

An Empirical Assessment of Customer Satisfaction in Hospitality Industry: A Study of 3*hotels in twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad

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Abstract

Now-a-days the term hospitality has become popular and consisting of various products / services such as hotels (accommodation), food and beverage etc. The main purpose of any business is to satisfy customers and encourage in retaining. The present study is focusing on finding the factors leading to customer satisfaction in 3* star hotels located in twin cities of Hyderabad/Secunderabad through factor analysis and also to study the behavioral aspects of customers such as the purpose of visit, length of stay, overall satisfaction and loyalty.

KEYWORDS: Customer, Satisfaction, Guest, Hospitality, Hotel

Introduction

The hospitality industry is defined as being the generic title for ‘different sectors of the hotel and catering industry’ offers a product which is with, tourism and leisure products, a service product. In order to relate to customer satisfaction, it is necessary to understand the service product’s main characteristics, which can be described as intangible, variable, inseparable and perishable. These characteristics not only reflect the nature of the service product but also reflect on the background why customer satisfaction has increasingly emerged as an important issue throughout the last decades in the hospitality industry.

Now-a-days any business operating within the hospitality industry can achieve its objectives and compete effectively by satisfying its customers. Therefore ‘satisfying the customer is a priority in most businesses’ (Kotler et al, 1996) which was already highlighted by Levitt (1976) who stated that ‘the purpose of a business is to attract and retain customers’. Satisfied customers not only provide positive word of mouth recommendations to their friends and relatives but are also much more likely to come back and remain loyal. The benefits of customer satisfaction and the fact that the hospitality industry has grown extensively over the last few years have made the concept of satisfying customers increasingly important.

According to World Tourism Organization, satisfaction defined as “a psycho-sociological concept that involves the feeling of well-being and pleasure that results from obtaining what one hopes for and expects from an appealing service” (World Tourism Organization).

Hospitality organizations are constantly engaged in a valiant struggle to master the fine art of estimating the customer expectations accurately and to meet or exceed them. The concurrent goals of high guest satisfaction must be balanced against organizational efficiency, fiscal solvency and making the first move against the competitor. To attain customer satisfaction, tailor made services were offered to each and every customer in

terms of number of amenities, degree of personal attention or interaction, speed of service delivery and service quality.

Review of Literature

The key determinant of customer satisfaction is the ability to meet and exceed customer's expectation (John C Crotts and Bind Pan 2008). The important factors of satisfaction in tourism and hospitality are food, cleanliness, hygienic conditions and satisfactory catering (Sheeba Rani 2007). The underlying dimensions of overall satisfaction in hotel industry are quality of staff performance, room facilities, value for money, variety and efficient services, business related services and safety and security (Hailin Qu, Bill Ryan and Raymond Chu, 2000). According to J.D.Power Associates (2005) the check-in/check-out, guestroom, food and beverage, hotel services, hotel facilities and costs determine customer satisfaction. Puja Walia Mann and Manish Jha (2011) stated that price, clean place, quality of food, quick service and food & beverage were the parameters preferred by the customers. Usha Ramanathan and Ramakrishnan Ramanathan (2011) considered six prominent attributes play a key role in customer satisfaction namely customer service, cleanliness, room quality, value for money, quality of food and family friendliness. Esther Williams (2011) emphasized that good hotel design inspires an emotional response and the comfort of the accommodations, the enjoyment derived from the dining options, the ease in the arrival and check-in procedures and other facilities are key elements that make the guest's holiday as a memorable and repeating. According to Jonathan Barsky and Lenny Nash (2010) the experience with the hotel during their stay is directly affecting hotel's reputation, repeat visits and recommendations. Ching-ChowYang (2009) found that customers require low prices and high quality services. Sudipta Dev (2010) opined that, in hospitality business, housekeeping plays an important role and will differentiate the hotel from others. The author also expressed that for any guest, the first impression forms about a hotel is how well the housekeeping job has been executed. J.D. Power Associates North America 2004 reported that the main factor contributing to satisfaction was guestroom experience followed by check-in/out, costs and fees, hotel facilities, food and beverage and hotel services.

Hence the study is primarily focused to find out the factors leading to customer satisfaction with reference to various services in 3* hotels of Hyderabad/Secunderabad. From the review of literature it is very much evident that overall satisfaction is also an important factor in guest satisfaction. Therefore an attempt made by the researcher to find out overall satisfaction, loyalty and some behavioral intentions of the customers such as purpose of visit to hotel, number of days spent in hotel etc.

Research Methodology

Based on the literature available the following objectives are framed for the study.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the factors leading to customer satisfaction with reference to front office/reception services, housekeeping services, room services, interiors/exterior, maintenance services, conference hall facilities and other services in 3* hotels located in twin cities of Hyderabad/Secunderabad.
2. To identify the factors leading to satisfaction with reference to food quality and restaurant services in 3* hotels of Hyderabad/Secunderabad

3. To analyze the behavioral intentions of the customers such as purpose of visit, length of stay etc.
4. To study and analyze the overall satisfaction and loyalty of customers.

Sampling Technique

The study is undertaken in three star hotels located in twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The population details are listed below in Table No.1. The proportionate sampling technique is used to select the hotels. Among eighteen hotels, 50% of the population i.e., 9 hotels were selected for the study.

Table No. 1 Sample Design

Hotel Category	Population of Hotels	Sample Size (50%)
3*	18	9

Source: FHRAI Guide 2008, 2009

Customer Sample

Since the study is related to the customers, from each hotel 100 responses were collected. The total of 900 samples was collected from all nine hotels. The convenient sampling technique used for getting the responses from the customers. The main source of data was primary data which was collected through the structured questionnaire administered to the customers when they were checking out. The questionnaire was consisting of five point scale which was ranging from highly satisfied (5) to highly dissatisfied (1) and Extreme (5) to Very Low (1). The pilot survey was conducted with 90 sample from the same hotels mentioned above then the questionnaire was modified while adding more number of attributes. The research required secondary data which has collected through various journals and magazines related to management, tourism & hospitality, various internet e-resources and reports published by HVS hospitality services and Ministry of tourism. The study is Exploratory, Descriptive and Analytical in nature.

Data Analysis

The reliability of the data is tested through Chronbach's alpha test which resulted a very high value i.e. 0.938. Hence the data is highly reliable.

Table.2 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
.938	90

Table No.3 Demographic Profile of the Customers

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Gender		
Male	816	90.7
Female	84	9.3
Total	900	100
Nationality		
Indians	800	88.9
NRIs	18	2
Foreigners	82	9.1
Total	900	100

Education Qualification		
Professional	331	36.8
PG	359	39.9
Graduation	174	19.3
Inter/SSC	18	2
Others	18	2
Total	900	100
Occupation		
Govt.Emp	136	15.1
Private	534	59.3
Professional	102	11.3
Self Emp	90	10
Any other	38	4.2
Total	900	100
Annual Income(Rs)		
Below 2,00,000	162	18
2,00,001-4,00,000	189	21
4,00,001-6,00,000	248	28
More than 6,00,000	301	33
Total	900	100
Marital Status		
Married	695	77
Unmarried	205	23
Total	900	100
Age		
Below 15	4	0.4
16-30	300	33
31-45	412	46
46-60	170	19
More than 60 yrs	14	1.6
Total	900	100
Visiting Pattern		
Individual	717	80
Group	86	9.6
Family	97	10.8
Total	900	100

Source: Questionnaire

The analysis of the data revealed that the majority of the customers (90.7%) are male in gender and 89% of the customers are Indian customers. The education status, 39.9% of the customers are PGs (39.9%) and (36.8%) professionals. Majority of the customers are private employees (59.3%) earning greater than Rs.6,00,000 per annum(33%) and are under the age group of 31-45 years (46%) visiting individually (80%) to hotels.

Factor Analysis

To find out the factors that influence satisfaction, the factor analysis conducted for all sixty attributes which were framed on five point scale ranging from highly satisfied=5 to highly dissatisfied =1. The factors are considered basing on two criteria. i) The eigen

value is greater than one ii) The factor loadings greater than 0.5 when rotated were considered for the study. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy is 0.944 (from Table no.3), indicating that the present data is suitable for factor analysis. Similarly Bartlett's Test of sphericity is significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that sufficient correlation exists between the variables. The Table No.5 illustrates the eigen values, variances, cumulative variances and factor loadings of the attributes undertaken by the study. Factor I is named as Housekeeping services and has eleven attributes, with a variance of 39.873. Factor-II, Front-office services and has eleven attributes with a variance of 7.884. Factor-III is considered as Conference hall services have seven attributes with a variance of 4.059, Factor-IV is Maintenance services and having five attributes with a variance of 3.981, Factor-V is named as Room services has five attributes with a variance of 3.096, Factor -VI is Room arrangements has four attributes, Factor-VII is Interior/Exterior services is having four attributes, Factor -VIII is Extra amenities had one attribute, Factor -IX is Other facilities having four attribute and Factor -X is Wellness facilities and have three attributes. The total cumulative percentages of all above ten factors are 69.867.

Table No.4 KMO and Bartlett's Test -3 * hotels data

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.944
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	4.723E4
Df	1770
Sig.	.000

Table No.5 Various statements and their Eigen values and Variances

Sl No	Attributes	Initial Eigen Values			Factor Loadings									
		Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Doorman greeting	23.924	39.873	39.873	.194	.598	.099	.105	.155	.205	.000	.457	.022	.034
2	Minimum time at Check-in	4.731	7.884	47.757	.254	.751	.038	.151	.074	.069	.054	.300	.037	.031
3	Reception greetings	2.435	4.059	51.816	.207	.716	.068	.190	.071	.172	.085	.104	.005	-.003
4	Reservation details	2.389	3.981	55.797	.349	.654	.027	.148	.083	.105	.095	.163	.045	-.095
5	Reservation accuracy	1.857	3.096	58.893	.273	.681	.062	.253	.112	.144	.100	.125	.061	-.089
6	Room kept ready	1.511	2.518	61.410	.249	.641	-.018	.160	.159	.205	.086	-.035	.200	-.094
7	Promptness of bell person	1.471	2.451	63.862	.223	.663	.071	.088	.266	.147	.184	.080	.087	-.004
8	Hotel facilities explained by bell person	1.360	2.267	66.129	.262	.652	.083	.107	.166	.124	.163	-.066	.202	.104
9	Bill ready when check-out	1.154	1.924	68.053	.216	.736	.059	.018	.141	.078	.125	.018	.235	.105
10	Accuracy of billing	1.089	1.814	69.867	.231	.691	.014	.128	.206	.123	.068	-.012	.075	.064
11	Speed/efficiency of staff at check-out	1.004	1.673	71.540	.232	.735	.124	.066	.205	.110	.082	.012	.068	.147
12	Timely and efficient housekeeping services	.898	1.497	73.036	.482	.262	.056	.285	.203	.162	.073	.428	.148	-.123
13	Room amenities package	.867	1.444	74.48	.639	.229	.067	.24	.154	.268	.038	.227	.139	-.071

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14	Special amenities	.827	1.378	75.85 8	.547	.296	.015	.24 1	.185	.095	.006	.134	.151	-.060
15	Mini-bar facility	.762	1.269	77.12 8	.653	.238	.046	.24 6	.052	.219	.080	.044	.300	.042
16	Coffee/tea maker	.725	1.208	78.33 6	.612	.401	.057	.24 7	.046	.086	.039	.069	.207	.023
17	Supplies for coffee/tea	.698	1.163	79.49 9	.667	.350	.048	.23 1	.098	-.145	.107	-.008	.099	.025
18	Crockery availability	.640	1.066	80.56 5	.708	.308	.014	.18 2	.001	.122	.062	-.127	.249	-.033
19	Carpet freshness	.620	1.033	81.59 8	.752	.233	.123	.22 5	.075	.105	.109	.106	.099	.018
20	Stationary availability	.612	1.019	82.61 7	.715	.309	.058	.07 9	.223	.220	.145	.043	.080	.054
21	TV/LCD TV availability	.561	.935	83.55 2	.619	.261	.114	.13 1	.307	.122	.155	.186	.013	.067
22	Telephone facility	.526	.877	84.42 9	.660	.272	.049	.12 0	.245	.205	.186	.144	-.086	.090
23	Dental kit in bathrooms	.489	.814	85.24 4	.676	.176	.133	.03 6	.153	.298	.142	.153	.070	.126
24	Shower cap	.467	.779	86.02 2	.449	.276	.083	.03 4	.097	.307	.119	.517	.216	.011
25	Bath towels	.462	.770	86.79 3	.443	.303	.134	.10 0	.119	.418	.196	.442	.121	.029
26	Amenities neatness	.442	.737	87.53 0	.448	.293	.086	.12 8	.208	.426	.203	.345	.174	-.051
27	Overall interiors of the room	.421	.702	88.23 2	.227	.253	.139	.23 1	.267	.598	.161	.141	.053	.119
28	Comfort of the room	.398	.664	88.89	.310	.291	.028	.21	.216	.647	.183	.152	.139	.031

				6				0						
29	Arrangement/setup of the room	.379	.632	89.52 8	.422	.356	.060	.17 8	.204	.643	.097	5.54 7E-5	.109	.030
30	Overall cleanliness of the room	.366	.610	90.13 7	.369	.343	.101	.21 1	.131	.680	.135	.105	.114	.041
31	Room boy behavior	.346	.576	90.71 4	.255	.388	.123	.11 2	.623	.119	.133	.328	.054	.069
32	Delivery of room service	.343	.571	91.28 5	.215	.363	.117	.20 5	.697	.126	.162	.187	.045	.069
33	Quality snack in room	.325	.541	91.82 6	.227	.229	.126	.11 3	.719	.100	.257	.138	.154	.042
34	Quality of meal in room	.295	.492	92.31 8	.253	.271	.142	.12 5	.658	.292	.224	-.061	.208	.000
35	Overall room service	.292	.487	92.80 5	.300	.349	.041	.15 2	.631	.282	.150	-.025	.128	-.072
36	Hotel ambience	.286	.476	93.28 1	.193	.209	.087	.25 1	.217	.010	.493	.492	.095	-.023
37	Architecture of hotel	.275	.459	93.74 0	.250	.292	.016	.25 9	.112	.129	.636	.098	.114	-.010
38	Lighting facility in ambience	.260	.434	94.17 4	.154	.181	.099	.37 0	.215	.216	.566	-.034	.103	.095
39	Furniture & Flower arrangement	.248	.413	94.58 7	.041	.037	.127	.01 8	.086	.099	.787	.076	-.054	-.019
40	Music & Fragrance	.240	.400	94.98 7	.201	.295	.154	.14 7	.242	.156	.444	.114	.243	.095
41	Entrance Parking	.226	.377	95.36 4	.172	.130	.134	.39 0	.280	.032	.580	-.050	.130	.119
42	Laundry	.221	.368	95.73 2	.185	.221	.070	.18 9	.237	.131	-.011	.397	.538	.047
43	Swimming pool	.218	.363	96.09	-.142	-.042	-.162	-	.349	.108	.148	-.030	-.032	.549

				5				.04 6						
44	Travel Desk	.208	.346	96.44 1	.341	.161	.186	.23 5	.131	.132	.113	.278	.534	.041
45	Business Center	.192	.321	96.76 1	.352	.200	.155	.16 7	.133	.131	.106	.028	.609	.156
46	Health Club	.187	.312	97.07 3	.140	.122	.135	.22 4	.221	.068	-.104	.061	.159	.637
47	Health Spa	.180	.300	97.37 3	.039	.008	.157	.00 6	-.316	-.031	.089	-.029	-.003	.716
48	Speed and performance of internet in room	.167	.279	97.65 2	.186	.170	.312	.20 3	.071	.057	.078	-.019	.596	-.030
49	Working order of whole Equipment in room	.160	.267	97.91 9	.277	.247	.114	.57 1	.063	.111	.179	.342	.196	.038
50	Air conditioning in the room	.146	.244	98.16 2	.187	.235	.123	.75 0	-.027	.140	.196	.119	.136	.067
51	Maintenance standards of equipment	.140	.233	98.39 6	.343	.191	.132	.70 2	.161	.175	.105	-.014	.141	-.008
52	Promptness of service	.133	.222	98.61 7	.296	.181	.097	.67 9	.144	.177	.205	.021	.162	.060
53	Efficient and well trained staff for maintenance	.128	.214	98.83 1	.299	.162	.187	.67 5	.222	.080	.148	.096	.075	.082
54	Condition of Conference venue	.121	.202	99.03 3	-.018	.017	.799	.03 5	.051	-.022	.024	.293	-.033	.108
55	Audio visuals availability	.119	.199	99.23 1	.040	.107	.823	.10 9	.098	.014	.006	.098	.077	.089
56	Working order of A/Vs	.111	.185	99.41 7	.085	.036	.844	.06 8	.060	.008	.002	.038	.061	-.100
57	Internet access	.107	.178	99.59 4	.111	.028	.713	.07 3	-.058	-.076	.208	-.215	.204	.032

58	Operating supplies	.097	.162	99.75 7	.005	.046	.833	.03 0	.065	.168	.035	.141	.069	.009
59	Condition of Conference chairs and tables	.077	.128	99.88 5	.058	.055	.838	.07 3	.034	.090	.055	-.094	.048	.070
60	Standards of conference stationary	.069	.115	100.0 00	.100	.045	.839	.07 6	.055	.050	.109	-.021	.045	.006

Extraction Method: Principal component Analysis

Food Quality and Restaurant Services

The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction on sixteen attributes related to food quality and restaurant services which are framed on a five point likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree(1). The two factor solution resulted, which shown in table-7 with the factors being labeled as Restaurant services and food quality. It is observed from the table-6 that the KMO measure of sampling adequacy is 0.940 which is very high and the Bartlett's test of sparsity is significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that sufficient correlation exists between the variables.

Table No. 6 KMO and Bartlett's Test- 3 star hotels sample

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.940
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1.073E4
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

a. Gradation = 3*

Table No.7 Various statements – Variances and Factor loadings for Food Quality and Restaurant Services

Sl No	Attributes	Initial Eigen Values		Factor Loads		
		Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Fact -I	Fact- II
1	Hot and freshness of food	9.046	56.535	56.535	0.273	0.821
2	Menu variety	1.522	9.515	66.050	0.407	0.713
3	Quality of food	0.891	5.570	71.620	0.287	0.819
4	Tasty and flavorful food	0.614	3.839	75.459	0.301	0.810
5	Eye appeal of food	0.535	3.346	78.805	0.283	0.807
6	Food order was correct and complete	0.485	3.028	81.833	0.717	0.345
7	Employees are patient when taking order	0.404	2.523	84.356	0.719	0.348
8	Service promptness	0.392	2.452	86.809	0.779	0.273
9	Availability of sauces, utensils, napkins, etc	0.336	2.099	88.908	0.728	0.243
10	Easy to read menu card	0.319	1.991	90.899	0.763	0.241
11	Sound system was clear	0.307	1.920	92.819	0.762	0.268
12	Employees speak clearly	0.286	1.788	94.606	0.784	0.248
13	Employees are friendly and courteous	0.250	1.564	96.170	0.768	0.243

14	The service is excellent	0.234	1.460	97.630	0.608	0.362
15	Quality of food & beverage	0.216	1.349	98.978	0.669	0.358
16	Value for price paid	0.163	1.022	100.000	0.753	0.332

Extraction Method: Principal component analysis

Behavioral Aspects of the customers in hotels:

An attempt is made by the researcher to find out the behavioral aspects of the customers like purpose of visit, the length of stay, overall satisfaction and loyalty related attributes like choosing the hotel in future so that the hotels can frame strategies. For the above behavioral aspects the hypothesis is framed and tested through chi-square analysis.

Table No.8 Overall Satisfaction Vs Length of stay

H₀: There is no association between overall satisfaction and length of stay

Category of star Hotels	Length of Stay	Overall Satisfaction				Chi-Square Value (P-value), Result
		Extreme (%)	High (%)	Moderate + Low (%)	Total	
3* Hotels	One day	150	90	2	242	151.66 (0.000)** Reject H ₀
	2-3 days	188	267(54.4)	36	491	
	4-5 days	28	39	4	71	
	6-7 days	24	10	2	36	
	More than 7 days	16	32	12	60	
	Total	406	438	56	900	

** Significant at 1% Source: Questionnaire

The above table shows that, majority (54.4%) of customers were stayed for 2-3 days and their overall satisfaction is high. The null hypothesis is not accepted because the chi-square p-value is significant at 1% ($p < 0.001$) and can conclude that there is an association existing between length of the stay and overall satisfaction of the customers.

Table No.9 Length of the stay vs Purpose of Visit

H₀: Purpose of Visit and Length of Stay both are independent

Star Hotel category	Purpose of Visit	Length of Stay						Chi-Square Value (P-value), Result
		One Day (%)	2-3 days (%)	4-5 days (%)	6-7 days (%)	More than 7 days (%)	Total	
3* Hotels	Holiday	82	124	16	2	3	227	83.343 (0.000)** Reject H ₀
	Meeting/Conference	72	201 (59.6)	22	17	25	337	
	Business	44	110	27	7	20	208	
	Convention	0	12	0	4	0	16	
	Others	44	44	6	6	12	112	
	Total	242 (26.9)	491 (54.6)	71 (7.9)	36 (4)	60 (6.7)	900	

** Significant at 1%,

Source: Questionnaire

From table-9 the majority (59.6%) of customers visited on meeting/conference purpose. The calculated chi-square P-value is less at 1% level of significance ($p < 0.001$). Hence the null hypothesis is not accepted and concluded that purpose of visit and length of stay both are dependent.

Table No.10 Customer Loyalty Vs Overall Satisfaction

H_0 : There is no association between choosing the hotel in future and overall satisfaction of the customers

Star Hotel category	Choosing the Hotel In the next visit	Overall Satisfaction					Chi-Square Value (P-value), Result
		Extreme (%)	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	Total	
3* Hotels	Most likely	380(59.7)	254(39.9)	2(0.3)	0	636	305.7 (0.000)** Reject H_0
	Likely	18(8)	166(73.8)	35(15.6)	6(2.7)	225	
	Not Very Likely	8(20.5)	18(46.2)	7(17.9)	6(15.4)	39	
	Total	406(45.1)	438(48.7)	44(4.9)	12(1.3)	900	

** Significant at 1%,

Source: Questionnaire

The table above shows that majority of customers whose overall satisfaction is extreme are most likely visit the hotel in future. The p-value is significant 1%. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is an association between choosing the hotel in future and overall satisfaction of the customers

Conclusion

The key factors leading customer satisfaction in 3* star hotels is housekeeping services, front-office services, conference hall facilities, maintenance services, room services, room arrangements, interior/exterior services, extra amenities, other facilities and wellness facilities. In restaurant the main important factors leading to satisfaction are restaurant services and then food quality. Regarding the length of stay of customers majority of the customers are staying for 2-3 days in hotel and their purpose of visit is meeting/conference. Hence, it is imperative for the hotels to formulate distinct marketing strategies for these groups. Satisfaction leads to loyalty. It is significant from the study that majority of the customers whose overall satisfaction is extreme they would most likely visit hotel in future. Therefore the hotels have to see that the entire stay would be the memorable and satisfied stay for customers.

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