

Guest Satisfaction: A Comparative Study of Hotel Employees' and Guests' Perceptions

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Abstract *The paper has twofold objectives - to assess the level of Guest Satisfaction in the 5 Star Deluxe Hotels located in Delhi and to explore the gaps between the hotel employees' and hotel guests' perception of quality and satisfaction with regard to service and product. The data have been collected from 5 Star Deluxe Hotel Guests and 5 Star Deluxe Hotel Employees based in Delhi by employing both Probability and Non-Probability sampling techniques. In this we have pooled 18 hotels but only 10 Five Star Deluxe hotels agreed to participate in this research. Thus, a sample size of 540 consisting of 390 hotel guests and 150 hotel employees has been taken up for the study. The questionnaires took about 15 minutes to answer and were collected immediately on completion, which resulted on 100 percent response rate. The data have been analysed by applying Paired sample t-test and two sample independent t-tests to test the hypotheses using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20.0. The study reveals that there is difference between the guest expectations (importance) and guest satisfaction (performance) from Reception and Room Facilities, Room Service and Food & Beverage Outlets depicting that guests were not as satisfied as the expectations they had from the hotels. There are gaps between the hotel employees' and hotel guests' perception on satisfaction derived from services and products. The hotel employees perceived hotel guests to be more satisfied than actual satisfaction levels of guests.*

Keywords: *Guest Satisfaction, Guest Perception, Employee Perception, 5 Star Deluxe Hotels*

INTRODUCTION

Guest satisfaction is the prime objective of hotel industry. Guests are considered as prime area of concern from the view point of business. It is the satisfied guest that brings more and more business to the hotels by repeat visit and even by word of mouth publicity. So, it is very important for the hoteliers to pay attention to the guest to achieve their highest level of satisfaction. Hoteliers pay equal attention to the guests whether they are economy class or business class guests. It is business that is associated with guest, irrespective of class or level of guest. The issue that is of utmost concern is that the dissatisfaction or disappointment of customers is speedily growing and is not informed/ to the organisation or the accountable persons, but to closed circle of friends, family and connections. Guest satisfaction is a reaction to an experience of a service or a product, in which the worth of the characteristics of the service or product is assessed. In this sense, the satisfaction of guest works as a

creator of positive or negative outcomes that can decide the flaws or the accomplishments of companies.

An important addition to the new ISO 9000:2000 standard has been the measurement of customer satisfaction. Organisations that need certification on this standard are expected to identify parameters that create customer satisfaction and are to consciously measure those (ISO 9000:2000 series, 2001).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The tourism industry being considered as one of the fastest growing sector at present is composed chiefly by services. This sector comprises of various interdependent sub-sectors, for example boarding and lodging, transportation, food, leisure, recreation, among others. The 'back bone' of the tourism system happens to be the hotel industry (Campos & Marodin, 2012). Crick and Spencer (2011) studied

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methods used to measure service quality and expectations and informed that service industry is dynamic in nature where the guest dictates the service required, and growing competitiveness has caused minimum satisfactory service level expectations from the guests. Different measurements of expectations from service have been recommended for the hotel industry but the quality function deployment (QFD) method has most potential, in which service is treated as a process are measuring guests' expectation at every phase so as to create service that meets and potentially exceeds their expectations. The gap analysis conducted by McCain, Jang & Hu (2005) between loyal patrons and possible switchers in assessing service quality attributes, the three topmost gaps were all found to be related to functional quality (exchanges amid guests and employees) and not technical quality and customer relation. Mohsin & Lockyer (2010) revealed that the areas like Front Office, Housekeeping, Food and Beverage Service in Room Service and Restaurants showed guests' importance perception higher than performance of the property. Researchers have used assorted variables like service quality, cleanliness of rooms and public areas, price, employee skills, security, pleasant staff, reception speed, image of hotel etc. (Saleh & Ryan, 1991; Haemoun, 1999; Mey et al., 2006; Dragičević, et al., 2010; Blešić, et al., 2011; Dunjić, et al., 2012). Guests initially have perceived standards preceding the service encounter regarding the level of service quality, they then examine service performance, match performance with standards and form confirmation or disconfirmation perceptions (Bearden & Teel, 1989; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988). These perceptions are combined with standard levels by the guests thereby forming précis of satisfaction decisions (Oliver, 1980; Gummesson, 1987) which effect in winning or losing their loyalty towards the organisation. Hotel businesses in order to expand service quality and the perceived value for guests to achieve better customer satisfaction and loyalty, are growing their investments, thus developing in better relationships with each customer (Jones, Mak & Sim, 2007). Anderson (1973); Oliver (1980); Crick & Spencer (2011); Campos & Marodin (2012); Bradić, Kosar & Kalenjuk (2013); Rao (2013); Chu (2014); Li (2014); Thakkar (2014); Aswin (2015) have assessed the levels of Guest Satisfaction attained after measuring the same in different ways. Sureshchandar, Rajendran&Aantharaman (2001) branded five factors of service quality as crucial from perspective of customers namely - Core service or service product; Human element of service delivery; Systematization of service delivery: non-human element; Tangibles of service – service escapes and Social responsibility.

There are nine distinct theories of Customer Satisfaction. Most of these theories are based on cognitive psychology.

Although some of these theories have received reasonable attention, the others have been initiated without empirical research. The theories are: Expectancy Disconfirmation; Assimilation or Cognitive Dissonance; Contrast; Assimilation-Contrast; Equity; Attribution; Comparison-Level; Generalised Negativity; Value-Percept (Aigbavboa, 2013). Mohsin and Lockyer (2010) and Rao (2013) that have pointed out lesser satisfaction amongst guests as compared to their expectations. The employee feedbacks on guests' expectations and actual deliverables reveal the need for 5 Star Deluxe Hotels to improve their employees' perceptions on guest satisfaction.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1985); Grönroos (1984); Graham (1987); Spinelli & Canavos (2000); McCain, Jang and Hu (2005); Mohsin (2010) gave different reasons for gaps in the expectations and perceptions of guests but could not study if there were any gaps between hotel employees' and hotel guests' perception and satisfaction with regard to hotel services and products. This was identified as a gap area for the present study to focus upon.

Impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction studied by Rao (2013) described the expectation and perceptions customers towards the service quality amongst front office staff in one hotel in Bhubaneswar. The finding established that most guests derived satisfaction on the service quality aspect of the front office employees at the hotel under consideration.

Bhat (2013) in his study on various hotel categories in Kashmir valley found that respondents are overall satisfied with the hotel services but overall improvement is needed in all dimensions of hotel services particularly on Reliability and Responsiveness to make hotel services more effective and efficient.

A study on factors affecting hotel guests' satisfaction from front office services & facilities in Indian hospitality industry revealed that check-in and check-out facilities, concierge facilities, reservation services, ambience of lobby, competence during check-in and check-out process, courtesy of the staff and connectivity of the hotel respectively emerged as the important dimensions influencing satisfaction of guests from front office (Kumar & Malik, 2013).

Occasions when guest's expectations are met or when they have fallen short of expectations are called as "moments of truth". Exchanges of such types which involve service provider and customer to interact directly, provide the stage where guest's perception of quality is set. First 10 minutes are considered most crucial in this regard (Vallen, 2013).

Thakkar (2014) finds the Front Office department to be the main promoter of guest satisfaction. In-Room Dining's facilities are another key attribute guest credit their

satisfaction to. Housekeeping department needs to ensure overall cleanliness, especially the bathroom as it is always given a lot of weight in finding satisfaction out of hotel stay.

Dissatisfaction will take place if the perceived performance stoops below expectations, or if the perceived performance exceeds the expectations (Isac & Rusu, 2014).

With the growing influence of online social media, organisations progressively taking up effective role in networking with consumers via social media. For many organisations, their initial job during online social media is managing responses, which ensures that the management replies to customers' remarks about the organisation or its offerings in the form of products and services (Gu and Ye, 2014).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY ARE

- To assess the level of Guest Satisfaction in the 5 Star Deluxe Hotels amongst travellers in Delhi.
- To explore the gaps between the hotel employees' and hotel guests' perception of quality and satisfaction with regard to service and product.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to collect data for this research, both the sources of data collection have been used, namely secondary and primary. Books, e-books, journals, e-journals and websites have been used for secondary data collection. The first-hand information through primary sources has been collected from 5 Star Deluxe Hotel Guests and 5 Star Deluxe Hotel Employees based in Delhi. Samples were chosen on the basis of both Probability and Non-Probability based sampling techniques. Probability based Simple Random sampling has been used to choose hotels and Non-Probability based Convenience Sampling has been used for the selection of hotel employees and hotel guests. 10 Five Star Deluxe Hotels were chosen from a universe of 18 Five Star Deluxe Hotels of Delhi, and a sample size of 540 consisting of 390 hotel guests and 150 hotel employees has been taken up for the study. The questionnaires took about 15 minutes to answer and were collected immediately on completion, which resulted on 100 percent response rate. The hypotheses were tested using statistical tools using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20.0.

In this research, pilot study was conducted on 15 hotel employees and 15 guests of 5 star deluxe hotels. The pre-test analysis displayed that the respondents found the questionnaires lengthy; therefore, questionnaires were worked upon and exclusion of some recurring and redundant questions was done. Questionnaires were also modified before pilot study using opinions from 10 academicians and 10 hoteliers.

Hypothesis 1

1A:

H₀1A: There is no significant difference between average performance related to "Reception and Room Facilities" and average importance of "Reception and Room Facilities".

H_a1A: There is significant difference between average performance related to "Reception and Room Facilities" and average importance of "Reception and Room Facilities".

1B:

H₀1B: There is no significant difference between average performance related to Room Service and average importance of Room Service.

H_a1B: There is significant difference between average performance related to room service and average importance of room service.

1C:

H₀1C: There is no significant difference between average performance related to "Food & Beverage Outlets" and average importance of "Food & Beverage Outlets".

H_a1C: There is significant difference between average performance related to "Food & Beverage Outlets" and average importance of "Food & Beverage Outlets".

Hypothesis 2

2A:

H₀2A: There is no significant difference between Guests and Employees in terms of their overall average rating on the importance of attributes related to products and services.

H_a2A: There is significant difference between Guests and Employees in terms of their overall average rating on the importance of attributes related to products and services.

2B:

H₀2B: There is no significant difference between Guest and Employees in terms of their overall average rating on the satisfaction of attributes related to product and services.

H_a2B: There is significant difference between Guest and Employees in terms of their overall average rating on the satisfaction of attributes related to product and services.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Tests for Hypothesis 1

To prove hypothesis 1, paired sample t-test has been used as it compares the means of two variables for a single group.

The procedure computes the differences between values of the two variables for each case and tests whether the average differs from 0. The test results are compared at 5 percent (alpha=0.05) and 10 percent (alpha=0.10) levels of significance. Based on the comparisons, the interpretation is made.

Test for Hypothesis 1A

The Attributes under “Reception and Room Facilities”

- Ease of making reservation
- Receiving prompt reservation confirmation
- First contact with the staff
- Courteous and helpful staff
- First Impression of the hotel
- The Check-In and Check-Out procedure
- Concierge service
- Cleanliness of guestrooms
- Cleanliness of bathrooms
- Comfort of the bed
- Guestroom amenities
- Guestroom furnishings
- Quality of fixture & fittings
- Access to Internet / Wi-Fi
- Features & channels on television set
- Cleanliness of public areas of hotel
- Maintenance of swimming pool
- Dealing with complains
- The value for money of the hotel

SPSS Results - Mean and Standard Deviation Values

Table 1: Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reception and Room Facilities: Importance Rating	6.123	390	0.495	0.025
Reception and Room Facilities: Satisfaction Rating	5.789	390	0.538	0.027

This indicates that that the overall mean of 390 respondents, i.e. average of average rating on all the attributes on reception & room facilities importance = 6.123, with a standard deviation = 0.495. Similarly, the average of average rating on all the attributes on reception & room facilities performance = 5.789, with a standard deviation = 0.538.

Paired Samples Correlations

Table 2: Correlation: Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Reception and Room Facilities: Importance Rating & Reception and Room Facilities: Satisfaction Rating	390	0.586	.000

The output provides a correlation between these two averages. The correlation is 0.586, which is strong and positive correlation. It indirectly indicates that the ratings for “importance” are more or less same with the ratings for “performance”, however there are considerable number of cases wherein ratings for importance and ratings for performance are different (because 0.586 is less than 1, the perfect positive correlation). The significance value 0.00 is less than 0.05 (the p-value), indicating that it is highly significant also.

Paired Samples t-test

Table 3: t-test: Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95 percent Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Reception and Room Facilities: Importance Rating - Reception and Room Facilities: Satisfaction Rating	0.334	0.471	0.024	0.287	0.381	13.98	389	0.000

The paired difference indicates a mean value of 0.334 and a standard deviation of 0.471. The significance value is 0.00.

INTERPRETATION: FINDINGS OF HYPOTHESIS 1A

Next step is to compare level of significance α (which is 0.05) with the significant value or p-value, from the above table. If p-value is $\leq \alpha$, the null hypothesis is rejected, else it is to be accepted. Since p-value is 0.00, which is < 0.05 , therefore *Null Hypothesis is Rejected*.

Test for Hypothesis 1B

The Attributes under “Room Service” Are:

- Prompt Response from the order taken
- Skills of the order taker
- Delivery and service of food
- The variety of Items on Menu
- Overall selection of beverages
- The value for money for room service

Data Considerations for Hypothesis 1B

The objective is to compare the average performance related to room service with average importance of room service. Hence, for each respondent, an average importance variable is calculated taking the average of the above given attributes, related to importance rating. Similarly, an average performance variable is calculated for each response by taking the average of the above given attributes, related to performance rating. These two average variables (by each respondent) are used to test this hypothesis.

Paired Samples *t*-test for Hypothesis 1B

Table 6: *t*-test - Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95 percent Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Room Service: Importance Rating - Room Service: Satisfaction Rating	0.183	0.614	0.031	0.122	0.244	5.892	389	0.000

The paired difference indicates a mean value of 0.183 and a standard deviation of 0.614.

Interpretation: Findings of Hypothesis 1B

The significance value is 0.00. Since significance value 0.00 > 0.05 , the *Null Hypothesis is Rejected*.

SPSS Results for Mean and Standard Deviation Values

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation Values: Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Room Service: Importance Rating	6.154	390	0.581	0.029
Room Service: Satisfaction Rating	5.971	390	0.647	0.033

This indicates that that the overall mean of 390 respondents, i.e. average of average rating on all the attributes on room service importance = 6.154, with a standard deviation = 0.581. Similarly, the average of average rating on all the attributes on room service performance = 5.971, with a standard deviation = 0.647.

Paired Samples Correlations for Room Service Importance and Satisfaction

Table 5: Correlation - Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Room Service: Importance Rating & Room Service: Satisfaction Rating	390	0.505	.000

The output provides a correlation between these two averages. The correlation is 0.505, which is strong and positive correlation. It indirectly indicates that the ratings are more or less same across importance and performance attributes related to room service, however there are considerable number of cases wherein different ratings are given, hence the correlation is less than 1 here.

Test for Hypothesis 1C

The attributes under “Food & Beverage Outlets”

The attributes under “Food & Beverage Outlets” are given below:

- Ambience of Restaurants/Bar
- Appearance of the staff
- Quality of service
- Product knowledge of the staff

- Quality and taste of food
- Portion Size of food
- Presentation of food
- Dealing with complaints
- Value for money of the outlets

Data Considerations for Hypothesis 1 C

The objective is to compare the average performance related to Food & Beverage Outlets with average importance of Food & Beverage Outlets. Hence, for each respondent, an average importance variable is calculated taking the average of the above given attributes, related to importance rating. Similarly, an average performance variable is calculated for each response by taking the average of the above given attributes, related to performance rating. These two average variables (by each respondent) are used to test this hypothesis.

SPSS Results Mean and Standard Deviation Values

Table 7: Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Food and Beverage: Importance Rating	6.20	381	0.466	0.023
Food and Beverage: Satisfaction Rating	5.95	381	0.775	0.039

Table 9: t-test: Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95 percent Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Food and Beverage: Importance Rating - Food and Beverage: Satisfaction Rating	0.247	0.681	0.035	0.179	0.315	7.154	380	0.000

Tests for Hypothesis 2

Two-Sample t-test: Reasoning

Here there are 2 groups, namely Guests and Employees. Both have given their opinion separately, i.e., independent of each other. To test these two hypotheses, the two sample independent *t*-test is used.

The two-sample (independent groups) *t*-test is used to determine whether the unknown means of two populations

This indicates that that the overall mean of 381 respondents, i.e. average of average rating on all the attributes on Food & Beverage Outlets= 6.20, with a standard deviation = 0.466. Similarly, the average of average rating on all the attributes on Food & Beverage Outlets performance = 5.95, with a standard deviation = 0.775.

Paired Samples Correlations

Table 8: Correlation: Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Food and Beverage: Importance Rating & Food and Beverage: Satisfaction Rating	381	0.491	0.000

The correlation is 0.491, which is moderate and positive correlation. It indirectly indicates that the ratings are more or less same across importance and performance attributes (could be in some attributes) related to Food & Beverage Outlets, however there are considerable number of cases wherein different ratings are given, hence the correlation is less than 1 here.

Paired Samples t-test

The paired difference indicates a mean value of 0.247 and a standard deviation of 0.681.

Interpretation: Findings of Hypothesis 1C

The significant value is 0.00. Since significance value $0.00 < 0.05$, *Null Hypothesis is Rejected*.

are different from each other based on independent samples from each population. If the two-sample means are sufficiently different from each other, then the population means are declared to be different.

Data Considerations for Hypothesis 2

- Guest data, who have visited the hotel and provided their opinion on the satisfaction on various attributes.
- Employee data, who are currently working in the hotel and provided their opinion on satisfaction on various attributes.

The guest data and employee data together are considered for this analysis.

The attributes considered for this analysis (by employees and guests) are same as attributes considered for Hypothesis 1.

Test for Hypothesis 2A

For each respondent, the average rating (on importance) of the attributes is calculated. Further consolidated average of all the respondents is arrived separately for Guest and Employee data. These two final averages are compared by this technique.

F-test (Levene's test) for Hypothesis 2A

Table 11: Independent Sample Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95 percent Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Importance of attributes	Equal variances assumed	9.729	0.002	-4.523	538.0	0.000	-0.278	0.062	-0.399	-0.157
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.358	173.9	0.001	-0.278	0.083	-0.442	-0.115

From the "Independent Samples Test" in Table above, F-test (Levene's test) for evaluating the equality of variance is first examined. It can be seen that the p-value is 0.002 (which is lesser than 0.05), indicates that the variances are significantly different. Hence the case of 'Equal Variances Not Assumed' can be considered.

Interpretation: Findings of Hypothesis 2A

The values under "t-test for Equality of Means" are examined. The p-value for the equal variances t-test is $p = 0.001$. Since this p-value is lesser than 0.05, the *Null Hypothesis is Rejected*. i.e., It is proved that there is a significant difference between the Guests and Employees in terms of overall importance rating on the study attributes.

SPSS Results: Group Statistics

Table 10: SPSS Results: Group Statistics

	Segment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Overall importance	Guest	390	6.144	0.450	0.023
	Employee	150	6.423	0.976	0.080

The average overall importance rating by Guest is 6.144 with a standard deviation of 0.450. In the case of Employee, the average overall importance rating is 6.423 with a standard deviation of 0.080.

Test for Hypothesis 2B

SPSS Result: Group Statistics

Table 12: SPSS Result: Group Statistics

	Segment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Overall satisfaction	Guest	390	5.867	0.502	0.025
	Employee	150	6.471	0.428	0.035

The average overall satisfaction rating by Guest is 5.867 with a standard deviation of 0.502. In the case of Employee, the average overall satisfaction rating is 6.471 with a standard deviation of 0.428.

F-test (Levene's test) for Hypothesis 2B

Table 13: Independent Sample Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95percent Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Satisfaction of attributes	Equal variances assumed	2.245	0.135	-13.018	538.00	0.000	-0.604	0.046	-0.695	-0.513
	Equal variances not assumed			-13.973	314.84	0.000	-0.604	0.043	-0.689	-0.519

F-test (Levene's test) for evaluating the equality of variance is first examined from the "Independent Samples Test". It is seen that the p-value is 0.135 (which is greater than 0.05), indicates that the variances are not significantly different. Hence the case of 'Equal Variances Assumed' can be considered.

Interpretation: Findings of Hypothesis 2B

The values under "t-test for Equality of Means" are examined. The p-value for the equal variances t-test $p = 0.00$. Since this p-value is less than 0.05, the *Null Hypothesis is Rejected*. i.e., It is proved that there is a significant difference between the Guests and Employees in terms of overall satisfaction rating on the study attributes.

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF GUEST RESPONDENTS

Table 14: Gender of Guest Respondents

GUEST GENDER	MALE	FEMALE
Numbers	234	156

Table 15: Age Distribution of the Guests

AGE 21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+
97	125	125	39	4

Table 16: Nationality of Guests

US	Swiden	France	Sri Lanka	Canada	UK	UAE	Portugal	SWZ	GER	Netherland	Italy	China	Australia	India
35	8	8	8	11	35	4	4	8	8	4	8	8	11	230

Table 17: Market Segment of Hotel Guests

BUSINESS GUESTS	LEISURE GUESTS	BUSINESS CUM LEISURE GUESTS	TOTAL GUESTS
172	148	70	390

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF EMPLOYEE RESPONDENTS

Table 18: Gender of Hotel Employees

MALE EMPLOYEES	FEMALE EMPLOYEES	TOTAL EMPLOYEES
100	50	150

Table 19: Hotel Employees' Age Distribution

21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61- ABOVE
85	28	30	7	0

Table 20: Department of Hotel Employees

FRONT OFFICE	HK	F&B SERVICE	SALES AND MARKETING	FOOD PRODUCTION	OTHERS	TOTAL
30	26	75	4	10	5	150

Table 21: Experience of Employees

No. of Employees	Percentage of Employees	Years of Experience
16	10.66	1
8	5.33	2
15	10	3
16	10.66	4
7	4.66	5
14	9.33	6
9	6	7
13	8.66	8
7	4.66	9
4	2.66	10
4	2.66	12
2	1.33	12
2	1.33	15
3	2	17
3	2	18
5	1.33	20
3	2	23
5	1.33	24
3	2	25
4	2.66	26
2	1.33	27
2	1.33	28
3	2	32

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

One of the challenges faced by the 5 Star Deluxe Hotels in Delhi is existence of a significant difference in guests' feedbacks between average performance/satisfaction related to "Reception and Room Facilities, Room Service and Food and Beverage Outlets" and average importance of "Reception and Room Facilities, Room Service and Food and Beverage Outlets". The findings suggest that there is gap between guest's expectation and services (performances) in the hotels, which is similar to findings of Mohsin and Lockyer (2010) conducted on luxury hotels of Delhi. Following are suggestions pertaining to this challenge:

There is a need for better understanding of guest needs. Hotels are lacking in completely satisfying guests as compared to guests' expectations. Guests have higher expectations from 5 Star Deluxe Hotels and this leads to disappointments if any area is neglected. The hotel management must ensure that they exceed guest expectations by incorporating training and upgrading and innovating their services and products. Training prepares hotel employees to be more skilled and knowledgeable in their positions, which boosts their learning and growth as well. Ritz Carlton prepares employees through training to dwell "in the moment" while interacting with the guests and determine the crucial variance amongst guests' declared needs and their unstated wishes from their hotel stay. Training is very essential as the objective is not to simply satisfy hotel guests by coming up to their level of expectations, instead it is to connect with them through an emotional bond (Enz, Verma, Walsh, Kimes & Siguaw, 2010).

It was also found that employees' perception of importance (guest expectation) attributes differs as compared to what guests actually perceive the importance to be. Same is in the case of performance (actual delivery by hotels). This also poses as another major challenge for the hotels.

This mismatch of hotel employees and hotel guests' perceptions needs to be managed more efficiently by the hotel management. Training of importance and performance (satisfaction) could be brought about by incorporating techniques like employee empowerment, involvement and training. Employees should be made aware of all guest feedbacks and should be a part of feedback taking process. The employees at all levels must know guest comments and be involved in making decisions of problem solving. Total Quality Management ensures that through Training, Empowerment and Communication, various quality related issues are resolved. Total Quality Management addresses a broad range of skills as it is cross-functional and diagnostic, problem solving and improves productivity and quality (Blackburn & Rosen, 1993). Though the difference of employees' and guests' perception is less, but the fact that there is a discrepancy, it must be given immediate attention. Incorporating Total Quality Management practices would ensure these differences and quality issues are addressed and resolved, and they become a part of standard operating procedures. Hotel Training and Human Relations departments

must document the instances of overcoming obstacles and resolving issues in a form of case studies, which could be discussed for future training and development purposes.

CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The present study researched the status of guest satisfaction amongst the 5 Star Deluxe Hotels in Delhi. The study reveals that there is difference between the guest expectations (importance) and guest satisfaction (performance) from Reception and Room facilities, Room Service and Food and Beverage Outlets depicting that guests were not as satisfied as the expectations they had from the hotels. There are gaps between the hotel employees' and hotel guests' perception on satisfaction derived from services and products. The hotel employees perceived hotel guests to be more satisfied than actual satisfaction levels of guests. The results of results of this study is concurrent with previous studies (Mohsin and Lockyer, 2010) (Rao, 2013) that have pointed out lesser satisfaction amongst guests as compared to their expectations. The employee feedbacks on guests' expectations and actual deliverables reveal the need for 5 Star Deluxe Hotels to improve their employees' perceptions on guest satisfaction.

While designing the present study, an endeavour was made to overcome its limitations, nevertheless the same could not be totally eliminated. In this research, all the sample hotels are from Five Star Deluxe category so it does not reveal whether there are significant differences between deluxe and non-deluxe hotels. Also, the current study cannot assert to be an absolute and a final work as it is has considered sample size from one city of India and the responses could be subjective in nature.

Some further scope of the present study to be carried forward, includes that the study could be replicated in other parts of the country to see if results are consistent. However, there could be regional differences from the respondents and such dissimilarity should be explored. The study was done in 5 Star Deluxe Hotels and it is suggested that it could be done in other categories and classification of hotels as well. Demographic factors taken in the study such age, gender, nationality and number of visits per year in 5 Star Deluxe hotel segment of hotel guests were taken for the study. Other demographic factors such as income, marital status could also be used to study guest satisfaction in hotels. One more study should be steered implementing only a qualitative approach in the data collection process and results should be associated with the results of the present study. Different ethnic backgrounds should be further studied, also replicating the present study in other countries/cultures could build up the knowledge of hotels for the development of guest satisfaction practices for different customers.

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