

Employee Satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel, Thai Nguyen City, Thai Nguyen Province, Vietnam



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ABSTRACT: Studying employee satisfaction is always the most important factor in maintaining and developing a hotel. This factor not only affects labor productivity, turnover rate, career development and employee motivation, but also helps maintain the sustainability of the hotel's business, through indicators of improving service quality, processes and management efficiency. By collecting secondary and primary data, combining analytical, statistical and descriptive methods to process data on related issues at Kim Thai Hotel, Thai Nguyen City, Thai Nguyen Province, Vietnam, the study has identified the current situation of employee satisfaction at the hotel. On that basis, the study initially sketched the career picture of employees at Kim Thai Hotel in particular and hotels in Thai Nguyen in general.

KEYWORDS: Employee satisfaction, hotel staff, Kim Thai Hotel

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Kim Thai Hotel is one of the famous accommodation establishments in Thai Nguyen city, Thai Nguyen province. The hotel was built in 2011 and officially put into use in 2015 [1]. Kim Thai is located in a prime location of Thai Nguyen city, right in the center, very convenient for tourists to stay when visiting, traveling and working in Thai Nguyen. In 2019, Kim Thai Hotel was known as the Top 10 3-star hotels in Vietnam [2]. However, like other accommodation establishments in the area, Kim Thai Hotel has encountered difficulties in organizing and maintaining a long-term, sustainable source of quality employees. In fact, since its operation, Kim Thai has had a small but regular number of employees leaving [3]. This raises the issue of maintaining a balance between customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction, enhancing employee loyalty at the hotel.

The reality of the hotel tourism industry in particular and the service industry in general shows that Customer Satisfaction and Employee Satisfaction are two factors that are directly proportional to each other [4,5], customer satisfaction increases when employee satisfaction with work increases and vice versa [6-8]. Tourism products and services are products with strong interaction between employees and customers, employee satisfaction in work will positively impact the quality of products and services, thereby increasing customer satisfaction and promoting revenue and profits of the business [9]. Specifically, we all see that employees leaving the business leads to lost training costs, reduced labor productivity, this is especially serious if it happens to long-term employees, the hotel may have to pay for training new employees at a rate of 1.5 times of an employee's salary [10]. On the other hand, employee turnover leads to loss of customers and reduction in product and service quality [12], affecting the reputation and brand of the business [11]. According to research, job satisfaction is one of the main factors that make employees decide to leave the business [13, 14], therefore, job satisfaction is also considered a factor that promotes employee loyalty to the business [6-8]. In short, to reduce the rate of employee turnover in the hotel industry, it is necessary to focus on improving their job satisfaction, which is also a way to maintain and increase revenue and product quality of the hotel.

It can be seen that job satisfaction is related to the feeling of expressing the level of satisfaction of employees with their jobs through the comparison between their expectations about the job and what they actually receive [15]. Thus, the level of job satisfaction will be higher when employees' expectations are met at a high level, clearly identifying employees' needs and expectations for the job plays an important role in determining the cause and creating their job satisfaction, thereby promoting service quality. Research on employee satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel provides managers in the accommodation business in general, as well as Kim Thai Hotel in particular, with an objective view of employee satisfaction, guiding managers to come up with more appropriate orientations and policies in the process of using labor to retain employees for a long time with the hotel, as well as improve human resource management, attracting candidates to the hotel.

Employee Satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel, Thai Nguyen City, Thai Nguyen Province, Vietnam

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Secondary data collection: The study uses secondary data collection methods including documents, research articles, statistical reports, summary reports, books, magazines, Internet sources, ... related to the content of employee satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel, Thai Nguyen province. Then, the information is synthesized, systematized and analyzed to serve the research topic.

Field survey: The method is used in order to collect primary information, verify the authenticity of secondary documents and evaluate the overall situation of the collected research problem. The research team conducted a direct survey at Kim Thai Hotel from November 2023 to November 2024.

In-depth interview with experts: Through direct and indirect conversations, the research team consulted 10 tourism experts coded from CG1 to CG10 on the survey content. The interview content was designed as closed questions, including 07 standards with 20 criteria on assessing employee satisfaction. The standards and evaluation criteria were built based on the overview process, inheriting published research works. The research team systematized the content, selected evaluation criteria suitable for the research topic, then used the results of the interview to complete the standards and criteria for assessing employee satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel.

Questionnaire survey: The research team conducted a survey on google form for all 30 employees working at Kim Thai Hotel. The number of ballots collected was 28 valid ballots. The survey period is from September 2024 to November 2024. Finally, the research team uses Excel to compile and summarize the survey results.

3. RESEARCH CONTENT

3.1. Research results

3.1.1. Employee satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel

a. Income

Table 1. Results of employee satisfaction with income at Kim Thai Hotel

(Unit:%)

<i>Comment</i> <i>Criteria</i>	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Satisfied with current salary	–	3.6	35.7	50.0	10.7
Fair in evaluating and proposing salary increase	–	–	21.4	60.7	17.9
<i>Comment</i> <i>Criteria</i>	Yes		No		
Salary commensurate with ability and contribution to work	32.1		67.9		

(Source: the authors)

Most employees are satisfied and very satisfied (60.7%) with the salary when working at Kim Thai Hotel. However, there is also a significant proportion (35.7%) who are quite satisfied and (3.6%) who are not satisfied with the current salary. This shows that the current salary may not fully meet the needs and expectations of some employees at the hotel. Similarly, with the criterion of salary commensurate with ability and contribution to work, 32.1% of employees think that the hotel's salary is not commensurate with ability and contribution to work. In fact, the salary paid to hotel employees is at the average level for 3-star hotels in Thai Nguyen. However, the survey shows that there is a difference in salary between positions in the hotel, specifically, some positions are not paid commensurate with their efforts, qualifications and contributions to the hotel. This leads to employees in lower-paid positions having to do other side jobs after hours to earn extra income. Regarding the fairness in evaluating and proposing salary increases, the majority of employees (78.6%) are satisfied and very satisfied with the evaluation and proposal of salary increases for employees in the department, showing that the criteria and implementation are valuable, the salary increase proposal of the hotel departments is quite fair, transparent, satisfying employees at work. Basically, it shows that the salary level, the method of evaluating, paying salary as well as the proposal of regular salary increases of Kim Thai Hotel have met the needs of employees living in Thai Nguyen, however, the disproportionate salary payment between positions in the hotel needs to be studied and adjusted appropriately by the hotel.

Employee Satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel, Thai Nguyen City, Thai Nguyen Province, Vietnam

b. Welfare

Table 2. Results of employee satisfaction with welfare at Kim Thai Hotel

(Unit:%)

<i>Comment</i> <i>Criteria</i>	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Welfare and benefits policy	–	–	17.9	64.2	17.9
<i>Comment</i> <i>Criteria</i>	Yes		No		
Clear and comprehensive hotel benefits	10.7		89.3		
Annual travel and entertainment	7.1		92.9		

(Source: the authors)

At Kim Thai Hotel, the criterion of welfare and benefits policy is rated quite well by employees. Accordingly, no employees rated as dissatisfied, the majority of employees (64.2%) rated as satisfied and very satisfied (17.9%) with the hotel's welfare and benefits policy. More specifically about the welfare and benefits policy, most employees rated the hotel's welfare as clear and complete (89.3%), the hotel regularly organizes annual travel and entertainment for employees (92.9%). This result confirms that Kim Thai Hotel is quite interested in employee welfare and has good welfare and benefits policy. However, 10.7% of employees still think that the hotel's welfare is not clear and complete, 7.1% said they do not get to travel and have entertainment every year. Most of the above results belong to new employees and most of them have not enjoyed these benefits, they also do not have full awareness of the benefits, welfare and policies of the hotel.

Furthermore, the hotel's actual salary and bonus are still limited and unreasonable. Although there is a policy of rewarding employees on holidays, the salary and bonus are not high, but only at a moderate level. In addition, the hotel does not have any specific policy on rewarding employees with good performance. Usually, the hotel will reward employees quarterly, but the bonus amount is often very limited. As for tips, employees will share them among themselves. The hotel does not have specific regulations, leading to employees feeling that the welfare policy is not clear.

c. Training and promotion

Table 3. Results of employee satisfaction with training and promotion at Kim Thai Hotel

(Unit:%)

<i>Comment</i> <i>Criteria</i>	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Satisfied with training policy and promotion opportunities	–	–	28.6	53.6	17.9
<i>Comment</i> <i>Criteria</i>	No		Yes		
Having opportunities for career advancement and development	3.6		96.4		
Having ample opportunities to learn and develop new skills; being free to be creative and make decisions at work	7.1		92.9		

(Source: the authors)

The survey results on the level of satisfaction with the training policy and promotion opportunities of employees at Kim Thai Hotel are quite good. Accordingly, no employees are dissatisfied with this criterion, the evaluation rate is 17.9% very satisfied; 53.6% satisfied, the rest are quite satisfied. Specifically, in the criterion of having opportunities for promotion and career development, 96.4% of employees agreed that the hotel provided them with opportunities for promotion and career development. Similarly, in the criterion of having enough opportunities to learn, develop new skills as well as being free to be creative and make decisions in their work, 92.9% of employees confirmed that Kim Thai always creates all conditions for employees. This shows that the training policy and promotion opportunities at Kim Thai Hotel are quite good. However, 7.1% of employees still believe that the hotel does not pay attention to meeting the needs of learning, self-development and lack of autonomy in work, at the same time, 3.6% of employees also believe that the hotel does not provide opportunities for promotion and career development for employees. Most of these opinions come from new employees, who have not worked for a long time, so they are not prioritized by the hotel like the old employees.

Employee Satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel, Thai Nguyen City, Thai Nguyen Province, Vietnam

d. Nature of work

Table 4. Results of employee satisfaction with the nature of work at Kim Thai Hotel

(Unit:%)

<i>Comment</i> Criteria	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Current job and working environment	–	–	14.3	60.7	25.0
Volume and the level of ease and difficulty of work			21.4	64.3	14.3
<i>Comment</i> Criteria	No		Yes		
Work performance is recognized and properly appreciated	3.6		96.4		

(Source: the authors)

According to the survey results of employees' evaluation of their current work and working environment, 85.7% of employees participating in the survey rated themselves satisfied or higher. However, there are still some employees who are only quite satisfied (14.3%) with their work and working environment. This is because the evaluation comes from part-time employees and new employees who have not yet adapted to the working environment.

Regarding the criteria of volume and the level of ease and difficulty of work, 78.6% of employees surveyed rated themselves satisfied or higher. This shows that the volume of work and "difficulty" of work at the hotel are quite suitable for the qualifications and experience of the employees. The work here is challenging enough for employees to continue to develop, but it is not too stressful, leading to employee discouragement. However, 21.4% of employees still feel unsatisfied with this criterion, possibly due to the large workload of these employees, being rotated or working in positions that do not match their abilities and expertise. Therefore, hotels should regularly monitor, ask for employees' opinions, and plan to arrange to use the right people for the right jobs, take advantage of the talents of all employees and also to increase their satisfaction.

In the final criterion, most employees feel that their work performance is recognized and properly evaluated (96.4%), which shows that the hotel is very fair in evaluating employee capacity, always acknowledging the efforts and achievements of employees, which is also a great source of motivation for employees to continue to improve and develop their full potential. In addition, there are still 3.6% of employees, mainly part-time employees and new employees, who do not feel that they are recognized and properly evaluated. This is due to many different reasons, mainly because this group of employees has not yet adapted to the job. At the same time, in order to quickly get used to the job, the hotel creates conditions for them to do some additional work within the allowed scope, unintentionally creating pressure and a phenomenon of comparison with old employees.

e. Management

Table 5. Results of employee satisfaction with management at Kim Thai hotel

(Unit:%)

<i>Comment</i> Criteria	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Satisfied with management	–	–	35.7	50.0	14.3
<i>Comment</i> Criteria	No		Yes		
Satisfied with management style	10.7		89.3		
Leaders have capacity, vision and operational ability	0		100		

(Source: the authors)

In the general criterion of satisfaction with management, there are no employees who are not satisfied with management of Kim Thai Hotel. At the same time, the percentage of employees who are satisfied or more with the management is quite high (64.3%) and the majority are satisfied with the management of the board of directors (89.3%). It can be seen that the board of directors of the hotel has done its role quite well, from organizing activities, to checking, supervising and building development strategies for employees in particular and the entire operation of Kim Thai Hotel in general. However, there are still 10.7% of employees who are not really satisfied with the management of the board of directors, when new employees and part-time employees are not fully aware of the management, staff building and proper attention from Kim Thai, which is also consistent with the survey results in the above criteria. However, 100% of all employees, including new employees and part-time employees, perceive the leadership as competent,

Employee Satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel, Thai Nguyen City, Thai Nguyen Province, Vietnam

visionary and capable. In fact, when interviewed directly, all employees have a positive view of the future of Kim Thai Hotel when looking at the performance of the leadership.

f. Colleague

Table 6. Results of employee satisfaction with colleagues at Kim Thai hotel

(Unit:%)

<i>Criteria</i> \ <i>Comment</i>	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Satisfied with colleagues in the same department	–	–	17.9	28.6	53.6
Satisfied with colleagues at the hotel	–	–	10.7	57.1	32.1

(Source: the authors)

At Kim Thai Hotel, 17.9% to 10.7% of employees only felt moderate in their relationships in the same department as well as with colleagues. Most new employees felt that they had not yet adapted to the relationships in the hotel, and at the same time, the coordination support between departments was sometimes interrupted during peak check-in and check-out times, leading to conflicts with colleagues at the hotel. However, no employee was dissatisfied with their colleagues, in fact 82.2% of employees were satisfied or more with their colleagues in the same department, 89.2% of employees participating in the survey were very satisfied and satisfied with their colleagues at the hotel. This is a positive sign, showing that the staff working at the hotel have good relationships with each other, regardless of whether they are colleagues in the same department or different departments, always ready to help and support colleagues, this creates a harmonious working environment, supporting each other in tasks, creating a positive culture, where everyone feels welcome, sociable and motivated.

g. Working condition

Table 7. Results of employee satisfaction with working condition at Kim Thai Hotel

(Unit:%)

<i>Criteria</i> \ <i>Comment</i>	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Facilities and equipment provided during work	–	3.6	28.6	60.7	7.1
Ensuring occupational safety and health care	–	3.6	10.7	71.4	14.3

(Source: the authors)

The survey results show that the majority of employees are satisfied or more with the facilities and equipment provided during the working process (67.8%), similarly, 85.7% of employees feel that they are guaranteed occupational safety and health care. In that context, there are still 3.6% of employees who are not satisfied with the provision of facilities and equipment, as well as the assurance of occupational safety and health care. Kim Thai Hotel has been in operation since 2017, after 9 years of operation, the hotel's equipment is no longer as new as before. Most of the items printed with the hotel logo have lost their logo and are no longer new. Some chipped and broken equipment is still used for setup. The hotel's vacuum cleaner causes high noise pollution, the poor soundproofing system causes inconvenience to guests. Some areas of the hotel's walls are showing signs of deterioration, cracking, damage, etc. Employee care activities have not been given much attention, especially for new employees. They have not been trained in occupational safety such as fire prevention and fighting measures or how to use safety equipment, and have not enjoyed benefits such as sick leave or medicine provision, etc.

h. General satisfaction

Table 8. Results of employee satisfaction on meeting the needs and expectations at Kim Thai Hotel

(Unit:%)

<i>Criteria</i> \ <i>Comment</i>	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Meeting the needs and expectations	–	3.6	28.6	50.0	17.9

(Source: the authors)

According to the survey, the percentage of satisfied and very satisfied employees accounted for the majority (67.9%), showing that the hotel has been quite good at meeting the expectations of employees. However, there is still a small number of employees who are dissatisfied (3.6%) and quite satisfied (28.6%). This shows that the hotel needs to continue to improve and refine policies and regulations to better meet the needs and expectations of employees.

Employee Satisfaction at Kim Thai Hotel, Thai Nguyen City, Thai Nguyen Province, Vietnam

The results of the survey in the open-ended question on Employee Suggestions for Kim Thai Hotel, the authors obtained the following results: 35.7% of employees proposed to increase salaries and benefits; 14.3% proposed to upgrade the hotel's equipment and facilities; 10.7% proposed to improve employee training; 7.1% of employees suggested improving the working environment and 32.4% of employees were either satisfied with their current jobs or were unsure that their suggestions could be met, so they had no suggestions. This result shows that the majority of hotel employees want to increase their salaries and benefits, be guaranteed safety at work and improve their skills and qualifications.

3.1.2. Some recommendations

a. Restructuring the current salary and benefits structure

Regarding salary, Kim Thai Hotel needs to clearly analyze the requirements, tasks, responsibilities, and benefits for employees' work to pay salaries; pay attention to clarifying and balancing the salaries of old and new employees, avoiding the situation where new employees feel unfair in job evaluation.

Regarding bonuses, Kim Thai Hotel needs consider reasonable rewards, supplement other bonus policies for employees with good and excellent achievements in the work process to increase employee satisfaction with the job. In addition, there needs to be a mechanism to divide Service Charge for employees, creating an additional source of income for employees from customers. From there, employees can have a more stable income, meet the needs of better life, help retain employees, thereby, increase the quality of hotel services.

Regarding welfare policies, the hotel should design a board to commend outstanding achievements of employees in the lobby so that employees are motivated to strive to work hard to put their names on the excellent golden board, to be seen by customers and to evaluate the service process. The department head and the management board need to set standards to evaluate employees monthly, quarterly, and annually and at the same time build departmental regulations to ensure everything follows a professional process.

b. Improving working conditions for employees

Regarding the hotel's equipment and facilities, there needs to be a strategy for repairing, enhancing, and replacing them appropriately and synchronously, such as thoroughly remove damaged items and equipment that are poorly covered, affecting the overall aesthetics of the hotel. Old hotel equipment that needs to be replaced, such as soundproofing systems, vacuum cleaners that make too much noise, damaged reception desks, etc. At the same time, rearrange areas to suit the characteristics and nature of the work.

Regarding ensuring occupational safety and health for employees, hotels should conduct health checks for candidates to ensure that employees are qualified to work after being recruited. Hotels also need to organize training courses on occupational safety, provide personal protective equipment to ensure that employees are fully provided with personal protective equipment suitable for their work, such as masks, gloves, protective T-shirts, and goggles, etc. The hotel must conduct regular safety checks to ensure that equipment and work environments are regularly inspected to ensure employee safety. In addition, the hotel also considers addressing some sensitive issues that are inevitable in the hotel business by recruiting more male housekeeping staff (other departments already have male staff) to achieve a balance in human resources. At the same time, some difficult and sensitive issues will be easier to resolve when there are male staff.

c. Organizing regular training courses to improve staff skills

The hotel should organize training sessions, assess staff skills to better understand their strengths and weaknesses, instead of focusing only on training the core points of the staff. At the same time, send senior staff to study, acquire new experience and knowledge at large hotel chains to update new knowledge, learn their processes to convey to the unit's staff. In particular, hotels need to improve their knowledge of customer psychology so that staff are not passive in communication when handling real-life situations when interacting with guests.

4. CONCLUSION

To improve the level of satisfaction as well as enhance the quality of human resources, Kim Thai Hotel needs to overcome the factors that cause dissatisfaction with the problems in the work of employees and apply specific solutions, helping to bring the best efficiency in business for the hotel. Accordingly, to achieve high efficiency and bring satisfaction to employees, solutions need to be implemented synchronously, with a long-term orientation. This is also one of the factors that contribute to improving the competitiveness of the hotel, building a brand in the market, because human resources are always one of the factors that determine the success or failure of a hotel, especially in the current context of fierce competition among businesses.

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