Perception Of Service Quality in Hotels of Odisha

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Abstract

The perception of service quality is an important concept in the hospitality industry, particularly in the hotel sector. The study on the topic helps in finding out that the perception of service quality in hotels is influenced by a range of factors, including customer expectations, service encounters, and staff behaviour. Various models and frameworks have been developed to measure and evaluate service quality, such as SERQUAL model and GAP model. The study also highlights the best practices for improving serving quality.

Hotel business is one of the most vibrant sectors of hospitality industry. The increasing prosperity is due to the rising demand and opportunity for travel. Although the industry has more number of customers to cater, there are many competitors wooing the same customers. Service quality has been an important aspect of hotel industry as it helps the hoteliers to have satisfied and loyal customers.

This paper focuses on understanding the perception of the quality of service provided by the hotels in Odisha from the point of view of the customers. From the previous researches it has been observed that customer satisfaction has a direct impact on the quality of service provided by the hotel and an indirect impact on the loyalty of the customer. In order to measure the performance of the service quality (SERVPERF), a measurement scale was devised and a questionnaire was given to the customers staying at 5 star, 4 star and 3 star hotels in the region of Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Various attributes of service quality like tangibility, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, reliability was taken into consideration for understanding the quality of service provided by the hotel to the guest.

Keywords: Service Quality, SERVPERF, Customer satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Perception

1. INTRODUCTION

Perception of service quality is a crucial factor in the success of hotels and the hospitality industry as a whole. In today's highly competitive market, customers' perception of service quality can make or break a hotel's reputation and bottom line. service quality can be defined as the customer' overall evaluation of the service received, based on their expectations and experience of the service encounter.

It has been found that since last decade a lot of research work is going on the most burning topic that is Service quality and customer satisfaction (Spreng and Mackoy,1996). The main cause of success in the environment of competitiveness is the quality of the service is being delivered to the customers and which in turn enhances the level of guest satisfaction (Shemwell et al, 1998). The organisation which has the potential to offer high quality of services to the customers can generate considerable amount of satisfied and loyal customers who will be eager to buy services from

them again and again (Aaker and Jacobson, 1994). Therefore hotels can earn more revenue in future. This is only possible if the hotels undergo detailed market survey to find out the rising demands of the customers and hence design their services accordingly to satisfy the expectations of the guests. However on December 8, 2019, the government of China had declared the outbreak of a newly erupted virus, popularly known as Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Bakar and Rosbi, 2020). This diseases has forced us to adopt new way of serving the guest by following the new standards. However the hotels still cling to their objectives of anticipating and meeting the guest needs and expectations as much as possible.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Service
Service is defined by numerous scholars in different ways. "Services are actually all those economic activities in which the primary output is neither a product nor a construction"-Quinn and Gagnon (1986). However this definition of service has got certain drawbacks. Although it describes about economic exchanges but not explain the reason behind un acceptance of construction activities as service. Service is also defined as "a process consisting of a series of more or less intangible activities that normally, not necessarily always, take place in interactions between the customer and service employee and/or physical resources or goods and/or systems of service provider which are provided as solutions to customer problems (Gronroos, 2007). A service "is any act or performance one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in ownership of anything" (Kotler, 2009). This definition truly defines all

possibilities of exchange between the customers and service providers.

2.2 Quality
The word quality is defined differently by different quality gurus. Quality of the product or services is defined as the features of the products and services which has the capability to satisfy the needs of the customers. Hence it helps in enhancing customer satisfaction. The term quality has been defined by Juran in 1988 as "Product performance that results in customer satisfaction and freedom from deficiencies and avoids customer dissatisfaction, in short fitness to use by the customers". Deming defined the term quality as "A product or service has or possesses quality if it helps somebody and enjoys a good and sustainable market". Moreover quality has been defined by Crosby as "Complying with clear specifications and that management is responsible for establishing unequivocal or clear specifications". ISO, 1994 has defined quality as "totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs". This definition clearly indicates that the product or service must satisfy the guests' needs.

2.3 Satisfaction
Customer satisfaction measures how happy the customers are after using the services or products of the organisation. Customers get satisfied with the products and services if the organisation is capable enough to meet their expectations. Not only the customers get satisfaction from the products and services they purchase but also they get satisfied from the atmosphere created before and after the purchase which includes behaviour of the

sales staffs, after care services etc. ISO 10004 mentions that "Satisfaction is a judgement, an opinion expressed by the customer. The degree of satisfaction reflects the gap between the customer's vision of expected product and the customer's perception of delivered product". This definition explains that customer satisfaction is a subjective term and it differs from one individual to another.

2.4 Dimension of Service Quality

The entire concept of service quality depends upon numerous factors which are closely linked together with each other. The following are some of the important dimensions of service quality.

1. Reliability
2. Responsiveness
3. Assurance
4. Empathy
5. Tangibility

Reliability

It involves the potential of the organisation to perform the desired service most accurately as possible. Reliability also means the ability of the organisation to ensure prompt delivery, effective after care service, solve problems and to determine appropriate prices of the product. In the market of excessive competitiveness where the customers have got numerous options, they are more inclined to be dependent on the firms who are likely to keep promises. Hence reliability is one of the important elements in retaining loyal customers. The fire also need to have a detailed knowledge on customer expectations. It is important to systematically fulfil all the promises made to the guest and on proper time (Cronin and Taylor, 1992).

Responsiveness

It involves willingness of the firm to provide prompt services to the customers in order to fulfil their expectations. It focuses on the behaviour and readiness to attain to the needs, complains, queries, questions and problems of the customers. It also deals with commitment of the staffs towards the customers. It can be measured in terms of the total duration of time the guests have to wait in fulfilling their needs. The degree of responsiveness can be enhanced by continuously monitoring the quality of the service being provided to the customers.

Assurance

It involves the ability of the organisation to instil trust and confidence among the customers. In broader term, this dimension mainly focuses on convincing the guest in building trust in them so that they will not move to the competitors. It also focuses on the level of skill, knowledge and attitude of the employees dealing with the guests. For example in the hotel industry, creating a memorable moment for the guest during their stay in the hotel will help in gaining their trust and also to ensure repeat business in future.

Empathy

It involves understanding the feelings of the customer and anticipating their needs. This dimension aims at considering each customer as unique and special to the hotels. This dimension aims at understanding the needs of the customers and ensures effective communication with the guests (Olu Ojo, 2008). This dimension focuses on providing services to the customers and caring and paying attention to their needs.

Tangibility

This dimension describes the availability of tangible facilities which include building, equipments and personnel etc.(Olu Ojo, 2008). This dimension plays a notable role in enhancing the image of the organisation. The following are the few indicators of the tangible services provided by the hotels : neat, clean and pressed uniform worn by the staffs, use of face masks, face shields, disposable gloves by the staffs, cleanliness of all the guest areas of the hotel etc.(Cronin and Taylor, 1992).

2.5 Models of Service Quality

Performance only model (Cronin and Taylor, 1992)

This model describes the inter relationship between service quality with customer satisfaction and their willingness to purchase the products and services. This model has measured the service quality on the basis of only performance of the service provider which is called as SERVPERF as against the model described by Parasuraman as SERVQUAL. This model described that performance to be more important than the performance expectation which actually determines the service quality.

3 METHODOLOGIES

3.1 Research Population and Sampling

In order to understand the perception of the service quality in the hotels of Odisha, a questionnaire is designed and distributed among the guests staying in the different hotels of Odisha. Purposive sampling method is used to identify the guests staying at various categories of hotel across the state Odisha. As it has been seen observed that around 1864.49 million

national and international tourists come to Odisha for various reasons (Tourism.gov.in, 2020), a minimum of 385 sample is considered for filling up the questionnaire with a confidence level of 95% and margin of error as 5%.

	Confidence level = 95%		
	Margin of error		
Population size	5%	2,5%	1%
100	80	94	99
500	217	377	475
1.000	278	606	906
10.000	370	1.332	4.899
100.000	383	1.513	8.762
500.000	384	1.532	9.423
1.000.000	384	1.534	9.512

3.2 Measures

The questionnaire consists of 20 items under the dimensions of service quality and 11 items under the factors of customer satisfaction. The dimensions under service quality are compared to that of customer satisfaction to understand the perception of the customers for the performance of the service in the hotels. In order to do so a 5point Likert scale was used ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. SPSS 16.0 was used for windows as the research tool for the analysis of the data. Frequencies, standard deviation and mean was used to understand the descriptive analysis and correlation was used to establish the relationship between the two attributes.

4 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

It has been found that (as per table no 1) among the 362 respondents around 72.4% respondents were male and 27.6% respondents were female. Also, mostly the age group of respondents were below 20 years of age followed by 37.3% of respondents belonging to the age group

between 21 to 30 years of age. Around 47% of respondents preferred staying in a 5 star hotel followed by 47% of respondents staying in 4 star category hotels and 14.9% respondents staying in 3 star category hotels and 12.4% respondents preferred staying in below 3 star category hotels. 51.4% respondents visited the hotel quite frequently in a year, 26.5% respondents visited once in every 6 months, 13% respondents visited the hotel once in every 3 months and 9.1% respondents visited the hotel every month. 79.3% respondents were single and 18.2% respondents were married.

Table 1: DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS		
CHARACTERISTIC	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENTAGE**
GENDER		
Male	262	72.4
Female	100	27.6
AGE GROUP		
21 - 30 years	135	37.3
31 - 40 years	56	15.5
41 - 50 years	10	2.8
Above 50 Years	11	3.0
Below 20 years	150	41.4
STAY IN STAR HOTEL		
3 star	54	14.9
4 star	93	25.7
5 star	170	47.0
Below 3 star	45	12.4
FREQUENCY OF VISIT		
Every Month	33	9.1
Once in every 3 month	47	13.0
Once in every 6 month	96	26.5
Quite frequently in a year	186	51.4
MARITAL STATUS		
No	287	79.3
Yes	66	18.2

By viewing the results of Table no 2 it has been seen that the mean of the costumers perception pertaining towards the perception for service quality in terms of the dimension tangibility ranged from 3.92 to 4.05. Similarly the mean of the customers perception for service quality in terms of the dimension reliability ranged from 3.87 to 4.19. The mean of the customers perception for service quality in terms of the dimension responsiveness ranged from 3.94 to 4.14, the mean of the customers perception for service quality in terms of the dimension assurance ranged from 3.92 to 4.11, the mean of the customers perception for service quality in terms of the dimension empathy ranged from 3.59 to 4.25. The mean of the

customers satisfaction from the quality of service offered by the hotel ranges from 4.04 to 4.12.

The above analysis concludes that the dimension empathy has less positive response than other dimensions of service quality. It has also been observed that the customers perception towards the quality of service offered by the hotels is positive. Also, it can be concluded that different customers have different point of views and while offering the services to the customers the management of the hotel should segmentize the customers according to their needs, preferences etc. As a reason it would become easier for the hotel to understand the perception of the guest and cater accordingly to their needs.

Table No 3: Correlations																					
	T1	T2	T3	T4	R1	R2	R3	R4	RP1	RP2	RP3	RP4	A1	A2	A3	A4	E1	E2	E3	E4
CS1	.594**	.563**	.593**	.574**	.666**	.645**	.584**	.601**	.647**	.554**	.618**	.637**	.673**	.674**	.657**	.573**	.648**	.617**	.418**	.655**
CS2	.565**	.612**	.567**	.574**	.650**	.657**	.577**	.572**	.636**	.512**	.604**	.680**	.666**	.678**	.661**	.560**	.629**	.609**	.415**	.632**
CS3	.562**	.596**	.532**	.575**	.631**	.676**	.543**	.575**	.657**	.499**	.649**	.688**	.649**	.663**	.624**	.567**	.613**	.623**	.363**	.610**
CS4	.549**	.613**	.552**	.554**	.605**	.660**	.540**	.546**	.629**	.489**	.596**	.629**	.613**	.623**	.633**	.536**	.586**	.603**	.376**	.631**
CS	.53	.57	.51	.53	.5	.62	.4	.54	.57	.49	.59	.63	.6	.6	.6	.5	.59	.5	.3	.5

5	2**	1**	4**	9**	72**	0**	93**	0**	5**	4**	5**	3**	07**	23**	02**	45**	3**	32**	74**	59**
CS 6	.613**	.607**	.577**	.560**	.635**	.702**	.564**	.579**	.673**	.551**	.669**	.686**	.642**	.659**	.652**	.589**	.632**	.627**	.403**	.637**
CS 7	.593**	.606**	.553**	.591**	.602**	.674**	.556**	.598**	.650**	.524**	.634**	.698**	.672**	.673**	.635**	.595**	.628**	.595**	.399**	.624**
CS 8	.536**	.624**	.546**	.568**	.594**	.670**	.526**	.554**	.621**	.461**	.621**	.623**	.624**	.639**	.588**	.497**	.581**	.596**	.354**	.623**
CS 9	.563**	.598**	.565**	.578**	.605**	.651**	.519**	.601**	.616**	.491**	.622**	.645**	.612**	.652**	.624**	.552**	.580**	.583**	.395**	.613**
CS 10	.564**	.614**	.552**	.584**	.639**	.680**	.511**	.596**	.634**	.517**	.581**	.646**	.638**	.622**	.635**	.541**	.583**	.628**	.374**	.613**
CS 11	.545**	.579**	.540**	.566**	.581**	.643**	.537**	.573**	.605**	.461**	.591**	.637**	.638**	.624**	.606**	.557**	.585**	.594**	.402**	.576**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Person's Correlation was also tested as shown in Table no 3. As per the table, all the dimensions of service quality are significantly related to the factors of customer satisfaction. It means when proper steps are involved in designing the quality of service by relating them to the perception of the customers then it will result in highly satisfied guests.

5 CONCLUSION

The dimensions of service quality are directly related to the customers satisfaction. Some guest may think service quality as good when the hotel's staff are friendly, helpful, and efficient enough in responding to their needs. While some may value cleanliness of the rooms and public areas as the important factor in achieving service quality at the same time some may value hotel's location and accessibility to various tourist destinations as the most important factors.

The management and the staff of the hotels should focus on the perception of the guests coming to their hotel. Keeping a track of the guest feedback can be one of the methods to understand the expectation

of the customers when they are coming to a hotel's property especially if they are a regular guest. The online reviews given by the guest and the feedback given by the guest should be analysed and accordingly strategies should be framed by the management of the organisation so that the quality of the service provided by the hotel will take into account the perception of the various guests.

TABLE NO 2: DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF EACH DIMENSION OF SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION		
	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
TANGIBILITY		
[T1: The hotel has latest amenities for the entertainment of in-house guests]	3.96	1.129
[T2: The hotel has latest equipment's to fight the pandemic]	4.05	1.129
[T3: The hotel has new technology for assisting the employees in guest service]	3.99	1.160
[T4: The hotel has latest equipment's to support green initiatives towards the environment]	3.92	1.167
RELIABILITY		
[R1: The hotel employee's provide service as promised by the organization]	4.07	1.115
[R2: The hotel employees provides a clean and hygienic environment to the guest staying with them after the pandemic]	4.19	1.074
[R3: The hotel employees try to curb the waiting time for a service to the guest by different ways]	3.87	1.126
[R4: The hotel employees follow procedures to help sustain nature for future]	3.96	1.103
RESPONSIVENESS		

[RP1: The hotel employees provide prompt service to the customer's request]	4.07	1.077
[RP2: The hotel employees are never late in attending the guest's complaint]	3.94	1.157
[RP3: The hotel employees are prompt in handling the sanitization of the rooms]	4.11	1.068
[RP4: The hotel employees are prompt in handling different situations to make the stay of the guest comfortable]	4.14	1.045
ASSSURANCE		
[A1: The hotel employees develop a trust among the guests for the organization]	4.11	1.088
[A2: The hotel employees make the guest feel safe to stay with them during the pandemic situation]	4.11	1.053
[A3: The hotel employees develop confidence among the guests for the organization]	4.07	1.080
[A4: The hotel employees react towards the guest feedback]	3.92	1.125
EMPATHY		
[E1: The hotel employees are able to provide personal attention to the guest]	3.97	1.099
[E2: The hotel employees should understand the guest needs]	4.19	1.072
[E3: The hotel employees should take out to reach out the guests on the social media]	3.59	1.295
[E4: The hotel employees should be patient and professional in handling the guest complaint]	4.25	1.089
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION		
[CS1: My reservation process was efficient and record was accurate]	4.06	1.099
[CS2: The check-in process was timely and efficient]	4.04	1.079

[CS3: The room was clean and comfortable]	4.18	1.073
[CS4: My bed and bedding were comfortable]	4.16	1.069
[CS5: The team was knowledgeable and fully answered my questions about the area]	4.06	1.083
[CS6: Housekeeping team was friendly and reliable]	4.08	1.073
[CS7: Management was available to solve problems]	4.12	1.020
[CS8: The food quality was good]	4.12	1.042
[CS9: Hotel amenities (pool, spa, gym) were clean, attractive and properly equipped]	4.07	1.119
[CS10: I received a complete and accurate bill]	4.12	1.082
[CS11: Overall how would you rate your experience at your hotel]	4.15	1.041

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