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**SERVICE INNOVATION FACTORS FOR
SUCCESSFUL NEW SERVICE DEVELOPMENT IN
THE DESTINATION SPAS: AN INVESTIGATION
ON SPA CUISINE**

Master Thesis

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This Master thesis has been compiled independently. All works by other authors used while compiling the thesis as well as principles and data from literary and other sources have been referred to.

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INTRODUCTION

The spa business environment is everyday stronger and more competitive so it is important that the organization will be able to innovate new service idea and formulate contributing aspects in order to identify their competitive advantages that may derive from differentiating their service being offer to the customer. Therefore, bringing into the context of the destination spas¹; the main objective of this research is to explore how the organization can achieve Spa cuisine new service development by involving service innovation factors to match with market attractiveness or customer needs. The research idea has been deriving from the assumption that the service innovation and new service development (NSD) process can donate on organization's service differentiation through Spa cuisine in order to attain competitive advantage. In addition, the research will also illustrate a conceptualized model of how NSD process complements service innovation in the context of Spa cuisine.

In these days, most of luxury hotels usually provide spa as part of their service in order to bringing in more revenue into their business. However, they are almost doing the same; spa with massage and standard health or treatment therapies, but what is exactly the luxury spa resort's core competency? What are customers exactly looking for? Not many studies point out that what shall be the key facets that the destination spas shall focus in order to stand out of the competitors and attain the competitive advantages or market share.

The reason the why Spa cuisine has been brought in to investigate is because these days, the customer is more aware on healthy nutrition regarding to the consciousness on health that rise up from various kinds of media; most luxury spa resort operations provide

¹ Destination spa (ISPA, 2014) is “a facility with the primary purpose of guiding individual spa-goers to develop healthy habits. This lifestyle transformation can be accomplished by providing a comprehensive program that includes spa services, physical fitness activities, wellness education, healthful cuisine and special interest programming”.

massage and nutrition-related services according to its incremental on necessity. In the service sector, the organization cannot just only focus on the product improvement but also have to pay more attention on the service because the product and service in the hospitality could not be really separated since the customer consumed the product while experiencing the service. In such a fast growing business like spa, the service innovation seems to be essential because the nature of the business is highly concentrated on using humankind service delivery to the customer who brings in the revenue to the business. And when the customer is the moderator of the business; therefore, the customer needs are the targeted orientation that the organization shall pay highly attention to in order to stay competitive among the competitors.

In this particular, the customer perceives the value from various perspectives, which is vary due to their preferences on targeted result. The data collection was assigned to gather from two destination spas in two different locations in order to get the different aspects that can be used to compare and analyze in the broaden view. The semi-structured interview was the chosen method since it can gather in-depth data in various aspects and the questions can be randomly developed during the interview. There were totally six-middle to top management interviewees from two resorts contributed in regard to giving out the information for this research.

The result revealed that in order to differentiate the service; as the innovator, the management shall focus both internal and external outlook. There are three aspects to be monitored, which compose of employee aspect (competency and creativity); management aspect (attitude and adaptation) and market aspect (customer perceived-value). In this particular, three moderators that can be extracted and brought into the discussion for the organization to retain and attain the competitive advantages; first, the employee knowledge on their professional manner in order to be able on monitoring customer needs efficiently; second, technological involvement by being pioneer to enhance customer experience and lastly; welfare system as an inspiration on employee commitment on service proficiency and creativity.

This research consists of seven parts which are divided to the literature review that discussed on hypothetical background of previous researches; methodology that will be illustrated on selected research method and how the research was done to get the

qualitative data; result and discussion part extracted the coding theme then bring into the discussion for the final answer. Lastly, the research concluded with both descriptive managerial and theoretical implication as a valuable resource for all people from both academic and business sector to study on it.

Keywords: destination spas; service innovation; new service development; NSD; customer perceived-value; competitive advantages; differentiation; employee knowledge; technological involvement; welfare system.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Hypothetical background

In 2008, Cohen and Bodeker foreseen that the future spa trend will be related to the five senses, one of those is the experience of cuisine in a unique way. The customer nominated that the purpose of the spa vacation is to “change” not for just “relax” anymore. This is the critical question that what the spa entrepreneur has to think about in order to provide the service in supportive on that changes.

As mentioned by Moreiras (2010), the document from Eurodiet (2000) referred that wellness and quality of life show significant relationship between nutrition and health. There is a potential risk from poor diet and nutrition that result to certain symptoms and chronic diseases; for instance, cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes mellitus, gastrointestinal disease, osteoporosis, neurodegenerative disease and several types of cancer.

Further to the research on “Marketing factors related to characteristics of Spa cuisine services in resort and hotel spas source” (Chirakanon, 2007). This study is focus on the marketing factor dimension that the spa resorts shall consider but did not contribute the customer as a data source into his research. Since the customer is the consumer, so it is stimulating to investigate further that can the Spa cuisine deliberate as the business opportunity that those destination spas can bring in in order to gain competitive advantages. In addition, in which aspect is exactly the spa entrepreneurs needed to consider if they would like to include Spa cuisine into their service dimension?

This is to develop the previous research (Chirakanon, 2007) by contributing the service innovation that refer to the new service development of customer value through solutions that meet new needs in new ways. In this particular, there were many theorists done the research about food consumption for longevity and its effect on wellness and

quality of life to the consumer, for example in Spain (Pieniak, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Guerrero & Hersleth, 2009; Moreiras, Ávila, Cuadrado, Pozo & Ruiz, 2010; González, Majem, Hernándo, Vallhonrat, Martínez, Ferrer, Barbeito & Castaño, 2011). The Spanish government invested on the Food Consumption Survey (FCS) in order to evaluate the food intakes and dietary patterns within the country (Moreiras *et al.*, 2010) and the results shown that food consumption patterns in Spain on energy and nutrient ingestions have changed distinctly in the last 40 years, opposing at present from the traditional and healthy Mediterranean diet.

The theoretical framework of this study is therefore underlying on the service innovation factors that may contribute on customer perceived-value which can derive from different needs; and the employee asset perhaps consider as the elements that the organization can use to design their new service in accordance with business environment. After reviewing various thematic literatures in relating to the research area that is focus on Spa cuisine; there are three key aspects that can be discuss in order to investigate further (Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of the literature and key concepts

Concepts	Authors	Concepts
Global spa trend and Spa cuisine	WHO (1992); WHO (2005); Pratt (2007); Chirakanon (2007); Pieniak et al. (2009); Moreiras <i>et al.</i> (2010); Bordoloi et al. (2013).	Global spa trend and Spa cuisine
Service innovation and New service development (NSD)	Woodwall (2003); Edvardsson, Gustafsson & Enquist (2006); Smith & Colgate (2007); Konu, Tuohino, & Komppula (2010); Ottenbecher (2007); Melton & Hartline (2010); Halliday & Trott (2010); Enz, 2012; Tajeddini (2011); Geraerds (2012); Melton & Hartline (2013)	Service innovation and New service development (NSD)
Customer perceived-value	McNaughton et al., (2002); Edvardsson, Gustafsson & Enquis, (2006); Volo, (2006); Cangemi & Miller	Customer perceived-value

	(2007); Svejenova et al. (2007); Ottenbacher & Harrington (2009); Nunta, Ooncharoen & Jadesadalug (2012).	
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It can be categorized the three aspects:

1. The global spa trend and Spa cuisine revealed that an integration approach for well-being, focus on changes not just relax, unique experience is more in focus.
2. The customer perceived-value aspect disclosed that customer valued the service from the perception; whether it can satisfy the basic need (functional, symbolic and experiential need) that they are expecting for.
3. Service innovation and NSD process exposed its relationship that service innovation is the process to develop the new idea with the right strategy to the right market; the main effective contribution and important asset is to focus on employees.

The hypothetical background is aimed to illustrate an exploratory research that appropriate and well monitoring NSD contribution will lead to organization's competitive advantages for long run success and the key elements that can contribute of each point that possibly interrelated.

1.2. Service innovation and new service development process (NSD) in the hospitality industry

“Service is an interaction between buyer and seller”; cited by Halliday & Trott (2010). When the service provider can differentiate their service being offer to the customer, then it is finally became their competitive advantages. Once the customer is the service consumer; therefore, get them involved as a resource in service innovation process may give the benefit to new service development. However, it is also depending on each organization's capability and business strategic aims. Comparing to the global spa trend, it is important to understand the environment in order to anticipate business strategy and ensure competitive competency (Ellis, 2008). The differentiation of product or services will help the organization position themselves competitively.

The study of Nunta, Ooncharoen and Jadesadalug (2012) on “the effect of service innovation strategy on business performance of spa business in Thailand” mentioned that the changing of environment of business competition and crisis in the service industry factors are driving the business to concentrate more on prospective trends to strive with the competitor by creating competitive advantages, differentiates market offering (McNaughton & Imrie, 2002; Edvardsson, Gustafsson & Enquis, 2006; Tajeddini, 2011) and market positioning (Smith & Colgate, 2007). Cangemi & Miller (2007) also devoted that as the service innovator, the organization shall have the capability to think out of the box for customer’s unique service experience.

In this particular, innovation in service sector is being considered as the conversion of the new ideas into the product or service (Volo, 2006). It is considered to donate in a form of achievement through difference or more effective products, processes and services delivery. Many companies are in the situations that have to stay competitive by creating customer value through new service development process (Edvardsson, Gustafsson & Enquis, 2006) in order to produce a positive customer experiences that require grounded thought on innovation perspectives.

In the spa business, it seems that creative management is also a positive driving force in order to invent new ideas and practices resulting in the changing of the service management platform. In the phenomenon of Spa cuisine; Nunta, Ooncharoen & Jadesadalug (2012) bring in the theoretical framework perspectives on service innovation that means “a set of ideas or practices that make the business innovative and efficient in developing new service or pattern of services to respond to the need of customers to achieve greater efficiency and planned goal” (p. 35); the service innovation in the context of Spa business aims to create a better image over other competitors by archiving quality of excellence in service to the customer.

The way to implement service innovation according to the organization’s asset may vary according to the industry (Enz, 2012). This can be clearly seen that service innovation is the principal of new ideas which focus on providing new way of service delivery of benefits, concept or new business models by improving organization’s service efficiency and capability; for example, continuous operational improvement from the investment in employee performance or management of the customer

Ottenbacher (2007) also mentioned that hotel might have the same hardware but employee is the person who plays an important role as the service differentiator that reflects customer satisfaction. The employee orientation on service innovation process is a must since the employee can help to identify the customer needs and wants, then there are supposed to be the important source of generating new service ideas. Ottenbacher (2007) added that “the success hospitality innovation is strongly related to excellent Human Resources Management (HRM) practices, such as “strategically linking them to the organization’s strategic business planning, behavior-based evaluation, training, and empowerment of employees” (p. 446). This management approach was considered as the competitive advantages of the organization rather than the cost issue.

The example of good HRM practice is the communication within the organization and what are the messages the organization or service provider would like to communicate to the customer in order to deliver the right message into the right target customer group. In addition, the organization shall ensure that they encourage positive attitude and behavior of the employee since it is highly effect on the customer value perceptions and experiences. It can be concluded that the employee quality can also be considered as the competitive advantages of the organization according to their creativity especially for the service-oriented industry such as spa; proper human resources strategy (Tabacchi, 2010) is tending to enhance the creativity while encouraging their service quality.

Following to the study on culinary that Ottenbacher’s (2007) cited on Harrington (2004) about culinary innovation process, they later developed thier study in year 2009 on “institutional, cultural and contextual factors: potential drivers of the culinary innovation process”. The current research is solely focus on the New Product Development Model (NPD).

However, it is noticable that creativity is one of the elementary factors in generating new ideas both for NPD and NSD (Ottenbacher, 2007; Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2009) but still, not many researches have been investigating on the New Service Development (NSD) in service industry (Konu, Tuohino & Komppula, 2010; Tajeddini,

2011) especially in hotel and leisure industry. For Spa cuisine, it is considerably that both development models are correlated; if comparing to the NSD model.

In related to several NSD model, the study of Konu (2010) was focusing on the “service concept” that considered “service experience” as a “product” which applied the model of Komppula & Boxberg (2002) on new tourism service development framework (Figure 1) into their study. In the context of the service industry Konu, Tuohino & Komppula (2010) dedicated that the new innovation process has more potential to be varying according to the level of comprehensiveness, level of creativity in the process, or the process hierarchy within the organization.

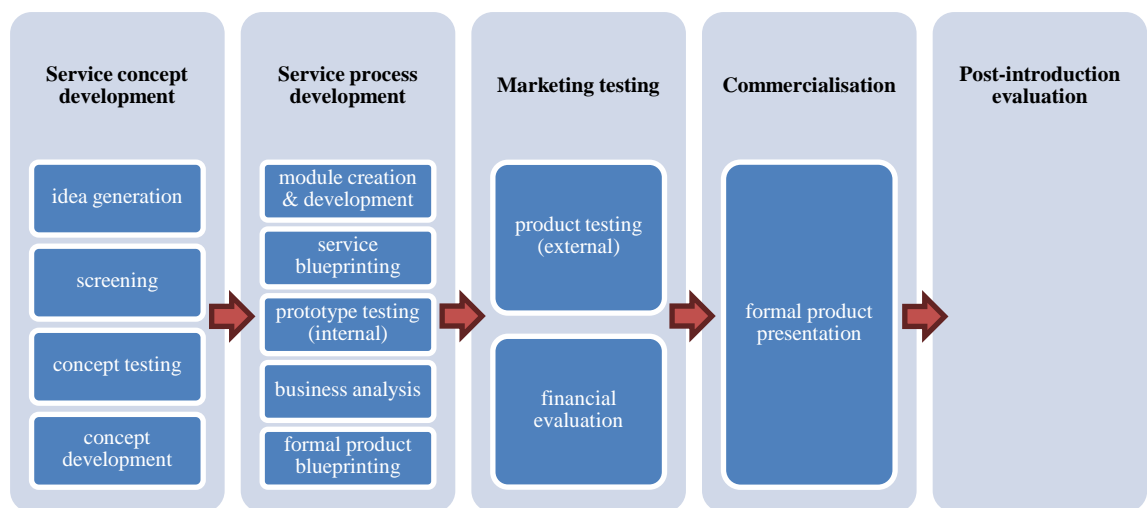


Figure 1. New Service Development Framework in tourism (Komppula & Boxberg, 2002)

Different from the NPD process which has refined six stages to complete; idea generation, screening, business analysis, concept development, final testing and commercialization (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2009) with the focus on customer orientation, therefore; the NSD has less refinement which starting from idea generation, core product screening, concept testing, and concept development until the market launch (Konu, Tuohino & Komppula, 2010). However, bringing the previous proposed NPD and NSD model from many scholars (Komppula & Boxberg, 2002; Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2009; Konu, Tuohino & Komppula, 2010) into the leisure industry such as spa, the appropriate NSD model is still in question.

Therefore, developed the model of Komppula & Boxberg (2002), Tajeddini (2011) proposed the model of New Service Development (NSD) orientation in the hotel and leisure industry that demonstrated the relationship among customer orientation, learning orientation and managerial attitude towards change as the critical aspects on NSD (Tajeddini, 2011, Figure 2). According to the proposed research model in Figure 2, it is obviously seen there is an interconnection among those three aspects.

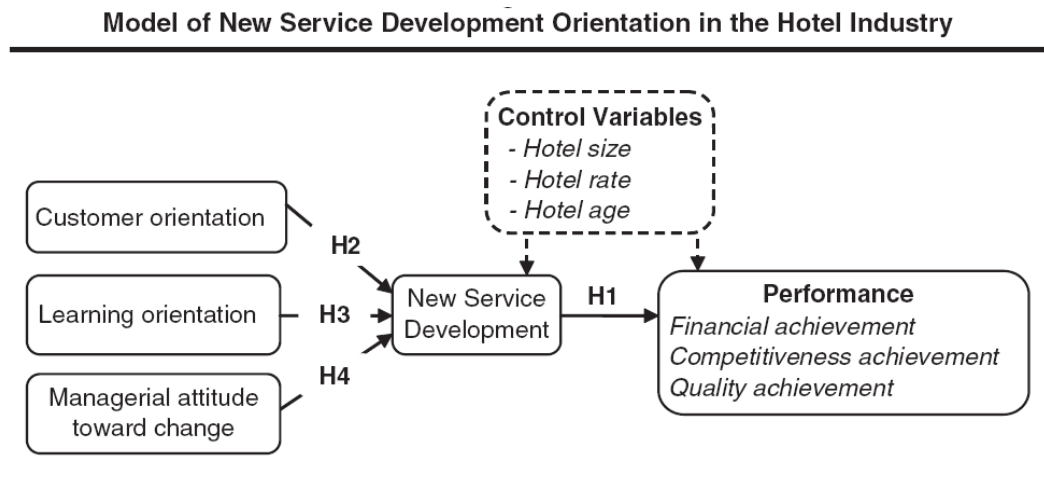


Figure 2. Model of New Service Development orientation in the hotel industry (Tajeddini, 2011)

Since the customer's perceptions on the service being offer are changing from time to times; therefore, the manager must be capable to accept those changes and focus on the learning scheme by adopting new service approaches, skills, technologies, standards, rules or regulations, and procedures (Tajeddini, 2011) in order to satisfy the new customer needs and to create customer value. In this particular, Kor & Steven (2007) added that the business must intend to maintain competitiveness advantage by preparing to adapt to the trend of change over time.

of healthy diet, the Spa cuisine then therefore bring into most of destination spas and hotels around the world. Basically, the Spa cuisine in each continent can be varying due to the resources (Chirakanon, 2007); it firstly found in late 1970-1980 in United State of America.

‘You are what you eat’, is the most common phrase people known for to describe human’s behavior consumption. It is considered as a healthy eating pattern gives a positive effect on health and against the most common chronic diseases (Moreiras *et al.*, 2010). The core aspect of Spa cuisine is to create individual’s healthy diet by sufficient consumption and balancing portion with various quality, fresh, and chemical free ingredients from natural sources. The Spa cuisine required less cooking process in order to maximize food value while still enhancing five senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch).

In this globalization world; the Spa cuisine can be also seen in the sustainable perspective which can be integrated in the context of the Spa industry as its concept has already represented itself. As per recently launched research; the food sustainability is vastly concerned to non-chemical products Olsson, Hourcade & Köhler (2014) that definitely Spa cuisine is deserved to since most of the menus required organic ingredients that priory sources from local suppliers rather than from overseas.

According to the changes in consumption pattern both diets and eating patterns (Pratt, 2007), it results in highly differentiated ways of diets cooking method and meals offer in the services sector. Pieniak *et al.*, (2009) mentioned that in many European countries, the traditional food consumption is considered as a motive value of food choice and one of them is Spain. There are many empirical researches done on Spanish food consumption and if compare to others Mediterranean countries which has much lesser (Pieniak *et al.*, 2009). Spanish food culture is based on the Mediterranean diet frame (Moreiras *et al.*, 2010); which the main components include a high intake of plant foods such as vegetables, fruits, cereals, legumes, nuts and seeds, and olive oil that considerably as healthy components.

One research revealed that Spain has become a destination for food enthusiasts looking for culinary innovation (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2009). The Spanish chefs were

originally combined the ultra-modern flavors with the scientific theory to inspire the conventional food experience so called molecular gastronomy. Ottenbacher & Harrington (2009) also cited to Svejenova *et al.* (2007) that in such a globalization era, the chefs around the world have been borrowing the culinary ideas from Spanish cooking revolution.

In Asian countries such as in Thailand, the eating habit is rooted back to tradition, the food culture have been harmonizing for many centuries. As a hub of wellness tourism in Asia (EuroMonitor International, 2010), the demand in Spa cuisine in Thailand then therefore has been increasing year by year as the customer are more aware of their lifestyle; with the intensity and uniqueness of cooking process and attitude of care, this result that why Thai cuisine is very popular nowadays. Bordoloi *et al.* (2013) unveiled that in Thailand, the authentic food culture plays an important role in creating healthy food demand in service sector.

The integration approach of involving Spa cuisine to balancing between mind and body then becoming more prevalent and it is no longer an optional or trend but nowadays it is the requirement (Bordoloi *et al.*, 2013). From inside out, the customer would like to experience more on Spa cuisine in spas. This mean the destination spas shall represent their capability offering an integrated healing approach to the customer that is not only in specific dimension anymore and it is the time for the real rival.

The question is how these changes in food consumption related to the spa and wellness industry? Regarding to the WHO (1992), wellness is “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”, therefore, it can be clearly stated that proper food consumption pattern will definitely effect on the absence of decease.

This can be considered that the innovation in such a leisure industry may require the different strategies and approaches since it has been differentiated by different location, competition environment, target customer group or niche market and company objectives (Ottenbacher, 2007); Tajeddini (2011) added that inappropriate service innovation strategy planning, for instance, lack of formalized NSD approach may lead to failure in organization’s success.

1.3.2. Customer perceived-value

Nowadays, since the spa customers are looking for the spa where offering a full destination-spa experiences including an excellent well-selected ingredient for healthful cuisine; therefore, it is a must that the spa entrepreneurs will be able to identify their target segment with their exact needs to deliver the best service experiences beyond customer's expectation.

Due to the evolution of service industry competition, organizations are tending to differentiate their service offer by creating new customer value through service (Edvardsson, Gustafsson & Enquist, 2006; Yuan & Wu, 2008). The customer value and NSD is connected in a way that it derives from the customer's needs and how it can be satisfied; this is depending on what is the goal of the customers. Konu, Tuohino & Komppula (2010) devoted that once these two elements met or once the need and service is benchmarked then it is called the customer value.

Smith & Colgate (2007) points out that value creation can be seen from many perspectives; from a customer's perspective, customer value is what benefit they get in relating to what they have to pay for (cost of the products or services) and the superior customer value can only be created in direct interaction with customers (Geraerds, 2012). Smith & Colgate (2007) cited Woodwall (2003) that the term "customer value" has two dominants; first "value for the customer" or perceived value, for instance; functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, conditional value; and second "value for the organization" or customer lifetime value.

In relating to the conceptual model of customer needs, there are three basic needs that reproduce value dimensions, which are functional needs, symbolic needs, and experiential needs (Smith & Colgate, 2007). In the context of Spa cuisine and the customer value dominant (functional value); the functional need seems to be the most concerned since this kind of needs motivates customer to seek for products or services that can solve consumption-related problems for example; some specific health conditions like chronic deceases. However, Smith & Colgate (2007) added that the symbolic needs that signify self-enhancement and experiential needs that represent

sensory pleasure shall not be taken behind since the consumer preferences are tending to inspire various value perceptions.

Not only the customer values that deviated from the basic needs like Smith & Colgate (2007) discussed, but Vinita (2004) also mentioned that the customers are not just the consumers so they are tending to be motivated by three levels of value, which are attributes, consequences and desired end state. The relationship of those three levels of customer values is the characteristic which is bottom line of the hierarchy, their aspect will effect on those tangible or intangible products and services being utilized and then finally resulted to the top level whether that consumption is met the customer's goal or purposes.

As quoted by Gonzalez *et al.* (2011), even there have many studies showing that it is difficult for the consumers to change habits; However, Moreiras *et al.* (2010) cited to Cantera (1995) that dietary changed can be finally derived from many factors; for instance, the family life's structure, home meals and leisure time, also Gonzalez *et al.* (2011) recited on the factor that consumers are intense to step into a healthy lifestyle, including the purchase of healthy food. As seen that there is an incremental number of people aware on this healthy habit and the use catering service (Moreiras *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, the development and creativity of foodservice offer in the hospitality sector especially in the spa therefore shall be counted in.

While the Spa cuisine or balancing of nutrition consumption is being considered as one of the important aspect in regard to improve individual quality of life and while the spa industry is extensively fragmented; the recent research in the past few years (Tabacchi, 2010) also showing that the spa operation where offering the nutrition-related service is now growing significantly. The destination spas are tending to differentiate themselves as a wellness center that is not limited only to offer the external healing.

It is obviously seen that the motive value of food choices is playing an important role that effect changing in food consumption pattern. This could be considered as an opportunity to develop the spa products and services in accordance with the customer needs. For the spa establishments, several of them are offering Spa cuisine as the mandatory service while others are not. The question is why those spas are deciding to

“use” the “Spa cuisine” as their positioning? In this particular, if looking into several researches, many of them were discussing about the contribution of service innovation in order to develop new product and service ideas and improve customer value.

To survive, the organizations can also having the competitive advantages by maintaining the existing resources or even to create the new ones. In this particular, the organization shall be capable to draw up their competitive advantages deriving from inside organization’s resources capability rather than looking only from outside (Yolles 2009;ENZ, 2012). Yolles (2009) cited to Porter (1985) that there are two types of competitive advantages:

- cost advantage represents when the organization can deliver the same benefits to the customers as the competitor but at a lower cost;
- differentiation advantage or positional advantage represents when benefits are delivered that exceed those of competing products.

In the loop of competitive advantages thought; Tacacchi (2010) pointed out that the key aspect of a differentiation strategy is to understand various segment on the customer market orientation (Figure 4), the consumer segmentation then initially critical in order to generate the right message and deliver right product and service to the right consumer group. The “Core spa consumer” (p. 111) may use spa as a part of their lifestyle for holistic retreat; they are price-sensitive but at the same time expecting for superior service that pay-off. The different service delivery scheme to providing memorable experiences (Yuan & Wu, 2008) is tending to attract more customers and encourage satisfaction; the consequence effects may lead to customer royalty and word of mouth that finally benefit in organization’s financial performance in the long run.

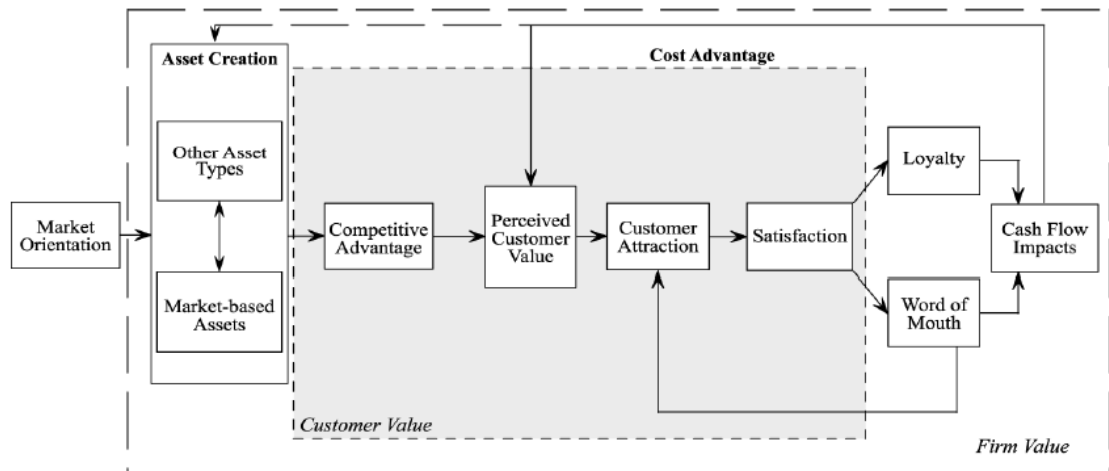


Figure 4. A model of market-oriented value creation (McNaughton & Imrie, 2002)

The spa customers are willing to travel in order to achieve superior spa service, the recent research (Tabacchi, 2010) demonstrated that apart from regular massage and treatments, 50 percent of spa customers are looking to improve their nutrition and health. It could be concluded that the Spa cuisine is tending to enhance customer perceived-value as superior unique spa experiences.

At this stage when the employee and customer orientation are met, it is then the time to investigate how the NSD model can be established in accordance with the organization's asset as previously mentioned (e.g. employee) and customer needs. As per the global spa trend that pointed out spa is not just relaxing (Ellis, 2008; Bordoloi *et al.*, 2013). Tabacchi (2010) devoted that the organization needs to come up with the new financial, marketing and image model in order to “preserve” their business.

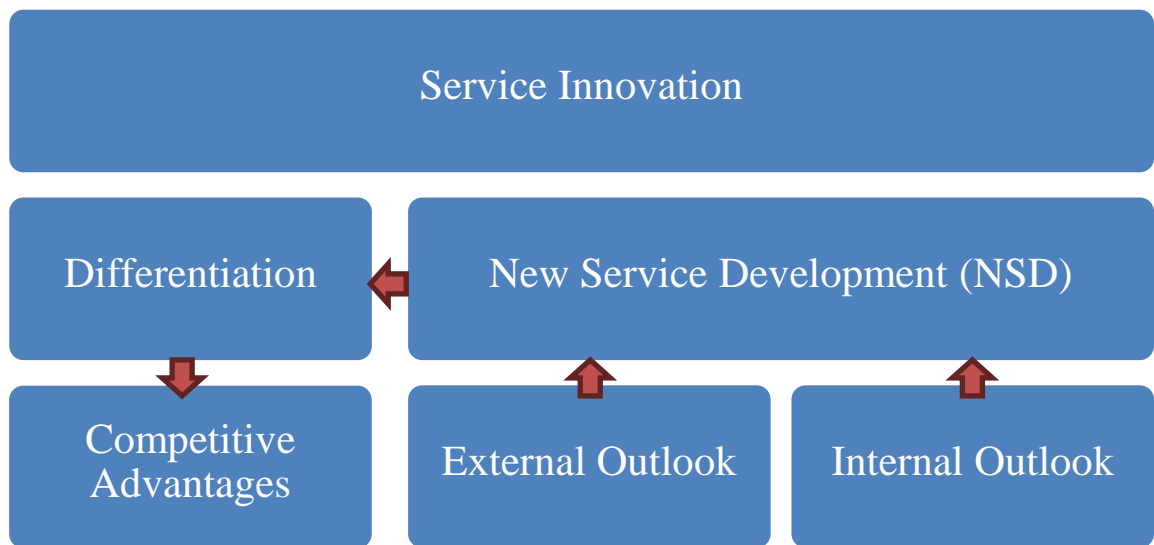


Figure 5. The relationship of theoretical frameworks (compiled by the author)

In summary, from Table 1 (see p. 7), it showed the group of researches and study areas on service innovation, NSD, customer perceived-value and competitive advantages. The Figure 5 is the conclusion of the relationship on theoretical frameworks among service innovation, internal and external outlook, NSD, differentiation and competitive advantages.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Assumption and research development

Since this research is targeted to explore how the successful spa entrepreneurs innovate their new service idea in order to attain competitive advantages through Spa cuisine. Therefore, the theoretical frameworks of service innovation in relating to NSD process with its outlook and aspects will be applied. The Figure 6 illustrated an expected practical service innovation model for the spa entrepreneur to apply the proposed theoretical concept on NSD process into the real business strategic management and attain competitive advantages.

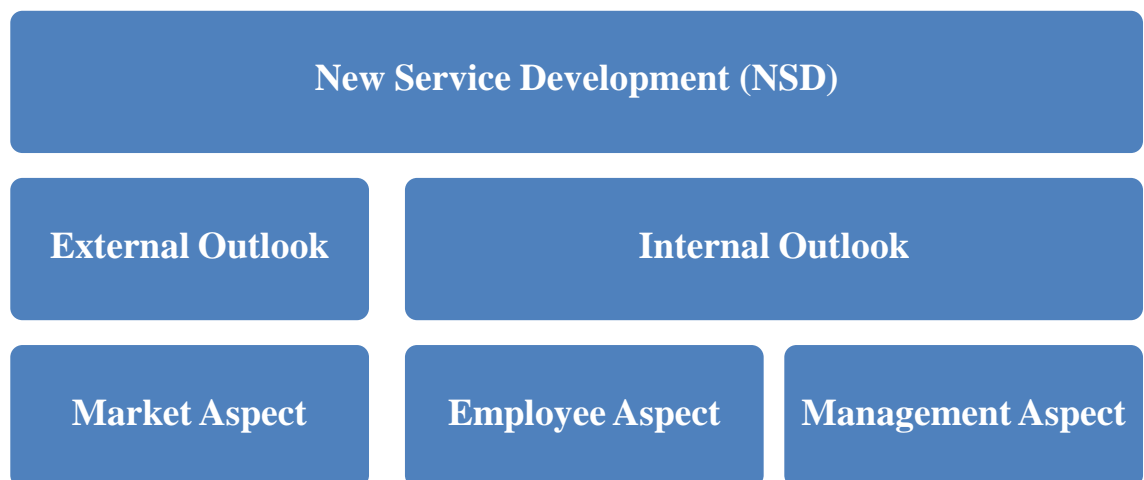


Figure 6. Expected practical service innovation model in the spa business context (compiled by the author)

When discussing about service innovation, not many researches obviously came up with the practical implication on the research model the organization can finally achieve the goal to differentiate their service from the competitors. The author then therefore draws

up an expected practical service innovation model in the spa business context particularly in Spa cuisine.

This model will be used to compare the two destination spas in two different locations by using two inputs which are:

- external outlook from customer aspect on their value perception;
- internal outlook from employee aspect on their competency and creativity and management aspect on management capability and planning to encourage employee capability delivering high quality service and communication in accordance with the customer needs.

Based on selected theoretical frameworks, the research was exploring the result by using qualitative research methods of semi-structured interview (open-ended questions) then extracted the data by using content analysis method since it is appropriate when the research problem is exploratory and intuitive, and the focus is on social processes rather than social structures.

This chapter will explain the choices of method for collecting and analyzing the data. It will be discussed why this particular method was chosen and the whole processes of collecting the data for the analysis will also be explained. More precisely, sections that will be discussed are objective of the research, choice of method, sampling, interview guide, and ethical issue. The chapter ends with the explanation of how analysis method is used to analyze the collected data.

2.2. Research method

The objective of this research is aimed to explore and draw up a conceptualized model of how NSD complements service innovation in the context of Spa cuisine. In addition, the research has been exploring what would be the critical elements or internal resources that the organization shall focus in order to carry out the most appropriate innovation strategy that will finally maximize the organization value with the competitive advantages resource capability. The research was done in the context of hospitality in the area of healthy gastronomy; at this place “Spa cuisine”. This derived from the reason that the customer needs, wants, and preferences underline various

values perceptions (Smith & Colgate, 2007), and therefore, investigating each typology driver and the key facets will enable the service providers to design and innovate proper customer value and attain competitive advantages over other competitors.

The suitable method for the research has been carefully chosen according to the research aim and research question, because the results are depending on it. The first pilot study was conducted at SHA Wellness Clinic (SHA) using semi-structured interview, questionnaire and observation. The most effective method was semi-structured interview as mentioned by Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2010) that it can gather in-depth data in various aspects and the questions could be randomly developed during the interview. Therefore, in this research, it is decided to use qualitative method for these targeted interviewees, particularly semi-structured interview to gather the raw data from the middle to top management level employees.

Regarding to this, Hesse-Bieber & Leavy (2010) also added that semi-structured interview is structured in a way that they rely on an interview guide. However, even though an interview guide will be made with the particular list of questions, but they also perceived as flexible and the interviewer can still ask open-ended questions in order to get richer data as well as the constructive discussion. Also, sometimes for the better understanding of a topic, some additional questions could be asked. Furthermore, Brown & Lloyd (2001) believed that the research topic that concerned to experience and perspective is better explained with the words rather than with the numbers.

In order to select the most appropriate sampling to compare in two different locations, the four criteria of star rating, facilities, services type and award received have been counted in to ensure that each sampling is qualified.

A world-wide pioneering well-being clinic, the SHA Wellness Clinic Spain; this medical spa resort focused on improving customer's longevity and well-being through their unique philosophy. This is done through the unique fusion of the best natural therapies deriving from the combination of Eastern wisdom and advanced Western techniques. The objective of their service is to deliver the feeling of vitality, healthful and young, with a more healthy appearance, leaving inwardly and outwardly renewed according to the SHA's method. Apart from the natural curative therapies, one of the

critical elements of SHA's method is the modern Macrobiotic nutrition, which is personalized to satisfy the needs of each customer and their goals. The Macrobiotic nutrition at SHA is adapted to modern time emerging between Mediterranean and Japanese elements of Yin and Yang energy.

“Feel Life Potential”, this phase is deriving from its name “Kamalaya”, which means “Lotus Realm” that represents unfolding of life's potential. This Thailand's award-winning wellness sanctuary and holistic spa resort, Kamalaya Koh Samui (Kamalaya) is inspiring Asia's holistic wellness sanctuary where offers a unique approach to complete wellbeing and personal fulfillment while empowering holistic lifestyle experiences. The approach is focusing on a synergy of healing therapies from East and West. The concept of the resort concentrated on the three pillars, which are the place, people and holistic wellness. The art of Spa cuisine at Kamalaya is merging culinary tradition of East and West and using fresh, tropical and, where possible, organic produce and will be changed according the seasonality.

The author has designed interview guides, which were using to conduct all the interviews (Appendix 1). In this particular; since semi-structured interview contains open-end questions; therefore, it is remarkably noted that the discussion can be randomly deviated from the interview guide. Nevertheless, Fick (2006) devoted that it is important to follow the interview guide but also the interviewees should have a liberty to answer beyond the limitations of the questions. In addition, since the interview guides are used to collect qualitative data then the question tag of “What”, “Why” and “How” were mostly used with the intention to get impulsive answers based on interviewee's knowledge. The interview guides are useful to keep the conversation in track while asking questions and to lead the interview session step by step to avoid overlooking an important area of investigation.

The interviews were conducted in English and ensure that the words that being used were comprehensible to all interviewees. The research proposal, reference letter and interview guides were sent out to the management of SHA and Kamalaya to review for approval on data collection. Before starting each interview session, each interviewee was asked for the permission on tape recording and to disclose the name, position and

the establishment name for a study research purpose and continued once the agreement was made.

2.3. Data collection and analysis

The current study took place in Spain and Thailand, which are all well-known for health and wellness gastronomy during February 2014 until Apr 2014. There was total three of middle to top management employees from each destination spa (total six interviewees) participated via semi-structure interview. For Spain the interview was organized by both semi-structure face-to-face Skype video interview which were composed of one Macrobiotic Chef, one Macrobiotic Counselor and one Human Resources Director. For Thailand, the two interviews were organized by face-to-face semi-structured-interview which were composed of one Spa cuisine Chef and one Human Resources Director, and for one Nutrition Counselor was organized the semi-structured interview by electronic mail. All the interviewees were communicated by email and telephone to define interest and willingness in being part of this study.

All the interviewees were asked for the permission on tape-recorded with disclosed position and later transcribed for the analysis. The recording was primarily important as a commemorative tool since the interviewer may not be able to recognize every words; it can be also challenging to prepare questions, ask them, listen to the answers and take notes at the same time. Before each interview, interviewer was explained to the interviewees shortly what the purpose of the study was. This was done in order to make the respondent becoming familiar with the topic.

All of the interviewees were acquainted with the innovation development process and had sound knowledge of the research issues being investigated. An interview procedure was developed by the author based on a review of the literature and the study objectives, and was pre-tested before the use in this study. This qualitative method allowed the researcher to ask supplementary questions to attain deeper understanding of complex issues, and thus create new knowledge. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the interviewees; each interview took between 30 minutes to 60 minutes.

As projection, the totally six semi-structured interviews were collected from two destination spas by tape-recording and then manually transcribed in order to get descriptive data. Therefore, the appropriate analysis method was necessary in order to help a systematically analysis for the big amount of the textual data and in particular; the qualitative content analysis was chosen. According to Wilkinson & Birmingham (2003) precisely mentioned that the aim of the qualitative content analysis is to recognize deeper meanings in the textual data and to classify them into categories. The aim of this content analysis was not to examine the linguistics but to investigate the content and to identify dominant ideas and categories in order to answer on research questions and the research aim.

Ehnert (2009) added that the qualitative content analysis is suitable for analyzing larger amount of the textual data and it enables researcher to deeper understanding the content of the data that is analyzed and to get richer results at the end. Furthermore, Polit & Beck (2008) explained that qualitative content analysis “break down the textual data into smaller units, coding and naming them according to the content they represent” (p. 517). This is called the process of coding in the qualitative content analysis. The inductive coding theme were used in accordance to typology and facet of each indicator and measurement, which means that codes could be developed during the analysis of the collected qualitative data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

Developing from the theoretical frameworks proposed in the previous chapter; the results of the study were categorized into two categories included internal and external outlook, which were coded in three themes; composed of employee aspect, management aspect and customer aspect (Figure 7). The coding patterns have been categorized in regarding to the similarity, difference, frequency, sequence, correspondence causation where appropriated.

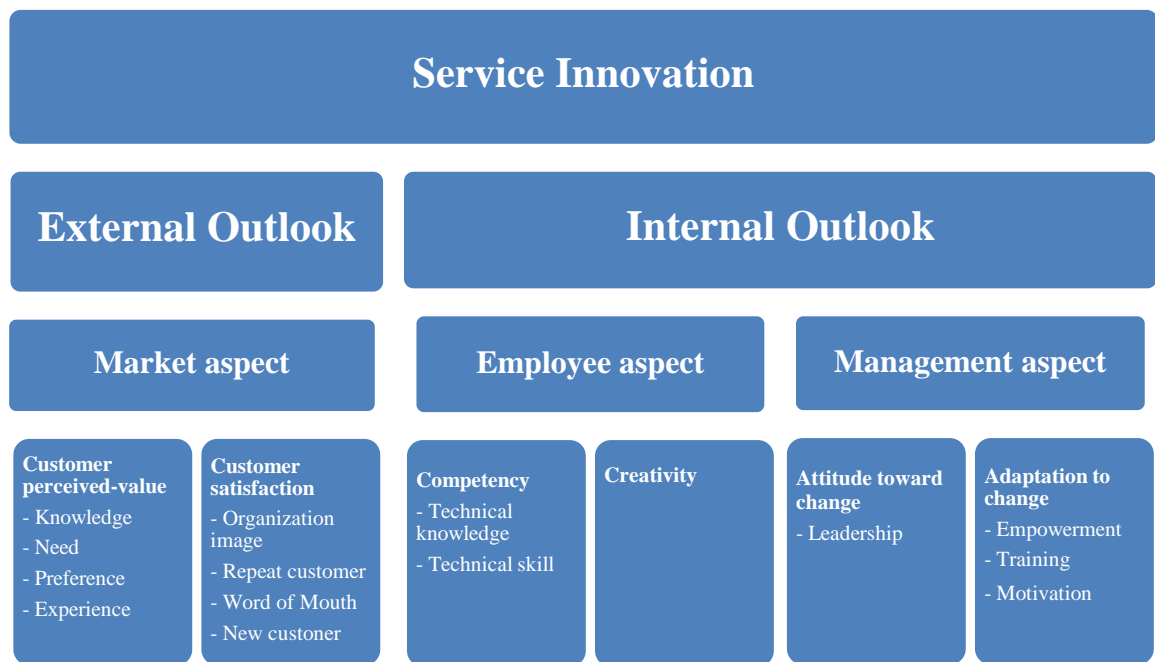


Figure 7. Coding theme (compiled by the author)

Both two samplings; SHA wellness Clinic and Kamalaya Koh Samui, the three coding themes have been explored from the transcribed interview of three related departments on Spa cuisine which was Kitchen, Wellness and Human Resources. The interviews

gave the overview on both external and internal outlook that were apparently show the factors on service innovation and new service development process.

3.1.1. Employee aspect

Regarding to the interviews, from an operation side; the employees qualification or technical skill in specific filed is required. In this particular, for the Spa cuisine Chef and the Nutrition Counselor, they required certification from both accumulated knowledge and experiences in this specific field. This is also including how to use the ingredients and cooking techniques according to the season as well as the problem of the tourist in appropriate with the targeted result.

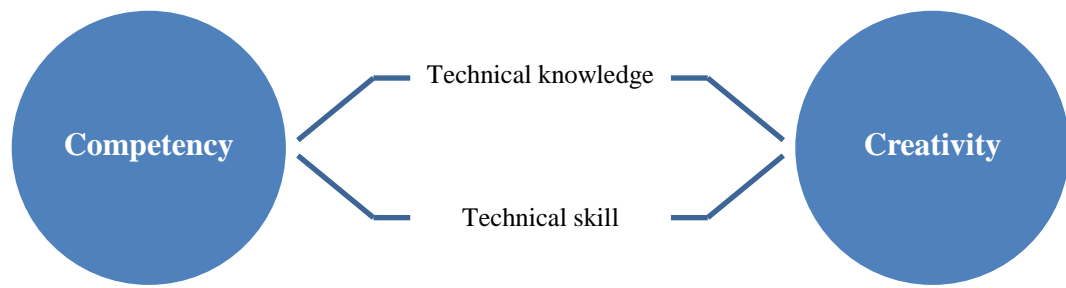


Figure 8. Internal outlook, employee aspects and related factors (compiled by the author, 2014)

Both of the transcription from those two sampling properties illustrated that knowledge and experiences on food and nutrition are the critical qualification working in this specific filed. However, it was not disclosed that the certification will be critically important; for example, the Spa cuisine Chef at Kamalaya revealed that:

Unfortunately, the definition of the Spa cuisine is too loose....I don't really take any special courses because there was no specific course about the Spa cuisine, you may study for the nutrition consultation and practice to be chef like we have here.

For the Spa cuisine, the best way is actually to practice it. The information about food and nutrition are very quick and you can get it instantly from the seminars or websites, 20 minutes a day, every day, the you can cook it in a couple of months.

We are really committed to the training here, we have English program course, even for expat like me for better communication.

From the interview, one thing to pin point for the service employees is that they have service mind but are still lack of knowledge. Unfortunately that some important service position like waiter and waitress are not the high paying job, the technical knowledge is still difficult as it is the low paying job. Therefore, no inspiration for them to acquire more knowledge in order to be the professional because they still cannot make more money from that time or money invested.

As such, in the context of healthy food context, the creativity of the service provider is tending to be based on the knowledge and experiences they have. For the food preparation side, the creativity is derived from some limitation, as mentioned by the Spa cuisine Chef at Kamalaya;

We have specific cooking method for specific diet; if customer is on detox menu then we cannot use oil in the cooking process. It is also concern to the creativity since it is a healthy food; for example how to make carrot tastes delicious, what can you do? It may have the different way, it is about the techniques, how to make that carrot better for you, and keep it fresh natural as much as possible.

Similar to the Nutrition Counselor at Kamalaya, pointed out one aspect that the flexible Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) could encourage more creativity during the consultation; as said:

We have SOPs but they do not restrict the practitioner.

The professional management skill is also mentioned in both at SHA and Kamalaya, the experienced people need to be standing by and make sure that everything is keeping under control which is really important because that make the problem resolved the problem or an unexpected circumstance immediately or to prevent before it is happened.

To conclude, from interview perspective; the healthy cooking market is growing everyday especially in the segment of food industry. Therefore, in order to maintain work efficiency; as a service provider, the knowledge of the employees is the mandatory

for the firm to invest on. People who work in this field is tending to stay awaked, it is very important to keep alerted both by active and proactive learning.

3.1.2. Management aspect

In related to the internal outlook on management side, several aspects were discovered throughout the interview (Figure 9). The interesting point is that several of them have the connection to other aspects as significant. In this particular, it is clearly unveiled that the management of each destination spa especially on Human Resources plays an important role to encourage service proficiency of the organization.

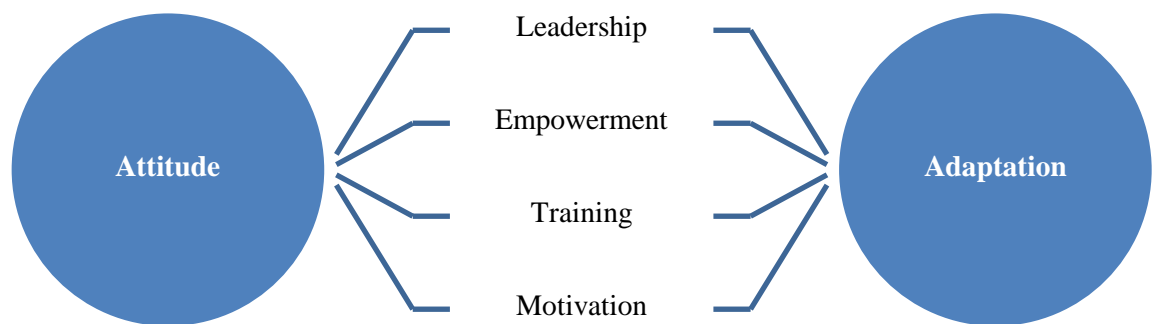


Figure 9. Internal outlook, management aspect and related factors (compliyed by the author)

Staring form the similarity, the strategic and professional panning and management play an important role on service innovation process. The leadership skill of the management derived attitude to change and adaptation to that change of the organization. In the context of Spa cuisine, it shown in the previous chapter that the information on healthy food and nutrition is tending to change more frequently; therefore, keeping up on alertness seems required to take into consideration. Looking into the company vision; for SHA, the clear and concise statement was proposed by the Human Resources Director:

...to become the leader in health and beauty through the combining technique of the oriental medicine and anti-oxidant medicine

Whereas at Kamalaya, the Human Resources Director identified that they do not really have the strict planning but the broad spectrum is highly focused on customer's satisfaction. As said by the Human Resources Director:

I believed that Kamalaya will be well-known in international market in terms of holistic wellness provider. We will be very popular since we are really concentrated on customer's satisfaction, not only serving the service just to meet the standard but we focus on building customer's satisfaction by delivering the service beyond expectation.

The principal is the concept of taking care each other. The first thing that they will focus is to treat their employees as one of their family members, make them feel like they are their family. This to make them happy and at the same time, they will bring this happiness in their work:

This will make them treat customer as the same what we treat them, customer will feel that we are their family who taking care of them. This is the core Human Resources Management competency of our service.

Furthermore, the adaptation skill of the management will lead the correct direction of organization on service development. At SHA, workforce planning and development have been justified in according to the seasonality, no actual number can be proposed. However, the total of employee being employed currently was approximately 200 persons; 30 persons are freelancers that mainly not the workforce in food and nutrition side. In terms of Kamalaya, the Human Resources Director mentioned that they did not pay much attention to the management hierarchy but more concentrating on helping each other's, when there will be work loaded so ones can be supported others. As such, it shown that Kamalaya was clearly indicated on the inspiration encouragement, as said by the Human Resources Director at Kamalya:

That is why we have the service standard but it is not such that strict, it gives the service employees empowerment to express and maximize good services to our customers.

They usually motivate the employees with the good welfare structure, good work environment. With such an environment, the employees then feel more comfortable to deliver the service naturally and their brevity expression; one thing that they tried and success is to encourage the employees to be proactive, instead of looking only the

service standard limitation, the employees will be able to decide the best solution to deliver the best service to the customers.

Each destination spa has focal points that are uniquely different; at SHA, the “SHA bible” is considerably as the manual of all employees to use as an instruction of service and behavior; for example, SHA methods, SHA menus, etc. The management is also giving out the meeting in the kitchen and restaurant regarding to the information and news, so the internal communication is highly important on all changes. Precisely, the interdepartmental communication at the SHA is apparently seen. As said by the Human Resources Director:

The kitchen employees will also have the meeting with the Macrobiotic Counselor so they can have the limitation and they can know the whole notes of the customer and have more open communication there.

One area that is interesting is the interdepartmental communication, the management do empower the employees to involving to the changes and services development; this can be done through reporting to direct manager and it is also mentioned in the SHA bible that the employees can send the email directly to the Chief Executive Officer, so if someone has new service ideas so then they are authorized to do that.

At SHA, as per interdepartmental communication, the management has changed the kitchen that the entire kitchen will be upstairs that previously separated both upstairs and downstairs for the kitchen employees in order to give much more quality for the cooking process.

However, still, the Macrobiotic Counselor at SHA dedicated that the time management for creativity is still the critical issue to be considered since the management would like to empower employees more for creativity but it cannot be done effectively because the employees usually too stress to get the job done so they do not have enough time for creativity.

Originating from the attitude towards changes, it is potentially from contribution on employee communication. At SHA, the management also invented a lot on innovation that is concerned to the service; for example, in clinic area, they are planning to have

new modern 14 rooms extra, and also they have introduced the special treatment called Kangen water⁴ treatment for the customer in the restaurant. So when the customers are coming back to SHA then they will have another piece of experience. In this particular, they acclaimed that it need to be aligned with the basis not just go for the innovation for whatever or whenever. As said:

It needs to go align with the vision of the president and the concept of SHA, which is something really unique for this place. The customer would like to experience something new; we have quite good proportion of returning at the moment.

For the service, probably what we need to do is to reflect and looking for future time, to analyze and get to get some resources step by step, sometimes we are going a little bit fast.

At Kamala, the adaptation to change was deriving from the focus on customers and the employees. Kamalaya revealed that even in this competitive environment on health and wellness industry; they did not put it aside as the resort is quite strong if compare to the competitors. One thing is that cost that it is considering cheaper than others, also the food is the main reason the customers chose to come to Kamalaya as they can see what the result they will get in return. This is from the people having raised awareness on their health then it is essential for them to have such a healthy nutrition. As said by the Human Resources Director when asking about the competitors:

We do not call them the competitors actually, we call them business partners. Since we will do our best so we do not compete with others; we do not published ourselves as the best and to benchmark with others but our core competency is to focus from internal not from outside. We do not really have many resorts where offering exactly the same services, some similar but still less options.

Added by the Nutrition Counselor at Kamalaya;

At our resort, health and nutrient content is the number one concern of most guests.

⁴ Kangen Water® (Enagic, 2014) is delicious water created from Enagic's innovative water technology. It's not only do these devices filter the tap water, but it also produces ionized alkaline and acidic waters through electrolysis. These waters can be used for various purposes, including drinking, cooking, beauty, and cleaning.

Another critical area that was discovered during the interview was concerning to the training and welfare system. It is revealed that in order to encourage the creativity of employees, both the management of SHA and Kamalaya invested quite a lot on these two parts. One popular question on employee turnover was thrown out and it is presented that both destination spa have fewer problems on this part as they acclaimed that it is highly concerned to the training and welfare system of the organization.

At SHA, the employee turnover rate is partly depending on the seasonality as mentioned before. The 15 percent of total employment structure are from freelancers and contract employees. However, the quality control of the employees is not considered as the big problem for the resort, especially they have the staff induction program that the department head will be in charge for all new comers for the initial guidance. In addition, the employees will be able to access to the company intranet on “SHA bible” to get all related material on menu and nutritional restriction, Standard Operating Procedures as well as the SHA codes.

In addition, the employee quality assurance has been monitored through the quality department. The feedback will be collected from the customers then deliver to the quality manager in order to investigate further. Under the roof of Human Resources Department; the Quality Department is working independently and will be coordinated with the Training Department in a way that once the feedback has been explored then the training department action will agree upon if necessary.

The employee motivation at SHA is still required to push more effort as mentioned by the Human Resources Director who exposed that not everybody are ready to work in SHA. Basically, the employees need to believe in the concept; like in the kitchen, the waiters or waitresses have not yet tried to read everything they have in the restaurant and they supposed to go deeply and emotionally with the customer. It is revealed that the problem is still need to find the exit.

On the others hands; at Kamalaya, the detailed employees and quality control and assessment have been discovered. As point out by the Spa cuisine Chef that the employees are still lack on technical knowledge; therefore, when the new food come they will have the food training for all related employees. Divided by three levels range

Starting from SHA, the resort brought in the uniqueness of Macrobiotic philosophy in order to positioning their uniqueness from health and nutrition service providing in the resort. In this particular, most of the customers who come to SHA need to lose weight or to get detox. Referring to the three different diet plans, the customers wanted the Kushi menu, not because they like it the most, but it is because they know that they can get the result. The Bio-light menu is also popular although they are not for lose weight but people like it because of the taste and the presentation. The SHA menu is even more popular but the Kushi menu is more used because people want to lose weight.

The customers expect for the service experience that can fulfilled their needs in regard to get the targeted result. As mentioned by Macrobiotic Chef and Macrobiotic Counselor; the people who come to SHA, not a lot of them understand Macrobiotic before they arrive; they just know that they are there. The reason why the customer chooses SHA for spa because of the integration of clinic service; and they know that they are going to get Macrobiotic food and cured. The customer want to get new experiences and the most important is that they can see the result from it. They do not know until they try.

One thing proposed by the Macrobiotic Counselor was that he would like to devote more time on communication and creativity. As said:

For really sick people or which I called high maintenance people, it would be good to have people that accompany them through the whole journey at SHA because at the moment we do not have that.

Regarding to that, the personalize service delivery based on the customer's health has been taken into account in order to improve customer experiences and maximize customer satisfaction.

Whereas at Kamalaya, the Spa cuisine chef pointed out several interesting aspects on customer needs that revealed on customer knowledge perhaps effect on customer perception. For example, one guest asked him during class concerning to coconut oil and coconut meat:

Is that fattening? Is that high cholesterol?

The customers know from the media that the coconut is 100 percent good for health but sometime it is exceptional in some case, not all the times.

First facet of value that can be seen; like previously mentioned on Kangen water of SHA is now serving to the customer in the restaurant; at Kamalaya, they use the technique of juice squeezing that modernize fruit juice extracting process so called "slow fruit juice"; instead of using regular spinning action and bleed the juice so this is to extract juice in the new way, by slow grinding pressing the juice out. By doing that, low spinning will increase much more juice extracted with more fiber for healthier juice. In addition, instead of eating the whole raw food all the times; they use the technique of marinating or fermentation for various vegetables to create similar taste while get healthier result in substitution, also concentrated dehydration which is the big trend of raw food cuisine these days. As said by the Spa cuisine Chef:

The technology in food production is going very fast and it is most of the times relevance on health issue, so you get healthier alert.

Another facet is related to the education; to giving out the information and knowledge to the customers while they are staying at the resort is the part of their service process. The aim is that the customers will be able to cook themselves when they go back home and keep continuing on healthy nutrition. As said by the Spa cuisine Chef:

At our resort, we do not really say to the guests that, "here is something healthy for you so just eat it". The places that are doing that because they want to keep the people with them, they do not educate people because once the people know more, then they can do on their own or have more questions like "this is not healthy for me so why you service this kind of food in the spa?".

Similarity to SHA, the customers who come to Kamalaya because they can see the result that suit to their individual need, this is also included the word of mouth from the existing customers who are also playing an important role to spreading out the uniqueness of the service. People who come to Kamalaya; for example, they can have all they need which include detox and weight loss program, which are all concerned to the food and nutrition as the mandatory. The resort usually has several new foods that

they may never try before so when they come back they can experience something new all the times.

3.2. Discussion

The objective of the research is to explore how the organization can achieve Spa cuisine new service development by contributing service innovation factors to match with market attractiveness or customer needs. This is to draw up a conceptualized model of how NSD factors complements service innovation in the context of Spa cuisine (Figure 11). As per selected methodology of qualitative semi-structure interview, several aspects and the factors in relating to the service innovation and new service development have been discovered. It is obviously seen that both internal and external outlook are critically important; however, the concentration on several aspects is also varying subject to the management vision on the service concept.

In relating the results presented in previous section; referring to the relationship of theoretical frameworks (Figure 6, see p. 22) proposed in hypothetical background part; Figure 11 illustrates the relationship of three important aspects that may contribute to the service innovation on new service development process of the destination spas.

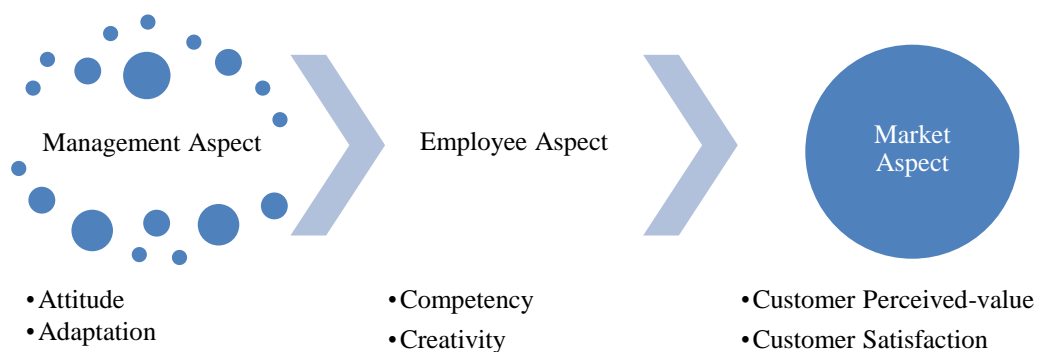


Figure 11. The relationship of the key aspects as the contribution on New Service Development process (compiled by the author)

To discuss further, there are three main motivators among those destination spas that significantly represented how they differentiate their service to attain their competitive advantages. Being as an the service innovator required to looking into deeper aspects

and so what are they exactly do in order to differentiate themselves from the competitor. So what are exactly they use? For the management side, the service innovation is highly based on the employee encounter. This can be seen through the continuous improvement of interdepartmental communication and cross training at an operational level, technology improvement on product and service and encouraging employee performance as the service quality control.

It is interesting that the management aspect seem to be the initial on all elements of the organization; depending on the attitude and the vision of “changes” according to the internal and external outlook of the organization; this skill playing in a huge role in regard to control the service development direction. What can be discussed further is that in the theory side; the research of Enz (2012) who illustrated several service innovation strategies that may be effective to implement in the hospitality industry. Enz (2012) also devoted that implementation strategy and success depends on the type of innovation and a mix of execution strategies including implementation by persuasion, leader intervention, participation, and even edict were linked to service innovation success.

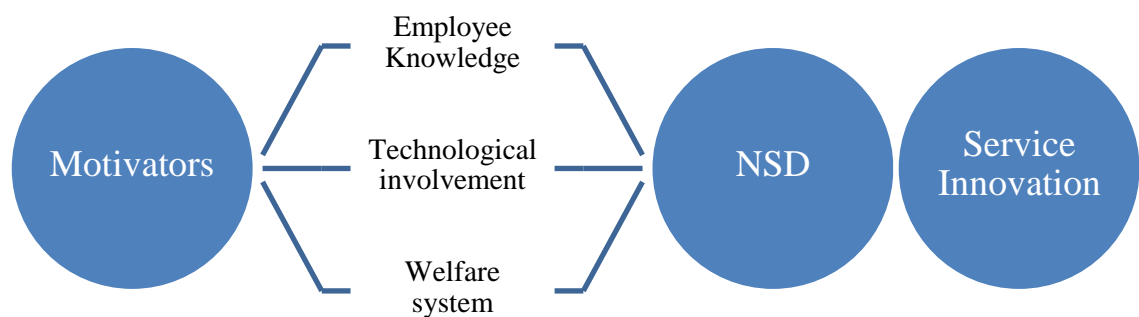


Figure 11. Differentiation motivators on NSD and Service innovation (compiled by the author)

In can be clearly seen that the knowledge factor is considerably important for the service employees for innovate service quality delivery; the question is what kinds of the knowledge required? In addition, who can support on this? As per the descriptive analysis proposed in the previous section, the service knowledge can obtain from the

managerial point of view and attitude toward changes (Tajeddini, 2011). In recent years, there were several researches have been done on the relationship between employee knowledge and the service innovation; Umashankar, Srinivasan & Hindman (2011) pointed out that customer-contact employees involved in product recovery are more likely to contribute to NSD process because of direct knowledge of customer needs.

Melton & Hartline (2010) demonstrated that the most important factor that effect sales performance were market attractiveness; meant that the customer needs were clearly identified, effective NSD management that committed to the resources capability to developing and implementing the new service and expert people-based service delivery. Three years later, they conducted the research, which was focused on the internal innovation on employee asset. The knowledge of the employee may improve the NSD outcomes (Melton & Hartline, 2013) when they contribute ideas for new services replicating consumer underlying needs and for design of the appropriate level of customization.

The research of Ottenbacher & Harrington (2007) found that the most success factor of hospitality innovation is to understand the market and take responsive by return. This can be done through getting an in-depth knowledge and appreciation of the customer needs, wants, and behaviors in order to differentiating the NSD for the customer to perceive the actual value. In the context of Spa cuisine, the technical knowledge is highly important due to the health and nutrition concerned; nobody want to consume the food prepared from ones who do not have the professional knowledge on this kind of diet. Once the employees have proper knowledge on their profession and authorization from the managerial side, they are tending to be more creative than those who are not.

The employee knowledge also does not limit to the service but also the customer needs. The customer is today inspired perceive-value not only from heath condition anymore but also from the worldwide media integration; in order to encourage or built up customer value and customer satisfaction, the customer needs shall be the mandatory awareness that the entire employees shall keep in their mind set (e.g. detox, weight loss, cure diagnosis, etc.). In those destination spas, the prices are not the main concerned but the service excellent or the quality of service is the first priority (Ottenbacher &

Harrington, 2007). This can be concluded that the more knowledge they have, the more empowerment they receive, and the more service innovative will be.

The second motivator is the technological involvement. It seems that technology is one of the factors that may create organization's Unique Selling Points (USPs) in service oriented industry (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2007; Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2010; Melton & Hartline, 2013). Nevertheless, the level of necessity may vary depends on different location, spa resort type (wellness resort, medical spa resort, destination spa resort, etc.), customer needs and expectation. In other words, the technology is today not only for tangible products but also intangible service especially in the spa business context in different luxury spa resort setting. Melton & Hartline (2013) devoted that the service innovations that contributing the latest technology or effectively responding to rapidly changing market trends are more likely to have been pioneering among market competitors.

In this particular, the level of contribution may vary depending on the business vision. Like at SHA, the technological involvement has been more concentrated as mentioned by Ottenbacher (2009) concerning to the Spanish culinary innovation. The technology is a very important aspect of their innovation activities especially the new precise and consistent cooking method and to supports their innovativeness in new food items, processes and presentations; whereas Kamalaya has been determined more on employee knowledge development. Apart from the philosophy, for the Spa cuisine; the technology is not only optimize nutritional benefits (Rodgers, 2005) but also plays important role on service differentiation as the USPs in order to enhance customer value and customer experiences. Chen, Tsou & Huang (2009) found that adoption of new technology will take advantages on organization's new service delivery process, especially this day's technology in food and nutrition is more concerned with the trends of healthy food demands referring to the global spa trends.

From the research result, it can be conferred that the welfare system of the organization is the considered as the one of key advantages on service innovation; the question may rise up "in which point?" The interesting part is that the result did not only disclose the advantage in one specific area of the organization but also the benefit may give to the overall organization's capability on employee service quality management (Tabacchi,

2010; Tajeddini, 2011). In this particular, the skilled employees who have the technical skill on healthy food and nutrition are rarely found, like in Thailand for example. Therefore, the money is not the main reason that will keep the skilled and quality employee forever. The good quality of life from work-life balance, positive work environment are highly important in this work area. This research unveiled that it is also effect on the employee performance in service delivery and empowerment effort for inspiration for creativity. For those businesses that related to Spa cuisine, the manpower is quite rarely found; therefore, for proper welfare system management may result to the employee turnover rate reduction and to keep the qualified employee with the organization in the long run.

In relation to the research limitation; the research was conducted under the specific resort types setting and the good co-operation from the management was given out from both two samplings. The reason was to be the study resources for all interested people who would like to improve their business and attain competitive advantages. Therefore, the detailed information on all aspects was disclosed. However, the limitation still revealed on the research methodology; the research used the combination of semi-structured interview among six interviewees; two of them agreed to give out the interview in person for face-to-face conversation; three of them agreed to give out the interview thought Skype call; and one of them agreed to give out the interview through electronic mail.

To compare the most effectiveness of the interview, the most productive interview was gone through face-to-face interview in person. This is because the online telephone interview is lack of interaction rapport and natural encounter that to encourage the constructive conversation (Irvine, Drew & Sainsbury, 2012). They cited on Fielding & Thomas (2008) that during the interview, the visual signals from the interviewer are important in inspiring interviewees to elaborate or express what they have said and finally lead to more conductive and detailed response.

CONCLUSION

Since past decade, the people are more aware on health issue; therefore, the service sector has been facing the new business challenge. One of the key issues to consider is the innovation. It is true that there were many researches done on the product innovation in order to drive the business beyond but unfortunately, not many researchers investigated on the service innovation. However, these days, several researchers are starting to focus more on service innovation researches in the hospitality industry worldwide. This is because academic researchers and business managers are aware of the critical aspects of service innovation as the key driving forces of business growth and service quality enhancement and development.

The nature of this research is based on intangible aspects so the thoughtful conversation and concise explanation are therefore critically important to optimize the efficient results. With the methodology chosen considering from the answers received among different interviewees, those ones with face-to-face interview in-person were more comprehensive than those received from online telephone interview. Therefore, this can be concluded that the gesture, posture and tone of voice are an important factor for qualitative interview communication for the productive answer. Additionally, the extra materials such as video cd, cookbook, magazine, etc. were offered from the interviewees that later found useful for the research analysis.

In terms of service differentiation side, the research found that employee knowledge, technology involvement and welfare system are the three motivators that are considerably related and important in service innovation and new service development in the spa business setting especially in the Spa cuisine. Comparing from two different locations, SHA Wellness Clinic, Spain unveiled to concentrate on technology development and employee knowledge while Kamalaya Koh Samui, Thailand was more concentrated on employee knowledge and welfare system.

In order to strengthen the organization, spa entrepreneurs shall on keep monitoring employee knowledge, technology involvement and welfare system factors dynamically. This will ease the organization to have less possibility to get replicate and attain the competitive advantages that can be converted to the sustainable competitive advantages later on. It is true that the customer needs are initially important factor that will effect future's organization management direction. However, in this particular, how organizations differentiate themselves among the competitive environment required high internal driving forces outlook both from the management side and the employee side.

For such business that required high concentration on service like the spa; the quality employees are significantly the main driving forces of the organization who are playing an important role to giving out the service excellence to the customers. One point that shall be extended is that the welfare system of the employees and NSD. It is obviously seen that in the spa business especially in this particular field of Spa cuisine, there is still lack of the specialized employees such as Spa cuisine Chef, Nutrition Consultant, etc. Therefore, by looking deeper into welfare system encounter will enhance direct benefit on keeping the quality employees with the organization and reducing employee's turnover rate, which will finally encourage service innovation and NSD creativity motivation for the long run success.

Spa industry today is more and more competitive. It is important that organization can develop the ability to process for grounded thought on service development. The business shall be able to anticipate in which factors that may reflect in service innovation of the organization, which will give also benefits in creating competitive advantages and will be able to standing out among the competitions. The new services development shall be based on the angle of view in marketing, which here has upheld the needs of consumers in mind. This will finally result in customer satisfaction that will be benefit in creating positive consequences of organization image, customer royalty, word of mouth and new customer acquisition.

Spa business cannot just stay still on offering only "healthy food", adding value into it is a must. Simply say, the value is not just "food" that "healthy" but the contexts around that are the preliminary clues. In this globalization edge with the incremental awareness

of sustainability, the people are also looking for more healthy lifestyles that can reduce the negative environmental impacts of agriculture. Referring to this trend, healthy food is not just only the fashion that will come and go. Not only because of its power of “curing” that beneficial in both mental and physical state of well-being but also, in relating to sustainability concerned; Spa cuisine is tending to grow substantially especially for those nationals that inspired healthy food by their food culture; for example, in Asia like Thailand, Japan and Vietnam. For specific group of consumers; a niche market oh healthy spa goers, the price is not the priority or sensitivity, therefore how important of NSD already say in itself of its necessity in these frameworks.

In the business managerial perspective, the research implied several knowledge to indicate and compare on how an integration of gastronomy techniques and organic food supplies can create healthy diet identity among Asian and European destination spas. The research can be used as the valuable academic resources for those who are interesting to study further in the customer needs on healthy food consumption and internal human resources development in order to improve service efficiency. In regard to the theoretical angle; the research implied the critical elements that can be involved in the process of NSD. In addition, it is also to be used as a fundamental study for the further research and development on how to design and apply the Spa cuisine identity as the marketing tool to attract more customers in terms of destination marketing for spa vacation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview Guide

Interview Guide (Kitchen)

Interviewee Information

Name: _____

Position: _____

Department: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Duration of Interview: _____

Interviewer: _____

Purpose of the Interview:

The purpose of the interview is to study how service design and innovation on Spa cuisine creates value to the customer. The interview will be used for the master thesis research that conducted by the master student from University of Tartu Pärnu College Estonia.

Interview Questions:

Do you give me your permission to record your voice during the interview and to use recorded material in this master thesis research?

- How long have you been cooking the Spa Cuisine and how can you cook them? Is there any special training/course/certificate required? Does it's from inside or outside the hotel?
- Why did you interested in Spa Cuisine way of eating? (*What is your inspiration?*)
- In your opinion, why Spa Cuisine diet is different from others culinary philosophy? (*Uniqueness of the ingredients, philosophy that being involved, etc.*)
- In your opinion, what are the key concepts of Spa Cuisine diet?
- Where are the sources of the ingredient for Spa Cuisine culinary?
- How is the structure of menu planning? (*What kind of me nus do you have?*)
- How often do you change the menu? And why do you have to change them?
- How many serving per meal do you have to prepare/handle?
- From your experiences, are there any limitations/obstacles during the preparation, cooking process, and service delivery? (*Long preparation process, guest complaint, not enough food, not enough staff, stock shortage, urgent request from diet restriction, etc.*)
- How did you resolve those problems?
- In your opinion, what are the main seasons the customer decided to consume Spa Cuisine, what do you think as the critical aspects?
- In your opinion, why the customer choose to come to ___?
- o you have any restriction or SOPs given from the management side? What do you think it's was missing?
- If you have a chance, what would you like to improve in terms of service at ___? And Why?

Thank you for the time and participation.

Your cooperation is very valuable.

Interview Guide (Nutrition Counselor)

Interviewee Information

Gender: ___Male ___Female

Age: _____

Nationality: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Duration of Interview: _____

Interviewer: _____

Purpose of the Interview:

The purpose of the interview is to study how service design and innovation on Spa cuisine creates value to the customer. The interview will be used for the master thesis research that conducted by the master student from University of Tartu Pärnu College Estonia.

Interview Questions:

Do you give me your permission to record your voice during the interview and to use recorded material in this master thesis research?

- How long have you been giving the nutrition consultation and how can you deliver the service? Is there any special training/course/certificate required? Does it's from inside or outside the hotel?
- Why did you interested in Spa Cuisine way of eating? (*What is your inspiration?*)
- In your opinion, why Spa Cuisine diet is different from others culinary philosophy? (*Uniqueness of the ingredients, philosophy that being involved, etc.*)
- In your opinion, what are the key concepts of Spa Cuisine diet?
- Where are the sources of the ingredient for Spa Cuisine culinary?
- How is the structure of menu planning? (*What kind of menu do you have?*)
- How do you design the nutrition program, what are the criteria or conditions?
- In your opinion, what are the main seasons the customer decided to consume Spa Cuisine, what do you think as the critical aspects?
- Which part of the world/country the guests come from?
- What are the common questions you've received from the guest?
- From your experiences, are there any limitations/obstacles giving the consultation or serious problem during the consultation process? How did you resolve those problems?
- In your opinion, why the customer choose to come to ___?
- Do you have any restriction or SOPs given from the management side? What do you think it's was missing?
- If you have a chance, what would you like to improve in terms of service at ___? And Why?

Thank you for the time and participation.

Your cooperation is very valuable.

Interview Guide (Human Resources)

Interviewee Information

Name: _____

Position: _____

Department: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Duration of Interview: _____

Interviewer: _____

Purpose of the Interview:

The purpose of the interview is to study on internal environment of company's structure as well as the quality of software (manpower and workforce) that encourage service excellence. The interview will be used for the master thesis research that conducted by the master student from University of Tartu Pärnu College Estonia.

Interview Questions:

Do you give me your permission to record your voice during the interview and to use recorded material in this master thesis research?

- Could you give me the general overview of vision, mission, strategic aims, etc. of the business?
- Could you explain the structure, competency, limits of the authority and practice of management?
- How is the staffing process of the? And how many staff you have in the ?
- Since the resort offers quite unique nutrition service so how do you maintain employee (talent) quality in order to sustain service standard and improve service quality? Are there any special training offers to them?
- Since the resort is focusing on organic products, therefore, do you plan to participate in any green label programs in order to improve credibility or attract more customers?
- Since the spa business is substantially growing, so how do you plan to handle on the change? (competitor and guest's need/demand)
- How do you inspire/empower employee creativity in term of service delivery?
- Have they had a chance involving creating new service idea?
- In your opinion, how the company will be in the next 5 years?
- In your opinion, how the company will be in the next 10 years?
- In your opinion, why the customer choose to come to ___?
- Do you have any restriction or SOPs given from the management side? What do you think it's was missing?
- If you have a chance, what would you like to improve in terms of service at ___? And Why?

Thank you for the time and participation.

Your cooperation is very valuable.

SUMMARY IN THAI

ปัจจัยที่มีผลต่อนวัตกรรมบริการ เพื่อพัฒนารูปแบบการบริการแนวใหม่ในที่พักสปา แบบองค์รวมให้ประสบความสำเร็จ: การวิจัยด้านอาหารสปา

ธุรกิจสปาในปัจจุบันนี้มีการแข่งขันมากขึ้น ดังนั้นจึงเป็นสิ่งสำคัญ ที่บริษัทจะต้องพัฒนาขีดความสามารถที่ปรับกระบวนการทางความคิด ในการบริการรูปแบบใหม่ และมีส่วนร่วม ในการที่จะชี้ชัดว่าสิ่งใดเป็นปัจจัยในการพัฒนาองค์กร ทั้งนี้เพื่อเป็นการได้เปรียบทางการแข่งขันทางการตลาด และสามารถที่จะยืนหยัดอยู่ท่ามกลางการแข่งขันต่อไปได้ในระยะยาว เมื่อกล่าวถึงธุรกิจสปา งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ ได้มุ่งหวังที่จะชี้ให้เห็นว่า ที่พักสปาแบบองค์รวมที่ให้บริการอาหารสปาใช้กลยุทธ์ใด เป็นเครื่องทำให้การบริการแตกต่างจากคู่แข่ง สิ่งใดเป็นปัจจัยที่สำคัญในการที่องค์กร จะสามารถผลักดันให้ก่อเกิดการพัฒนาด้านนวัตกรรมบริการและการบริการแนวใหม่ ทั้งนี้การพัฒนา นั้นต้องขึ้นอยู่กับมุมมองทางการตลาด ซึ่งในที่นี้ได้ยึดถือความต้องการของผู้บริโภคเป็นหลัก สาเหตุที่ทางผู้วิจัย ได้เลือกนำเอาอาหารสปามาเป็นกรณีศึกษาและกำหนดของเขตงานวิจัย เนื่องจากว่าในปัจจุบันนี้ อาหารสปาหรืออาหารเพื่อสุขภาพ ได้เข้ามามีบทบาทในที่พักสปาแบบองค์รวมมากขึ้น ซึ่งจากงานวิจัยหลายฉบับได้กล่าวถึงความต้องการของผู้บริโภคที่มีต่ออาหารสปามากขึ้นอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ และสืบเนื่องจากว่า ยังไม่มีรายงานการวิจัยที่มากนักเกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาการให้บริการในธุรกิจสปา ดังนั้น งานวิจัยนี้จะชี้ให้เห็นถึงผลสำเร็จและปัจจัยสำคัญ ที่ทางองค์กรด้านธุรกิจสปาโดยเฉพาะที่พักสปาแบบองค์รวม จะนำไปปรับใช้ เพื่อสร้างความต่างให้กับบริการของตนเอง ซึ่งจะส่งผลในการเพิ่มขีดความสามารถในการแข่งขันทางการตลาดอย่างสูงสุด

และเนื่องจากขอบเขตงานวิจัย ต้องการชี้ให้เห็นถึงการเอาใจใส่ในปัจจัยแต่ละชนิดที่มีแนวโน้มที่แตกต่างกันไปในแต่ละพื้นที่ ดังนั้น การเก็บข้อมูลการวิจัยจึงได้จัดทำขึ้นในสองพื้นที่ คือที่พักสปาแบบองค์รวมในประเทศสเปนและประเทศไทย เพื่อจะได้เปรียบเทียบให้เห็นคุณลักษณะของปัจจัย ที่เหมือนและแตกต่างกันไปในแต่ละบริบท การเก็บข้อมูลวิจัยนั้นได้จัดทำขึ้นผ่านทางวิธีการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึก เพื่อให้ได้ข้อมูลที่ตรงและละเอียดมากพอเพื่อนำไปวิเคราะห์ และสามารถที่จะพัฒนาคำถามได้ตามแต่ละสถานการณ์ จากผลรายงาน มีสามประเด็นหลักที่สามารถนำมาวิเคราะห์เพื่อต่อยอดในงานวิจัยได้ กล่าวคือ 1) แง่มุมด้านพนักงาน 2) แง่มุมด้านผู้บริหาร และ 3) แง่มุมด้านตลาด (ในที่นี้หมายถึง ลูกค้าหรือผู้บริโภค) สำหรับที่พักสปาแบบองค์รวมในประเทศสเปน (SHA Wellness Clinic) มีการเน้นปัจจัยด้านเทคโนโลยีและพนักงานค่อนข้างสูง เปรียบเทียบกับในประเทศไทย (Kamalaya Koh Samui) ซึ่งมีการเน้นในด้านพนักงานและระบบสวัสดิการอย่างเห็นได้ชัด สาเหตุหนึ่งนั้น สืบ

เนื่องมาจากบริเวณที่ตั้งของที่พักและกลุ่มลูกค้าที่มาพัก มีความต้องการที่แตกต่างกันไป ประกอบกับวิสัยทัศน์ และขีดความสามารถในการวิเคราะห์การเปลี่ยนแปลงความต้องการของตลาด และการนำไปปรับใช้ซึ่งขึ้นอยู่กับ ทิศทางการบริหารของแต่ละสถานประกอบการ

อนึ่ง จากการวิเคราะห์พบว่า สามตัวแปรหลัก ที่มีผลต่อขีดความสามารถของที่พักสเปนแบบองค์รวมเหล่านี้ มาจาก 1) ความรู้ของพนักงาน ที่มีส่งผลโดยตรงต่อคุณภาพของการบริการ ขีดความสามารถในการสังเคราะห์ความต้องการของลูกค้าและนำไปปรับใช้ในเชิงสร้างสรรค์ เพื่อที่จะสร้างนวัตกรรมด้านการบริการและการบริการในรูปแบบใหม่ อันมีผลต่อองค์กรในด้านการสร้างความแตกต่างและความมั่นคงต่อฐานลูกค้า โดยตัวองค์กรนั้น จะต้องเล็งเห็นถึงความสำคัญในการฝึกอบรมความรู้ทั่วไปและความรู้เฉพาะ ประกอบกับให้อำนาจการจัดการงาน ที่ได้รับมอบหมายตามสมควรในแต่ละระดับ 2) การมีส่วนร่วมของเทคโนโลยี ซึ่งเป็นปัจจัยที่สำคัญมากที่ที่พักสเปนแบบองค์รวมจะมีความสามารถในการวิเคราะห์และสังเคราะห์เทคโนโลยีที่เหมาะสม ต่อการพัฒนาการบริการให้ สอดคล้องกับความต้องการของผู้บริโภคหรือลูกค้า โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งในปัจจุบันนี้ อาหารเพื่อสุขภาพได้เข้ามามี บทบาทในชีวิตของผู้คนมากขึ้น ซึ่งได้มีการอิงแนวคิดการพัฒนาอย่างยั่งยืนในด้านอาหารปลอดภัยพิชชีร่วมด้วย ดังนั้น เทคโนโลยีด้านการจัดการเชิงบริการและควบคุมคุณภาพรวมถึงโภชนาการอาหารโดยนำเทคโนโลยีเข้ามาใช้ จึงเป็นสิ่งที่องค์กรไม่ควรมองข้าม 3) ระบบสวัสดิการของพนักงาน ซึ่งเป็นหนึ่งในแรงผลักดัน ในการสร้างสรรค์ ความคิดเพื่อให้เกิดนวัตกรรมในการบริการรูปแบบใหม่ ทั้งนี้รวมถึง ความกินดีอยู่ดี ระบบสวัสดิการอุปโภคต่างๆ และการตอบแทนรางวัล (ค่าบริการ หรือ service charge) เหตุที่ระบบสวัสดิการเข้ามามีบทบาทเป็นหนึ่งในปัจจัย นั้น เนื่องจากระบบสวัสดิการที่ดี มีแนวโน้มที่จะลดอัตราการเปลี่ยนถ่ายของพนักงาน โดยเฉพาะพนักงานที่มี ความสามารถเฉพาะทางที่มีคุณภาพ ให้อยู่เพื่อสร้างความแข็งแกร่งให้กับองค์กรต่อไป และอีกสาเหตุหนึ่งนั้นมา จากธุรกิจที่เกี่ยวข้องกับอาหารสเปน ยังจัดเป็นธุรกิจแขนงหนึ่งที่ยังขาดบุคลากรเฉพาะทางอยู่มาก โดยเฉพาะพ่อครัว, นักโภชนาการ, ฯลฯ จึงจำเป็นอย่างยิ่ง ที่องค์กรจะต้องมีระบบการจัดการสวัสดิการที่ดี เพื่อรักษาพนักงานที่มี คุณภาพ ซึ่งถือเป็นแรงขับเคลื่อนที่สำคัญในธุรกิจบริการ ณ ปัจจุบัน

ด้านการเสนอแนะแนวทางเพื่อต่อยอดการวิจัยในระดับต่อไป สืบเนื่องจากข้อได้เปรียบในการแข่งขันระดับประเทศ ขอบเขตงานวิจัยที่เพิ่มเติม ควรนำประเด็นในเรื่องของการตลาดในระดับประเทศมาเป็นตัวชี้วัด เพื่อที่จะวิเคราะห์ แผนทางการตลาดในระดับภาคส่วน (Destination Marketing) ในเชิงปริมาณและสังเคราะห์แนวทางการ สร้างสรรค์นวัตกรรมบริการ โดยพิจารณาจากปัจจัยภายนอกพร้อมด้วย อันจะนำมาซึ่งการพัฒนาส่วนแบ่งทาง การตลาดในอุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพของประเทศซึ่งกำลังมีการพัฒนาด้านการท่องเที่ยวอย่างต่อเนื่อง

คำหลัก: ที่พักสเปนองค์รวม; นวัตกรรมบริการ; การพัฒนาการบริการใหม่; NSD; การรับรู้คุณค่าของลูกค้า; ข้อ ได้เปรียบในการแข่งขัน; ความแตกต่าง; ความรู้พนักงาน; การมีส่วนร่วมทางเทคโนโลยี; ระบบสวัสดิการ

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