



SERVICE QUALITY AND TOURIST SATISFACTION IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

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Abstract

The importance of quality in tourism is a vital factor in all aspects of life. The guest needs products in tourism where they could be certain of receiving excellent quality services at a reasonable price. As a result, great service quality has a direct impact on client satisfaction, which leads to a desire to return. Seetanah et al., (2020) various countries have various perspectives on service quality. According to Furer et al. (2002), the perception and significance of service quality are heavily influenced by consumers' attitudes, values, and beliefs. Furthermore, Jabnoun and Khalifa (2005) focused on the importance of evaluating the quality of services in different societies. This research looked at service quality and tourist satisfaction.

Keywords: *Service Quality, Tourist Satisfaction, Tourism, Hospitality.*

Introduction

Tourism sector is cherished for improvement in infrastructure, high standard living, infusing socio-cultural and environmental awareness and also helping in conservation and preservation of culture heritage. It promotes better of better understanding among nations and social integration which has been highly recognized by the United Nations. The special characteristics of tourism industry are that it can be developed in those areas which are lacking in basic minerals and economic geology. Also, the attraction sector is non-consumptive by nature and hence if its appeal is maintained it can be used for a longer period. The costs and leakages in transporting the product to the market are also not involved in tourism sector since tourists are the main consumers of the various goods and services.

Initially, the SERVQUAL model had 97 qualities, which were difficult for the researchers to evaluate. Later, model was enhanced afterwards by many researchers and contained with the five factors which are Tangibility, Responsiveness, Empathy, Assurance and Reliability. However, following responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, reliability is the most significant factor, whereas intangible is the least important (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Zeithaml et al., 1990). Jensri et al., (2020); Meng & Cui 2020; Prmudito (2020); Seetanah et al., (2020)

Review of literature

Service Quality

Albrecht and Zemke (1985) proposed variables in service quality such as spontaneity, recovery, issue solving, concern, and caring in their study. According to Johnston and Silvestro (1990), there are twelve qualities of service quality that lead to some other components of service quality, namely integrity, functionality, commitment, helpfulness, and care. Similarly, Walker (1990) emphasized that the primary components in service quality are: quality environment, delivery system, and product reliability, which includes knowledge, skills, and staff attitude.

According to Kim et al. (2007), customers rate the quality of service based on environmental and human factors. Furthermore, Zeithaml and Bitner (2000) advised that certain attributes be assessed and explored



in consumer perceptions of service quality. Furthermore, Baker et al. (2002) divided "perceived service quality" into three categories: physical surroundings, customer satisfaction, and personnel behavior. According to Lovelock and Wirtz (2007), tourist satisfaction has a direct and positive relationship with joy.

Customer Satisfaction

There have been many theoretical studies into the topic of customer satisfaction. Oliver (1989) differs from other researchers in his definition of satisfaction. According to Boulding et al. (1993), there are two types of client satisfaction: cumulative satisfaction and transaction-specific satisfaction. Furthermore, Cook and Thompson (2000) stated in their study that "transaction-specific satisfaction" refers to evaluation of customer reaction and experience. According to Tahir and Abu-Bakar (2007), "cumulative satisfaction refers to overall evaluation of customers and their experience of services from beginning to end."

According to Gustafson et al. (2005), "customer satisfaction is the measurement of how customers measure the service of business organizations." Customers who are satisfied serve as the firm's ambassador since their degree of satisfaction has a good effect on word of mouth, which leads to repurchase intention (Aiello et al., 2003; Hekkert et al., 2009; Wu, 2011; & Zavare et al., 2010;). According to Farris et al. (2010), customer satisfaction is defined as the person who is more satisfied with goods and services than with specified goals. Increased customer pleasure leads to increased customer loyalty.

Many researches, like Saleh and Ryan (1991), Snoj and Mumel (2002), and Juwaheer and Ross (2003), focused on the SERVQUAL aspects and evaluated customer satisfaction. Pizam et al. (1978) used a factor analytic approach to evaluate the scale at Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where tourists spend their vacations, and identify the components of visitor satisfaction. They were among the first researchers to devise a scale for determining tourist satisfaction variables.

Jensri et al., (2020); Meng & Cui 2020 argued they mostly concentrate on the following eight factors: lodging, beach options, hospitality, cost, drinking and eating facilities, commercialization, and environment. Saleh and Ryan (1991) used the factor analysis approach in their study to build a scale of thirty three items while examining the quality of service in the travel and tourism segment.

Although the function of service quality in the service industry has recently received increased attention, many experts believe that its relationship with customer happiness is still unclear. As a result, "expectations and perception" are used as imperative antecedent dimensions in service quality and customer happiness. According to Cronin and Taylor (1992) and Oliver (1993), the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction is unclear, necessitating the development of an empirical and conceptual study.

In contrast, Zeithaml et al. (1993) argued that "service quality and satisfaction are interrelated and are similar in nature, where as there is some differences are noted". Consequently, Patterson and Johnson (1993) also tried to combine service quality and customer satisfaction in a single conceptual model. This model clearly investigates the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction and also highlighted the main difference between them.



Nithila (2014) analyzed that service quality variable like destination facilities, attraction and accessibility have direct influence on tourist satisfaction. Likewise, Hau and Umar (2014) investigated that factors of service quality like destination image, security, support services cleanliness and facilities have the strong consequence on tourist satisfaction. Further,

Attallah (2015) confirmed that in hotel sector five dimensions of service performance model had a significant effect on overall tourist satisfaction. Consequently, Kim et al. (2017) in their study applied path analysis for examined an association between “satisfactions of customers” “service quality” and “purchase intention”.

Puri and Singh (2018) also explored the relationship between service quality and customer happiness in the tourism industry and discussed the popular SERVQUAL Model. As a result, Kumar (2018) researched service quality and customer satisfaction in fast service restaurants and discovered eight key characteristics, stating that "customer expectations were high while customers perceived level from restaurant services was low.

According to Andaleeb and Conway (2006), customer satisfaction in full-service restaurants in the United States is determined by meal quality, responsiveness, dependability, and price. According to Kim et al. (2009), "in the United States, University food service facility restaurant attributes such as food quality, service quality, price and value, convenience, and atmosphere had a significant impact on customer satisfaction." Mohammad and Alhamadani (2011) conducted a survey study at Jordan's commercial bank, and the results revealed that service quality elements (empathy, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance) are positively and significantly related to customer satisfaction. Oh, (1999); Kyoon, Y., and Ah, P. (2007); Korda and Milfelner, (2009) all agreed that service quality is directly related to customer satisfaction in the hotel sector in the United States.

(Fah & Kandasamy, 2011) investigated the impact of service quality dimensions in Malaysian hotels, the findings of the study disclosed that customer satisfaction not only influenced by tangibility, assurance, reliability, responsiveness and empathy but also ecological design and concept had affected the satisfaction of customers. Gourdin et al. (1991); Tse & Wilton, (1988); Anderson & Zeithaml, (1984) all these authors described that survival of companies largely depend on quality that is the essential element for the company to stand apart in a competitive edge. On the other hand quality act as a strategic tool to achieve efficiency in operation, helpful to improve performance of business, increase market share, profit, customer returns intention and satisfaction.

Conclusion

All these researchers (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Oliver, 1997; Lee et al., 2000; Kim et al., 2009; Stevens et al., 1995; Andaleeb & Conway, 2006; Min & Min, 2011) suggested that service quality is the key element of satisfaction, the findings of all these study reached to the conclusion that service quality and customer satisfaction had a direct relationship. Andaleeb & Conway (2006) pointed out that employee's attitude; price and food quality was significantly related to customer satisfaction.

Qin and Prybutok (2008) conducted a survey study at Chinese fast food restaurants, and the findings revealed that meal quality, service quality, and perceived value were predictors of consumer satisfaction. In a survey of Korean ethnic restaurants, Ha and Jang (2010) discovered that service and food quality play an important influence in increasing customer happiness. Similarly, Min and Min (2011) investigated customer satisfaction and service quality at fast food restaurants in the United States,



discovering that food taste was a significant service dimension of service quality and, as a result, satisfaction. According to Zeithmal (1988), service quality is defined as a customer's judgement on the overall excellence of a product or service.

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