



ELSEVIER

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

ScienceDirect

Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 224 (2016) 149 – 157

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

6th International Research Symposium in Service Management, IRSSM-6 2015, 11-15 August
2015, UiTM Sarawak, Kuching, Malaysia

A Study of Brand Image towards Customer's Satisfaction in the Malaysian Hotel Industry

Johanudin Lahap^{a,*}, Nur Safiah Ramli^b, Noraslinda Mohd Said^c, Salleh Mohd Radzi^d,
Razlan Adli Zain^e

^{a, b, c} *Universiti Teknologi MARA, Penang 13500, Malaysia*

^d *Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam 40450, Malaysia*

^e *Universiti Teknologi MARA, Dungun 23000, Malaysia*

Abstract

Branding is known to be important to an organization. Through effective and efficient branding research and development, it is believed that the attainment of proper organizational return on investment (ROI) can be viably achieved. Therefore, establishing a strong brand image is inevitable to ensure the overall organizational success. This research was conducted to study the importance of brand image towards customers' satisfaction and to examine whether the brand image influences customers' satisfaction. Citing from the past literature it was found that brand image was among the first constituents that customers will adhere to when selecting accommodation. In this study, a total of 300 questionnaires were deployed with a 75% response rate. The finding was found to be intriguing and revealed that brand image does influence customer satisfaction in the Malaysian hotel industry context. Thus, this study is valuable because it strengthens further the understanding of what customers really want when choosing a hotel. Therefore, this study has the capacity to offer hotel operators a way to plan, formulate, and decide to what extent they should improve their brand image to compete in the long run.

© 2016 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of the Universiti Teknologi MARA Sarawak

Keywords: brand image; customer satisfaction; hotel industry

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +6-016-472-1006.

E-mail address: j_lahap@yahoo.com.au

1. Introduction

Hospitality and tourism industry worldwide have developed into a truly global industry in which both consumers and producers are spread worldwide. The industry was known to be one of the major contributors to many countries (Mohajerani & Miremadi, 2012). In relation to that, the hotel sector emerged as a subsection of the industry that strengthened the business. The hotel industry in Malaysia has undergone a process of transformation that brought phenomenal economic expansion towards the Malaysian economy (Lahap, Said, Rose, Sumarjan & Mohi, 2014). In 2013, it was revealed that approximately 25.7 million international tourists visited Malaysia. Furthermore, it was recorded that the tourism revenue has increased from MYR 60.6 billion to MYR 65.4 billion (USD 19 billion) in 2013, an increase of 7.3% (Tourism Malaysia, 2014). Significantly, the development of hospitality industry in Malaysia has gone to a certain degree that further enhances the Malaysian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that intertwined to the overall Malaysian economy. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reports ranked Malaysia as the best ten tourist destination in 2012. The Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) has recorded a total of 2,724 hotels with a total of 195,445 hotels rooms to cater the inflow of international tourist and domestic consumption (Tourism Malaysia, 2014).

The aggressive nature of this industry in attaining service perfection drives hotel operators to constantly seeking for a new approach in building strong positive experience towards their customers (Liat & Rashid, 2013). Subsequently, it is vital for hotel operators to stay adhered concerning the present and future needs to advance in the business and to react towards the needs and wants of hotel guests. Innovation and creativity is a crucial element in maintaining competitive edge in this industry (Lahap, O'Mahony & Dalrymple, 2014; Tigu, Iorgulescu and Ravar, 2013). Thus, hotel operators have to explore hard especially in creating unique and distinctive service features that be able to meet and exceed customer's expectations (Liat & Rashid, 2013). Hence, this research is conducted to study on how brand image could contribute to customer's satisfaction in particular to the Malaysian hotel industry, and therefore, one hypothesis is offered: H¹: There is a significant relationship between brand image and customer satisfaction.

2. Literature review

2.1. Brand image

Image is an important element of a hotel, a brand acts as the most influential element in services because of its natural uniqueness like perishability, inseparability, tangibility and heterogeneity (Dhillon, 2013). Saleem and Raja (2014) posited that brand image is a reflection of a brand held in consumer memory. They added that, in a simple words, brand image is basically what comes into the consumers' mind when a brand is placed in front of the customer. In other words, it means that when the customers assess a brand name, they spontaneously think of the features of a brand. Mohajerani and Miremadi (2012) explained that image is the overall impression made in the minds of the public about something. They also stated that the image of service organization is diverse, and therefore, each customer has different types of expected impression, experiences and contacts with the organization, and that leads to a different image acceptance. Recent views of hotel operators stated that a solid brand image has the capacity to improve corporate esteem, financial performance, occupancy, average price, revenue and degree of profitability (Fung So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2013). Suhartanto and Kandampully (2003) stated that "...company image also can be an important element in the value equation...company or brand image can support or undermine the value that customer's feel they are getting, and therefore, image can affect loyalty..." (p. 9). Brand image can be translated into what customer could benefit, the realization customer's attributes and the customer's personality traits (Maroofi, Nazaripour, & Maaznezhad, 2012).

Image is developed in the customer's mind through the impacts of promotion, advertisement, public relations, word-of-mouth and customer's encounter with the products and services (Suhartanto & Kandampully, 2003). Moreover, one approach in keeping up customer's brand dedication is to emulate an existing positive brand image implemented by successful organization (Kayaman & Arasli, 2007). The hotel image is also an important variable that positively or negatively influences marketing strategies of the hotel itself (Lahap et al., 2014). According to Suhartanto and Kandampully (2003) image is an important element to organizations, due to the ability to influence

customer's perception towards goods and services and it affects customer's buying decision and behavior. When a customer is committed to a brand or toward a company, the customer will cooperate actively and ignore competitors, which sustain company's profit in a long run (Minsung, Kwang-Ho, & Won-Moo, 2011). As proposed by Schulz and Omweri (2012) superior quality of services could add value and lead to customer retention and customer loyalty. Organization knows that their profitability is resulted from creating a strong image products or services that leads to customer loyalty (Mirzaee, Rad, & Molavi, 2013). Despite of that Robinot and Giannelloni (2010) debated that satisfaction is essential, however, not sufficient to support customer's loyalty, implying that regardless of the possibility that the hotel guests are satisfied with the service, they will keep on deserting in the event that they accept because they know that they could get a better value, comfort or quality somewhere else.

The corporate image is influenced by service quality and customer satisfaction which in turn influence customer loyalty (Schulz & Omweri, 2012). Janghyeon, Ekinci and Whyatt (2011) further explained that there are two unique dimensions of quality and they are physical quality and staff behavior. Based on the studies conducted on store image Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000) identified two dimensions of image namely "holistic" and "attributes". The holistic dimension refers to an individual's mental picturing of the phenomena as a whole, as opposed to a mere collection of independent stimuli. In other words, the holistic or imaginary element of image encompasses the total impression and feeling of a phenomenon from any senses. Suhartanto and Kandampully (2003) mentioned that the operationalization of the holistic dimension of hotel image is based on the customer's perception of the hotel's atmosphere, reputation, external appearance, and layout. Meanwhile, they mentioned that attributes dimensions refer to the facilities and physical environment that forms and influences the phenomena. The operationalization of the attributes dimension is based on the basis of the guest's perception of the hotel location, physical facilities, interior design, price, the quality of the goods and services provided and also employee performance.

2.2. Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction became among the most important antecedent that the hotel management needs to achieve while delivering services to customers. Customer satisfaction, leads to various effects and it was known to be an indicator of a company's future income and profit (Forozia, Zadeh & Gilani, 2013). In other word, service provider of hotel industry should put a priority in fulfilling customer's need as their main objectives. Furthermore, customer satisfaction has become the determinant and predictable aspects of success, therefore, hotels are not able to compete with their rivals without satisfying customers (Forozia et al. 2013). They further asserted that customer satisfaction analysis helps hotel operators to assess their weaknesses and flaws, ergo solving customer's real needs and wants. In addition, Mohajerani and Miremadi (2012) postulated that customers' satisfaction will occur when customers' perception are met or exceeds customer's expectation. Similarly, Torres and Kline (2014) stated that customer satisfaction is defined as the individual's perception of a performance of products or services that tailored to his or her expectation. This means that if a hotel is able to fulfilling customer needs, in return they will be satisfied vice versa.

Customer satisfaction can be seen as a customer's perspectives in which his or her needs, wants, and expectations throughout the product or service life cycle have been met or surpassed, bringing about ensuring repurchase and delay unwaveringness (Usta, Berezina & Cobanoglu, 2014). Customer satisfaction is a business beliefs which leads to the creation of value for customers, anticipating and managing their expectations, demonstrating ability, and responsibility to satisfy their needs (Dominici & Guzzo, 2010). If the hotel industry can easily understand and satisfy customer needs, they will conceivably make greater profits than those who fail to satisfy them. Dominici and Guzzo (2010) also stated that as the cost of attracting new customers is higher than the cost of retaining the existing ones, therefore, managers must focus on retaining the existing customers by improving policies and procedure in managing customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction is the most important criteria in determining the quality of service delivered to customers through the products or services and other supplementary services (Wai & Low, 2005).

3. Methodology

In this research a total number of 300 questionnaires were distributed. As a result, 225 responses were successfully gathered which represents 75% response rate. In this, the researchers employed factor analysis in examining factor loading, reliability and validity (Cronbach’s Alpha) for consistency, mean, standard deviation and multiple regressions as a means to find the relationship between variables. The researcher used survey questionnaire to collect the required data and 5 point Likert’s Scale were employed. In this study the respondents were mostly from the Klang Valley, and stratified sampling technique was employed. The respondents were chosen due to the availability and ease of cooperation towards this study. The questionnaire consisted of three sections that included questions relating to demographic, brand image and customer satisfaction. Those questions were adopted from Kim and Kim (2005) for brand image and Rust and Zahorik (1993) for customer satisfaction. Questions pertaining to brand image consists of 8 items and 13 for customer satisfaction. The questionnaires were sent to respondents all over Malaysia via email.

4. Findings

4.1. Demographics

In this research, it was found that out of 225 of total respondents, 158 of them were female, which represented 70.2% and 58 respondents were male representing 29.8% of the whole sample population. It shows that the percentage of female respondents is higher and dominated the sample of the research. In general, it can be suggested that in this sample selection, the majority of respondent is dominated by female. The distribution of respondents by gender is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondents gender.

	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Count	158	67	225
Percentage (%)	70.2%	29.8%	100.0%

It was found that the respondent’s highest age range is below 25 years old which represented 64.9% of the sample. It can be suggested that within the sample most of the respondents are young travelers. The second highest respondents’ age range is within 25-35 with the total of 26.7% of the sample. The smallest percentage of the respondents’ age range is 0.4% of the range over 55 years old. The remaining respondents are within 36-45 and 46-55 which represent 6.2% and 1.8% respectively. Table 2 shows the age range of the respondents.

Table 2. The distribution of respondents' age range.

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25	146	64.9%
25-35	60	26.7%
36-45	14	6.2%
46-55	4	1.8%
Over 55	1	0.4%
Total	225	100%

Based on the data collected, it shows that the majority of the respondents are students which represent 39.1% of the whole sample of population. The second highest occupation percentage is employee which represents 20.4% followed by government official with the total of 20.0% of the sample. Besides that, it also shows that the lowest distribution of respondents’ occupation is others where it represents only 5.3% of the sample. Table 3 shows the overall distribution of the respondents’ occupation.

Table 3. The distribution of respondents' occupation.

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Government Employees	45	20.0%
Employee- Independent	46	20.4%
Owner or Private Business	34	15.1%
Student	88	39.1%
Others	12	5.3%
Total	225	100%

Table 4 shows the total reliability scales for customer satisfaction and brand image is 0.93 and 0.90 respectively. It shows that all the items are reliable and the overall variable items are acceptable.

Table 4. Result of reliability test.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Item
Satisfaction	0.933	13
Brand Image	0.902	8
Total	0.954	21

4.2. Brand image

Table 5 depicts 8 questions regarding brand image and the finding reveals that the highest mean score is 4.01 (*SD* = 0.815) for comfortableness of the hotel. In positive side, the respondents also strongly agreed that the hotel need to have a clean image with the mean score of 3.91 (*SD* = 0.874). Majority of the respondents also agreed that the staff at the hotel they have stayed is kind which represents the mean score of 3.66 (*SD* = 0.863). Moreover, the respondents also agreed that the hotel they have stayed before was luxury with the mean of 3.52 (*SD* = 0.877), but they are not sure whether the hotel is suitable enough for high class guest to stay with the mean of 3.40 (*SD* = 0.959). Other than that the respondents also agreed that the hotel need to have differentiated image from its competitors so that it will stand out from the others with the mean of 3.51 (*SD* = 0.907). Meanwhile, most of the respondents were disagreed that the hotel they have stayed has a long history with the mean of 3.28 (*SD* = 0.854). The lowest mean score recorded is a question that asking whether the respondents feel special when they visiting the hotel with the mean of 3.20 (*SD* = 0.974).

Table 5. Descriptive analysis of image of the hotel.

Item	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
It is comfortable	225	4.01	0.815
It has a very clean image	225	3.91	0.874
It is luxurious	225	3.52	0.877
It is a suitable place for high class	225	3.40	0.959
I become special by visiting this hotel	225	3.20	0.974
The staff is very kind	225	3.66	0.863
It has a long history (about the hotel)	225	3.28	0.854
It has a differentiated image from other	225	3.51	0.907

The pattern loadings, factor structure and factor interpretation are shown in Table 6 below. The dimensions were defined by the variables with the significant factor loadings of 0.6 and above. Respondents reported that the hotel that they have stayed before is comfortable for them (0.74). Other than that, it was also found that the hotel that they have stayed has a clean image (0.82). The respondents also reported that the hotel that they have stayed is luxurious (0.82) and it is a suitable place for high class guest to visit and stay (0.78). In addition, some of the respondents

stated that they've become special by visiting the hotel (0.74) as the hotel treated them exclusively and by providing to them an extra service. The staffs at the hotel were found to be kind with factor loading of 0.80. Respondents also reported that some hotel has a long history (0.67) as the hotel has been in the business for quite sometimes and the hotel that the respondents have stayed before has a differentiated image from other hotel brand (0.78) that makes the hotel dissimilar to competitors. Overall, it can be suggested that the respondents are concern with the image of the hotel.

Table 6. The result of Varimax rotated factor matrix for brand image.

Item	Brand Image	Factor Loadings
1	It is comfortable	0.74
2	It has a very clean image	0.82
3	It is luxurious	0.82
4	It is a suitable place for high class	0.78
5	I become special by visiting the hotel	0.74
6	The staff is very kind	0.80
7	It has a long history (about the hotel)	0.67
8	It has a differentiated image from other hotel brand (uniqueness of the hotel)	0.78

4.3. Customer satisfaction

Based on the results, it shows that the highest mean score pertains to the ambience (interior design and décor of the hotel) and it recorded a mean score of 3.87 ($SD = 0.866$). This means that when the guest viewed the ambience of the hotel at a first glance, they know that they will be satisfied. Other than that, most of the respondents also agreed that the amenities that were offered in the guest room was satisfying ($M = 3.81, SD = 0.851$) and the hotel employee were friendly to them with the mean of 3.80 ($SD = 0.807$). They also agreed that the reservation department is convenient when they make a booking with the score of ($M = 3.80, SD = 0.841$). The respondents also reported that they agreed that the location of the hotel was accessible to other businesses or attractions ($M = 3.79, SD = 0.876$). With regards to the quality of the service the majority of respondents scored ($M = 3.73, SD = 0.802$), the amenities offered in other part of the hotel ($M = 3.66, SD = 0.846$), the room rate ($M = 3.56, SD = 0.875$), and the easiness to access the hotel from airport or major highways ($M = 3.51, SD = 0.926$). Most of the respondents also think that the hotel listens to their needs very well ($M = 3.56, SD = 0.870$). Meanwhile, there are some items that they disagree with which are the timeliness of the hotel staff dealing with them as a guest in busy times ($M = 3.44, SD = 0.859$) and the price of other services provided by the hotel such as room service and laundry ($M = 3.31, SD = 0.911$). The lowest mean on this section is the question regarding on how well the staff or the managers know their guest when they visit the hotel with the mean of 2.80 ($SD = 1.083$).

Based on the analysis, it was found that the hotel employees were friendly according to most of the respondents (0.77) but the employees or the managers did not recognize some of their guests (0.53). Respondents reported that the hotel listened to their needs during their stay at the hotel (0.70). It was also found that respondents found that the hotel reservation system were good (0.71). The respondents also reported that the hotels were able to deal with them as guests in a short time during busy times (0.70). Furthermore, most of the respondents expressed that the room rate of the hotels that they have stayed in was reasonable (0.80). The respondents also found the price of other services offered by the hotel was affordable (0.80). It was also found that the location of the hotel to other businesses or attractions was reachable (0.79) and respondents posited that the hotel they have stayed could be accessed from the airport and major highways (0.70). In addition, the respondents found that the ambience (interior design and décor) was attractive to them (0.83). The respondents also found that the amenities offered in the guest room were satisfying (0.81) and also the amenities that were offered in other parts of the hotel (0.80). The quality of service offered by the hotel (0.85) recorded the highest factor loading of 0.85, and it can be assumed that respondents really seek for quality of service.

Table 7. Descriptive analysis of customer satisfaction.

Item	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The friendliness of the hotel employee	225	3.80	0.807
How well the staff or managers know me	225	2.80	1.083
How well the hotel listens to my needs	225	3.56	0.870
The convenience and service of the reservation system	225	3.80	0.841
The timeliness of the hotel staff dealing with me as a guest in busy times	225	3.44	0.859
The room rate	225	3.56	0.875
The price of other services (e.g. room service, laundry)	225	3.31	0.911
The location of the hotel to other businesses or attractions	225	3.79	0.876
How easily accessible the hotel is from airports and major highways	225	3.51	0.926
The ambience in the hotel (interior design/décor)	225	3.87	0.866
The amenities offered in the guest room	225	3.81	0.851
The amenities offered in other parts of the hotel	225	3.66	0.846
The quality of service offered by the hotel	225	3.73	0.802

Table 8. The result of Varimax rotated factor matrix for customer satisfaction.

Item	Customer Satisfaction	Factor Loading
1	The friendliness of the hotel employees	0.77
2	How well the staff or managers know me	0.53
3	How well the hotel listens to my needs	0.70
4	The convenience and service of the reservation system	0.71
5	The timeliness of the hotel staff dealing with me as a guest in busy times	0.70
6	The room rate	0.80
7	The price of other services (e.g. room service, laundry)	0.80
8	The location of the hotel to other businesses or attractions	0.79
9	How easily accessible the hotel is from airport and major highways	0.70
10	The ambience in the hotel (interior design/decor)	0.83
11	The amenities offered in the guest room	0.81
12	The amenities offered in other parts of the hotel	0.80
13	The quality of service offered by the hotel	0.85

4.4. Multiple regression

To test the significant relationship between brand image and customer satisfaction, multiple regression analysis was employed. This analysis was carried out to determine whether the brand image significantly predict customer satisfaction. The hypothesis is: H¹: There is a significant relationship between brand image and customer satisfaction and the results shows that:

Table 9 shows the results of the regression analysis between brand image and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. It was found that the model was significant with predictor explaining 68.2% of the variation in customer satisfaction. The remaining 31.8% is explained by other predictor’s variables. From the results, it shows that the predictor significantly contributed to the customers’ satisfaction in the hotel industry. The result also shows that the brand image is an important contribution towards the customers’ satisfaction. Consequently, the hypothesis is accepted where there is a relationship between brand image and customers’ satisfaction (p < .005). The results were in line with Fung et al. (2013) and further supported by Mirzaee et al. (2013) opined that brand image does influence customer satisfaction in a long run. Therefore, it can be contended that based on the finding of this research it was found that brand image is a significant antecedent towards customer’s satisfaction. The summary of the hypothesis testing is illustrated in Table 10.

Table 9. Results on multiple regression of brand image, $R^2 = 0.682$, $p < .005$.

	B	SE B	B
Constant	10.078	1.700	
Brand Image	1.282	0.059	0.826

Table 10. Summary of the hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis	R^2	β	Regression Statistical significant	Result
There is a relationship between brand image and customer satisfaction	.682	.826	$p < .005$	Supported

5. Recommendations

In this study it was found that customer satisfaction helps to drive repeat business and should remain a top priority of a service-oriented business. There are many ways for hotel operators to satisfy their customers. One of the viable ways is to pay more attention towards tangible elements such as the architectural design, style, ambience (music, scent, color) and layout of the hotel which may attract customers that is recorded in this paper. As a result this study will provide hotel operators to be competitive over rival (Lahap, O'Mahony & Dalrymple, 2014; Kayaman & Arasli, 2007). In addition, it was revealed that if hotel operators neglect paying attention to those attributes, as a result, it will confine the chance of repeat patronage; this finding is in line with Margabandhu and Saravananaraj (2014) study. While the hotel management focuses on their products and services, they also need to pay attention to the staff or employees. This is because the employees are the ones who will deliver the services to customers. In summary, an intriguing finding shows that employee need to be properly trained and compensated so that they can deliver an exceptional services to customers (Lahap, Said, Rose & Saber, 2014b).

6. Limitation

Some limitations are unavoidable in this study. This study was conducted in a small population and acted as a preliminary work that will be extended to a longitudinal research. In this study, several limitations were offered such as time and monetary support. Due to limited budget and resources, this research was conducted in a short period of time and to a small sample.

7. Conclusion

Despite the limitations, this research had successfully achieved its goal. This study enhances and fosters our understanding regarding how brand image could influence customer satisfaction in the Malaysian hotel industry. To sum up, it is hoped that this research will contribute to the body of knowledge and it can act as a tool to provide maximum customer satisfaction as well as to be used as a recommendation for hotels to improve their brand image so that it will attract more customers and able to retain the existing customers.

References

- Dhillon, D. J. (2013). Brand loyalty in hospitality sector in India: A case study of Indian hotels in Goa-Kerala. *Journal of Business and Management*, 9(3), 58-63.
- Dominici, G., & Guzzo, R. (2010). Customer satisfaction in the hotel industry: A case study from Sicily. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 2(2), 3-12.
- Forozia, A., Zadeh, M. S., & Gilani, M. H. (2013). Customer satisfaction in hospitality industry: Middle East tourists at 3 star hotels in Malaysia. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology*, 5(17), 4329-4335.
- Fung So, K. K., King, C., Sparks, B. A., & Wang, Y. (2013). The influence of customer brand identification on hotel brand evaluation and loyalty department. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 34, 31-41.

- Janghyeon, N., Ekinci, Y., & Whyatt, G. (2011). Brand equity, brand loyalty and consumer satisfaction. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(3), 1009-1030.
- Kandampully, J., & Suhartanto, D. (2000). Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: The role of customer satisfaction and image. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 12(6), 346-351.
- Kayaman, R., & Arasli, H. (2007). Customer based brand equity: Evidence from the hotel industry. *Managing Service Quality*, 17(1), 92-109.
- Kim, H. B., & Kim, W. G. (2005). The relationship between brand equity and firms performance in luxury hotels and chain restaurants. *Tourism Management*, 26(4), 549-560.
- Lahap, J., Isa, S.M., Said, M.S. Rose, K., & Saber, J. (2015). An examination of current compensation and performance appraisal practice among hotel employer in Malaysia: A preliminary study. *Theory and Practice in Hospitality and Tourism Research* (pp. 9-14). Penang: CRC Press/Balkema.
- Lahap, J., O' Mahony, B., & Dalrymple, J. (2013). Barriers to improving service delivery in Malaysia hotels: Experts' view on a proposed model. *9th Annual Tourism and Hospitality Research in Ireland Conference (THRIC)* (pp. 12-21). Dublin: Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology.
- Lahap, J., O' Mahony, B., & Dalrymple, J. (2015). Six Sigma as a source of service delivery in improvement methodology for the Malaysian hotel sector. *Theory and Practice in Hospitality and Tourism Research* (pp. 15-19). Penang: CRC Press/Balkema.
- Lahap, J., Said, M.N., Rose, K., Sumarjan, N., & Mohi, Z. (2014). Internal market orientation framework as a source of improving service quality within the Malaysian hotel sector. *The 4th International Conference on Tourism Research (ICTR)* (pp. 21-33). Kota Kinabalu: EDP Sciences.
- Liat, C. B., & Abdul Rashid, M. Z. (2011). A study of service quality, customer satisfaction, corporate image and customer loyalty in the hotel industry in Malaysia. *International Research Conference and Colloquium* (pp. 21-30). Kuala Lumpur: Kuala Lumpur Press.
- Margabandhu, S., & Saravananaraj, D. M. (2014). A study on customer satisfaction towards hotel industry in Vellore. *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, 4(2).
- Maroofi, F., Nazaripour, M., & Maaznezhad, S. (2012). Investigating the service brand, customers value and its perspective. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*, 2(4), 102-118.
- Minsung, K., Kwang-Ho, A., & Won-Moo, H. (2011). Building brand loyalty through managing brand community commitment. *Management Decision*, 49(7), 1194-1213.
- Mirzaee, N., Rad, M. K., & Molavi, N. (2013). An examination of the effect of brand's dimensions on loyalty of industrial customers. *Journal of Research and Development*, 1(2), 1-14.
- Mohajerani, P., & Miremadi, A. (2012). Customer satisfaction modeling in hotel industry: A case study of Kish Island in Iran. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 4(3), 134-152.
- Robinot, E., & Giannelloni, J. L. (2010). Do hotel's "green" attributes contribute to customer satisfaction? *Journal of Service Marketing*, 24(2), 157-169.
- Rust, R. T., & Zahorik, A. J. (1993). Customer satisfaction, customer retention and market share. *Journal of Retailing*, 69(2), 193-215.
- Saleem, H., & Raja, N. S. (2014). The impact of service quality on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 19(5), 706-711.
- Schulz, R. N., & Omweri, J. N. (2012). The effect of business image on customer retention in hotels in Eldoret, Kenya. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 4(18), 185-193.
- Suhartanto, D., & Kandampully, J. (2003). The role of customer satisfaction and image in gaining customer loyalty in the hotel industry. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 10(1/2), 1-24.
- Tigu, G., Iorgulescu, M. C., & Ravar, A.S. (2013). The Impact of creativity and innovation in the hospitality industry on customers. *Journal of Tourism Challenges and Trends*, 6(1), 9-33.
- Tourism Malaysia (2014). Facts and Figures. Retrieved Jan 5, 2015 from http://corporate.tourism.gov.my/research.asp?page=facts_figures
- Usta, M., Berezina, K., & Cobanoglu, C. (2014). The impact of hotel attributes' satisfaction on overall guest satisfaction. *Journal of Service Management*, 6(3), 1-12.
- Wai, C. P., & Low, K. L. T. (2005). Are travellers satisfied with Malaysian hotels? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(3), 217-227.