RESEARCH NOTE / NOTA DE PESQUISA / NOTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS HOTEL SERVICES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

In the highly competitive world, the hotel industry's success depends on the quality of services they provide, which gives wow feelings and high customer satisfaction. Many researchers have tried to assess customer satisfaction towards hotel services by proposing different models. Hence, the present study attempts to identify the influencing factors for determining customer satisfaction towards hotel services by conducting a systematic literature review. During the search process, 457 articles were obtained from the Web of Science database, and after filtration, 91 articles were used for further analysis. The result revealed that the top six influential factors affecting customer satisfaction towards hotel services are empathy, assurance, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, and green practices. If customers are satisfied, they will be motivated to revisit, spread positive word of mouth, and build loyalty. Moreover, the results identified that the USA, Malaysia, and China are the leading countries in this field. This study provides an extensive literature review, which otherwise is an unexplored area so far, which offers valuable insight for the hotel services providers to improve their services and also to the researchers and academicians to develop and propose new theories.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction; Hotel Services; Service Quality; Hospitality Sector; Systematic Review.

## SATISFAÇÃO DO CLIENTE EM RELAÇÃO AOS SERVIÇOS HOTELEIROS: UMA REVISÃO SISTEMÁTICA E UMA AGENDA DE PESQUISA

#### Resumo

Num mundo altamente competitivo, o sucesso da indústria hoteleira depende da qualidade dos serviços que presta, o que proporciona sensações surpreendentes e elevada satisfação do cliente. Muitos pesquisadores têm tentado avaliar a satisfação do cliente em relação aos serviços hoteleiros propondo diferentes modelos. Assim, o presente estudo tenta identificar os fatores que influenciam a determinação da satisfação do cliente em relação aos serviços hoteleiros, através da realização de uma revisão sistemática da literatura. Durante o processo de busca, foram obtidos 457 artigos na base de dados Web of Science e, após filtragem, 91 artigos foram utilizados para posterior análise. O resultado revelou que os seis principais fatores que influenciam a satisfação do cliente em relação aos serviços hoteleiros são empatia, garantia, confiabilidade, capacidade de resposta, tangibilidade e práticas sustentáveis. Se os clientes estiverem satisfeitos, serão motivados a revisitar, propagar recomendações positivas e construir lealdade. Além disso, os resultados identificaram que os Estados Unidos, Malásia e China são os países líderes nesse campo. Este estudo fornece uma revisão abrangente da literatura, uma área até então pouco explorada, oferecendo insights valiosos para os provedores de serviços hoteleiros melhorarem seus serviços, bem como para pesquisadores e acadêmicos desenvolverem e propor novas teorias.

Palavras-chave: Satisfação do Cliente; Serviços Hoteleiros; Qualidade em Serviços; Setor de Hospitalidade; Revisão Sistemática.

## SATISFACCIÓN DEL CLIENTE HACIA LOS SERVICIOS HOTELEROS: UNA REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA Y UNA AGENDA DE INVESTIGACIÓN

#### Resumen

En un mundo altamente competitivo, el éxito de la industria hotelera depende de la calidad de los servicios que brinda, lo que genera sensaciones asombrosas y una alta satisfacción del cliente. Muchos investigadores han intentado evaluar la satisfacción del cliente hacia los servicios hoteleros proponiendo diferentes modelos. Por lo tanto, el presente estudio intenta identificar los factores que influyen en la determinación de la satisfacción del cliente hacia los servicios hoteleros mediante la realización de una revisión sistemática de la literatura. Durante el proceso de búsqueda, se obtuvieron 457 artículos en la base de datos Web of Science y, después de la filtración, se utilizaron 91 artículos para un análisis posterior. El resultado reveló que los seis factores principales que influyen en la satisfacción del cliente hacia los servicios hoteleros son la empatía, la garantía, la confiabilidad, la capacidad de respuesta, la tangibilidad y las prácticas sostenibles. Si los clientes están satisfechos, se motivarán a revisitar, difundir recomendaciones positivas y construir lealtad. Además, los resultados identificaron que Estados Unidos, Malasia y China son los países líderes en este campo. Este estudio proporciona una revisión integral de la literatura, un área hasta ahora poco explorada, ofreciendo ideas valiosas para que los proveedores de servicios hoteleros mejoren sus servicios, así como para que los investigadores y académicos desarrollen y propongan nuevas teorías.

Palabras clave: Satisfacción del Cliente; Servicios Hoteleros; Calidad en Servicios; Sector de Hospitalidad; Revisión Sistemática.

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

The success of tourism and hospitality industry, best catalyst of socio-economic transformation in any region (Subhash et al., 2009), depends on providing the best services to their customers to have a memorable experience

which results in revisiting and expressing their positive experience through offline and online Word of Mouth (WoM) platforms. Accessibility (travel) and accommodation (hotel) are the two most significant components of the tourism sector (Deng et al., 2013; Ferrer-Rosel et al., 2015).

The availability of different modes of transport and



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types of accommodation solves the primary concern of tourists, namely, how to travel and where to stay at the destination. Of these two, travel involves less number of days, whereas accommodation involves more days; hence customers look for a comfortable place where they feel the hotel is their home when they are away from home.

Moreover, Competition in the hospitality sector resulted in more choices for customers resulting in hotels providing better services to customers with various options at competitive rates (Nunkoo et al., 2020). But the success (even the survival and the very existence) of any hotel in the highly competitive globalized world completely depends on the quality of services provided, which gives WOW feeling to the customers. And, the best way to measure the business success is through customer satisfaction (Fornell et al. 2016). If the customers are highly satisfied with the services, they tend to spread positive word of mouth, which will in turn help the hotel service providers to attract new customers and build brand image in the market.

Many researchers tried to assess the customer satisfaction level across different industry (Bowen and Chen, 2001; Kim, 2011; Gaonkar et al. 2021) and in particular the hospitality industry (Almeida and Pelissari, 2019; Lee and Whaley, 2019; Padma and Jiseon, 2020; Lhendup and Panda, 2020; Barthelemy et al., 2021; Tagmanov and Ulema, 2023). The previous studies were conducted by taking different variables at a time and also proposing different models for customer satisfaction towards hotel industry.

The presence of many studies with different models leads to confusion among the researchers and academicians and also among the hotel service providers. Hence, there is a need arises to perform systematic literature review in this field.The present study aims to perform a systematic literature review on customer satisfaction towards hotel services.

And,the three main research questions developed for understanding and assessing the available literature are: (1) How and in what way such studies identified influential aspects with respect to the evolution of research over the periods of 15 years, the publisher, and the relevant journals, including the region of study? (2) What are the methodological trends commonly used by researchers? and (3) What are the influencing factors used for assessing the level of customer satisfaction in the hospitality sector?

The systematic literature reviews are quite beneficial and help researchers to identify research gaps, develop new theoretical frameworks and future research avenues (Marabelli & Newell, 2014; Paul & Criado, 2020). Many researchers conducted systematic reviews in the fields of Technology adoptions (Williams et al., 2015; Castanha et al., 2021); Sustainable tourism (Ruhanen et al. 2015; Rahmadian et al., 2022); Tourist planning and International Tourist Demand (Costa de Carvalho & Pimentel, 2019; Camara et al., 2022); Luxury hospitality (Jain et al., 2023). However, as far as author's knowledge and based on literature search, no study has been carried out on customer satisfaction towards hotel services, therefore makes the present study unquie and fill the gap by adding valuable insights and new perspectives.

The remainder of the article is organised as under:

Section two describes the methodology adopted for identifying, filtering, and selecting the study's relevant research papers. Section three presents the results of the systematic review. Section four includes the discussion and conclusion of the study.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

The systematic literature review can be conducted in different ways, such as theory-based, domain-based, method-based, framework-based, bibliometric-based, and meta-based reviews (Paul and Criado, 2020). The present study adopted a mixed approach, including domain-based, framework-based, and bibliometric-based reviews. The study employed PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analysis) approach, as shown in Fig. 1.

It is a widely accepted and extensively used method for conducting systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Moher et al., 2009; Tawfik et al., 2019). This method ensures that articles included in studies match the eligibility and inclusion criteria using three stages – identification, screening, and inclusion (Moher et al. 2009).

The initial identification stage includes selecting a database, searching for articles using keywords, and removing duplicate articles. The study used the Web of Science (WOS) database, one of the largest global databases for research articles (Guo et al. 2019).

The keywords used to search articles were "Customer Satisfaction," "Guests Satisfaction," "Hotel Services," and "Hotel Guests Satisfaction." Results were filtered using document types and language to include only research articles and reviews written in English. Following this criteria, 457 articles were extracted; after removing duplicate articles, 450 were available for further screening.

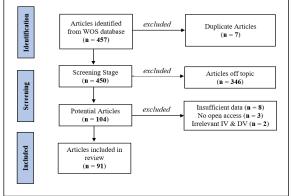


Figure 1. PRISMA Method for research articles selection.

**Source:** Authors own elaboration.

The second stage of PRISMA includes screening the articles extracted from the first step. Here, inclusion and exclusion criteria are employed to finalize the papers and to extract robust findings (Akter and Wamba, 2016).

The study employed the following inclusion and exclusion criteria: first, studies focusing on guest satisfaction towards hotel services were included, whereas other articles were excluded. This was achieved by screening the selected articles' titles, abstracts, and keywords.

Second, research articles and reviews were included, and conference proceedings, book chapters, book reviews, editorial materials, and meeting abstracts were excluded from the study (Kushwah et al., 2019).

Third, the study only included articles published in English; lastly, articles published up to 2021 were included. Of the 450 articles from the initial stage, 346 did not meet the inclusion criteria and were thus removed, making 104 articles eligible for the next step. Off these, 13 articles were excluded from this study due to the non-availability of data, no access to full-text articles, and usage of irrelevant independent and dependent variables were used. Finally, 91 articles were considered for the study, as illustrated in Figure 1.

## **3 RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

This section deals with the article's review structure, methodological trends, and key determinants of hotel guest satisfaction.

## **3.1 Articles Review Structure**

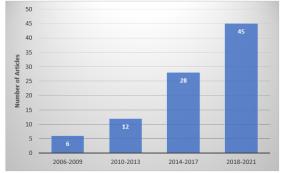
The trends observed in customer satisfaction towards hotel services literature are presented in the form of publication and citation trends, publishers and journals, and geographical distribution of the studies.

## 3.1.1 Publication and Citation Trends

The number of research articles published are from 2006 to 2021, as depicted in Figure 2. Six articles were published from 2006-2009 (Nasution and Mavonda, 2008; Chang, 2008), emphasizing customer satisfaction towards hotel services.

The number of published articles increased from twelve to twenty-eight in the 2014-2017 period (Dortyol et al., 2014; Xiang et al., 2015) compared to the 2010-2013 period (Berezina et al., 2012; Ramanathan and Ramanathan, 2013). The publication trend signifies the growing relevance of this topic as the number of published articles increased to forty-five in 2018-2021 (Bravo et al., 2019; Barthelemy et al., 2021). This clearly indicates that researchers are trying to study different perspectives of customer satisfaction towards hotel services and, in a way, beneficial to hotel service providers to improve their services, attracting more new customers and retaining the existing ones.

## Figure 2. Number of articles published from 2006 – 2021.



Source: Authors own elaboration.

In terms of the impact of the publication, Xiang et al. (2015) article on big data and text analytics in guest experience and satisfaction emerged as the most cited one, followed by Xu and Li (2016) article on antecedents of customer satisfaction towards various hotel types.

Table 1. Top Most Cited Publications.

Author(s) and Year	Title	Cited by	Journal
Xiang et al., 2015	What can big data and text analytics tell us about hotel guest experience and satisfaction?	384	International Journal of Hospitality Management
Xu and Li, 2016	The antecedents of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction toward various types of hotels: A text mining approach	168	International Journal of Hospitality Management
Zhou et al., 2014	Refreshing hotel satisfaction studies by reconfiguring customer review data	151	International Journal of Hospitality Management
Jani and Han, 2014	Personality, satisfaction, image, ambience, and loyalty: Testing their relationships in the hotel industry	145	International Journal of Hospitality Management
Gao and Mattila, 2014	Improving consumer satisfaction in green hotels: The roles of perceived warmth, perceived competence, and CSR motive	143	International Journal of Hospitality Management

Source: Authors own elaboration.

Table 1 indicates a shift of research focus from manual identification of customer satisfaction antecedents to big data and text mining approaches to identifying customer satisfaction antecedents towards hotel services (Jani and Han, 2014; Zhou et al., 2014).

Moreover, the focus is also on green practices, and CSR activities lead to customer satisfaction (Gao and Mattila, 2014). All the top-cited publications featured in the International Journal of Hospitality Management.

## 3.1.2 Journals and Publishers

Information provided in Table 2 indicates the top ten journals having publications on customer satisfaction towards hotel services. The International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management and the International Journal of Hospitality Management tops the list with twenty publications in each journal.

Furthermore, the Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management has eight articles. In terms of publishers, Elsevier is the leading publisher, accounting for 33 percent of articles, followed by Emerald Insight, having 32 percent of articles published on satisfaction level towards hotel services. The other publishers include Taylor & Francis, Sage Publications, Wiley, and MDPI. Table 2. Top Ten Journals.

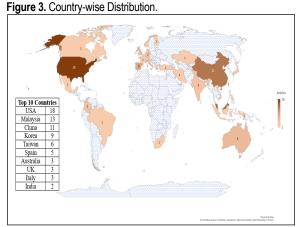
Journals	Publishers	#
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	Emerald Insight	20
International Journal of Hospitality Management	Elsevier	20
Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management	Taylor & Francis Online	8
Cornell Hospitality Quarterly	Sage Publications	4
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	Taylor & Francis Online	3
Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences	Elsevier	3
Electronic Commerce Research and Applications	Elsevier	2
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology	Emerald Insight	2
Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism	Taylor & Francis Online	2
Journal of Services Marketing	Emerald Insight	2

Source: Authors own elaboration.

#### 3.1.3 Geographical Distribution of the Studies

The study countries were identified based on the respondent's location, and in case the respondent's country was not disclosed, the first author's country was considered (Fetscherin and Usunier, 2012; Islam and Rahman, 2016). In terms of continental wise, most studies are reported in the Asia Pacific region (50 percent), followed by the European region (21 percent) and North American region (21 percent).

The United States of America has dominated research in this field, having 16 studies (Dieck et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2018; Sukhu et al., 2019). In the Asia Pacific region, 50 studies are spread across 12 countries, Malaysia being the top country having 13 studies (Ali et al., 2017; Wong et al., 2020), followed by China with 11 studies (Kwortnik and Han, 2011; Luo et al., 2021), and Korea with 9 studies (Nunko et al., 2020; Suh et al., 2015).



Source: Authors own elaboration.

In the European region, 21 studies featured in 10 countries, wherein Spain was the leading country (Bravo et al., 2019; Moreno-Perdigon et al., 2021), with 5 studies followed by the UK (Ramanathan and Ramanathan, 2011; Assaker et al., 2020) and Italy (Merli et al., 2019; Modica et

al., 2020), having three studies each. Two studies from the middle east and Africa region are reported from UAE (Ahmad et al., 2019; El-Adly, 2019). In contrast, Turkey (Dortyol et al., 2014), Iran (Dabestani et al., 2017), and South Africa (Nunko et al., 2020) reported 1 study each, as depicted in Figure 3. This being the case, the top five cited works in this area belong to North America and Asia Pacific Region (Xiang et al. 2015, Xu and Li 2016, Zhou et al. 2014, Jani and Han 2014, and Gao and Mattila 2014).

#### 3.2 Methodological Trends

Regarding Research Approach, about 78 percent of articles (71 studies) are quantitative (Kwortnik and Han, 2011; Nunko et al., 2020; Moise et al., 2021), eight employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Dieck et al., 2017; Ahmad et al., 2019), five studies were experimental (Berezina et al., 2012; Siamionava et al., 2018), and four used a cross-sectional approach (Milfelner et al., 2011; Worsfold et al., 2016).

With respect to data used, around 65 percent of the research used the survey method for data collection, in which offline mode (40 studies) is the most preferred (Nasution and Mavonda, 2008; Wang et al., 2021) over online mode (14 studies) (Berezina et al., 2012; Sukhu et al., 2019), and four studies used both ways for data collection (Kwortnik and Han, 2011; El-Adly, 2019).

Table 3. Methods Used.

Research Approach	#	%
Quantitative	71	78.0
Qualitative and Quantitative	08	8.8
Experimental Study	05	5.5
Cross-Sectional	04	4.4
Qualitative	03	3.3
Data Collection		
Offline Survey	40	44.4
Online Reviews database	21	23.3
Online Survey	14	15.6
Interviews	11	12.2
Online and Offline survey	4	4.4
Offline Survey	40	44.4
Sample Size		
0 – 250	23	31.9
251 – 500	38	52.8
Above 500	11	15.3
Types of Likert's Scale		
5-Point Likert Scale	33	53.2
6-Point Likert Scale	2	3.2
7-Point Likert Scale	25	40.3
10-Point Likert Scale	1	1.6
11-Point Likert Scale	1	1.6
Techniques Used		
Confirmatory Factor Analysis	45	22.6
Descriptive Statistics	41	20.6
Structural Equation Modeling	40	20.1
Exploratory Factor Analysis	19	9.5
Regression Analysis	18	9.0
Correlation Analysis	10	5.0
Anova/ Manova	9	4.5
IPA/ IPMA / Gap analysis	8	4.0
Sentiment Analysis	3	1.5
Data/ Text Mining	2	1.0
Others	4	2.0

Source: Authors own elaboration.

Moreover, about 23 percent of the studies used secondary data (Xiang et al., 2015; Moreno-Perdigon et al., 2021), basically focusing on consumer reviews posted on different traveling websites where tripadvisor.com (13 studies) is most commonly used (Yang et al., 2018; Rajaguru and Hassanli, 2018; Moreno-Perdigon et al., 2021) whereas 11 studies used interview schedules for data collection (Dieck et al., 2017; Ahmad et al., 2019).

Regarding sample size, around 53 percent of researchers collected the data with a sample size between 250 to 500 respondents (Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015; Sukhu et al., 2019) and predominately used 5-point (33 studies) (Dieck et al., 2017; Ahmad et al., 2019) and 7-point (25 studies) (Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015; Moise et al., 2021) Likert's scales to measure the customer satisfaction towards the hotel services.

The researchers extensively used different tools and techniques to analyze the data. The broadly applied techniques are Confirmatory Factor Analysis (45 studies) (Berezina et al., 2012; Worsfold et al., 2016; Merli et al., 2019), Descriptive Statistics (41 studies) (Dabestani et al., 2017; Bravo et al., 2019; Sukhu et al., 2019), and Structural Equation Modelling (40 studies) (Berezina et al., 2012; Worsfold et al., 2016; Merli et al., 2019). Besides, researchers also used Exploratory Factor Analysis (19 studies) (Dieck et al., 2017; El-Adly, 2019), Regression analysis (18 studies) (Ramanathan and Ramanathan, 2011; Suh et al., 2015), Correlation analysis (9 studies) (Yang et al., 2018; Barthelemy et al., 2021), and Gap analysis (8 studies) (Dabestani et al., 2017; Nunko et al., 2020).

## 3.3 Key Determinants of Hotel Guests Satisfaction

Investigating the key determinants to understand how and in what way the level of satisfaction is influenced towards hotel services. It is a critical factor for improving the service quality, which ultimately leads to a revisit attitude and positive word of mouth, thereby essential for the success and very survival of the hotel in the future. These factors are classified into antecedent, mediating, and outcome variables.

Table 4. Antecedent, Mediating, and Outcome Variables				
Antecedent	#	Mediating Variables	#	
Variables				
Empathy	18	Guest satisfaction	27	
Assurance	15	Service quality	5	
Reliability	15	Emotion	3	
Responsiveness	14	Image	3	
Tangibility	14	Rating	3	
Green practices	13	Trust	3	
Ambient	9	Value	3	
Service quality	8	Commitments	3	
Value for money	7	Others	3	
Employees behavior	6			
Accessibility	4	Outcome Variables	#	
Brand image	4	Satisfaction	28	
Food quality	4	Intention to Revisit	18	
Amenities	3	Loyalty	17	
Cleanliness	2	WOM/Recommendation	15	
Others	13	Others	5	

Table 4. Antecedent,	Mediating.	and Outcome	Variables
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Source: Authors own elaboration.

As depicted in Table 4, 16 factors are identified as antecedent variables. The top five constructs are from the SERVQUAL model propounded by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in 1985 and subsequently revised in 1988 (Parasuraman et al., 1985; 1988).

Empathy is a significant factor in determining customer satisfaction towards hotel services used in 18 studies (Chang, 2008; Ahmad et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021). Empathy is the caring and individualized attention given to customers by the service providers (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Assurance is another factor widely addressed in hotel guest satisfaction literature and examines employees' knowledge, courtesy, and ability to convey trust and confidence (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Chang, 2008; Ahmad et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021). Moreover, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, and green practices are the other significant factors considered for measuring customers' satisfaction with hotel services (Chang, 2008; Ahmad et al., 2019; Merli et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021; Moise et al., 2021).

Apart from these, variables such as ambient (Suh et al., 2015; Han et al., 2019); service quality (Rajaguru and Hassanli, 2018; Wong et al., 2020); value for money (Nasution and Mavonda, 2008; Rajaguru and Hassanli, 2018); employee behavior (Dortyol et al., 2014; Nunkoo et al., 2020); accessibility (Yang et al., 2018; Dieck et al., 2017); brand image (Milfelner et al., 2011; Lahap et al., 2016); food quality (Dortyol et al., 2014; Ramanathan and Ramanathan, 2011); amenities (Bravo et al., 2019; Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015); and cleanliness (Ramanathan and Ramanathan, 2011; 2013) are used in this literature to assess the level of satisfaction among hotel guests by researchers in different geographical locations during different time periods.

The mediating mechanism was part of 53 studies, and the commonly used mediating variable is guest satisfaction, used in 27 studies (Merli et al., 2019; Sukhu et al., 2019; Berezina et al., 2012; Rajaguru and Hassanli, 2018; Suh et al., 2015). Around five studies used service quality as a mediating variable (Kwortnik and Han, 2011). Additionally, emotion (Sukhu et al., 2019), image (Suh et al., 2015), rating (Rajaguru and Hassanli, 2018), trust (Kwortnik and Han, 2011), value (Wong et al., 2020), commitments (Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015) were other mediating variables used in this body of literature.

The outcome variables used in hotel guest satisfaction research are broadly classified into Satisfaction (28 studies) (Dortyol et al., 2014; Ali et al., 2017; Modica et al., 2020; Nunko et al., 2020), Revisit Intention (18 studies) (Berezina et al., 2012; Ramanathan and Ramanathan, 2013; Dortyol et al., 2014; Bravo et al., 2019), Loyalty (17 studies) (Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015; Merli et al., 2019; Modica et al., 2020), and Word of Mouth/ Recommendation (15 studies) (Berezina et al., 2012; Rajaguru and Hassanli, 2018; Bravo et al., 2019; Sukhu et al., 2019).

The ultimate aim of hotel guest satisfaction literature is to develop the theory/constructs to measure the guest satisfaction level towards hotel services. Customer satisfaction is used as one of the outcome variables in most of the studies (Ali et al., 2017; Fatma et al., 2018; Dortyol et al., 2014; Nunkoo et al., 2020).

Likewise, many authors believe once the guests are satisfied with the services provided by the hotel, they will prefer the same hotel or same hotel brand whenever they revisit the place. Thus, measuring the revisit intention of hotel guests was considered another essential outcome variable (Bravo et al., 2019; Berezina et al., 2012; Dortyol et al., 2014; Nunkoo et al., 2020).

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A systematic literature review on customer satisfaction towards hotel services was conducted by reviewing 91 articles published in this field. The study findings provided an overview of the research on guest satisfaction towards hotel services and advocated the major determinants influencing customer satisfaction.

There are a few notable trends in this literature. The publications on customer satisfaction have exhibited a rising trend during the 2018-21 period, possibly due to the advancement in information and communication technology. Around 45 studies (49.45%) have been carried out in three years, almost similar to the number of works carried out during eleven years from 2006 to 2017. Moreover, 51% of the studies during this period collected the data using online surveys and online reviews database, which ultimately led to faster data collection and more publications during this period as compared to earlier periods.

Regarding geographical distribution, the USA was the leading country in the total number of studies conducted in this field, followed by Malaysia and China. However, a different pattern is observed when we compare the studies period-wise. The results show that from 2006 to 2017, the highest number of studies were conducted in USA and Malaysia. In contrast, from 2018 to 2021, more studies were carried out in China, followed by USA and Malaysia.

Moreover, the publications on customer satisfaction towards hotel services have exhibited a rising trend, with the majority being from developed countries, which clearly shows the importance given by the developed countries to maximize customers satisfaction by improving the services provided by the hotel industry (Ali et al., 2017; Dieck et al., 2017; Sukhu et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2020; Luo et al., 2021).

The methodological trends provide comprehensive insights into how the studies were conducted. The results show that most of the researchers focused on quantitative studies on different attributes affecting customer satisfaction in the hotel industry, which was done using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire instrument. And the proposed attributes of customer satisfaction were examined using popular techniques of Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling.

The review found the determinants of customer satisfaction towards hotel services that varied across studies in terms of their significance. The identified determinants of customer satisfaction are categorized as antecedents, mediating, and outcome variables. Table 4 illustrates that the antecedent variables have received huge attention compared with other variables (mediating and outcome variables). The strongest antecedents are empathy, assurance, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, and green practices. This indicates that the researchers used the SERVQUAL model to measure the satisfaction level of customers toward hotel services.

## 4.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The theoretical implications of the study are as follows. Firstly, to the author's knowledge, this is the first systematic review covering all Web of Science journals on customer satisfaction towards hotel services. According to the insights and findings of prior studies discussed in this review, not many studies highlighted the theoretical factors contributing to the satisfaction level of customers towards hotel services. Thus, this review provides unique insights, allowing a complete and unifying picture to effectively assess the level of customer satisfaction in the hotel industry.

Secondly, the present study provides information about the most cited articles, clearly showing that most are from Asia-Pacific Region. However, the USA is the country with more work being carried out. This provides the geographical spread of such research, which gives information about the missing geographical regions where further research can be conducted in the future to identify how and in what way the level of customer satisfaction gets influenced.

Thirdly, methodological issues were assessed, and it found that researchers may think about quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methodology. Data collection is to be carried out by conducting offline and online surveys depending on effectiveness and appropriate sample size using suitable Likert scaling. The most crucial aspect is the techniques to be used for data analysis, where data reduction, confirmation, and model testing (exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling) are the more commonly applied for assessing the level of customer satisfaction in the hotel industry.

Last but not least, an overview of various determinants influencing customer satisfaction towards hotel services provides a birds-eye-view of the entire spectrum of research in assessing the level of satisfaction. One may be able to check and see how and in what way such determinants are used in different geographical settings at different points of time. And this study will help in appropriate modifications in the factors while conducting similar studies to validate the earlier results in different geographical settings. This will significantly contribute to theory development.

In addition to the theoretical implications, the study also provides practical implications which are useful for different stakeholders, namely, hotel service providers, researchers and academicians, policymakers, government as well as non-governmental agencies. The study may be considered as a strong foundation developed based on 91 studies, which gives clarity on how and in what way similar studies can be carried out in future, as the influencing determinants are clearly identified.

The hotel managers along with hotel service provides can provide maximum satisfaction to its customers by improving certain services such as individualised attention, good and caring attitute of employees, providing them with safety and security, maintaining proper hygienic and clean environment. Moreover, they can also improve the hotel ambiance and physical appearance, provide proper transportation facilities, and work on sustainable development by following green practices. This will help the service providers retain existing customers and attract new ones. The study also reveals the significance and importance of catering and providing hotel services in alignment with customer needs.

## 4.2 Limitations and Future Research

Due to its noteworthy role, customer satisfaction towards hotel services has sought continuous attention in the tourism and hospitality literature. In this study, we thoroughly review the existing literature and provide valuable insights on publication trends. geographical distributions, methodological trends, and determinants of customer satisfaction. However, this study inherits some limitations which the researchers can study further. Firstly, the current systematic literature review is limited to the research articles published up to December 2021. However, the authors investigated the current publication status available in this field as of May 2023. And, without filtration, the publications in 2022 and up to May 2023 are 65 and 20 articles, respectively. This shows the prominence of research in this field and future research can be carried out.

Secondly, the study chose the Web of Science as a primary database for conducting a systematic literature review. Exploring other databases, such as Scopus can provide more insights to the research results. Thirdly, the study considered only English-language articles published in peer-reviewed journals. The other forms of publication, such as conference articles and book chapters, were excluded. Fourthly, it is possible that some articles were screened out due to a specific set of keywords used during the search strategy stage or may be due to exclusion criteria, which can be taken into consideration for future research. And lastly, future research can focus on conducting a meta-analysis of different factors determining customer satisfaction towards hotel services, which will provide more insights into whether a hotel is a home away from home for the guests.

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Term	Definition	Author 1	A.2	Α.
Conceptualization	Ideas; formulation or evolution of overarching research goals and aims		х	)
Methodology	Development or design of methodology; creation of models	Х	х	)
Software	Programming, software development; designing computer programs; implementation of the computer code and supporting algorithms; testing of existing code components	x		
Validation	Verification, whether as a part of the activity or separate, of the overall replication/ reproducibility of results/experiments and other research outputs	х	х	)
Formal analysis	Application of statistical, mathematical, computational, or other formal techniques to analyze or synthesize study data	x		
Investigation	Conducting a research and investigation process, specifically performing the experiments, or data/evidence collection	х		
Resources	Provision of study materials, reagents, materials, patients, laboratory samples, animals, instrumentation, computing resources, or other analysis tools			
Data Curation	Management activities to annotate (produce metadata), scrub data and maintain research data (including software code, where it is necessary for interpreting the data itself) for initial use and later reuse	x		
Writing - Original Draft	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically writing the initial draft (including substantive translation)	x		
Writing - Review & Editing	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work by those from the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary or revision – including pre-or post-publication stages	x	х	
Visualization	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically visualization/ data presentation			
Supervision	Oversight and leadership responsibility for the research activity planning and execution, including mentorship external to the core team		х	
Project administration	Management and coordination responsibility for the research activity planning and execution			
Funding acquisition	Acquisition of the financial support for the project leading to this publication			Γ

Source: adapted from Elsevier (2022, s/p), based upon Brand et al. (2015).

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