



A Service Quality for Five Star Hotel from the Customer Perspective

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ABSTRACT

We all are aware of this fact that The hospitality industry is of the largest industry in India as well as all around the entire world international tourist will be hitting 1.8 billion by 2030 according to the newly released UNWTO long-term forecast, Tourism Towards 2030. The report, given by the 19th session of the UNWTO General Assembly, confirms that international tourism will continue to grow in a sustained manner in the next two decades .

So hence we can say according to reports International tourism will definitely grow by the time 2010-2030, but at a more reasonable velocity than the past decades, with the figure of international tourist arrivals worldwide growing by an average 3.3% a year. This report says that an average 43 million added international tourists will join the tourism marketplace every year.

Toward those anticipated pace of growth, it will be 1 billion mark Eventually in 2012, will be increased by 940 million done 2010 . Eventually by 2030, arrivals would likely should scope 1. 8 billion, implying that in two decades' time, 5 million state funded will a chance to be crossing universal borders .

Hence the article will emphasis on the great importance of service quality of five star hotels in the Hospitality sector .The present study analyzes the service quality of selected five star hotels of India .The customers perspective on various service quality factors like service bonding, service competencies, service inclination, service customization, service recovery, etc. are ascertained and analyzed in this paper. The major findings of the study are that there exists a difference in the perception and expectations of the employees as far as their dimensions of external service quality are concerned. All the hotels have been found to be struggling on the service quality dimensions such as service customization, service inclination and service recovery. However the selected hotels are also leading in many aspects of service quality like service scope, service impressiveness and service competence. On other aspects the concerned hotels are showing average results.

Keywords--- External Service Quality, Service bonding, Service Recovery, service impressiveness

I. INTRODUCTION

“The next 20 years will be of persistent growth for the sector – a more moderate, responsible and

inclusive growth,” said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai. “This growth offers immense possibilities as these can also be years of leadership, with tourism leading economic growth, social progress and environmental sustainability..

By the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer demand for international tourism remained robust in 2016 despite challenges .International tourist arrivals grew by 3.9% to reach a total of 1235 million , according to the analysed in the issue of the UNWTO world Tourism Barometer .Some 46 million ,more tourist (Overnight visitors) travelled international last year compared to 2015.

2016 was the seventh consecutive year of sustained growth following the 2009 global economic and financial crisis .A comparable sequence of uninterrupted solid growth has not been recorded since the 1960s. As a result , 300 millions more international tourist travelled the world in 2016 a compared to the pre-crisis record in 2008.

Tourism has shown amazing potency in recent years ,in spite of many challenge ,for the most part those related to safety and security .Yet international travel continues to grow strongly and contribute to job creation and the well being of communities around the world .

International tourist arrivals have crossed 1 billion mark globally in 2012 and this has happened for the first time in history. In India also the industry is a major source of gross revenue, foreign exchange and employment.

The hospitality sector is a very fantastic & very prompt & courteous industry is a very proficient sector industry in the whole world. The Indian hospitality sector has achieved very significant growth flow by the arrival & stays foreign tourists along with increased customer movement in the country and it has become one of the most important players in the global industry. The World Travel & Tourism Council calculated that in 2012 the tourism industry generated INR6.4 trillion or 6.6% of the nation's GDP. It support 40 million jobs, 7.7 % of its total employment. The sector is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 7.9% from 2013 to 2023. This gives India the third rank among the countries with the fastest growing tourism industries over the next

decade. According to provisional statistics by Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India 6.84 million foreign tourists arrived in India in 2013, an increase of 8.8% from 6.58 million in 2012 and an increase of 7.1% from 2011. As per the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer,

December 2013, India's rank in the World Tourism Receipts during 2012 was 16th and rank in international tourist arrivals was 41. The rank of India was seventh among Asia and the Pacific Region in terms of tourism receipts during 2012. The Hotel is an establishment that provides accommodation or it can be said that it provides you a home away from home. Now, Five Star Hotels are very important in any economy as most of the international tourists and high profile domestic tourists stay in these hotels. Hence service quality in these hotels must match International Standards. These modern luxurious hotels provide various facilities to customers like climate control, internet connectivity, Batra, Apeejay - Journal of Management Sciences and Technology 3 (1), June- 2014 (ISSN -2347-5005) 21 pool, spa etc. The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) is a regulating body which collects information from its members through a questionnaire and then publish its findings in Annual Indian Hotel Industry Survey, which is an extremely beneficial report. Attractiveness of Indian Tourism is encouraging many foreign and domestic players to set up their operational facilities in the country.

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II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Every research work, its planning and execution is highly dependent on the thorough review of literature on the subject. This helps the researcher to familiarize with work already been done and also helps to trace down the gaps, the unexplored area and those research problems that have not been covered or considered earlier, for future considerations and studies. The prominent studies pertaining to service quality in the hospitality sector, irrespective of the measuring scale used have been discussed below. Many researchers have been done from time to time to access the importance of

service quality. Parsuraman et al. [1] were of the view that the sole judge of service quality is the customers and they looked for five imperatives in service to judge its quality. These five imperatives discussed in SERVQUAL Model are Tangibles, Assurance Empathy Reliability and Responsiveness. Parasuraman et al. [2] observed the importance of Communication and Control Processes in the Delivery of Service Quality. The authors' identified a reasonably exhaustive set of factors potentially affecting the magnitude and direction of four gaps on the marketer's side of their service quality model. Again Leonard L. Berry, A. Parasuraman, Valarie A. Zeithaml, Dennis Adsit, John Hater, Eric J. Vanetti and David J. Veale [3] described ten lessons from an extensive ten-year study of service quality in America - lessons that we believe apply across industries and are essential to the service-improvement journey. The lessons they presented are Listening, Reliability, Basic Service, Service Design, Recovery, Surprising Customers, Fair Play, Teamwork, Employee Research, Servant Leadership. These lessons are like guidelines to help managers to chart a service improvement strategy for their organizations. Ruth N. Bolton [4] formulated a dynamic model of the duration of the Customer's Relationship with a Continuous Service Provider and the role of satisfaction. The findings in his article were that increase in customer satisfaction can result in an increased financial impact for the organization because lifetime revenues from an individual customer depend on the period of the his relationship with the organisation. Harsha E. Chacko [5] discussed the drawbacks of the current organizational structure of hotels and presented a model for the smooth running of a hotel organization. The new structure is more favourable to the creation of an environment where better customer service quality is provided in hotels. Leyland F. Pitt, Richard T. Watson and C. Bruce Kavan [6] discussed the appropriateness of SERVQUAL to assess Information System service quality. The appropriateness of SERVQUAL was analysed in different types of organizations in three countries. After applying various tools the study stated that SERVQUAL is a suitable instrument for researchers. Maria Joao Carneiro & Carlos Costa [7] have analyzed the impact of Service Quality on the Positioning of Five Star Hotels in Lisbon area. They have highlighted the importance of understanding the preferences attributed by Batra, Apeejay - Journal of Management Sciences and Technology 3 (1), June-2014 (ISSN -2347-5005)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Objectives

The Study will be focused on the existing service quality orientation of selected five star hotels of India and to find the key factors that impede service quality delivery in these hotels. The study the relative importance of service quality in these hotels. To examine the expectations of the selected hotels on various service quality fronts. To assess how the

employees actually perceive service quality of their hotels. analyse the gap if any between expectations and actual perception of the employees .To give practical suggestions for the selected five star hotels so that their service quality is perceived well by their customers.

B. Research Design

This is an empirical study. The researchers have made use of both primary and secondary data to arrive at necessary conclusions. The primary data has been collected to analyse the quality of services being rendered by the **star hotels**. Secondary data has been collected from the literature on service quality scanned by the researchers from various published and unpublished reports/journals and books etc.

C. Scope of the Study

The present study has been confined to three prominent five star hotels of .. All the hotels are amongst the leading five star hotels of India. Hotel Park is situated in the capital of India, New Delhi. Country Inn and Suites is located in Jaipur and Hotel Lalit is situated in jaipur, the hub of jaipur .

D. Research Thrust

The thrust of this study is on the following dimensions of service quality

- Service Quality Parameters
- Service Bonding: It is the ability of an organisation to create bond with the customers by keeping promises and performing the service accurately and dependably.
- Service Security: To make customers feel quite safe and secure in the hotel.
- Service Scope: The ability to create conducive atmosphere through physical facilities both exterior and interior, furniture, equipments and personnel.
- Service Competence: It is the possession of specific range of skill, knowledge or ability.
- Service Inclination: Employees are always willing to serve customers and solve their problems.
- Service Timeliness: Ability to provide prompt service or to perform the service at the time agreed upon.
- Service Accessibility: It is the quality of being available and receptive to customers.
- Service Customisation: Services are designed according to customers specific needs.
- Service Communication: Employees listen to customers and keep them informed in the language they understand.
- Service Impressiveness: The quality of making a strong vivid impression on customer's mind.
- Service Standardisation: Ability to achieve same standards of service.
- Service Recovery: Ability to recover in case of a failed service.

IV. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis and interpretation of the responses of the respondents on various parameters of service quality is as follows:

A. Service Bonding

Service bonding is the outcome of the reliable services. When any organisation fulfils its promises made to the customers, then customers also give privilege to the organisation by becoming loyal to the same. Hence, a sort of bond is established in between organisation and customers. Reliability and hence service quality, thus are pillars to any service quality pursuit.

B. Service Security

Customers want to feel at home in hotels and that can be possible if they are provided security and safety just like home in the hotels. It is high time for the selected hotels to change its existing stance and image on the security front as the same is of paramount importance in the case of hospitality services.

C. Service Scope

Booms and Bitner [13] defined a service scope as "the environment in which the service is assembled and in which the seller and customer interact, combined with tangible commodities that facilitate performance or communication of the service". In the hospitality industry, Service scope includes the appearance of physical facilities both interior and exterior, furniture, spacious rooms, seating area, crockery, equipments, signage, parking, surrounding environment. layout, air quality, temperature, personnel and communication materials. All these play a significant role in enhancing service quality. All the selected five star hotels have been found to be better performers in terms of ensuring good ambience by creating ideal physical evidence. The concerned hotels have got negative mean ratings of 0.90 which may be considered satisfactory in lieu of extremely high expectations of modern day customers. Being five star hotels service scope is always expected to be excellent and these hotels have somehow managed to achieve the same.

D. Service Competence

Service Competence can be achieved by providing employees the necessary skills and knowledge to perform the service. Service quality without competent employees is a distant dream. It is thus imperative for any services provider to judge the incumbents for competency before selecting them and further giving them continuous doze of training. This will not only enhance their skill set but also keep their clients' happy and satisfied. However competency of employees can be improved by continuous training and development.

E. Service Inclination

Service inclination means employees possess empathy i.e. they are understanding, friendly and caring and are always willing to solve the problems of customers. In hospitality industry where a continuous interaction between employees and customers takes place this factor plays a very crucial role. The hotels

must hire the right kind of people and impart them training so as to make employees more service inclined.

F. Service Timeliness

Delivering the service at the right time is the tool to judge the efficiency of an organisation. As time scarcity always haunts modern day customers, it becomes imperative for service providers to serve them within no time. Any organization that makes its customers wait generates a lot of ill-will for itself in their mind. Not abiding to time and making clients wait is virtually unacceptable in case of five star hotels where we have high profile national international customers. All the hotels need to understand the same. Earlier it is done, better it would be.

G. Service Availability

Availability of service when the customer needs, is the leading characteristic of service excellence. Availability of support is in fact the heart of service excellence. It is because of the fact that no other element of service including timeliness or quality matters if services are not accessible. Customers cannot predict when they will need assistance, so when problems arise immediate access to assistance makes the difference between average and excellent service. These mean rating of the selected hotels on this front is -1.346 which signifies the less availability of services to the customers. In order to succeed these hotels should make sure that services must be made accessible in order to avoid resentment from customers.

H. Service Customisation

Each and every individual is unique and hence wants to be served differently. The present era calls for understanding unique needs of clients and satisfying the same in a unique way. Mass marketing has paved the way for customised marketing. As a matter of fact, the customers are not able to design their services by themselves. Some more efforts however are warranted to bridge the wide gap between customers' perception and expectations as mass marketing cannot be the cup of tea in case of hotel services.

I. Service Communication

Service communication implies employees listen to customers and keep them informed in the language they understand. In five star hotels where we have customers from different parts of the world understanding different languages this aspect plays a very important role.

The hotels are showing average performance here. These hotels must improve on this front as consistency in how all employees in a hotel communicate with guests improves customer satisfaction.

J. Service Impressiveness

Serving customers will satisfy them but serving them impressively will delight them. The behavior of the employees should be such that the same instill confidence in customers. There is no denying the fact that serving customers with a smile on the face may enhance the perceived quality of the service. In hospitality sector it is rather necessary to be impressive

so as to create a long lasting impression. Batra, Apeejay - Journal of Management Sciences and Technology 3 (1), June- 2014 (ISSN -2347-5005)27

K. Service Standardisation

According to Prof. Dr. Günther Schuh "Service standards enable us to develop from a service jungle to a service garden." Standardization describes a process of unification, especially in terminology, capabilities of personnel, technology, and organizational processes. For customers, standardization represents clearly structured offers with low risk. Standardisation of services plays a very crucial role because it enables organizations to focus their attention on the deficiencies and strictly committing to service standards. These hotels must strictly fulfill the commitments and adhere to standards.

L. Service Recovery

An organisation's ability to correct service errors is an important factor in achieving success in today's service economy. Service recovery refers to the actions taken by an organisation in response to a service failure [14]. Therefore, service recovery efforts play an important role in achieving customer satisfaction. The success of marketing endeavour, to a great extent, depends upon the way customers react to recovery efforts made by the organisation.

It implies that the hotels must pursue systematic efforts to correct a problem following a service failure and retain a customer's goodwill. Without service recovery long term customers can't be made.

V. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Hospitality industry of India is emerging as the one of the most attractive and profitable industry of the nation and is gaining the attention worldwide.

All the selected five star hotels are leading to Service scape, Service impressiveness and Service competence front. It means every hotel is considering these as an important aspect of service quality.

After that Service security and Service standardization are depicting almost same results which is just satisfactory as compared to other dimensions.

Service bonding, Service timeliness, Service availability, Service communication are not showing good results though these factors are equally important parameters of service quality. All the parameters especially service bonding should be looked upon very seriously. So all the concerned hotels must try to improve on these fronts.

It is ironic that all the hotels under study are five star and in spite of charging high prices of the services, they are performing miserably on Service Customisation, Service Inclination and Service recovery parameters. So it's clear that the hotels are not able to provide customised and friendly services to the customers and also the hotels are not able to recover in case of failed service. These aspects need immediate attention. Batra, Apeejay - Journal of Management

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It is high time that service quality must be reviewed from the customers' viewpoint and improved accordingly. This is how the five star hotels can hope to get international acclaim and generate positive word of mouth from employees as well as customers.

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