

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for the study of building staff service quality and efficiency in small hotels in Phuket combines qualitative and quantitative data collection methods using quota sampling. The main tools for information collection are comprised of questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and direct observation. Direct observation will be used as a support technique for collecting the data base. 590 small hotels were initially discovered in Phuket. This chapter will proceed by discussing:

1. The population and sample
2. The research instrument
3. Data collection
4. Analysis of data

The population and sample

Different tools for studying the population and sample will be used in each procedure. This mixed methodology makes use of both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The details are described as follow:

1. Qualitative research

For the qualitative research methodology, data will be collected from small hotel human resources managers and/or management levels by using in-depth interviews. This is to gain knowledge and understanding of the service quality and efficiency of the staff of small hotels in Phuket. The details are as follows:

1.1 Small hotel managers of human resources and/or management levels

The sample size for the in-depth interviews will be determined for three districts in Phuket including Muang, Kathu, and Thalang. The researcher determined the sample sizes at 22 people from the human resources department and/or management levels of small hotels in Phuket by cutting a similar population from a

sample of three districts in Phuket including boutique and hip hotels, resort hotels, guest houses, airport hotels and bungalows. This results in the following sample:

- 1.1.1 Small hotels in Muang district, Phuket 4 hotels
- 1.1.2 Small hotels in Kathu district, Phuket 5 hotels
- 1.1.3 Small hotels in Thalang district, Phuket 5 hotels

The details of the hotel types by area are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 The number of hotel types by areas

Areas	Type of hotels	Number of hotels
Muang district	Boutique and Hip hotel	1
	Resort hotel	2
	Guest house	1
	Bungalow	1
	Total	5
Kathu district	Boutique and Hip hotel	3
	Resort hotel	3
	Guest house	3
	Bungalow	1
	Total	10
Thalang district	Boutique and Hip hotel	1
	Resort hotel	2
	Guest house	2
	Bungalow	1
	Airport Hotels	1
Total		7
Amount		22

2. Quantitative research

To obtain quantitative data, the research will sample both Thai and foreign tourists in Phuket. Therefore, questionnaires will be used for exploring the opinions of tourists concerning the service quality level of small hotels staff in Phuket.

Population of this study will be referred with the calculating method of Taro Yamane. According to the population of the study, the statistics of Ministry of Tourism and Sport declares that there were 5,471,218 tourists visit Phuket in 2011 (Ministry of Tourism and Sport, Thailand, 2011). Then, the researcher referred to the calculating method of Taro Yamane (Yamane, 1973), his formula has been set as follows;

$$n = \frac{N}{1+Ne^2}$$

When n = Sample size
 N = Population size
 e = The error of sampling

This study allows the error of sampling on 0.05. The sample size shows as follow;

2.1 Tourists:

$$\begin{aligned} N &= 5,471,218 \text{ (Ministry of Tourism and Sport, Thailand, 2010)} \\ n &= \frac{5,471,218}{1+5,471,218 (0.05)^2} \\ &= 399.99 \\ &= 400 \end{aligned}$$

From above calculating, a minimum of 400 questionnaires will be distributed to both Thai and foreign tourists of small hotels in Phuket.

However, tourists will be sampled using quota random sampling. Therefore, the sample was divided into three areas. The details are described below.

2.2 Tourists

- 2.2.1

Small hotel businesses at Muang district

103 persons.
- 2.2.2

Small hotel businesses at Thalang district

97 persons.
- 2.2.3

Small hotel businesses at Kathu district

200 persons.

The details of sample size for tourists by area are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 The number of samples’ size for tourists by areas

Areas	Sample size	Number of tourists
1. Muang district	Karon, Thais/Foreigners	13/30
	Chalong, Thais/Foreigners	10/17
	Muang Phuket Municipality, Thais/Foreigners	13/20
2. Thalang district	Naiyang, Thais/Foreigners	10/40
	Cherngthalay, Thais/Foreigners	10/10
	Naithorn, Thais/Foreigners	10/17
3. Kathu district	Patong, Thais/Foreigners	30/80
	Kamala, Thais/Foreigners	20/27
	Kathu, Thais/Foreigners	16/27
Total		132/268

The research methodology can be summarized into three purposes as follows.

Purpose 1: To gain knowledge of the service quality level of the staff of small hotels in Phuket, the research methodology is quantitative and consists of collecting data by questionnaires from the tourists of small hotels in Phuket.

Purpose 2: To explore human resources managers’ and/or management levels’ opinions on the service efficiency of small hotels staff in Phuket, the research methodology is qualitative and uses in-depth interviews of human resources managers and/or management levels of small hotels in Phuket.

Purpose 3: To develop an appropriate standard-guideline of service efficiency for the staff of small hotels in Phuket, the research methodology is to analyze the data from the findings in purposes 1 to 2 using the relevant concepts and theories from the review of literature.

The research instruments

Various instruments for collecting data concerning the service efficiency of the staff in small hotels in Phuket will be used. The details are as follow:

1. In-depth interviews

Open-ended questions and guidelines will be developed to do the in-depth interviews. This is to allow interviewees to share their views freely. There will be follow-up questions in the form of probes in case items in the discussion need to be clarified.

The interview schedule will be tested in a pilot interview—before the actual interviews—and revised before the discussions with the research sample. These discussions will be recorded using tape recorders, papers, pens, et cetera, in order to develop transcripts for analyzing data. Efforts will be made to assure that the data will be stored confidentiality for research purposes only and the anonymity of persons providing information will be guaranteed.

The discussion will be semi-structured with questions prepared to cover the following content:

- 1.1 Opinions on the situation and potential of small hotels in Phuket.
- 1.2 Opinions on the potential or efficiency of small hotels staff in Phuket (the 8 groups of competencies).
- 1.3 Opinions on the service quality of small hotels staff in Phuket.
- 1.4 Opinions on the internal factors affecting the efficiency of staff service in small hotels in Phuket.
- 1.5 Opinions on the external factors affecting the efficiency of staff service in small hotels in Phuket.
- 1.6 Opinions or suggestions regarding guidelines for building the service efficiency building of the staff of small hotels in Phuket.

2. Direct observation

Direct observation will be used for exploring the physical characteristics of and service of the staff of small hotels in Phuket. The purpose is to collect basic data. Thus, a camera and notebook will be used as the main tools to record the direct observations.

3. Questionnaires

Questionnaires will be created and tested for their validity and reliability. The details are described below.

3.1 To determine the face validity of the questionnaires, they will be shown to experts. This is to review and verify the content of each question in order to check to see if it will help achieve the objectives of this study or not. Then, if necessary, the questionnaires will be revised and reviewed again.

3.2 To determine the reliability of the questionnaires, the final questionnaires will be tested on groups of 30 people who are yet to be defined. Then, the questionnaires will be subjected to Cronbach’s coefficient alpha (Boonriang, 2000, pp. 183-189). Cronbach’s coefficient alpha can be calculated by the following formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{k}{1 - k} \left\{ \frac{1 - \sum v_i}{vt} \right\}$$

when	α	means	reliability value
	k	means	number of population
	v_i	means	total variability of each item
	vt	means	variability of the total scores

Data collection

The data collection for the research involving building staff service quality and efficiency in small hotels in Phuket has many procedures as follow:

- Step 1: To determine the research’s direction.
- Working place: Naresuan University, Bangkok Campus and Phuket.
- Step 2: Finding the basic using both primary and secondary sources.

Working place: Naresuan University, Bangkok Campus and small hotels in Phuket. Information sources such as websites, newspapers and other journals will be used.

Step 3: Designing the questionnaire to be used for collecting data from small hotel managers (front office managers, food and beverage managers, and housekeeping managers) and tourists (Thai and foreign tourists) in Phuket. However, the questionnaire will be tested by experts for face validity.

Working place: Naresuan University, Bangkok Campus and Phuket.

Step 4: Field work to collect data by using questionnaires, in-depth interviews, direct observation and documentation analysis from small hotel owners/or entrepreneurs and management levels in Phuket.

Working place: Small hotels in Phuket.

Step 5: Verify the data.

Working place: Naresuan University, Bangkok Campus and Phuket.

Step 6: To enter the 400 questionnaires that collected from tourists and department managers (front office, food and beverage, and housekeeping) into the computer program and to analyze the data from human resources managers and government and private sectors that are involved with small hotels that was collected by in-depth interviews.

Working place: Phuket.

Step 7: Analyzing the service quality levels and competencies of small hotels staff in Phuket. These analyses are aimed at proposing an appropriate standard-guideline of service efficiency for the staff of small hotels in Phuket.

Working place: Naresuan University, Bangkok Campus and Phuket.

Step 8: Preparing the research report and publishing the research.

Working place: Naresuan University, Bangkok Campus and Phuket.

Analysis of data

The qualitative and quantitative data analysis to be done is described below:

1. The qualitative data

Thematic analysis will be used to analyze the qualitative data according to the following procedures:

1.1 Transcripts of the interviews will be developed and read in detail several times.

1.2 Classified data; the data from in-depth interviews and direct observations at small hotels in Phuket will be classified as the data file.

1.3 Manage all classified data into groups. The data from in-depth interviews and direct observations will be compiled from the data source in the three districts of Phuket.

1.4 Interpretations and conclusions from the data; the data from in-depth interviews and direct observations will be interpreted and concluded along the conceptual framework of the study.

1.5 Analytic data; the interpreted and concluded data will be discussed by the descriptive analysis (Appleton, 1995, pp. 993-997; Chantavanich, 2005, unpagged), which is included as follow:

1.5.1 Analytic induction: it is the interpretation of the conclusions based on the phenomenon that can be seen in the small hotels in Phuket such as hotel decorations, materials and machines used in the hotel, as well as services providing by the staff, et cetera. Then, its phenomenon will be concluded, but if a conclusion has not investigated so that the result was a hypothesis, if a conclusion has confirmed, it is considered to be definitive.

1.5.2 Typological Analysis: the data received from the analytic induction will be classified as a data type by using the theory framework for classifying data.

1.5.3 Analytic content comparison: it is to use a comparison method by which the data were compared with a phenomenon, which can be done by the researcher to observe or collect data. Then, the data will be classified and compared.

2. The quantitative data

Questionnaires will be analyzed and processed by a computer program (Statistical Package for the Social Science: SPSS for windows version 11.0).

In testing of the hypotheses, the statistical significance value will be set at 0.05. The following statistics will be reported:

2.1 Percentages: used for describing personal information such as age, sex, and education level, et cetera.

2.2 Means and standard deviations: using for analyzing the level of staff service efficiency in small hotels in Phuket.

2.3 Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients: to study factors/conditions affecting the staff service efficiency of small hotels in Phuket.

The significance level is set at 0.05 (this will be indicated with a *) and the significance level of 0.01 will be indicated with a **. The opinion levels

concerning the service quality and efficiency of small hotels staff in Phuket will be determined by the following scores:

Best	score	5
Good	score	4
Fair	score	3
Poor	score	2
Poorest	score	1



The opinion levels are interpreted as follows:

Opinion levels between 4.21 – 5.00	means	Best
Opinion levels between 3.41 – 4.20	means	Good
Opinion levels between 2.61 – 3.40	means	Fair
Opinion levels between 1.81 – 2.60	means	Poor
Opinion levels between 1.00 – 1.80	means	Poorest

Conclusion

The study of building service quality and efficiency in the staff of small hotels in Phuket will use a mixture of research methods. Small hotel entrepreneurs in Phuket and organizational sectors involved directly with small hotels in Phuket serve as some of the populations to be studied. In-depth interviews, direct observations, documentation analysis, and questionnaires will be used as the research instruments. The eight steps to be used to collect data are: 1) determining the research’s direction, 2) finding basic data and completing the literature review using both primary and secondary sources, 3) designing the questionnaires, 4) field work, 5) collecting and verifying the accuracy data, 6) compiling the data from questionnaires, 7) analyzing the service patterns, factors, and conditions affecting service efficiency of the staff in small hotels in Phuket, and 8) preparing the research report and publishing the research. Finally, there are 2 approaches to analyze the data including 1) thematic analysis which is used to analyze the qualitative data, and 2) computer program (SPSS) which is used to analyze the quantitative data.