

ABSTRACT

Quality of service in many service sectors has been studied by researchers for over two decades. To be successful in the service business, a high quality of service is crucial, in addition to customer satisfaction. Therefore, this study was conducted with the purpose of finding the customers' satisfaction with the service quality related to the terminal building complex at Suvarnabhumi International Airport. The study examined Asian and Western customers' point of view to see whether a difference exists between the two groups in terms of expected and perceived service quality. The study determined the gap between expectation and perception of service quality among both groups. Finally, the study also examined the difference between demographic characteristics of the two groups and the expectation as well as perception of service quality provided by the airport.

In order to measure the quality of service, the SERVQUAL instrument was used as a tool to collect the data. A total of 600 respondents who were international customers who had used this airport not exceeding two times were classified equally into 300 Asian customers who were Japanese, South Korean, and Chinese and 300 Western customers who were United Kingdom (English), United States, and Australian. The designed questionnaire was deemed reliable to apply to this research. In the close-end questionnaire, the respondents were asked their opinions on the five dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy on both expectation and perception sections along with their demographic characteristics which consisted of gender, marital status, age, education, occupation, and income. The data of this study was analyzed by using SPSS to test all hypotheses.

The results of this study showed that there are differences in expected service quality between both groups on the dimensions of tangibles and assurance while the other three dimensions are not different. Moreover, there is a difference in perceived service quality only in terms of reliability, whereas the other four dimensions are not different. Additionally, the expected service quality of Western customers is greater than Asian customers on all five dimensions as well as perceived service quality, excluding reliability. Furthermore, there are gaps between expected and perceived service quality of

Asian customers in dimensions of tangibles and reliability while there are no gaps between the two criteria of Western customers on all five dimensions. However, Asian customers are not satisfied with the empathy dimension whereas Western customers are not satisfied with reliability and responsiveness dimensions. Overall, Asian customers are more satisfied with the airport service than Western customers.

From these findings, the operator of Suvarnabhumi international airport should pay attention toward closing the gaps as perceived by each group as well as understand the difference in customers demographics by improving the quality of service and creating appropriate strategies to satisfy all customers.

