workload, relationships with colleagues and supervisors, and access to resources and support. The director of sales and marketing, Ms. C, who has been working with hotel X for 28 years, mentioned that “I have been with the Bangkok property since January 2019. I’m the opening team of the hotel X Bangkok, and I am still working with this hotel brand because I like the culture of the company”. Mr. A, who is the regional director of people and culture and has to manage eight properties under the hotel X brand, shared his experiences that “It was a coincidence that I applied to work with hotel X, but after working with this organization, I never moved to work for another brand. I like the culture and feel comfortable working here.” One of the employees from food and beverage, Ms. H commented that “Hotel X is one of the most luxurious hotel brands in the world, and I was very proud to be part of the organization and work in the field that I like.” She added that “I am very satisfied with the working conditions at this hotel, I like the physical and environmental aspects of the workplace such as the physical layout of the workspace being well arranged, the cleanliness and safety of the workplace, the availability of necessary tools and equipment, the locker room and uniform being properly provided,

and the overall comfort of the work environment is very good.” According to other employees, they are also given the answer in the same direction that the employees are willing to work under this famous 5-star hotel brand, which is reputable for its high quality and service to customers and well-treated to its employees in terms of organizational aspects, social aspects, workplace environment, etc. It can be said that all the interviewees who are the hotel’s employees are quite satisfied with the hotel’s working conditions. However, some employees are not quite satisfied with the food in the staff canteen. Ms. H mentioned that “There are many employees that don’t like the menu at the staff canteen. There are 2 meals to choose from each day, but on some days, we don’t like both of the meals, and we don’t have any other choice.”

The COVID-19 also affects the hotel’s working conditions in some aspects. In terms of health and safety measures, hotel has implemented various health and safety measures in response to COVID-19, such as increased cleaning and sanitization protocols, mandatory use of personal protective equipment (PPE), social distancing measures, and temperature checks for employees and guests. These measures aim to minimize the risk of virus transmission, but they may also affect working conditions. Ms. J shared her team’s working routine, saying that “There are more steps that can be added to the housekeeping and laundry departments. If we know that our guests are infected with COVID-19, we need to have special procedures to do such as room disinfection and also separate the bedding set and towel and do the sterilization before the washing process.” She also mentioned that “On behalf of the housekeeping department, we understand the unusual situation of COVID-19; the fact that there is an increase in workflow does not make us dissatisfied.” Mr. G, one of the hotel’s restaurant managers, mentioned about the safety and hygienic of preparing food and beverages for the customers that “Our hotel has very strict policies and rules about the food and beverage hygienic; even the COVID-19 pandemic didn’t affect much with the task that we need to do because we normally have a very high standard of food and beverage hygienic.” These comments support the issue that the pandemic affects some of the working conditions, but there is no doubt that there is resistance or dissatisfaction among the employees with the increased cleaning protocols, which may

result in additional workload for the staff. Ms. I explains that “The reason why the employees are not resistant to the new work conditions, especially with the safety and hygienic policies, is because they understand the pandemic condition, and policies not only protect the hotel’s guests, but they also help the hotel X’s employees to prevent and avoid COVID-19 infection.

4.7 Career Growth Opportunities

There are 6 interviewees mentioning the career growth opportunities, which consist of advancement, job promotions, personal growth, and training. Hotel X offers a wide range of career opportunities, from entry-level positions to management and leadership roles. Many employees are motivated by the potential for career growth and advancement, as hotel X often provides training, development programs, and opportunities to gain valuable skills and experience. The possibility of progressing in their career and achieving their professional goals can be a strong motivator for hotel employees.

4.7.1 Advancement and Job Promotions

Advancement refers to the process of moving forward in one’s career or position, often through promotions, job changes, or professional development opportunities. Advancement opportunities may be based on factors such as an individual’s skills, experience, performance, and potential for growth. Mr. E shared his experience, saying, “I work in the hotel industry, especially in jobs that relate to the front office and receptionists all the time. From reception agent to supervisor, and then become a duty manager. At hotel X, the first position that I worked in was duty manager, and then I got promoted to guest service manager.” Furthermore, Ms. F mentioned that “I have worked at hotel X for three and a half years, and I have been promoted to assistant front office manager.” “I think hotel X offers a lot of opportunities to move forward in the career path. I work here as a hostess and got promoted after more than a year to become a senior hostess.” said by Ms. H. According to the findings, hotel X provides opportunities for

employees to grow. The interviewees agree that the hotel provides employees with the opportunity to showcase their talents and provides opportunities for job promotion. Ms. C mentioned that “Advancement can provide a sense of achievement, recognition, and job satisfaction, as well as opportunities for increased responsibility, compensation, and influence within the organization, which is a key motivator for employees and can contribute to their long-term commitment to the organization.”

4.7.2 Personal Growth and Training

Personal growth can be described as the journey of enhancing and progressing oneself, which commonly involves various aspects of an individual’s physical, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual wellness. It involves expanding knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as developing a greater sense of self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-actualization. Personal growth can be pursued through a variety of means, such as education, training, coaching, therapy, and self-reflection. It can contribute to increased resilience, adaptability, and emotional intelligence, as well as a greater sense of purpose and fulfillment in life. Mr. B mentioned that “Our hotel has a training program that allows employees to learn and expand their knowledge and skills.” Ms. C said that “Even top management needs to join the training section. There will be different and separate courses where each job position will be trained.” Hotel X pays attention to their employees’ personal growth, which means that talented employees who have knowledge and skills will have the abilities to perform well with quality work. Personal growth is often seen as a lifelong journey that involves continuous learning, exploration, and self-discovery. No matter what position the staff holds in the company, they still need to enhance and develop themselves.

Because of the COVID pandemic, the hotel X may have faced financial challenges during the pandemic due to reduced demand and occupancy, which resulted in cost-cutting measures, including a freeze or reduction in hiring and promotions. According to Ms. I, “During the pandemic, hotel X is reducing its hiring of new staff; we take employees from other departments, such as waiters and waitresses, to help clean some public areas in the hotel, including restaurant and hotel’s lobby.” Ms. I also added that

“Most of the employees are willing to temporarily shift their jobs to work in different positions because during COVID-19 the hotel didn’t operate the restaurant, so rather than being fired or leave without pay, waiters and waitresses are willing to work in the housekeeping department for temporary.” “Some employees refuse to shift to the housekeeping department because of health problems and allergies to cleaning chemicals. The hotel will assign them to do something else.” said by Ms. I. Nonetheless, after the COVID situation has recovered, hotel X has promoted many existing employees, such as Mr. E, Ms. F, and Ms. H.

4.8 Responsibility

There are 5 interviewees who mentioned responsibility at the hotel. Responsibility refers to the extent to which an employee is given autonomy and control over their work. When employees are given responsibility for their work, they are more likely to feel a sense of accomplishment and personal growth. This, in turn, leads to increased job satisfaction and motivation. Ms. C mentioned that “I feel challenged when I have the opportunity to take on a bigger project with high responsibility. It’s like you are stepping out of your comfort zone and taking on something new and exciting.” “The company allows employees to be themselves to some extent, and the company is open to listening to the employee’s voice; opinions are valued, comments are taken seriously, and even at the line staff position, all opinions matter.” also informed by Ms. C. Besides, Ms. F also talked about the responsibility at the workplace; she said that “It is normal for everyone to feel pressure when you have more responsibility or do new things and get good results and meet the expectations. When you get more responsibility, it means company trust and gives us an opportunity to see your talent.” As well as Mr. D, he mentioned that “Taking on responsibility can demonstrate one’s reliability, dependability, and commitment to achieving goals and objectives, which can also contribute to personal growth and development, as individuals learn new skills, take on new challenges, and develop a sense

of self-efficacy and confidence, and at hotel X, we are granted the freedom and authority to manage and direct our work according to our own discretion.”

The pandemic has brought about changes in hotel operations, including adjustments to staffing levels, shifts, and duties. Employees have had to demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in their responsibilities, such as by cross-training in different areas, taking on additional tasks, or adjusting to changes in work schedules or roles based on the evolving needs of the hotel. Ms. I said that “Some employees have been redeployed to different roles or departments or have had to take on additional responsibilities to compensate for reduced staffing levels such as waiters and waitresses needing to clean the restaurant or other public area in the hotel.” Ms. H added that “The temporary shift job has provided valuable cross-training opportunities because we can learn new skills; on the other hand, it may also have impacted our ability to focus on our career growth in our original roles.” Nevertheless, the epidemic has altered the workloads of many hotel personnel, with some being forced to take on more duties or work longer hours. Ms. H mentioned that “After COVID-19, the hotel is now running in full operation; tourists are coming back to our hotel as usual. Because hotel X hired fewer employees during the pandemic, we now need more staff to serve the guests. With the overload work may result in exhaustion and burnout, which may lower the employees’ motivation and decrease productivity.”

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings of this research paper shed light on the key aspects and implications of the topic under investigation. Throughout this study, we have explored and analyzed various relevant data and literature related to the research question. Our results suggest that there are many factors that motivate employees to work in hotel X including hotel's brand, salary, coworker relations, passion for hospitality, service-oriented work, and work itself, incentives and rewards, working conditions, career growth opportunities, and responsibility. As opposed to that, the COVID-19 pandemic also affects and decreases employees' motivation at hotel X.

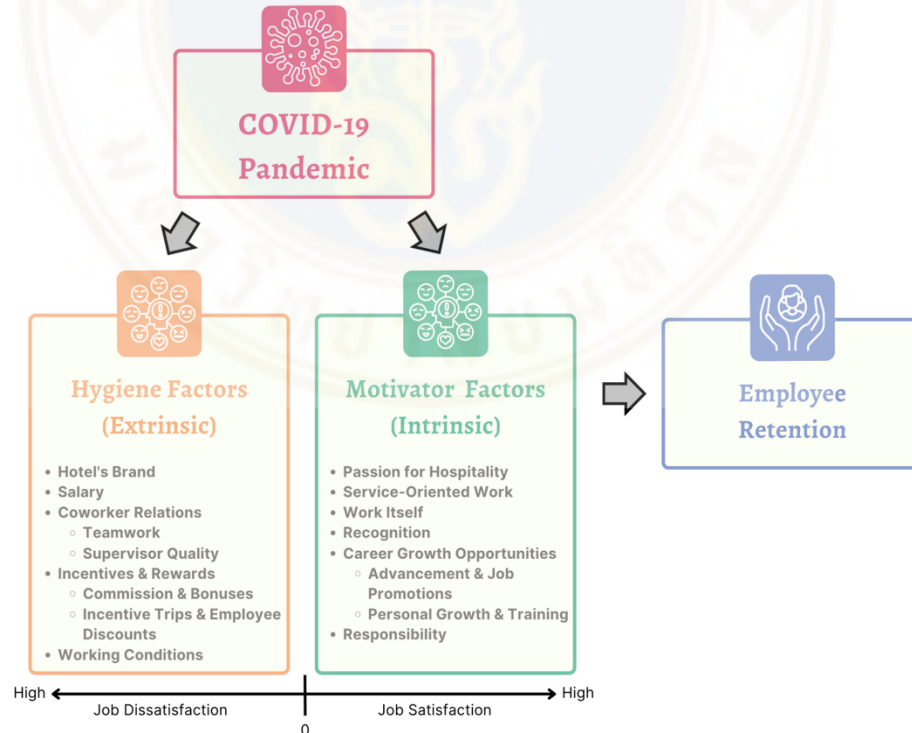


Figure 4.1: The Hygiene and Motivator Factors of Hotel X Employees

5.1 Conclusions

There are various factors that influence the employees' job satisfaction level and how it can motivate the employees to continue working with the hotel X. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the hotel industry, which has resulted in a range of challenges for employees in this sector. These challenges can have an impact on employee motivation in a number of ways.

The interviews revealed that the most significant factor motivating hotel employees to work at hotel X is the hotel's strong and reputable brand. All 10 interviewees mentioned the brand's impact on their motivation and engagement, with some expressing a sense of pride and loyalty to the hotel. The COVID-19 pandemic did not directly affect the hotel X brand, and although some employees were laid off, many expressed a willingness to continue working with the company once the situation improved. Overall, the data suggests that hotel X has a highly respected brand among its employees, who are motivated to work for the company and have access to training, development, career advancement opportunities, and other benefits.

Salary, particularly the service charge, is a crucial factor in motivating hotel employees to work for hotel X. The service charge is distributed among employees and varies depending on the hotel's low and high seasons. All interview participants agreed that a salary is a basic need, and fair compensation enables them to support themselves and their families. During the COVID-19 pandemic, some hotel staff experienced salary deductions, but higher-ranking employees were less affected because their base salary was still high enough to cover their expenses. Some employees with insufficient income for their livelihoods due to low income and the absence of service charge payments have to leave their hotel jobs. The absence of customers during the pandemic resulted in no service charge being paid. The deduction and no service charges paid are effective for many hotel staff, which the service charges count as 2 out of 3 of the total salary.

The paper discusses the importance of coworker relations as a key factor in employee motivation at work. The nature of relationships and interactions between colleagues within a workplace, including communication, collaboration, trust, respect, and teamwork, are crucial for positive coworker relations. The hotel X tries to recruit employees that fit the company culture and encourage trust, respect, teamwork, and collaboration among employees, and the hotel X encourages the worker to speak up, comment, and give feedback. The supervisor quality is another important factor that contributes to employee motivation. The paper also mentions the impact of COVID-19 on coworker relations, such as social distancing protocols and remote work, which can affect opportunities for informal interactions among coworkers and hinder the building of relationships.

The interviewees express their motivation to work in the hotel industry, highlighting their passion for hospitality, service-oriented work, and the work itself in the hotel industry. They also discuss the different roles within the industry and the skills required for each position and how they enjoy providing excellent service to guests. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted the hospitality industry, leading to reduced demand for services, temporary and permanent closures of businesses, and job losses. This has resulted in financial challenges and decreased job security for employees. The stress and uncertainty associated with the pandemic have also impacted the passion and motivation for service-oriented work in the hotel industry because the employees don't know when the epidemic will end or when the economy and hospitality industry will recover.

The hotel X offers various incentives and rewards programs to motivate employees to perform well, such as commissions and bonuses, recognition programs, and employee benefits. Sales teams can earn a percentage of the room rate or a flat fee for each room they sell, while other employees in different departments can receive incentives for their performance. Recognition involves acknowledging and appreciating an individual's efforts and contributions, which can take the form of verbal or written praise, awards, or promotions. The hotel X also offers incentive trips and employee discounts to desirable

destinations as a reward for employees' working efforts. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the hotel's ability to conduct incentive trips, and financial constraints have led to reduced commissions and bonuses for employees.

Hotel X employees' express satisfaction with their working conditions, citing factors such as the culture of the company, the physical environment, the equipment provided, safety measures, relationships with colleagues and supervisors, and access to resources and support. The staff mentioned that hotel X has implemented health and safety protocols, such as hygiene practices and social distancing, which have impacted the working conditions of employees, including changes in shifts, duties, and cleaning procedures. Employees express understanding and support for these measures, citing the importance of protecting guests and preventing the spread of COVID-19. However, there is an issue that the employees are dissatisfied with, which is the food in the staff canteen. The taste of the food occasionally offends the palates of the personnel. The COVID-19 pandemic has also affected working conditions, with hotels implementing increased health and safety measures. Employees express understanding and support for these measures, citing the importance of protecting guests and preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Hotel X offers various career opportunities, from entry-level positions to management and leadership roles. The possibility of career growth and advancement, training, and development programs are strong motivators for employees. Advancement opportunities and personal growth are key factors in employee satisfaction and commitment to the organization. During the COVID-19 pandemic, hotel X has had to reduce its operations, resulting in reduced hiring and promotions and some employees shifting to different positions temporarily. This can impact motivation levels among employees, who may feel that they are not able to progress in their careers. However, after the situation has recovered, hotel X has promoted existing employees.

Employees who are given responsibility for their work tend to feel a sense of accomplishment and personal growth, leading to increased job satisfaction and motivation.

Hotel employees have had to demonstrate flexibility and adaptability during the COVID-19 pandemic by taking on additional tasks or adjusting to changes in work schedules or roles based on the evolving needs of the hotel. While this has provided valuable cross-training opportunities, it may also impact career growth in the original roles. Employees at Hotel X are granted the freedom and authority to manage and direct their work according to their own discretion, and the company values employee opinions and voices. Even so, the pandemic has resulted in changes in workloads for many hotel employees, with some being required to take on additional responsibilities or work longer hours. This can lead to fatigue and burnout, which can have a negative impact on motivation and productivity.

5.2 Recommendations

Employee retention is crucial for the success of any business, including the hotel industry. Here are some recommendations that can help improve employee retention:

Firstly, hotel X should focus on maintaining a strong brand image that reflects its unique selling proposition, values, and mission. This can be achieved by creating a consistent visual identity, messaging, and customer experience across all touchpoints, such as the website, social media, and advertising. This will not only create a strong brand image and reputation among customers or guests, but it will also attract attention from employees who want to work with the well-known brand. From the employees' perspective, working for a well-known luxury brand can be a source of pride and motivation. Therefore, it is recommended that hotel X continues to maintain and enhance its reputation as a leading luxury hotel brand in the market. This can be achieved through consistent delivery of exceptional guest experiences, continuous innovation and improvement, and active engagement with guests and the community.

Furthermore, hotel X should ensure that its compensation and benefits package is competitive and fair, especially to attract and retain top talent. This includes providing

industry-standard wages, health insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, and other perks that align with the needs and expectations of its employees. This will not only help to attract and retain talented employees, but it also shows that the company values and respects its workforce. On top of that, the high service charge could be the factor that motivated employees to work in hotel X. Given the impact of the pandemic on the hotel industry, it is understandable that salary cuts may have been necessary to maintain the business's financial stability. However, it is important to consider the impact of such cuts on employees' motivation and job satisfaction. Therefore, as soon as possible, hotel X should cancel the salary cuts and provide compensation for periods when employees were not fully paid. This can help restore employees' confidence and loyalty to the company. One way to provide compensation could be through a one-time bonus or profit-sharing program that rewards employees for their hard work and dedication during the pandemic. Alternatively, the hotel can consider adjusting employees' salaries to reflect the cost of living or providing additional benefits such as healthcare, retirement plans, or paid time off. It is important to communicate with employees transparently about the reasons behind the salary cuts and how the company plans to address the issue going forward. This can help foster a sense of trust and transparency between management and employees, which can lead to improved job satisfaction and retention.

To foster positive coworker relations, hotel X should encourage teamwork and collaboration through team-building activities, open communication channels, and recognition of individual and team achievements. Encouraging a culture of respect and inclusivity can also help to create a supportive work environment where employees feel valued and appreciated. Even with the social distance protocol, it is important to maintain a sense of team spirit and camaraderie. Hotel X can organize virtual team-building activities, such as online games, virtual happy hours, and other activities, to help employees stay connected and engaged, replacing the normal staff party.

Hotel X can provide training and development opportunities that help employees hone their skills and grow their knowledge of the industry. This can include on-

the-job training, mentorship programs, and access to professional development courses and certifications. To maintain a service-oriented work culture, hotel X should continue to prioritize guest satisfaction and provide employees with the tools and resources they need to deliver exceptional service. This includes providing adequate staffing levels, clear job expectations, and ongoing feedback and coaching. Moreover, hotel X can provide support programs to help employees deal with the challenges they face during the pandemic. This can include counseling services, financial assistance, and other resources to help them manage stress and anxiety. This support program is not only used for the stress and uncertainty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, but it can also be applied to normal issues that employees face and want to consult on.

In addition, by offering clear career paths, development plans, and opportunities for advancement and promotion, hotel X can help employees feel valued and engaged in their work while also providing a pathway for their personal and professional growth in which the employees can develop their skills and knowledge beyond their specific job duties. This can include cross-training opportunities, leadership development programs, language classes, personal finance workshops, and other training programs that help employees develop both personally and professionally. According to the finding, employees have mentioned the flexibility and adaptability in their responsibilities, which during the COVID epidemic they need to change working tasks to different jobs, and this may impact their ability to focus on their career growth in their original roles. However, Hotel X can also work with employees to create individualized development plans that align with their career goals and aspirations and provide regular feedback and coaching to help them progress in their careers. This can help employees feel more engaged and invested in their work and provide a clear path for advancement within the organization.

Finally, hotel X employee has mentioned the dissatisfaction with the food in the staff canteen. In response to this issue, hotel X could consider conducting a survey or gathering feedback from employees to understand their preferences and dietary restrictions and offer a wider variety of options that meet the needs and preferences of their employees.

Besides, hotel X can announce a weekly food schedule to all the employees, so that the employees can plan ahead and have more control over their meal options. Employees can prepare and bring their own meals if they prefer, with hotel X offering food warming machines such as microwaves. This would give employees the ability to bring their own meals from home and warm them up at work, which can be a convenient and effective solution because the employees who wear the hotel's uniform are not allowed to go out to have lunch outside the hotel. Overall, these actions can improve employee satisfaction and help meet the diverse dietary needs and preferences of the staff.

By implementing these recommendations, hotel X can create a work environment that fosters employee retention and leads to long-term success.

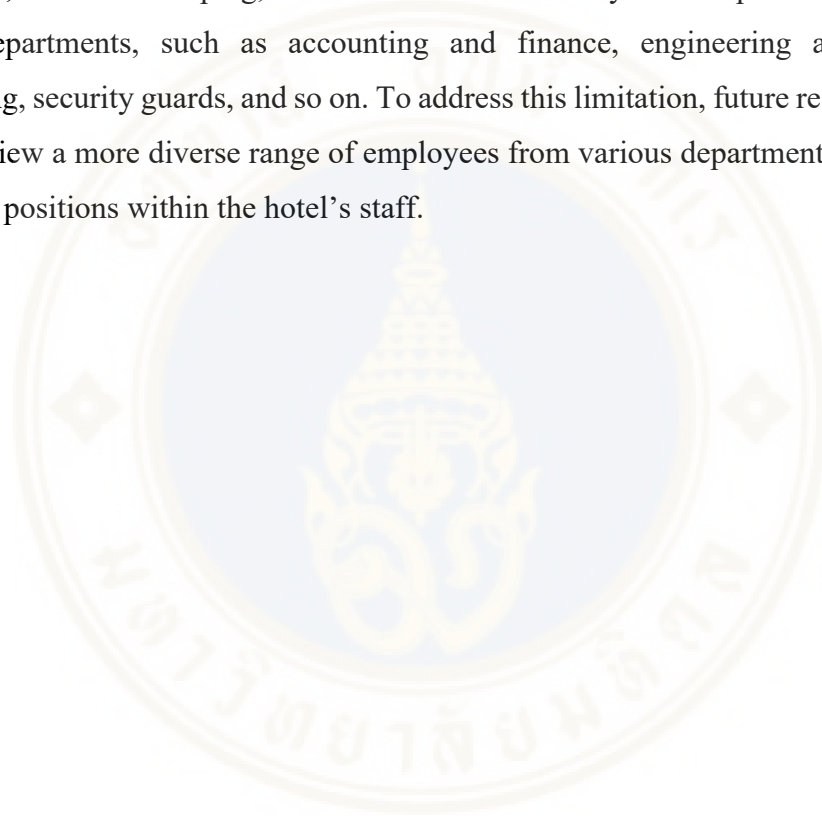
5.3 Limitation

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of investigating the factors that determine employees' levels of satisfaction and the effect of the COVID pandemic on hotel employees' motivation and provides valuable insights for the hotel industry, which can help hotel management teams, especially human resources, in various ways. However, this study has limitations, which future research can further explore with more samples. Mixed research methods can be conducted in future research, which will include both quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a more complete and clearer overview than a standalone qualitative study because the data is not sufficient. The use of mixed methods research is frequently motivated by some common reasons consisting of generalizability, contextualization, and credibility (Malina et al., 2011).

Qualitative research can be time-consuming and resource-intensive, as it often involves prolonged fieldwork, multiple data collection methods, and detailed data analysis. Although the study's findings are consistent with the literature review, its main drawback is the limited number of interviewees, which amounted to just 10 participants. Due to the

small sample size, it may not be possible to draw broad conclusions. Therefore, conducting the research with a larger sample size would be more desirable.

The study is limited in terms of the range of employee levels and departments represented. The majority of interviewees were from management positions, and only 5 departments, including sales and marketing, front office, human resources, food and beverage, and housekeeping, were included in the study. This report did not cover other hotel departments, such as accounting and finance, engineering and maintenance, gardening, security guards, and so on. To address this limitation, future research should aim to interview a more diverse range of employees from various departments, including those in lower positions within the hotel's staff.



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