

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The last chapter presents (1) summary of the study, (2) summary of the findings, (3) discussions of the findings, (4) conclusions, and (5) recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.1.1 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to measure the level of customer satisfaction with Thammasat University Bookstore: Tha Prachan Campus, to scrutinize the issues and problems which customers are not satisfied with, and to find the solution for further improvement.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures

5.1.2.1 Subjects

The subjects of the study were 150 customers who visited Thammasat University Bookstore: Tha Prachan Campus only and the study design was descriptive cross-sectional.

5.1.2.2 Materials

The research instrument was an open-ended and closed-ended questionnaire which consisted of three parts. The first part was demographic information requiring the respondents' general information such as age, gender, income, and education. The second part scale rating from 1 to 5. Finally the third part aimed to obtain recommendations for investigated the level of satisfaction by Likert further improvement.

5.1.2.3 Procedures

The survey began in December 2006 and finished in January 2007. All data collected were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences or SPSS program version 12. Descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage, mean, and Standard Deviation were used to present the findings of the study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 General Information of the Respondents

Although the respondents were both male and female, the proportion between them was different since there were 72.7% female respondents while there was only 27.3% male respondents. The age of customers varied, ranging from 16 to 49. The majority level of education was Bachelor's Degree and marital status was single. Concerning the average income per month, the biggest group of respondents earned 5,000 – 10,000 baht per month. Besides, most of the respondents were university students. Moreover, 84% of respondents used the bookstore 1-2 times/week because of its convenience.

5.2.2 Level of Customers' Satisfaction with Thammasat University Bookstore: Tha Prachan Campus

This section will be divided into 3 parts based on the measurement procedure of Likert scales as below:

First of all, when asked about the customers' satisfaction with Thammasat University Bookstore: Tha Prachan Campus in terms of place, the customers were satisfied with the bookstore's cleanliness and atmosphere. Furthermore, the bookstore's location and its signage made the customers satisfied. The customers felt moderately satisfied with the bookstore's space and its attractive store decoration and display. Furthermore, the store environment is not too noisy. In contrast, the customers felt dissatisfied with the bookstore's limited parking.

Secondly, the majority of the customers felt moderately satisfied with the staff's friendliness, interaction with customers, readiness and willingness in providing service, ability to answer customers' questions, and ability to help solve customers' problems, whereas the staff's polite manner, good temperament, and proper attire made customers feel satisfied.

Thirdly, few customers were satisfied with the staff's service speed, payment options, service equipment modernity, reasonable product price, service of bakery shop, coffee corner, and magazine kiosk. A moderate satisfaction level was given to store operation times, store promotion, lucky draw, and discount items. In addition,

the customers were moderately satisfied with the variety of books and up to date book.

5.2.3 Customers' Suggestions to Improve Thammasat University Bookstore: Tha Prachan Campus

The major problems were about bookstore space, parking areas, there were not enough book or there were out of stock too long and not up to date. Few customers complained about store decoration, stationery department was messy, staff could not find the books they wanted, no computer for book searching, and operation time on weekend (only 9 am to 4 pm) was not appropriate for Master's Degree Students. The respondents proposed the useful solutions and some suggestions such as making the bookstore bigger, more parking areas, more foreign books, more stationery products, opening the bookstore longer on weekends, customers' reading corner, internet café, bigger coffee corner, discount books fair, and ability to order books via website.

5.3 DISCUSSIONS

In this part, the findings of the study will be discussed based on the research questions posed in Chapter One.

5.3.1 Research question one asks if the customers are satisfied with the Thammasat University Bookstore: Tha Prachan Campus. It was shown that the customer satisfaction level with the bookstore was different. Factors, that people were most satisfied with, included store location, its clean area, prominent store signage, staff manner, staff temperament, staff clothing, service speed, payment options, modern equipment, product price, coffee corner, magazine kiosk, and bakery shop.

They were moderately satisfied with store space, environment, decoration, product display, staff friendliness, interaction with customers, staff willingness in providing service, solution for customers' problems, payment waiting time, opening hours, promotions, lucky draws, discount items, varieties of up to date books.

The customers felt dissatisfied with only one area which related to parking.

5.3.2 Research question two asks about the expectations of the customers of Thammasat University Bookstore. To answer this question, one needs to consider the problems raised by the customers. Few problems were raised by the customers; for

instance, the bookstore was too small, very few parking spaces, books were too old and always out of stock, no computer provided for books searching, no reading corner, and staff were not nice enough.

5.3.3 Research question three asks how Thammasat University Bookstore can meet the customers' expectations. To answer this question, one needs to consider the suggestions provided by the customers. The customers also provided some suggestion for improving the bookstore to increase their satisfaction by extending the store space, new store decoration, area for reading corner, customer lockers, bookstore brochure, books categories tags, longer opening hours on weekends, friendly staff, more parking etc.

5.3.4 The findings from this study showed that the bookstore location was convenient for the customers and that it was clean and had a good atmosphere (Table 9: 3.95% and 3.66% respectively). This brought a positive feeling to the customers which response to the satisfaction measurement instrument or SERVQUAL Dimensions of Gronross explained the accessibility and flexibility (location, operating hours etc.) is the key factor of quality service which the service providers should prepare for its customers. However, access to the bookstore is limited by very few parking spaces (Table 9: 2.05%).

5.3.5 Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2006, pp. 116 –117) presented the five elements of how consumers weigh service quality. Those factors consisted of employees' full service availability, job responsiveness to serve customers' needs, product knowledge, proper attire etc and were in accordance with the results of staff satisfaction aspects which revealed that the customers were quite satisfied with staff' service in terms of their appropriate clothing, temperament, polite manner, and readiness to serve. In contrast, if the employees knew little or nothing about products (Table 10: only 3.2% of staff's ability to interact with customers), the customers would be irritated.

Most of the customers from Table 11 said they were satisfied with the bookstore's prices. It can be concluded that the customers compare the price here with other stores. This result can be referred to the definition of Customer Satisfaction by Zikmund, McLeod, and Gilbert (2003, pp. 73) who specified that Customer

Satisfaction is a post-purchase or post-choice evaluation that results from a comparison between those pre-purchase expectations and actual performance.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Regarding the research findings, the customers were quite satisfied with Thammasat University Bookstore: Tha Prachan Campus, but with different degrees of satisfaction degree except for the parking space which was the only area that they felt dissatisfied with. The factors leading to customer satisfaction were the bookstore's size, easy access, cleanliness, polite manner, good temperament, and proper attire of the staff. Moreover, providing fast service with many payment options, service equipment modernization, and reasonable price lead to client satisfaction. In addition, the service provided by the bakery shop, coffee corner, and magazine kiosk enhanced the level of the customers' satisfaction.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research was conducted with 150 respondents on the satisfaction level and opinion about the Thammasat University Bookstore at Tha Prachan campus; therefore, further studies should be done with a broader target group. Besides, future research should be conducted at Thammasat University Bookstore at Rangsit Campus or at other university's bookstores in order to compare the satisfaction level with the bookstore at Tha Prachan campus.