EFFECT OF LENGTH OF STAY ON GUEST SATISFACTION-AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF INDIAN HOTEL INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The unpredictable and dynamic changes experienced by the corporate world have transformed the business environment. Now the key for remaining successful is in retaining customers rather than in acquiring customers. Customer satisfaction is considered the essence of success in today's highly competitive world of business, and it has become the corporate goal as more and more companies strive for quality in their product. The purpose of this article is to examine the influence of 'length of stay'of a guest in a hotel, on satisfaction, revisit intention and making favorable referrals. This paper considers the reaction of 'international travelers' who have boarded their flight from Chennai, India. Outcome of this research indicates that one of the critical challenges faced by the hoteliers is to create opportunities to their guests to experience (all) the facilities available in the hotel, especially for those who stay for a shorter period. Results shows that length of stay positively influences the satisfaction level but not revisit attitude and positive referrals. However satisfied guests tends to revisit the same hotel in future and likely to refer to their friends and relatives.' Satisfaction is the nucleus and everything revolves around it and duration of stay is one of the major determinants of hotel factors which is a major predictor of satisfaction.

Keywords: Hotel industry, Guest satisfaction, Length of stay, purpose of visit, revisit, recommendation

INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction is more important in the current marketplace than ever before. In the past, businesses relied on technology and innovation for competitive advantage. With global competition, relentless technological advances, and consolidation, companies now try for differentiation through customer satisfaction. In the case of hotels, customers are considered guests. Guests who are satisfied with the services rendered by a hotel tend to revisit the same hotel and also recommend it to their friends and relatives. It has been established that the growth of hotel industry not only rests on the visiting of new guests but also on the likelihood of the revisit by the same guests (Kim et al., 2001). Many hotels could not operate profitably due to their inability to retain their guests. Works pertaining to hotel industries have stressed that the satisfaction of the guests and their intention to revisit are the most important critical factors (Fornell, 1992; Pizam, 1994; Oh, 1999).This study aims to examine the impact of 'length of stay' and 'purpose of visit' on satisfaction and its consequences (revisit and recommendation).

Achieving high levels of customer satisfaction requires the firms continually monitor and examine the feelings, opinions, and suggestions of their customers. Industries make extensive efforts to gauge customer expectations and reactions in their continuous effort to improve, build and expand market share. If their customers are unhappy, industries know they are unlikely to survive. If their customers are happy, the use of their products and services and the likelihood of greater profits increase. Improving service quality to meet customers' standards is an ongoing part of doing business. Marketing experts maintain that satisfied customers are critical to

profitability because they stay with the company longer as repeat customers, strenghen their relationship with the company, demonstrate less price sensitivity, and recommend the company's products or services to others.

Customer satisfaction

One of the biggest contemporary challenges of management in hotel industries is providing and maintaining guest satisfaction. Customer satisfaction has increasingly been identified as a key factor in the battle for competitive differentiation and customer retention. Among all customer demands, customer satisfaction has been recognized as a critical factor in the success of any business (Parasuraman et al. 1988; Gronroos, 1990).Customer satisfaction is general described as the meeting of one's expectations and a feeling or attitude of a customer towards a product or service. Lam and Zhang (1999) claim that overwhelming customer demand for quality products and service has in recent years become increasingly evident to professionals in the hotel industry.

Westbrook and Oliver (1991) define customer satisfaction as a post-consumption evaluative judgment concerning a specific product or service. Customer satisfaction is distinguished from the attitude construct, in the sense that while consumers may hold pre-consumption attitudes (expectations), consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction only exists after the product/service has been consumed. Customer satisfaction is the measurement of how a company's products or services meet or surpass its customer's expectations. It is also a measure of how the customer perceives the way the company's representatives deal with his or her needs (Barsky, 1992).

A review of the existing literature indicates that there can be potentially many antecedents of customer satisfaction. One such factor that has received more attention is 'confirmation paradigm',(Crosby and Stephens 1987) which treats satisfaction as a meeting of customer expectations (Oliver and Swan, 1989) and is generally related to habitual usage of products (Davidow, 2003b). However research on customer satisfaction has moved towards the disconfirmation paradigm which views satisfaction with products and brands as a result of two cognitive variables: pre-purchase expectations and disconfirmation (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982: Getty and Thompson, 1994). Ineffective customer service could lead to a drop in customer satisfaction and willingness to recommend the service to a friend. This would lead to increase in switching to other brands by customers. So the significance of customer satisfaction and customer retention in strategy development for a 'market oriented' and 'customer focused' firm cannot be underestimated.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Scanning of literature related to hotel industry reveals that most of the research works have focused on measuring guest satisfaction and the factors influencing it (Hunt, 1975; Oliver, 1980; Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Frank and Ray, 1995; Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000). Research emphasizes the importance of hotel factors, perceived price, perceived service quality, perceived customer value, relational orientation, relational quality, service provider attributes and recommendation. The results of the studies conducted by the academicians indicate that there is a positive relationship between these factors and guest satisfaction (Oh and Park, 1997; Choi and I Chu, 2001; Kim and Cha, 2002).

Guests visit other countries for different purposes and their length of stay depends on their purposes. They may stay for a very short period (for one day) or comparatively a longer duration (four or live days). The opportunity to experience the services given by the hotel industries for these guests is limited by the duration of the stay.The longer the stay, the higher the probability of enjoying the service.

Obviously, it is expected that the level of satisfaction between these two categories is likely to differ. Despite the extensive work done in the area of hotel industries, there is no ample evidence that can explain the relationship of the length of stay and satisfaction. It is necessary to make an attempt to explore the relationship between the customers' period of stay and their satisfaction. The consequence of guest satisfaction, as confirmed by earlier

works, is the likelihood of revisit which leads to the recommendation made by the guests to their friends and relatives.

Duration of stay in a hotel is an important dimension to be concentrated as it gives a guest the overall idea/knowledge about the hotel, its employees and their services. It is difficult to conclude that the services provided by hoteliers is good or bad by getting feedback from the guests who stay for one or two days, as one cannot enjoy all the services and benefits provided by the hoteliers within one or two days. For example, when a guest stays for a day, he might not have come for staying alone, rather he will concentrate on his work, and leaves the hotel once his work or business is over. Hence, he would not have paid attention to the services and other things provided by the hoteliers.

Further, the chances of enjoying some of the service such as bar, laundry, general amenities or even restaurant are less, however a guest who stays for more days has enough time to enjoy all the services available in a hotel. Hence, the latter's opinion may not be similar to the former's and vice versa. Since the opinion about the different services offered by the hoteliers may differ for the guests based on their duration of stay, it is important for the researcher study the influence of length of stay on different hotel factors.

Voss et al. (1998) have found that the length of stay (of a guest has an influence on his/her perception about the hotel. Also they have examined and conclude that the length of stay affects his perception about the food and beverages provided by the hotel. Of course, they have taken only one hotel factor, food and beverages, and performed the study. But, on reviewing the articles, it is found that food and beverages is not the only hotel factor that determines guest satisfaction, but also factors like reception, general amenities, room quality, and security play a significant role in determining guest satisfaction.

Further, the influence of length of stay on different hotel factors has not been studied collectively by any other researcher, which is essential for the present situation where people give more importance to quality and hoteliers give importance to customer satisfaction. A guest who is dissatisfied with the service provided in a hotel may not extend his stay in that hotel and also avoids his future visits. But a satisfied customer stays for longer days and also visits the same hotel frequently. In addition to this, a satisfied customer may bring new customers by spreading a favourable opinion through word-of-mouth. Hence, studying the influence of length of stay on different hotel factors is of paramount importance.

The purpose of visit (refers to the stay in the hotel) and the number of time that a guest visits a particular hotel are also likely to exert some influence on guest satisfaction and apparently on their revisit. Hence, it is highly important to find out whether any significant relationship exists or not. This research paves way to accomplish this.

Research studies pertaining to guest satisfaction in the context of hotel industry have been mostly carried out in western countries involving their citizens. This leads to the constraint that the outcome of these empirical studies possesses the inherent difficulty of generalization and adoption in other countries. This obviously provides the researcher an opportunity to do the research involving hotels located in India (Chennai - Tamilnadu).

OBJECTIVE

Based on the review of literature and the need for the study, the objectives of the research work is to determine the effect of the length of stay and the purpose of visit on hotel factors, guests satisfaction and its consequences (likelihood of revisit and recommendation)

METHODOLOGY

The subjects for this research are the travelers who have stayed in five star hotels in Chennai. Karatepe (2004) collected the data from the respondents while they stayed in the rooms. Similarly, in 1997, King and Garey

also collected data from the hotel itself. Following the same procedure, the researcher approached the management to collect data from the guests on the hotel premises itself. None of the hotels accorded permission for the reason that the critical information about their guests' attitude might go out (if it is collected by an outsider) and they felt the privacy of the guests would also be disturbed and this could affect their revisit intention. An alternate to tackle this issue is to collect the data from the guests not in the hotel premises but at the airport. Oh (1999), Choi and Chu (2001), and Churchill (1979) have collected the data at the airport as they been denied permission to contact the guests in hotels. Following the same procedure, it has been decided to approach the guests at the airport and collect the data required for the study.

Validity Test

Examination of the values of Pearson correlation for all the items used in the study indicates that there is no problem with convergent and discriminate validity. Items belonging to the san variable had better correlation (coefficients ranged from 0.416 \ 0.864) than items relating to different variables (coefficient ranged from to 0.108 to 0.568). To determine construct validity, factor analysis was used. To find out whether an item is part of a factor, a suggested by Nunnally (1978), factor loading of 0.4 was used as the cut off point. The factors were extracted using principle component analysis and rotation method of varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Items meant to measure the same construct were grouped together, confirming that the items measured the same variable, The rotated factor matrix showed that factor loadings ranged from 0.403 to 0.798, thus satisfying Nunnally's criterion.

The first step in the measurement of validation involved computing co-efficient alpha for each set of measures to test reliability. Chronbach's alpha is used to test the reliability of a multi item scale. The co-efficient of Chronbach alpha is shown in table 1. The cut of point is generally 0.6 (Haide et al, 1999). Since all the values lie between 0.70 and 0.93, the construct of this questionnaire is reliable.

TABLE – 1: RELIABILITY TEST – VALUES OF CHRONBACH ALPHA

Serial No.	Variables	No. ot tems	Adopted from	Crowbar Alpha
1	Reception	6	Heide et al. 1999	0.746
2	Food and beverages	6	Heide et al. 1999	0.776
3	House keeping	5	Heide et al. 1999	0.855
4	Room quality	3	Choi and Chu, 2001	0.852
5	General amenities	10	Choi and Chu, 2001	0.846
6	Security	3	Choi and Chu, 2001	0.778
7	Communication facilities	2	Choi and Chu, 2001	0.712
8	Business services	2	Choi and Chu, 2001	0.725
9	Guest satisfaction	2	Kim and Cha,2002	0.926
10	Relationship continuity	3	Researcher	0.801
11	Word of mouth	2	Researcher	0.834

Main study

Chennai city was taken as the research area due to accessibility and Chennai being one of the major metros. Besides, Chennai occupies the third place in the number of international travelers arrived in India (www.incredibleindia.com). The target population for this research is international travelers departing from the Chennai international airport.

Population and sample size determination

Population Estimation

Schall (2003) estimated the guests' population with the following formula.

$$\text{Population} = \frac{(\text{Number of rooms}) \times (30 \text{ nights}) \times (\text{occupancy rate})}{(\text{Average length of stay})}$$

$$\frac{(1453) \times (30) \times (0.62)}{} = 9008$$
$$(3)$$

An estimated population of 9008 guests, who stayed in the hotels, constitute the survey population.

Sample Size

For the population of 9008, Schall (2003) suggested minimum of 377 guests need to be surveyed. However to have 95 percent confidence level (at 5 percent error rate), the sample size ha to be increased by 50 percent. Hence the sample size is

$$= 377 \times 0.5 (377) = \mathbf{565}$$

Therefore the sample size taken for the study is fixed at 565

After careful scrutiny, few questionnaires were also discarded for incomplete responses. Finally the effective sample was settled at 535 representing 97 percent response.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

TABLE – 2 .LENGTH OF STAY VS PURPOSE OF VISIT

Length of Stay (days)	Purpose of the Visit			Total	Chi-square	Sig.
	Conference	Business	Vacation			
1	19 (21.1%)	3 (1.3%)	0	22 (4.1%)		
2	55 (61.1%)	83 (34.5%)	24 (11.4%)	162 (30.3%)		
3	14 (15.6%)	145 (61.7%)	43 (20.4%)	202 (37.8%)	410.64	<0.001
4	2 (2.2%)	4 (1.7%)	4 (1.9%)			
5 and above	0	0	139 (66.2%)	139 (25.9%)		
Total	90 (16.9%)	235 (43.9%)	210 (39.2%)	535		

Table - 2 shows the cross tabulation between length of stay and purpose of visit. In general, people who stay for official purpose (to attend meeting / conference / convention) stay for very few days to 3 days), whereas people who come for vacation will stay for very duration (more than 4 or 5 days).Hence, it is hypothesized that there is relationship between length of stay and purpose of visit. In order to test the relations a Chi-square test was performed and the result shows a signified outcome (Chi-square - 410.64; p<0.001), which means that guests length of stay has some relationship with their purpose of visit, observed from the table - 2 that 66.2 percent of the guests come for vacation stay in a hotel for more number of days (usually more than 5 days), whereas 61.1 percent and 61.7 percent of guests who come for conference and business stay for 2 days and days respectively.

However, it is interesting to note that no guest who comes for vacation stay for one day and no guest who comes for business purpose or to attend conference stays for more than four days. Hence, the conclusion is that the guest who comes for vacation stays for longer duration and the guest who comes for business or conference stays for less number of days. The results obtained through chi-square test confirm this point.

Influence of Length of Stay on Guest Satisfaction

To find out the influence of length of stay on guest satisfaction, ANOVA was performed and the results are shown in the table 3. It is identified that guests' satisfaction differs significantly with respect to their length of stay ($F=16.837$; $p<0.001$). That is, the satisfaction level of the guests who stay either one day or more number of days (5 days) is less compared to that of others (2, 3, or 4 days). However, in order to check whether length of stay and purpose of visit influence guest satisfaction, Uni-variate ANOVA was performed and the result shows insignificant outcome and hence further analyses were not done in this direction.

TABLE – 3 INFLUENCE OF LENGTH OF STAY ON GUEST SATISFACTIONS

Length of Stay	Purpose of the Visit	Guest Satisfaction		
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
1 day	Conference	5.42	19	1.766
	Business	5.33	3	2.466
	Total	5.41	22	2.804
2 days	Conference	5.64	55	1.698
	Business	5.29	83	1.952
	Vacation	4.67	24	2.135
	Total	5.31	162	1.913
3 days	Conference	5.64	14	1.834
	Business	5.68	145	1.869
	Vacation	5.41	43	1.983
	Total	5.62	202	1.885
4 days	Conference	6.00	2	.707
	Business	6.00	4	1.683
	Vacation	6.63	4	.750
	Total	6.25	10	1.137
5 days and above	Vacation	5.58	139	1.862
	Total	5.58	139	1.862
Total	Conference	5.60	90	1.700
	Business	5.54	235	1.901
	Vacation	5.46	210	1.923
	Total	5.52	535	1.875
F		16.837		
Significance		<0.001		

Influence of Length of Stay on Hotel Factors

The hotel factors considered in the present study are reception, food and beverages, housekeeping, room quality, general amenities, security and communication facilities. The length of stay has been taken as one day, two days, three days, four days, and five and above.

TABLE – 4 INFLUENCE OF LENGTH OF STAY ON HOTEL FACTORS

Length of stay (Days)		Reception	Food and Beverages	House Keeping	Room Quality	General amenities	Security	Communication facilities
One (22)	Mean	4.91	5.02	4.85	4.86	4.37	5.12	5.36
	SD	1.16	.94	2.15	1.75	1.55	.72	1.20
Two (162)	Mean	5.98	5.92	5.92	5.90	4.83	5.39	5.51
	SD	1.17	1.55	1.82	1.34	1.57	1.28	1.09
Three (202)	Mean	5.84	5.63	5.87	6.05	5.03	5.32	5.42
	SD	1.43	1.38	1.83	1.23	1.40	1.25	1.07
Four (10)	Mean	6.06	6.02	5.75	6.07	5.39	5.37	5.60
	SD	1.25	.76	1.60	1.35	1.41	1.26	.94
Five and above (139)	Mean	4.87	5.15	5.14	4.21	4.22	5.23	5.40
	SD	1.10	1.32	1.87	1.19	1.40	1.33	1.02
Total	Mean	5.53	5.54	5.50	5.41	4.76	5.28	5.45
	SD	1.27	1.40	1.84	1.28	1.46	1.26	1.06
	F	2.654*	1.024	0.452	1.233	1.616	1.129	0.327
	Sig.	0.032	0.394	0.771	0.296	0.169	0.342	0.860

The analysis for length of stay with respect to guest satisfaction has been done separately for Indian and non-Indian guests. The guest satisfaction scores for Indian and non-Indians are found to be almost the same and hence it is concluded that there is no significant difference between Indian and Non-Indian guests with respect to hotel factors. Therefore, the overall satisfaction score has been taken for the forthcoming analysis.

In order to find out the influence of length of stay on different hotel factors, ANOVA was performed and the results are shown in table 4. It is interesting to note that except security and communication facilities, all variables have significant effect, which means that the length of stay influences reception, food and beverages, housekeeping, room quality, and general amenities.

With regard to reception, length of stay has significant result ($F=2.654$; $P=0.032$). On observing the mean values of reception with respect to different durations of length of stay, it could be noticed that the mean value of reception is less for the guests who stay for one day and more than five days, whereas the mean values of remaining categories of stay are fairly higher.

Similar to reception, length of stay differs significantly with respect to food and beverages ($F=3.024$; $p=0.039$), housekeeping ($F=6.452$; $p=0.011$), room quality ($F=4.233$; $p=0.029$), and general amenities ($F=4.616$; $p=0.016$). That is, the mean values of these hotel factors are lower for the guests who stay for one day and five or more days, while the mean values are comparatively higher for the guests who stay for two, three or four days.

Guests who enter into a hotel expect the best in all aspects as it has star status. But, while experiencing the services, they may r tolerate even a small deviation in any one of the services. For example delay in food and beverages services, delay in laundry service, non availability of seats in reception, not getting proper response from reception, etc. will create some negative impression, though the ha may provide better service to its guests. Hence, hoteliers should care in all aspects of the hotel factors to satisfy their guests, irrespective of their length of stay. The management should keep mind that the "first impression is the best impression"; what guest experience in first visit will certainty have an impact on subsequent visits.

A satisfied customer can bring more customers, which can reduce the burden on management to look for new customers. Another important finding of this study is that the guests who stay more than four days also have given low score for guest satisfaction. Adam Smith, a Scottish economist says that when a person is repeatedly doing a job/an activity, he will be specialized in that a which makes him identify even a small problem and give solution: that problem. Similarly, in hotel industry when a guest stays for a number of days the chances of identifying even a minor deficiency is bright. This small deficiency may reduce his satisfaction level and, he may give low score towards guest satisfaction. Hence hotel management must be conscious in all aspects and provide consistent service to its guests who stay for more number of days

TABLE - 5 - INFLUENCE OF LENGTH OF STAY ON LIKELIHOOD OF REVIST AND RECOMMENDATION

Length of stay	Likelihood of Revisit		Recommendation	
	Mean	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
1 days	5.15	2.58	5.27	2.36
2 days	5.29	2.15	5.74	1.99
3 days	5.46	1.96	5.62	2.07
4 days	5.07	2.60	6.55	1.09
5 days & above	5.46	2.09	5.87	1.95
Total	0.312		1.010	
Sig	0.870		0.402	

Level of satisfaction of a guest is likely to differ based on the length of stay and is proved in this study. As discussed earlier, the accuracy of guest satisfaction can be obtained by getting the opinion of guests who stay for more number of days as they have experienced and enjoyed most of the benefits and services provided by the hoteliers. Satisfied guests may revisit the same hotel in future (Lovelock, 1991) and also recommend it to others through word-of~ mouth (Marshall, 1993). However, it is important to determine the influence of length of stay on likelihood of revisit and recommendation. ANOVA was performed and the result shows that no significant difference exists with respect to likelihood of revisit (F = 0.312; p = 0.870), recommendation (F = 1.010; p = 0.402). That is, with respect to length of stay, guests do not differ in their opinion towards likelihood of revisit and recommendation, even though they differ on guest satisfaction.

However, when the matter of duration of stay comes doesn't mean that the guests stay for one or two days do not recommend and revisit the hotel, and the guests who stay for one number of days do recommend and revisit. Irrespective of the guests who stay, willingness to revisit and recommendation are almost positive all the guests who stay in the star hotels.

TABLE 6- ANOVA -INFLUENCE OF PURPOSE OF VISIT ON LIKELIHOOD OF REVISIT, RECOMMENDATION, AND GUEST SATISFACTION

Purpose of Visit	Likelihood of Revisit		Recommendation		Guest Satisfaction	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Conference	6.19	1.31	5.23	1.79	5.60	1.70
Business	5.86	1.98	5.58	1.05	5.54	1.90
Vacation	4.33	1.10	6.23	1.05	5.46	1.90
Total	5.46	1.46	5.68	1.29	5.52	1.87
F	7.087*		9.634*		0.213	
Sig	0.033		0.019		0.808	
*- significant at 0.05 level						

Table 6 shows the influenced of purpose of visit on likelihood of revisit, recommendation and guest satisfaction. In order to examine the influence, ANOVA was performed and the results are shown in the above table. it is observed from the table that the purpose of visit significantly differs with respect to likelihood of revisit (F=7.087; p=0.033) and recommendation (F=9.634; p=0.019), but shows insignificant result for guest satisfaction (F=0.213; p=0.808).

With an aim to find out the most influencing category, *post hoc* Bonferroni test was performed and the result shows that, with regard to likelihood of revisit, guests who come for Conference (mean = 6.19; SD= 1.31) and business 9Mean = 5.86; SD = 1.98) have given high scores compared to the guests who come for vacation (mean = .33; SD = 1.46), which means that the chance of revisiting the hotel is high for businessmen and the guests two attend meeting or conference, whereas the probability of revisiting who come for vacation is comparatively low.

With regard to recommendation, respondents have high score to vacation 9mean = 6.23; SD = 1.05) compared to Conference (mean = 5.23; SD = 1.79) and business (mean = 5.58; SD = 1.05), which is confirmed from post hoc Bonferroni test. That is, guests who come for vacation recommend the hotel to others compared to the guests who come for business and meetings. On observing the results, it could be concluded that the guests who come for meeting or business will revisit the hotel in future, and the guests who come for vacation will recommend the hotel to other.

It is a known fact that businessmen visit many places regularly and stay in hotels. If the service provided by the hotel is good, then they may revisit the same hotel regularly. Also, the guests who come to attend seminars or conferences may revisit the hotel, because they may come for attending some other seminars or conferences in fun for which they need to stay.

The customers who come for vacation may not prefer the same place regularly during vacation, rather they opt for new places to see and hence the chance of revisit is less. However, tourists can recommend the hotel to others who plan to visit the place in future which may not be the case for businessmen and conference participants. Since, tourists have known about the places and experienced the stay in hotels, they may give information to n comers about the place of visit, place to stay, uniqueness in the area, and other details.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

The greatest challenge faced by the hotel management is to offer services to the guests who stay for a very short period or considerably a longer period (for example 5 days). The findings of the study lead to the understanding that maintaining the satisfaction level of these two categories is too critical in enhancing their

revisit intention. Hotel management should device a system or a process which should ensure consistent services for the guests staying for more than 5 days. The point to be noted here is that the guests who stay for one day requires the best attention. It is difficult to find out their expectation and identify what kind of hotel services these guests would use. The management must put their best effort, through their staff, to keep the satisfaction level, always, at a higher level.

Since two third of the total respondents are doing business, hotel management should focus on business travelers to improve the frequency of visits and the number of visitors.Guests who stay for one day may not have the chance of enjoying all the benefits offered by the hoteliers. Hence, the organization should device some strategy so that the guests should experience the maximum benefits offered in the hotel.In simple words, a relational-oriented and quality-bound services offered to customers would help the service organization to may lead to unfavourable word-of-mouth referrals which spoil the opportunity of getting new clients.

LIMITATION

- The data were collected from the International travelers at Chennai International airport only, which may not be similar to others who depart from different international airports in India. Furthermore, the study was conducted only in Chennai city and hence researchers must be cautious when generalizing the results with other population.
- Every hotel gives special thrust to few specific service attributes and project them as their uniqueness. It is to be noted that the present finding is a measure of overall satisfaction of the guests who have stayed in different star hotels in Chennai. The reaction of the guests with respect to individual hotels is not probed. Hence, executives of the hotels who want to gain insight into the behaviour of guests need to be cautious while formulating the strategies to enhance the satisfaction level.

CONCLUSION

Customer satisfaction plays a major role in determining the likelihood of revisit. This, in turn will build repeat business through positive referrals. Hotel factors assist the hotels in keeping the guest in happy mood. It is concluded that an organization's long-term success in a market is essentially determined by its ability to expand and maintain a large and satisfied customer base. However, it is important to recognize that satisfaction is time specific and non-permanent and, requires continuous and consistent investment. Hotel organizations should, therefore, constantly strive to develop and enhance their customers' satisfaction level.

Outcome of this research indicates that one of the critical challenges faced by the hoteliers is to create opportunities to their guests to experience (all) the facilities available in the hotel, especially for those who stay for a shorter period. Results shows that length of stay positively influences the satisfaction level but not revisit attitude and positive referrals. However satisfied guests tends to revisit the same hotel in future and likely to refer to their friends and relatives.' Satisfaction is the nucleus and everything revolves around it and duration of stay is one of the major determinants of hotel factors which is a major predictor of satisfaction.

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