

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter is divided into 5 parts: 1) summary of the study, 2) summary of the findings, 3) discussion of the study, 4) conclusions and 5) recommendations for further research.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

The study of the factors affecting students' satisfaction with private dormitory services in Mueng district, Nakornpathom province was conducted to investigate the factors influencing the students' decision-making and their level of satisfaction with the services of private dormitories. This study can be used as guideline for the owners or the managers to improve their service quality to retain existing customers and increase profit. To understand how this research was conducted, it can be summarized as follows:

##### **5.1.1 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to examine the factors affecting the level of students' satisfaction with the services of private dormitories. The sub-objectives of this study were to: (1) measure the level of students' satisfaction with the private dormitories in Mueng district, Nakornpathom Province, (2) identify existing problems/inconveniences that students faced when living in private dormitories, (3) find out students' suggestions/comments about the services so they can be improved in the future.

##### **5.1.2 Subjects, Materials, and Procedures**

The subjects used in this study consisted of 72 male and 128 female students who were living in the private dormitories in Mueng district, Nakornpathom province. There are two types of data in this study. The secondary data was collected from textbooks, literature, theses, and websites. The primary data was collected from the responses to questionnaires.

The study design used for this study was accidental sampling. A self-administered questionnaire was employed as a tool for collecting data. The questionnaire was divided into five parts consisting of: (1) general information, (2)

dormitory services and facilities, (3) factors affecting student's decisions on selecting dormitories, (4) overall satisfaction with dormitory services, and (5) other opinions on dormitory services and suggestions.

The data collection was conducted during 5<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> January 2008. All respondents stated their opinions/feelings. The data obtained was analyzed by using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social science) version 12. Descriptive statistics (frequency, mean and percentage) were used to illustrate and compare the respondents' answers.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

The results of the study can be summarized as follows:

### **5.2.1 General Information Results**

The total number of respondents was 200 students. The number of male respondents was 72 while 128 were female respondents. 85.5% of respondents were between the age of 19-22 years old. Most of the respondents had Bachelor's degree (193 students or 96.5%). Most of the students were Silpakorn students (198 persons), and approximately 30% each of the respondents were freshmen and senior students. Many of respondents were from Bangkok (20%). 30% of the respondents had income of 3,000-4,000 Baht per month. Most respondents had their own vehicles (73.5%) and most of the respondents (79%) commuted to their educational institution by motorcycle or by bicycle.

### **5.2.2 Dormitory Services and Facilities**

The majority of the respondents lived in the apartments (63%). The average period of time that the respondents had lived in the dormitory was about 1 year and 7 months, and most respondents generally preferred to live with 2-3 friends (62%). The average monthly rental fee of a majority respondent (33.0%) was less than 2,000 baht. More than 85% of dormitories provided beds, mattresses, desks and chairs, and dressers for students within the room. The most important facilities of most dormitories were a car park (93.5%).

### **5.2.3 Factors Affecting Students' Decisions in Selecting Dormitories**

The study shows that the dormitory's location was the most important factor affecting the students' decision in selecting their dormitories with the average

score of 4.13. However, the students also considered personal factors (3.76), the price factor (3.61), other factors such as their roommates (3.59) and dormitory services factors (3.52) when they chose dormitories. Promotional factors likely did not affect their decision-making according to the average mean score of 2.88.

#### **5.2.4 Satisfaction With Dormitory Services**

In general, students felt satisfied with private dormitory services. According to the average mean scores, the students were most satisfied with the dormitory's cleanliness (3.86), next was the dormitory's convenience (3.69). Although some students said that the rental fee and facility expenses were quite high, they felt satisfied with the expenses involved with the dormitory (3.63). Additionally, the students were satisfied with the dormitory's comfort and appropriateness (3.57), communication/ computer network (3.53), security service (3.45), and general services (3.44).

#### **5.2.5 Problems/Inconveniences That the Students Faced**

Loud noise from other nearby individual rental houses was the main inconvenience that some respondents talked about. They stated that this problem led to them being disturbed, especially during the period of their examinations. In addition they also said that they lacked privacy while living in dormitories. Secondly, some students mentioned an insufficient number of parking lots, and some students talked about the price. Regarding the price, they said that the rental fee and facilities expenses were too high. Other problems that some students faced were pollution and an inadequate security system. They clarified that they were faced with high dust from buildings under construction nearby, while some complained that the security service was insufficient. Finally, some respondents faced problems about the lack of cleanliness of the dormitory area and an insufficient number of bins. Some students indicated that they had bad experiences with the temperament owners or dormitory personnel, whereas some students complained about the failure of the Internet system in the dormitories.

For the reasons why students chose these dormitories, the results show that the most important reason for selecting the dormitory was the transportation convenience. The respondents, especially females also indicated that separate

dormitories for men or women and safety were also important factors. The least important factor for their decision-making were the regulations of the dormitory.

#### **5.2.6 Suggestions/Comments From the Respondents**

Some students felt that they would be willing to pay a high price for services if they get better service. They suggested that the rental and facilities fees should remain the same. In addition, a parking lot should be provided for all types of vehicles; for example, personal cars and motorcycles. Lastly, the students desired that the dormitory staff swiftly solved the problem, especially with the Internet network, because it is important for their learning process.

### **5.3 DISCUSSION**

The study of factors affecting students' satisfaction with private dormitory services in Mueng district, Nakornpathom province aimed to investigate the factors influencing the students' decision-making process and how the students perceived the private dormitory services. More insight and detailed information about the characteristics of dormitory businesses that influence satisfaction and dissatisfaction in students will help owners and managers know how to manage their service quality to satisfy students. Therefore, the interesting points from the findings are analyzed and discussed as follows:

#### **5.3.1 General Information of the Respondents**

From the results of the findings on the gender of the respondents, the majority of residents of private dormitory services are female. The results comply with the information from the report of the office of Social Development and Human Security Nakornpathom province, in 2007, which stated that, in Nakornpathom province, the numbers of female dormitories are higher than the number of male dormitories. The results also identified that the major group of their customers were the Silpakorn university students, and most of them tended to stay in the same dormitories until they graduated if they felt satisfied with the dormitory services.

When considering the price of the dormitory, the results show that most students preferred dormitories with rental rate of less than 3,000 Baht per month. Most of the respondents also had their own vehicles, but they usually preferred to go to the university in a group by walking with friends or by going together in a vehicle.

This is the main reason why most students decided to choose dormitories near the university.

### **5.3.2 Dormitory Service, Equipment and Facilities**

The major types of private dormitories were apartments, and most respondents generally preferred to live with 2-3 friends. This result complies with the previous findings that respondents preferred to go in a group when traveling to their university.

In addition, the results indicate that most existing private dormitories provide sufficient services, equipment, and other facilities for student's convenience while they living in the dormitories. There were a few complaints about these services mainly regarding Internet network failure.

### **5.3.3 Factors Affecting Students' Decision in Selecting Dormitories**

Similar to several previous studies as mentioned in chapter 2, when selecting dormitories, respondents will evaluate the overall characteristics of the private dormitories by first looking at the dormitory's location in two respects: 1) transportation convenience and 2) the distance from the university. Then, they consider the personal factors, price factors, other dormitory services, and the dormitories physical appearance, respectively. The least important factor for their considerations was the promotional factor.

This result implies that, even though today private dormitory businesses in Nakornpathom province are faced with a highly competitive environment, the owners or managers of dormitories need not spend money on advertising or promotional campaigns. In contrast, the essential competitive advantage of the successful of private dormitories is their location, and convenient transportation access to the university, community or shopping centers. In addition, to retain customers, the politeness and good attention by all staff is important for customers' satisfaction.

### **5.3.4 Satisfaction with Dormitory Services**

As stated in chapter 2 and in the previous section, one of the important factors influencing students' decision-making is personal factor. Thus, students did not evaluate the service quality only in terms of the physical characteristics and dormitory services, they also assessed the process of delivering the service. Most

respondents also considered the ability of the staff to provide individual attention and offer them prompt service. As the respondents said, dormitory staff needs to be capable of providing appropriate services. So the result of this aspect is quite positive. Few students felt dissatisfied with staff's service, though some respondents said that staff were sometimes uncaring, impolite, and unresponsive.

However, according to the results of this study, it is apparent that students felt happy while living in private dormitories. When evaluating the overall quality of services, the respondents felt satisfied with the services they actually received from the dormitories. For example, the students felt satisfied with the cleanliness of both the internal and external environment, the convenience of the personal services both before and after they signed the rental contract, the comfort and the appropriateness of the room, the adequacy of security service, the sufficiency of communication and computer system, and other general services. These findings indicate that, in the perceptions of most students, the service quality of private dormitories is at high level. Unsurprisingly, most respondents identified that they were satisfied with the reasonable price they paid to obtain the services from the private service providers.

To enable services improvements which will lead to a higher satisfaction level among respondents, both the recognition by staff who contribute to the students' satisfaction and the commitment by the owners or the managers are essential.

Finally, though most students felt satisfied with the overall dormitory services, there were some sub-elements with which students felt neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. For example, some regulations such as the closing time, the regulations regarding the non-residents, rules, and the non-resident parking; most students thought that these services should be more flexible. Effective communication between dormitory staff and students is therefore essential so that students clearly understand the reasons behind the regulations. As a result, the level of students' satisfaction will be improved.

### **5.3.5 Problems/Inconveniences That the Students Faced**

Generally, some students discussed the same problems as previous studies mentioned. The first main problem was loud noise from nearby rental house.

They stated that this problem led to them being of disturbed, especially during the period of their examinations. In addition, they also said that they lack of privacy while living in dormitories. This problem is being gradually solved by the government sector through the social ordering program. Currently, all private dormitory businesses, which have more than five students, have to be legally registered and follow all regulations mentioned in the Dormitory Act, B.E. 2507.

Secondly, some students mentioned inadequate parking, and the price. They said that the rental fee and facilities expenses were high. To relieve this problem, the owners and the managers of the dormitories should improve their service quality in order to meet the students' expectations. This is the challenge for enhancing the students' satisfaction level.

Other problems that some students faced were pollution and inadequate security systems. Some students dealt with high dust from buildings under construction while some complained that the security service was insufficient. The pollution is likely uncontrollable, but the quality of security services certainly is one of the responsibilities of the dormitory's owner. Thus, to retain these customers, security services should be improved as quickly as possible.

Finally, some respondents faced problems regarding an unclean of the dormitory area and lack of bins. Some students indicated that they had bad experiences regarding the bad temperament owners or dormitory's personnel, whereas some students complained about the failure of the Internet system in the dormitories. Therefore, the dormitory should have technology which serves the customers' needs. For example, improving the Internet system should be done to enhance students' satisfaction

The implications of this study indicate the extent of students' satisfaction with all elements was at the moderate level. There was no element of the dormitory services with which students felt extremely satisfied. The results identify the gap between students' expectations and their perceptions about the dormitory services, so there is a huge opportunity for dormitory owners who want to develop high quality services for their customers.

## 5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusion can be drawn from the discussion above:

According to the findings, students normally evaluate the overall characteristics of private dormitories by first looking at location.

Generally, students are satisfied with the overall services provided by private dormitories, though there are some elements with which most students felt neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, such as the recreation space, the closing time, the regulations regarding non-residents, the non-resident parking, and the rules. However, the students said that these were not important factors influencing their decision-making in selecting dormitories.

Nevertheless, to improve the level of students' satisfaction, all persons involved in dormitories businesses should carefully consider to the above in order to improve their service quality in the future. Staff should also be trained to deal with the different needs of students.

Furthermore, there were few elements that students felt strongly satisfied with. Thus, all sectors, including the government sector and the private sector, should strive to improve service quality. Because of the rapidly changing environment in the dormitory business, all elements should be improved to improve satisfaction.

In summary, to improve private dormitories, the following suggestions should be followed:

1. Private dormitories should be located within two kilometers from the university because it is the most important factor that affects the student's choices.
2. Private dormitories should pay more attention to the cleanliness and service convenience.

## 5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for future research.

Investigating the extent of students' satisfaction with dormitory services as well as examining the customers' perceptions of the service quality should be further considered as interesting topics for further study. This may cover a variety of aspects; for example, the comparison between the satisfaction level with university dormitory



services compared to the private dormitory services. To increase the reliability of the findings in this study, the researchers should include more elements related to students' satisfaction.

In addition, comparing the degree of students' satisfaction with services provided at different times is also another interesting topic to determine to what extent dormitory services have improved.

Lastly, to produce in-depth findings, further research should develop a more effective research design to cover other aspects such as increasing the sample size, or changing the sampling method to address more characteristics.