

ABSTRACT

This thesis proposes a theoretical model that aims to explain the relationship between staff selection and training based on the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM) and guest satisfaction in 4-5 star hotels in the USA and Australia and Thailand. The relationship that is the subject of the present investigation has been extensively discussed in the literature but has not been subjected to comprehensive empirical investigation. This exploratory research aims to generate empirical evidence concerning the relationship between TQM, guest satisfaction and human resource performance. The chosen methodology compares levels of hotel guest satisfaction based on the extent to which TQM principles have been applied to staff selection and training. The perceptions of frontline staff are investigated across three key operational departments; namely front office, housekeeping and food & beverage. A range of multivariate statistical techniques was used to analyse the results. These confirmed the proposed relationship and found that staff in "Western" hotels (in Australia and the USA) expressed a more positive view of TQM staff selection and training approaches and their connection with guest-orientation quality than was the case with the staff of the Thai hotels. Though guest satisfaction levels in Thai hotels were higher than was the case in the comparable Western hotels, the linkage between staff perceptions of quality as measured in terms of guest-orientation and guest satisfaction in service quality was found better in the Western hotels than was the case in the corresponding Thai hotels. These results are consistent with the fact that TQM principles are longer established in Western hotels. The study identified a range of significant relationships: between TQM staff selection and guest-orientation quality, between TQM training and guest-orientation quality and between guest-orientation quality and guest satisfaction. The research contributes to theoretical knowledge by providing a convincing evidence for the relationship between TQM, guest satisfaction and human resource performance, and by being the first of its kind to show the relationship between TQM, guest satisfaction and staff selection. The study has significant implications for the hospitality industry in the areas of hospitality management, service management, total quality management (TQM) and human resource management. There were recommendations provided for further research in these areas.