

A Study on Customer's Expectations in Hotel Industry in Trichy Districts

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper was to examine the Customer's expectations in the hotel industry in Trichy district. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were employed for the test of the hypotheses. The findings revealed that customer expectation has a significant effect on both customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. In addition, clear statistic revealed that increased services such as babysitter and internet reserving system are highly expected by customers. Collected data was analyzed according to the objectives of the present research and result of the statistical analysis to compile the result. Hence it is suggested that customers should proactively monitor hotels' preferences with regard to the service charges; delivering of doorsteps of the food promptly and issue of new taste and recipe due to loss of modernization in order to retain their customers.

Keywords: Hotel Industry, Expectations, Preferences, etc.,

1. INTRODUCTION

Customer expectations refer to the perceived value or benefits that the customers seek when purchasing a good or availing a service. They are the result of the 'learning' process and can be formed very quickly because even first impressions matter a lot. Once established, these expectations can hold significant influence in decision-making processes and can be very hard to change. For example, branded items are often associated with quality. Most customers expect that well-known brands are higher quality and thus evaluate their performance higher than that of an identical product from a little-known brand. This is one of the reasons new brands find it difficult to make it to the consideration set even when they have superior products than current brands.

The hotel is maybe one of the oldest industries in the world. The history of hotels is connected closely to civilizations of mankind. According to some documents, the first inn appeared in the sixth century B.C when some couples provide large halls for travelers to drink and the entire service was done by owners. To other documents, since early biblical times, the Greeks developed thermal baths in villages for rest. Later, the Romans built mansions to provide accommodation for the government business. The first thermal baths in England, Switzerland, and the Middle East were developed by the Romans. In the Middle Ages, religious built inns to cater for their colleagues on the move. At the beginning, inns did not offer meals. They only provided shelter and allowed horses to be changed more easily. Travelling became popular and the impact of the industrial

revolution in England spread widely that led to the change from social or governmental travel to business travel. The need for quick and clean service all the time emerged.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of customer satisfaction has become a vital business issue as organizations have realized the major outcomes achieved when providing effective customer service. For hospitality and tourism, satisfaction has always been important. With regard to other industries, different researchers and institutions have undertaken a lot of scientific and detailed studies. But, Indian hotel business with reference to customer satisfaction has not been able to draw the attention of researcher to any noticeable extent. Hence, this study examines and analyses the level of customer's expectations with reference to "Trichy district hotels". The study would help firms to employ the outcome to develop appropriate customer expectations policies.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study attempts to review different kinds of literature on customer satisfaction and expectations with reference to the hotel industry and presents various studies made regarding the issues related to the hotel industry and customer satisfaction.

Gabbie et al (1996) have conducted a study to investigate the relationship between quality service and customer expectations in the Northern Ireland hotel industry. The study was conducted in two hotels in Northern Ireland using the SERVQUAL. More specifically the paper tries to identify the service gaps. Two hotels with different management were selected for the research study. Questions for data collection were based on the service quality gap model.

Peter Jones and Andrew Lockwood (2002) provide a simple definition for the hotel as, "an operation that provides accommodation and ancillary services to people away from home."

Paul S. Goldner (2006) defines, "...a customer is any organization or individual with which you have done business over the past twelve months".

Grigoroudis, E and Siskos, Y (2009) provide definition for 'customer' upon two approaches: With reference to loyalty, "A customer is the person that assesses the quality of the offered products and services" and on process-oriented approach, "the customer is the person or group that receives the work output" (p.9).

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study intends to practice the following specific objectives with reference to "Trichy district hotel industry".

- To identify the level of customer expectations towards various hotel attributes in Trichy district hotels.
- To seek out the customers' order of preference towards the various hotel attributes.
- To understand customers' gourmet and suggest various strategies to be implemented in order to make customer-oriented surfeit.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Coverage of the study is the hotel customer's expectation in Trichy district. The study sample frame covers 10 branches of Various of Hotels at Trichy. The customers of this hotel constituted the source of data. The sample size is 300 customer respondents from the 10 branches of Group of Hotels at Trichy. The sampling is equally distributed by 30 respondents from each of the branches.

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study was confined only to the selected 10 different branches of Hotels in and around Trichy district.
- Hence the customer sample does not reflect all segments of the population.
- Since the study was conducted during a particular period, the outcome may not reflect the dynamic nature of the level of satisfaction and the sample size was also limited.
- All the findings and observations made in this study are purely based on the respondents' opinion and therefore there is a possibility of personal bias.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation. Primary data collection was done through scientifically prepared questionnaire to measure the tangible and intangible attributes of the hotel industry. Totally 300 questionnaires were distributed to the customers who had visited the target group of hotel branches at least five times, based on the recommendation from the Supervisor and Waiters of the Hotels.

TABLE SHOWING THE RESPONDENTS (AGE)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	up to 20 years	61	20.4	20.4	20.4
	21-30 years	98	32.8	32.8	53.2
	31-40 years	67	22.4	22.4	75.6
	41-50 years	32	10.4	10.4	86.0
	above 50 years	42	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	School level	110	36.8	36.8	36.8
	Graduation	125	41.5	41.5	78.3

	Post Graduation	65	21.7	21.7	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

RESPONDENTS' GENDER					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	192	64.2	64.2	64.2
	Female	108	35.8	35.8	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

OCCUPATION					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Salaried	94	31.1	31.1	31.1
	Self-employed	133	44.5	44.5	75.6
	Professional	37	12.4	12.4	88.0
	Student	36	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

FAMILY SIZE					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Up to 3 mebers	102	34.1	34.1	34.1
	3-6 members	131	43.5	43.5	77.6
	7 - 9 members	39	13.0	13.0	90.6
	Above 9 members	28	9.4	9.4	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

REASONS FOR OUTSIDE FOOD					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Tasty food	82	27.4	27.4	27.4
	Bachelor	111	37.1	37.1	64.5
	Student	107	35.5	35.5	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

ANNUAL INCOME					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 1 lakh	59	19.7	19.7	19.7
	1 - 2 lakhs	72	24.1	24.1	43.8
	2 - 3 lakhs	51	16.7	16.7	60.5
	Above 3 lakhs	66	22.1	22.1	82.6
	Not Responded	52	17.4	17.4	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

RESPONDENTS' FAVOURITE BREAKFAST ITEMS					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Idli sambar	147	49.2	49.2	49.2
	Dosa	45	14.7	14.7	63.9
	Roast	60	20.1	20.1	83.9
	Puri	14	4.7	4.7	88.6
	Pongal	34	11.4	11.4	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	
Valid	Twice	102	34.1	34.1	64.5
	More Than Twice	106	35.5	35.5	100.0
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- From the above table it is clear that 36.8% of the employees fall under the age, group of 21 - 30 years, followed by 22.9% of employees under the age group of 31 - 40 years, and the

very next 20 % were under the age group of up to 20 years, 41-50 years age group were only 10%, and finally 10.4% of respondents were above 50 years of Age.

- The above analysis shows the respondent's educational qualification; where 43.9 % of the respondents had completed their graduation, 33.9% had completed their schooling and the remaining 22.1% have done their post-graduation
- From the above analysis, it is inferred that 64.6% of the respondents were male and the remaining 35.4% were female.
- The above table shows the respondents' occupation. 36.8% of the respondents were self-employed, 33.2% were salaried and the remaining 15% of respondents were under the category professional and students.
- The above table interprets the respondent's family size, where 39.6% of the respondents have a family size of 3-6 members, 38.6% were in the category of up to 3 members, 13.6% of respondents' family size lies between 7-9 members and the remaining 8.2% of the respondents' family size was above 9 members.
- The above table analyses the reason to have food in hotels .55% of the respondents had food in the hotel because of its taste, 17.9% being bachelors, 17.5% through parties and other functions and 9.6% of the students used to have food in the hotel.
- The above table illustrates the distribution of annual income of the respondents. 46.8% of the respondents' annual income was less than 1 lakh, 20 % of the respondents' annual income lies between 2-3 lakhs, 11.8 of the respondents' annual income was more than 3 lakhs, 9.3 % of the respondents' annual income was between 1 to 2 lakhs, and the remaining 12.1% of the respondents' did not disclose their the annual income.
- The above table displays the respondents' favorite Breakfast item. 44.3% of the respondents have opined that Idli Sambar as their favorite breakfast item, more or less the same number of respondents i.e. 19.6% and 19.3% like Roast and Dosa, followed by 11.4% prefer Pongal and 5.4% of the respondents favoritewere Puri. South Indians' most preferred and favorite breakfast item was Idli, Dosa, and Vada.
- The above table depicts the frequency of food intake in hotels. 27.1% of the respondents take food in hotels twice a week, 20.4% of the respondents had once in a week and another 20.4% had once in a month and 17.9% of the respondents used to take rarely in the hotels and the least 14.3%of the respondent's frequency was once in two weeks.

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

Hypothesis

The relationship between Gender and Age group of the visited the hotel.

CHI-SQUARE TESTS			
	Value	of	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.092 ^a	4	.542
Likelihood Ratio	3.100	4	.541
Linear-by-Linear Association	.254	1	.615
N of Valid Cases	300		

Since Sig (p) <0.05, the level of significance, the N.hypothesis is rejected. From the table, it is understood that majority of the Male respondents used to visit the hotels and 31-40 age group people are preferably hotels. This is due to the paucity of the time to have food at home, dual income and the need of the day.

ANNUAL INCOME AND VISIT THE HOTEL

CHI-SQUARE TESTS			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.522 ^a	8	.897
Likelihood Ratio	3.554	8	.895
Fisher's Exact Test	3.585		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.010	1	.919
N of Valid Cases	300		

Since Sig (p) <0.05, the level of significance, the N.hypothesis is accepted. So, there is no relationship between income and Number of visit the hotel.

6. FINDINGS

- The above table it is clear that 36.8% of the employees fall under the age, group of 21 - 30 years, followed by 22.9% of employees under the age group of 31 - 40 years, and the very next 20 % were under the age group of up to 20 years, 41-50 years age group were only 10%, and finally 10.4% of respondents were above 50 years of Age.
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7. SUGGESTIONS

- The hotel may consider giving menu cards to all the customers, as most of the branches had the practice to list their items only through the waiters.
- Regarding the parking facilities, the hotel has to increase the parking space, as it was not adequate in some of its hotels.
- Interior decoration can be improved in all the hotels, which in turn will create a good atmosphere for the customer.
- Customers always need privacy in every situation, especially during dining times. The partition can be made for the convenience of the consumers.
- The hotel administration may opt for comparatively less price structure. This would attract more regular customers. An increased satisfied customer means more profit.
- The restaurant can introduce the self-service system so that the consumers can be benefited by saving their waiting time.
- Door delivery system can be introduced to bring in more customers, who may not be able to come to the hotels for some reasons.

8. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to identify the needs and perceptions of hotel customers based on their level of their satisfaction with reference to Trichy district hotels. Various differences and similarities in the satisfaction level of the respondent customers have been discussed. Overall, the data analysis showed that the results were reliable and indicated a good measure of sampling adequacy. Whether the hotel attributes exceeded customers' expectations is the key to success for hoteliers. Effective marketing strategies need to be planned by hoteliers to attract and retain more

and more customers, by satisfying them during their first visit and then developing customer loyalty for all Trichy district hotels.

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