

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature in three main areas along with the summary: (1) the theory and concept of customer satisfaction, (2) the theory of airline service, (3) relevant factors of interpersonal communication.

2.1 THE THEORY AND CONCEPT OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2000), defines the word "satisfaction" as "The good feeling that you have when you have achieved something or when something you wanted to happen does happen; something that gives you this feeling." or "The act of fulfilling a need or desire."

Richard Oliver's study (as cited in Phatthareeya Lukphet, 2003) mentioned that satisfaction is the consumer's fulfillment response. It is a judgment that a product or service, feature, or the product or service itself, provided a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment, including levels of under or over-fulfillment.

2.1.1 Concept of Customer Satisfaction

Botten and Macmaurens's study (as cited in Phatthareeya Lukphet, 2003) said "Customer satisfaction is determined by expectations and other pre-experience standards, product-service performance and factors affecting actual perception of the service."

Direk Ruekrthai's study (as cited in Siriwat Deephor, 2000) stated that satisfaction means the positive feeling of an individual towards something that would change to satisfaction.

Richard L. Chitty's study (as cited in Rintarn Jaroenroop, 2003), vice president of Lexus Automobile defined the meaning of customer satisfaction in the book *The Customer is Always Right!*, written by Kabodian (1996): Customer satisfaction means recognizing and valuing lifelong partnership with every customer; creating and enhancing bonds of respect and consideration with every customer contact; attending to the smallest detail of the shortest phone call, and the entire

conversation of the longest customer meeting. In summary, customer satisfaction is exceeding customer expectations.

2.2 NATURE OF AIRLINE SERVICE

Lufthansa Services Thailand Ltd. (LST) provides handling of the ground services for Finnair, one of the customer airlines which are Lufthansa German Airlines, Austrian Airlines, Finnair, Etihad Airways, and Swiss. Hoffman and Bateson's study (as cited in Phatthareeya Lukphet, 2003) mentioned that there are three elements of basic service package as follows:

The first element is the core service which is the reason for a company being in the market. For an airline, it is transportation. In order to make it possible for customers to use the core service, some additional services are required such as check-in services. The second element is called a facilities service which refers to facilities which use the core service. If facilitating services are lacking, the core service cannot be consumed. The third one is the supporting service. These services do not facilitate the consumption or use of the core service, but are used to increase the value of the service and/or to differentiate the service from those of competitors." LST provides the supporting service to Finnair at Suvarnabhumi Airport because it is related to the service of hospitalities besides the facilities provided by Finnair to serve customer needs at check-in counters and at boarding gates.

2.3 INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Davito, J.A. (1983) states that interpersonal communication involves at least two people. Each of these people formulates and sends message (source function) and also perceives and comprehends messages (receiver function). Interpersonal communication cannot occur with oneself, and it deals with people= human beings. Communication with animals, machines, plants, pictures and the like are not interpersonal communication experiences. Interpersonal communication occurs between two people or among a small group of people. It excludes mass communication and public speaking situations, in which there is a large audience and the messages go essentially in one direction- from speaker to audience but not from audience to speaker. Interpersonal communication is one of the most important factors of supporting service in the airline business because ground service agents are known as the front-line service that can create the image of an airline in the passengers'

perception. The more passengers are satisfied with front-line service, the better the image of service gained by the public. Interpersonal communication involves the use of channels for the transmission of messages and of codes that carry the message. Without channels and codes there is no communication.

2.3.1 Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal signals are bodily movements, which can be analyzed in physical terms. Their importance is in their meaning to the sender and receiver. When a human makes a certain noise is different in different parts of the world. Communication of all kinds can be looked at in terms of a sender who encodes and a receiver who decodes, so that the signal has a meaning for each of them. Non-verbal communication defines the social context in which messages are transmitted and received in order to make the interpretation possible. It also makes an essential difference between human interaction and the communication occurring between sender and receiver. Non-verbal signals such as sighs, groans, laughter and cries are another channel of communication besides verbal coding like words. The non-verbal channel involves variations in voice quality during speech which is a separate part from the verbal content of what a person says. Variation in the loudness, pitch, tempo, stress, etc. of someone's speech can communicate something of his/her feelings. The non-verbal aspect of speech is often referred to as paralanguage. The existence of paralanguage indicates the fact that human communication is not exclusively verbal because the verbal component is what we are most aware of when we communicate, but there are many other non-verbal channels that all contribute to the total patterns of human communication. Non-verbal communication may emphasize what is expressed on the verbal level. Kurt D. (1976) mentioned that human beings make extensive use of non-verbal channels in face-to-face communication. The non-verbal channels include the regulation of interpersonal distance, gaze direction, posture, movements and gestures and paralanguage. Those aspects of non-verbal communication are mostly concerned with how something is said rather than what is said. Non-verbal aspects of behavior not only have a communicative but expressive function because movements, gesture, postures and others express interpersonal affects and attitudes. Unless the other partner in an interaction can decode the meaning of these acts, no communication has indeed occurred.

Non-verbal communication has the presentation function of interpersonal relationship like clones or intimacy and status differentials. People who are close to each other psychologically also stand or sit closer to each other physically, look at each other more consistently, and probably synchronize their gestures and movements effectively. Non-verbal communication helps to define human interaction in terms of certain fundamental properties of social relationships, and it also constitutes different forms of address which defines the relationship between addresser and addressee. The act of address must be made in a certain mode that defines the fundamental features of the relationship in which the individuals stand to each other. Besides the roles in presentation or definition of social relationships, non-verbal messages have the function of providing much of the feedback which is necessary in any ongoing interaction. This function provides the information about how each of the communicators is defining the situation at any particular time.

2.3.2 Interpersonal Feedback

Hamilton and Parker (1997) mentioned that feedback is the verbal and visual response to the message, and it can be a self-monitoring response that allows people to modify their behavior until it meets their expectations. Feedback is the way that people can make sure if the messages sent are interpreted as intended or not. It helps people to assume that message have been received correctly. One of the advantages of feedback is that it can increase people satisfaction because people like to feel that their ideas, their requests and opinions are valuable. According to Hamilton and Parker (1997) p.103 , using feedback effectively is briefly stated in the book “*Communicating for Results A Guide for Business and the Professions*” that

Remember when giving feedback to others, it should (1) be directed toward behavior rather than toward the person, (2) be descriptive rather evaluative, (3) involve sharing ideas rather than giving advice, (4) include only as much information as the person can handle at one time, and (5) be immediate and well timed. Also keep in mind that a sudden and unusual interest in feedback may be viewed with suspicion by those who know you, so move slowly, identify the specific type of feedback you want, and tell them why you want it. Remember also that you must receive any feedback in a positive manner. A negative or defensive response will convince others that being open with you is too dangerous.

2.3.3 Effectiveness in Listening to Customers

Hamilton and Parker (1997) mentioned that

Listening to customers can tell us a great deal about the competition. Most companies like to compare and contrast themselves with other companies' people, information, goods, and services. It is simply good business practice to do so. Customers will communicate their opinion of you, your company, and its competition if they are encouraged. Listening to customers can also increase sales and customer satisfaction.

Effective listening is not only a passive communication activity, but it also takes a great deal of effort and motivation to become effective listener. Good listening is the first step for success in business and professions and lead to the solution of problem in business. The case cannot be made strongly enough that organizational effectiveness is hampered by employees and managers who do not listen well. Individual career advancement can also be hindered by poor listening. Unfortunately, poor listening is often more apparent to others than it is to the poor listener.

2.3.4 Body Communication

Bodily communication plays an important part in human social Behavior and functions in more intricate manners. Argyle, M.(1975) states that these signals are gestures, head movements and other bodily movements, postures, facial expression, direction of gaze, proximity and spatial position, bodily contact, orientation, tones of voice and other non-verbal aspects of speech, clothes, and bodily adornment. A sign or signal is the element of appearance, behavior, etc., of one organism that is received by the sense organs of a second organism and affects its behavior. Signals are quite a distinctive class of behavior because they have meanings = they might stand for other objects or events, or create expectations of behavior to follow. Wiener et al., (1972) mentioned that it is very difficult to decide whether a particular non-verbal signal is intended to communicate or not. There are communications which are motivated without conscious awareness of intention. One criterion is whether; for example, when telephoning instead of communicating visibly, or when the signal is repeated if it has no effect. Another criterion is whether or not the sender varies his signal in order to elicit the correct response from the receiver.

According to Davito, J.A. (1983), body communication can be defined as five types as follows:

Emblems are non-verbal behavior that translate words or phrase rather directly such as the O.K. sign or come here sign. Emblems are non-verbal substitutes for specific verbal words or phrase without conscious awareness. It is used as a kind of reinforcement or when there is a considerable distance between individuals or when we want to talk at someone's back.

Illustrators are non-verbal behavior that accompany and literally illustrate the verbal message. Illustrators seem more natural and less arbitrary than emblems.

Affect Displays are the movements of the facial area that convey emotional meanings. It is unintentional, but they may also be intentional. Actors are often rated by the public for their ability to accurately portray affect by movements of their facial muscles.

Regulators are used to monitor, maintain, or control the speaking of another individual such as nodding, pursing lips, or adjusting eyes focus. It also includes the gross movement such as turning one's head, leaning forward in one's chair, and even walking away.

Adaptors are behaviors that serve some kind of need and occur in their entirety when performed in private but are only partially executed when attempted in public; for example, when you are alone you might scratch your head until the itch is gone, or pick your nose until you are satisfied.

2.3.5 Effectiveness in Interpersonal Communication

Davito, J.A. (1983) points out that there are five characteristics of effectiveness in interpersonal communication which are as follows:

Openness: the interpersonal communication must be open to the people with whom they are interacting. It also refers to willingness of a communicator to react honestly to incoming stimuli because nothing seems worse than indifference. Openness concerns the owning of feeling and thoughts that to acknowledge that what we express is ours and we are willing to be responsible for them.

Empathy: this word is from German word *Einfuhling* which

means “to feel with”. This is the most difficult ability to achieve for communicators. As Henry Backrack puts it, empathy refers to “ the ability of one person to experientially ‘know’ what another is experiencing at any given moment, from the latter’s frame of reference, through the latter’s eyes.” (p.)

Supportiveness is demonstrated and fostered by our being (1) descriptive rather than evaluative. (2) spontaneous rather than strategic, and (3) provisional rather than certain. Open and empathic communication cannot survive in an unsupportive atmosphere.

Positiveness can be considered in terms of attitudes and stroking behavior. Attitudes can be defined in three aspects which are attitudes to self, others person, and general communication situation. Stroking behavior acknowledges the existence, and in fact the importance of the other person. When we stroke someone, whether positive or negative, we are acknowledging her or him as a person, as a significant human being. Stroke can be verbal or non-verbal, positive or negative. It is believed that people need to be stroked otherwise they will shrivel up and die.

Equality should characterize the interpersonal communication in terms of speaking and listening. Interpersonal communication is generally more effective when the atmosphere is one of the equality. This means that there should be a tacit recognition that both parties are valuable and worthwhile human beings and that each has something important to contribute.