

Factors Influencing Housekeeping Services and Practices on Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the factors influencing the cleanliness, physical facilities, and room décor of the housekeeping services and practices in hotel. This study has three research objectives, research questions, and hypotheses. The theoretical frameworks were created using theories, models, and prior research findings about variable connections. According to the findings, there is a highly positive correlation between each of the independent variables and customer satisfaction, indicating that the relationship is statistically significant. The regression analysis shows cleanliness, and physical facilities have a significant impact on customer satisfaction because their p-values are less than 0.05, which are 0.04, 0.00, and 0.00 respectively. The results indicated that the authors' hypothesized that cleanliness has a positive correlation with customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Cleanliness, Physical Facilities, Room Décor, Customer, Satisfaction.

Introduction

Accommodation is a major component of the tourism industry (Kim & Kim, 2022). The accommodation market is also characterized by fierce competition among service providers. Customers benefit from competition by being provided with a variety of lodging options, which has led to rising expectations (Alnawas & Hemsley-Brown, 2019). To remain competitive, retain existing customers, and attract new ones, lodging providers generally improve their service quality and, as a result, customer satisfaction as a key strategy. Customer satisfaction measurement has piqued the interest of researchers (Teng, 2019; Naumov, 2019; Wu & Gao, 2019). As a result, customer satisfaction is one of the most thoroughly researched topics in the hospitality literature (Zhu, Lam & Lai, 2019; Rahimian, ShamiZanjani, Manian & Esfiddani, 2020; Bonfanti, Vigolo & Yfantidou, 2021). The creation and implementation of customer satisfaction indices, like the Swedish customer satisfaction barometer and the American customer satisfaction index, has resulted in a national and highly practical orientation to relevant research. These indices of customer satisfaction assess the overall customer experience.

Customer satisfaction is heavily influenced by service quality (Zhu et al., 2019). It is a multidimensional construct with dimensions that vary by sector (Prentice, Dominique Lopes

& Wang, 2020). Customers' perceptions of service quality typically differ between hotels with different classification ratings, as well as between different types of hotels, such as stand-alone versus resort-based luxury hotels (Olimovich, Bakhtiyorovich & Salimovna, 2020). More comparative studies of customer opinions of different types of hotels have thus been called for by research (Priyo, Mohamad & Adetunji, 2019; Buhalis, Lin & Leung, 2022).

Customer satisfaction is at the heart of every successful business in the service industry, particularly in hospitality, where a guest's experience is directly tied to the quality of service provided. The present study, which focuses on factors influencing housekeeping services and practices in hotels—specifically cleanliness, physical facilities, and room décor—offers essential insights into how these variables shape guest satisfaction. The significance of investigating these factors is multi-faceted, with implications that affect not only the hospitality industry but also customer behavior, employee performance, and the overall sustainability of hotel operations. Understanding how these factors contribute to customer satisfaction helps ensure that hotels can remain competitive, profitable, and relevant in an ever-changing market. The hospitality industry is experiencing rapid evolution driven by increased competition, customer expectations, and changing travel behaviors. As travelers become more discerning and digitally connected, their expectations of service quality have risen. Studies, including the current one, have shown that customer satisfaction is a crucial determinant of a hotel's success, affecting not only guest retention but also the hotel's reputation through online reviews and word-of-mouth recommendations.

In an industry where competition is fierce, customer satisfaction is no longer a bonus but a necessity for survival. The modern consumer has access to a plethora of hotel options, and decision-making is often influenced by online reviews and personal recommendations. Therefore, investigating how housekeeping practices, physical facilities, and room décor impact customer satisfaction is timely and essential. These elements form a substantial part of the guest experience, making them integral to customer retention and the overall success of hotel operations. In today's hospitality environment, where experiential travel is on the rise, room décor has taken on new importance. Guests are increasingly looking for unique, Instagram-worthy experiences, and room décor is a critical element in creating such moments. Hotels that invest in aesthetically pleasing and modern décor can differentiate themselves from competitors, attracting a niche market of travelers seeking more than just a place to sleep. Moreover, décor that resonates with guests on an emotional level can enhance their overall satisfaction, making them more likely to leave positive reviews and recommend the hotel to others.

This study emphasizes that poor room décor can lead to negative guest experiences, potentially driving away customers and reducing repeat bookings. Hotels that fail to keep up with modern design trends or that do not invest in high-quality materials for their interiors may find themselves struggling to compete in an increasingly design-conscious market. Thus, room décor is not just about aesthetics but is a strategic element that can make or break a guest's experience.

This study offers significant insights for various stakeholders in the hospitality industry:

1. **Hotel Owners and Management:** By understanding the factors that influence customer satisfaction, hotel owners and managers can make more informed decisions about where to allocate resources. For instance, investing in housekeeping services

and regularly updating room décor could lead to higher levels of guest satisfaction, increased bookings, and improved profitability.

2. **Hotel Employees:** Housekeeping staff and facility managers benefit from understanding how their work impacts the overall guest experience. When employees recognize the importance of cleanliness and décor in shaping customer satisfaction, they are more likely to take pride in their work, which in turn enhances the quality of service provided.
3. **Customers:** Guests ultimately benefit from hotels that prioritize their satisfaction. Clean, well-maintained, and aesthetically pleasing environments contribute to a more enjoyable stay, ensuring that guests feel valued and respected. This leads to higher levels of comfort and an increased likelihood of returning to the same hotel in the future.
4. **The Hospitality Industry:** As hotels improve their services based on studies like this one, the entire industry benefits from higher standards of service and increased customer satisfaction. This drives competition, leading to overall improvements in the quality of accommodations across the market.

Customer satisfaction, particularly in relation to housekeeping services, physical facilities, and room décor, is central to the success of any hotel. This study highlights the need for hotels to invest in these areas as a strategic priority, ensuring that they meet the ever-growing expectations of modern travelers. The benefits of doing so are clear: higher guest retention, improved profitability, and a stronger competitive position in the market. As the hospitality industry continues to evolve, the focus on customer satisfaction will remain a critical driver of success for hotels worldwide.

Problem Statement

Hotels are regarded as an important component of the tourism industry because they meet the most basic need of guests, which is accommodation (Sann, Lai & Liaw, 2020). Furthermore, guests may benefit from other services provided by hotels, such as a playground, tennis courts, restaurants, saunas, bars, swimming pools, and so on. Since employees offer and provide services to guests, hotel staff is a vital component in company achievement (Foris, Crihalmean & Foris, 2020). For instance, if hotel staff do not provide the best service to guests, it will have a negative impact, and guests may not return to the same hotel. According to Jiménez-Barreto, Loureiro, Braun, Sthapit and Zenker (2021), 88 percent of people trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations. When they see a dirty bedsheet, 71 percent of guests are more likely to leave. In other words, a negative review about cleanliness has the potential to influence even prospective customers who want to book with the hotel. Meanwhile, according to Pillai, Haldorai, Seo and Kim (2021), there is a good chance that the bathroom is not clean, or that the sink is filthy, and that there are hairs in the tub or on the bed. Even housekeeping occasionally fails to gather items left in the closet by previous customers. These are some of the issues that may irritate the hotel guests. On the other side, the majority of hotels in Malaysia, have not paid adequate consideration to hotel room décor in order to sustain the generation of revenue, as is possible in advanced countries such as the United States, Dubai, the United Kingdom, Spain, France, South Africa, and many others (Zarezadeh, Rastegar & Xiang, 2022). It was reported that these hotels have gone vanished in which resulting in others are facing loss of revenue, guest disapproval of rooms, lower customer support, and hoteliers do not have a return on their investment due

to poor design of the interior and redesign that conforms to the taste of the time (Bi, Liu, Fan & Zhang, 2020). Due to poor interior design, even previous guests rarely return to the same hotel for repeat business. Poor interior design will be equipped with an impact on a customer's stay, satisfaction, and intent to return.

Furthermore, according to research done by Jiang and Wen (2020), poorly managed facilities increase the risk of customer injuries while also increasing overall maintenance costs. As conditions worsen, maintenance requirements become more serious and complex. Minor issues, such as variations in custodial services, have also had a significant impact on customer retention and satisfaction (Chang, Chen, Chen & Tseng, 2019). The findings demonstrate the potential impact on housekeeping service even if poor facility management does not cause direct harm. Poor hotel service quality will end up resulting in disappointed customers, lowering demand and thus lowering hotel performance. Almost entirely rely on the marketing and sales teams in order to draw prospective customers, but it is directly in the hands of operational teams to maintain them, certainly to make them loyal (Sann, Lai & Liaw, 2020). Thus, if customers are dissatisfied with the services provided by one hotel, they will seek better services somewhere else. Therefore, this study will examine the factors influencing the cleanliness, physical facilities and room décor of the housekeeping services and practices in hotel.

Research Objectives

1. To determine the relationship between cleanliness and customer satisfaction.
2. To determine the relationship between physical facilities and customer satisfaction.
3. To determine the relationship between room décor and customer satisfaction.

Research Methodology

In this section, it explains the methodology which describes how the research carried out. This chapter goes over the procedures used throughout greater detail, like data gathering, sampling strategy, design of the study, as well as research methods. With the increasing number of Covid-19 cases, the data collection method used to analyze the factors in housekeeping influence customer satisfaction is outlined first. To achieve research objective, the review study would employ a quantitative method of data collection through a set of questions. The study design might specify the technique to be used, and questionnaires will be distributed to the customers of hotel they reside. At the end of this part, the findings will be examined as well as tested.

Research Framework

A framework is like a research guide or a blueprint (Grant & Osanloo 2014). According to Adom et al (2018), frameworks are often built on an existing theory in an area of research that represents the study's hypothesis. According to these scholars, the framework acts as the cornerstone of a study. It lays out clearly how researchers characterize their work "philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically." (Grant & Osanloo 2014).

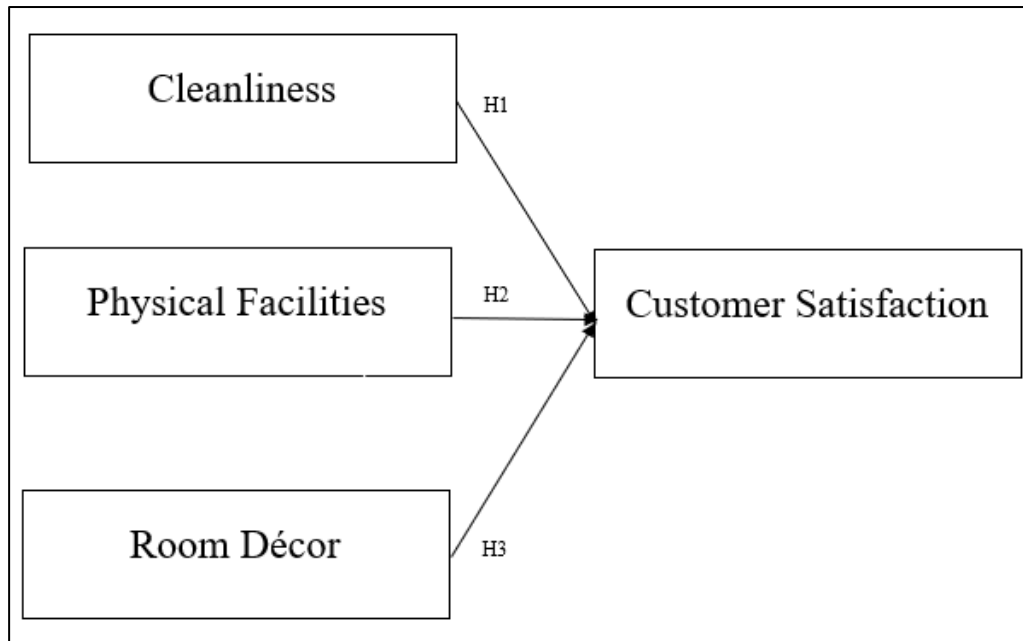


Figure 2.2: Proposed Conceptual Framework

Above framework shows the organization and direction of this research. It can be clearly seen where there are three independent variables that have been used cleanliness, physical facilities and room décor. The customer satisfaction is the dependent variable in this research.

Customer Satisfaction Influenced by Housekeeping Services

The concept of customer satisfaction was developed a few decades ago. Customer satisfaction, as per Naumov (2019), is a measure of the gap between the demands of consumers prior buying a product or service and their evaluation of that product or service after consumption. Customer satisfaction is still debated in the service industry about whether it should be viewed as a transaction-specific concept or a cumulative concept (Witell, Kowalkowski, Perks, Raddats, C., Schwabe, Benedettini & Burton, 2020). Rather, Tehseen, Itoo and Parrey (2021), make a compelling case for embracing customer satisfaction as a unified conceptualization and operationalization. The overview of the various investigations on the customer satisfaction index by these authors effectively shows that most authors agree with the transaction-specific conceptualization.

Customer satisfaction is a constantly changing phenomenon in the hotel industry. The challenge is to keep the customers happy (Kim & Han, 2020). Customer satisfaction can help to build brand loyalty and repeat business. Various approaches to customer satisfaction have been developed. The most widely agreed-upon/accepted definition of customer satisfaction is an evaluation of affective responses/experiences adhering to a cognitive expectancy disagreement process throughout previous expectation and perceived achievement of a the good or service and its characteristics (Nunkoo, Teeroovengadum, Ringle & Sunnassee, 2020). If a customer is pleased and satisfied, it is obvious that the hotel will receive repeat business. Word of mouth will lead to prospective visitors to the hotel from a satisfied customer.

Bi, Liu, Fan and Zhang (2020), studied customer satisfaction using four emotion-laden items. For a better understanding of satisfaction, Olimovich et al (2020), distinguished nine customer satisfaction attributes of hotel services which include employee attitudes, location, room,

price, facilities, reception, services, parking, and food and beverage. According to Al-Gasawneh, Anuar, Dacko-Pikiewicz and Saputra (2021), customer satisfaction depends on hospitality, housing, food and beverages, recreation and entertainment, additional amenities, safety and security, innovation and value-added services, transportation, place and looks, in addition to the more fundamental concerns of pricing and payment. According to a recent study by Shamsudin, Esa and Ali (2019), customer satisfaction is determined by four factors: reception, food and beverage, housekeeping, and price. The critical attributes are more likely to receive compliments for good performance and vice versa. As a result, numerous scholars attempted to find the best attributes for effectively increasing customer satisfaction by focusing on the attribute. Therefore, because of the potential impact on repeat purchasing behavior and profits, satisfying customers is the goal of every business (Teng, 2019).

Kim and Han (2022), discovered that the concrete elements of the housekeeping division and the intangible aspects of the reception area are one of the most essential elements to the consumer overall satisfaction in four major business hotels in a large city in Norway. The study also discovered that efforts to improve other aspects had no effect on customer satisfaction. Interestingly, Bueno, Weber, Bomfim and Kato (2019), discovered that customer satisfaction does not appear to have a significant impact on loyalty. Although many studies on customer satisfaction have been conducted, the majority of the studies have focused on the process aspects of the construct, such as the antecedent and repercussions with little work done on the content of customer satisfaction (Ali et al., 2021). As a result, it is critical to conduct a study to uncover the content of customer satisfaction so that managers who are committed to customer satisfaction can take additional steps to improve.

Findings

Respondents Demographic Profile

Table 4.1

Summary of Respondent's Profile

Demographics		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	30	60.0
	Female	20	40.0
	<i>Total</i>	50	100.0
Age	< 20 years old	2	4.0
	21 to 30 years old	15	30.0
	31 to 40 years old	17	34.0
	41 to 50 years old	13	26.0
	> 51 years old	3	6.0
	<i>Total</i>	50	100.0
Race	Malay	37	74.0
	Chinese	6	12.0
	Indian	4	8.0
	Others	3	6.0
	<i>Total</i>	50	100.0
How Often You Visit Hotel	Very Often	14	28.0
	Occasionally	31	62.0
	Everyday	5	10.0
	<i>Total</i>	50	100.0

As per the summary of respondent profiles, most respondents were male with 60.0 percent (30 respondents) and the rest were female with 40.0 percent (20 respondents). As for the age group, the majority of the respondents were between the ages of 31 to 40 years old with 34.0 percent (17 respondents), followed by 21 to 30 years old with 30.0 percent (15 respondents), 41 to 50 years old with 26.0 percent (13 respondents), then more than 51 years old with 6.0 percent (3 respondents) and the least were less than 20 years old with 4.0 percent (2 respondents). As for the race, the majority of the respondents were Malay with 74.0 percent (37 respondents), followed by Chinese with 12.0 percent (6 respondents), Indian with 8.0 percent (4 respondents) and the least were others with 6.0 percent (3 respondents) In terms of the frequency of visiting the hotel, majority of the respondents occasionally with 62.0 percent (31 respondents), followed by very often with 28.0 percent (14 respondents) and the least were everyday with 10.0 percent (5 respondents).

Table 4.2

Descriptive Statistic of Variables

Description	Mean	Standard Deviation
Customer Satisfaction	3.98	1.29
Cleanliness	4.02	1.32
Physical Facilities	3.87	1.32
Room Décor	4.01	1.31

Table 4.2 shows that cleanliness had the highest mean of 4.01 and the highest standard deviation of 1.32. Following that is room décor, which has the second-highest mean of 4.01 and a standard deviation of 1.31. Customer satisfaction is third, with a mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 1.29, and physical facilities have the lowest mean, with a mean of 3.87 and a standard deviation of 1.32. Nonetheless, because most of the mean is greater than 3.50, each of the components continues to elicit a significant response.

Table 4.3

Descriptive Analysis for Cleanliness

Code	Description	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
CL1	The hotel rooms are always clean, comfortable, and cozy.	50	3.92	1.37
CL2	I always stay in a hotel which has spotlessly clean rooms.	50	3.70	1.43
CL3	The hotel I stayed has clean and hygienic surroundings.	50	4.18	1.37
CL4	The hotel's garden and lawn are neatly maintained.	50	4.10	1.37
CL5	The hotel's front office workers are neat and tidy.	50	4.18	1.37

Table 4.3 shows the reliability of the survey, which consists of five (5) items. According to the data, many of the items have a mean value greater than 3.50. According to the data, the statements "The hotel where I stayed has clean and hygienic surroundings" and "The hotel's front office workers are neat and tidy" have the highest mean, 4.18. Furthermore, with a

mean value of 3.70, the comment "I always stay in a hotel with spotlessly clean rooms" has the lowest mean in the study. Above all, the results show that most of the items received high response rates from respondents because the mean is greater than 3.50.

Table 4.4

Descriptive Analysis for Room Décor

Code	Description	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
RD1	Flower arrangement is good and placed everywhere in the hotel.	50	3.86	1.31
RD2	Flowers are beautifully placed in rooms.	50	4.12	1.35
RD3	The hotel has spent huge capital in planning and sustaining decor of the hotel to attract more guests.	50	4.00	1.34
RD4	The hotel room decor is appealing.	50	4.06	1.36
RD5	Flower arrangement in the hotel helps in beautifying the environment.	50	4.00	1.33

Table 4.4 depicts the survey's room décor, which includes five (5) items. According to the data, many of the items have a mean value greater than 3.50. The phrase "Flowers are beautifully placed in rooms" has the highest mean (4.12). Furthermore, the statement "Flower arrangement is good and placed everywhere in the hotel" is linked to the lowest mean of the finding, which has a value of 3.86. Above all, the results show that most of the items received high response rates from respondents because the mean is greater than 3.50.

Summary and Conclusion

This study was conducted with the objective of factors that influenced housekeeping services and practices on customer satisfaction such as cleanliness, room décor, physical facilities. The accommodation industry is a major component of the tourism industry, with fierce competition among service providers leading to rising customer expectations. To remain competitive, lodging providers focus on improving service quality and customer satisfaction to retain existing and attract new customers. Customer satisfaction measurement has become a key strategy, with indices like the Swedish and American customer satisfaction barometers being used to assess the overall customer experience. Service quality is heavily influenced by hotel staff, and poor interior design can negatively impact customer satisfaction. Hotels are important for meeting the basic need of guests, and hotel staff are a vital component in company achievement. Poor service quality in hotels can lead to loss of revenue, guest disapproval, and lower customer support. Online reviews can influence prospective customers who want to book with the hotel, and negative reviews about cleanliness can have a negative impact on the hotel's reputation. Poor maintenance in hotel facilities can also lead to lower customer satisfaction, which can impact sales and customer retention. Many hotels in Malaysia have not paid adequate consideration to hotel room décor to sustain revenue, resulting in the disappearance of some hotels. Poor customer service and maintenance can lower the overall demand for hotel rooms, leading to a lack of return on investment for hoteliers.

All respondents have high intention to staying in hotel which had the best cleanliness because it is crucial in hotels as it directly impacts the guest experience. A clean and well-maintained hotel room creates a positive impression and ensures guest satisfaction. By maintaining cleanliness in hotels is essential for the health and safety of guests. Clean environments help prevent the spread of germs and reduce the risk of illnesses. Cleanliness also plays a significant role in establishing a hotel's reputation and brand image. A clean hotel reflects professionalism, attention to detail, and a commitment to providing a high standard of service.

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