A Study of Guest Satisfaction Tracking System with Special Reference to Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi

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Abstract – **The Hospitality industry is growing by leaps and bounds and so is the competition amongst hotels to retain customers. A retained customer in today's market scenario is of utmost importance to any hotel not only in terms of brand loyalty and the goodwill established by the brand in the market but also helps in saving costs involved in attracting new customers. Guest satisfaction is also become a yardstick for the measurement of a hotels performance in the recent years. In the constant endeavor to look for newer means to satisfy customers the managers were often faced with problems such as which aspects contributed majorly to the guest satisfaction, what are the key attributes the staff to posses in order to enhance the guest experience. Thus came into being systematic methods to track and find out the attributes for guest satisfaction i.e. Guest Satisfaction Tracking Systems (GSTS).**

The old school comment cards were given a more sophisticated and practical approach with the use of technology through GSTS. GSTS have helped managers to understand customer needs better and changed the way data was conceptualized. Data could be easily understood and presented in the form of charts, diagrams and tables which formed an integral form for Management Information Systems. The researchers aim at studying the guest satisfaction tracking system adopted by the hotel and finding the attributes that are the most promising and those that need to be worked upon by the hotel. They also wish to enhance the general understanding of GSTS. This was done by analyzing random feedback forms received by the hotel, interviews were conducted with employees and managers.

Keywords – *Guest satisfaction, brand loyalty, quality, feedback, services.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization and industrialization have led to boom in trade and simultaneous travel related to it. This has lead to the Hotel Industry growing in leaps and bounds resulting in numerous new hotels and brands mushrooming and expanding. Increasing competition has kept Hotel managers on their toes and they are constantly on the lookout for newer ways and means to satisfy and retain guests. Over the past few decades the managers and the practitioners in the Hotel industry have increasingly realized the importance of service quality in doing so. 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 tourism and hotel industry. Among all customer demands, service quality has been increasingly recognized as a critical factor in the success of any business. One of the key ways to do it is to have constant service quality which is a prime factor to measure customer's satisfaction. The

more satisfied the customers are, the more likely they are to return or prolong their hotel stay. Hotel operators now focus more on the quality standards in order to meet the basic needs and expectations of the customers. Once customers & requirements are clearly identified and understood, hotel operators are more likely to anticipate and fulfill their customers' needs and wants. Service quality leads to higher profitability. Furthermore, a number of empirical studies indicate a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000; Dimitriades,2006; Chi and Qu,2008; Faullant et al., 2008), as well as between customer satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth (Söderlund,1998).

Therefore, one of the key strategies for customer-focused firms is to measure and monitor service quality and customer satisfaction. Several tools are available for measuring customer satisfaction. In hotels, one of the most popular ways to get a feedback is a guest comment card (GCC). GCCs have the advantages of small size, easy distribution and simplicity. When analyzing data gathered in such a way, managers can get information about the attributes that have an impact on guests' satisfaction. This simple procedure used by the hotel managers has taken the form of a more systematic and sophisticated procedure known as the Guest Satisfaction Tracking System (GSTS). It largely helps the management to understand which attributes in their services help them to earn maximum satisfaction and which the services that need improvement are. Upon check out automated online feedback forms are sent to the guests, to do so software's are used that are usually linked to the Hotel PMS and help collect data of the guest. Using the PMS these software's typically extract the demographic profile of the Guest noting their name, age, gender, along with other details like address, email id, telephone numbers, the type of room stayed in and the duration of stay, loyalty membership numbers and levels if any. It may also include the confirmation number and/or customer id number etc. The feedback forms are usually further divided into various segments based on the key service area's i.e. housekeeping, front office, etc. the guest is asked to rate the sub sections (i.e. quality of food, speed of check-in) of each of these key service area's usually on a five point or ten point scale. Many feedback forms also include open ended questions like ways to improve satisfaction, positive experiences during the stay, as well as would a guest recommend the hotel to a colleague or friend. On receipt of the forms the software

would typically characterize and group data and represent the same in forms of various charts, diagrams, etc.

This data allows the management to easily understand, interpret and act upon the feedback received from the guests. The software easily allows the management to handle and deal with the feedback in an individualized manner as well. All in all one could say that the use of Guest Satisfaction Tracking Systems helps improve the functioning of the management as well as promote the satisfaction among guests.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the services provided by the Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi.
2. To analyze the services which prompt guest satisfaction towards service quality at the Hotel.
3. Identify the levels of customer satisfaction with the services at Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi.
4. To compare the level of service among different services at the hotel.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study will be of great significance to-

1. *The Hotel Owners and the Management-* It will be beneficial for the Hoteliers as they will know the exact details for the factors causing satisfaction and dissatisfaction among their guests. The findings of the study will also assist them in formulating an action plan for rectification if any.

2. *The Hotel Employees-* Employees working in hospitality industry or aspiring to join the industry can make use of present study by knowing the kind of practices existing in the hotels, guest expectations and preferences, importance of quality service in the each department of the hotel.

3. The Academics-The present study can be of help to academicians and the students as the topics like guest satisfaction, repeat business, brand loyalty are part of the curriculum for the Hotel Management studies. The research work can also be taken further by other academicians in doing sector wise, region wise or period wise comparison.

4. The Researcher-The study will help me in thoroughly understanding the concept of GSTS. It will help me in developing more understanding about the delivery of desired guest satisfaction. This entire research experience would lead to a lot of learning in the mentioned subject.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

The data for the above mentioned topic will be extracted from a combination of literature review which includes various theses on related subjects, books and internet.

Silky Vigg Kushwah, March 2014, International Journal of Advancement in Technology. IILM Institute of Higher Education, New Delhi stated that service quality is the result of the comparison that customers make between their expectations about a service and their perception of the way the service has been performed. A number of experts define service quality differently.

Parasuraman et al., (1985, 1988): Service quality is the differences between customers, expectation of services and their perceived service. If the expectation is greater than the service performance, perceived quality is less than satisfactory and hence, customer dissatisfaction occurs.

Lewis and Mitchell, Oakland and Asubonteng define service quality as the extent to which a service meets customers, need and expectations.

As per Asian Development Outlook, March 2007 the growing trend of service markets has prompted all of the service businesses to improve their service quality in order to make customers satisfied with their services, especially the hotel industry. Hotel operators now focus more on the quality standards in order to meet the basic needs and expectations of the customers.

Hernon & Whitwan, Delivering satisfaction and Service Quality have defined customer satisfaction as a measure of how the customer perceives service delivery. They stated that customer satisfaction is a function of service performance relative to the customer expectation. For this reason, it is important to understand how customer expectation is formed in order to identify the factors of service satisfaction. Customer expectations are based on their knowledge of a product or service. This can be implied that a customer may estimate what the service performance will be or may think what the performance ought to be. If the service performance meets or exceeds customers & expectation, the customers will be satisfied. On the other hand, customers are more likely to be dissatisfied if the service performance is less than what they have expected.

As stated in the Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism the service quality plays a very important role in the guest's satisfaction with service. The study also emphasizes on the involvement of people.

Gundersen et al state that Guest satisfaction can be defined as a guest's post consumption judgment of a product or service that can, in turn, be measured by assessing guests' evaluation of performance on specific attributes. Rather than focusing on error reduction focus should be on improving and maintaining customer quality.

Kotler defined that satisfaction is a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectation. Additionally Yi, also stated that customer satisfaction is a collective outcome of perception, evaluation and psychological reactions to the consumption experience with a product/service. Pezeshki Vahid, September-2010,Three dimensional modeling of customer satisfaction, retention & loyalty towards product

represent ongoing challenge for the corporate financial performance, School of Engineering and design, Brunel University.

The Researcher Mr. Vahid established a framework that links service attribute performance to customer satisfaction and then to customer retention and loyalty. The findings of the study are that customer retention is interpreted as probability of switching between service providers. Customer loyalty is interpreted as word of mouth activity by existing customers.

Ulrich et al. (1991) suggested that there is a relationship between staff attachment (equivalent to organizational commitment), customer attachment and human resource management practices. Hence we have also considered the aspect of staff in our research.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. *Research Design*- The research will be descriptive and explanatory regarding the various services of the hotel and the satisfaction levels of the guests with those.

a)*Primary data-* is collected through Observations, Interviews and feedback from Hotel Managers and Employees (at all levels).

b*) Secondary data-* Is collected through previous records, reports, guest online feedback forms, Library resources, Trade Journals, Internet.

2. *Sample size*- The participants of this study consisted of guests who stayed at the Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi between 1st June 2014 and 30th June 2014 and responded to the online feedback form. Random feedback forms received from the guests who stayed in the above mentioned duration were considered for the study.

3. *Research Instrument-* Medallia feedback form (online guest feedback survey) was used as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire instrument consisted of information as follows;

General background which included gender, age, nationality, purpose of traveling. The other parts included factors of service quality related to all the operational areas of the Hotel i.e. Front Office (Arrival, Departure), F&B Service (Restaurant quality) by name Carmine, The Great Kabab Factory, The Bridge, Skye Bar and Room Service., the general facilities provided by the hotel including Spa, Fitness Centre, Business Centre, Valet Parking and Internet access; those related to the Hotel staff and their attitude. The study explored customer's satisfaction levels towards service quality of the services at Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi as well as the guest satisfaction tracking system used.

In the feedback form, the degree of satisfaction towards services of the hotel and staff is set from 0 to 10 (10 is from the highest satisfaction, whereas, 0 is the lowest satisfaction).

While comparing the results the scores were categorized as

Scores among 0 - 4 mean poor or lowest satisfaction

Scores among 5 - 7 mean average satisfaction

Score among 8 -10 mean good satisfaction.

A part of the feedback is designed to ask the customers suggestions on why they would recommend the hotel or why should one detract from the hotel, they were also asked to mention if they faced any problem and if yes then was it handled as per their expectation.

VI. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

General information about the hotel-

The hotel (a 5-star hotel) is a part of Carlson hotels chain under the hotel's unique service philosophy "Yes I Can". It has a room inventory of 141 rooms and is located at a close proximity from the Pune airport and the IT areas of Eon, Magarpatta and Ranjangaon. The hotel is also close to the down town Koregaon Park and M G Road shopping areas.

1. I have selected this hotel as a sample of studying service quality of front office staff since I was a part of the Front Office team. The hotel has opened nearly 5 years back and is an international brand in Pune and Worldwide.

2. *Hotel services*

This hotel offers a variety of services which consist of various types of rooms such as Standard rooms, Business Class room, Radisson suites, and Deluxe suite. Five food and beverage outlets which offer different dining experiences which are

Carmine – All day – dining restaurant provides Mediterranean, Pan Asian and Western cuisine.

The Great Kabab Factory – The signature specialty restaurant serves a variety of Kababs using ancient and contemporary recipes.

SKYE - Unique hanging bar, one of its kind in the city provides excellent wines, malts .

Citrine – Lounge designed to provide maximum relaxation, serves classic snacks, exquisite tea's and confectionery products.

The Bridge – Mexican Eatery & Lounge – A perfect set up for a quiet evening it serves specialties from Mexico including Quesadillas, Refried beans, Nacho's and much more along with the some fine liquor.

Moreover, the hotel provides many recreation facilities such as a swimming pool, spa, fitness center and meditation room.

Spa Blue – Spa Blue is a cocoon of relaxation, rejuvenation and well being which offers a revitalizing experience with its Swedish and Balinese treatments under the guidance of specialized measures.

Other services available –
- Business Centre
- Dedicated Travel Desk
- In room wi-fi service
- Fitness Centre
- Swimming Pool
- Round the clock foreign exchange facilities
- Concierge services
- Doctor on call
- Baby sitter (on prior request)
- Satellite Television in rooms

This chapter presents the results of this study consisting level of customer's satisfaction, and their suggestions concerning the service quality at the Radisson Hotel Pune Kharadi. The total services were classified into five broad categories largely based on the functional areas of as well as the attributes that affect the customer satisfaction on the whole –

1. Services provided by Front Office (overall arrival, overall departure).
2. Services provided by Housekeeping (overall guestroom and overall bathroom)
3. The Food & Beverage outlets of the Hotel
4. The Hotel Staff
5. The services and facilities provided by the Hotel.

Table I- Summarized findings of the research

Service Parameters	Total responses	Poor (0-4)	Average (5-7)	Good (8-10)
Overall services / facilities	49	1	9	39
High Speed Internet/Internet Access	35	4	11	20
Fitness Centre	11	1	4	6
Business Centre	8		1	7
Spa	8	1	3	4
Valet Parking	6	1	1	4
Swimming Pool	8	0	2	6
Staff				
Overall staff	50	1	3	46
Did whatever it took to meet my needs	49	2	2	45
Food and Beverage				
Overall satisfaction with F&B - Carmine	21	2	5	14
Overall satisfaction with F&B - Citrine	11	0	2	9
Overall satisfaction with F&B - IRD	13	0		13
Overall satisfaction with F&B- Skye Bar	10	1	1	8
Overall satisfaction with F&B – TGKF*	10	0	3	7
Front Office				
Overall arrival	50	0	2	48
Overall departure	50	2		48
Housekeeping				
Overall Guest Room	49	0	4	45
Overall Bathroom	50	0	8	42

   *TGKF – The Great Kabab Factory.

It was observed that of the 35 respondents who responded for internet access 20 (57.14%) thought that the services were good, 11 mentioned as average and 4 rated it as poor.

The Fitness Centre was rated by 11 respondents of which 6 found it good, 4 found it average and 1 claimed it was poor. The Business Centre and Spa were rate by eight respondents each.

While seven respondents rated the Business Centre as good only one rates it as average. The Spa was rated as good by four average by three and poor by one.

Out of six respondents four rated the valet service as good, one rated it as average and one as poor.

Eight respondents rated the swimming pool of which six found it good and two found it average.

46 respondents rated the overall hotel staff as good while three rating them as average and only one as poor out of the full sample of 50.

In addition the staff was also marked on their willingness to do whatever that that it took to meet the guest needs. 45 respondents rated them as good and two each were respectively marked as average and poor.

The next segment to be reviewed was the Food and Beverage outlets of the Hotel. 14 respondents felt that Carmine was good, while five said it was average and two said it was good.

Out of the 11 respondents who rated Citrine nine felt it was good while two rated it as average.

100 per cent or all 13 respondents felt that the In Room Dining was good.

The Skye Bar was rated by 10 respondents while eight marked it as good one each mentioned it as average and poor.

Seven respondents marked The Great Kabab Factory as good while three marked as average.

The overall arrival was marked by 48 respondents as good and only two as average while overall departure was again marked by 48 respondents as good and two as poor.

45 respondents rated overall guestroom as good and 4 respondents rated it as average.

Out of the 50 respondents 42 rated overall bathroom as good and 8 rated it as average.

VII. CONCLUSION

Well travelled guests, globalization and growing competition in the hospitality industry has prompted

business to take extra efforts to keep their guests satisfied and retain them rather than then spend huge amounts on attracting new customers. The key elements in doing this are standardized products, trained, motivated and empathetic staff and strict quality checks. Different hotels work on different policies and philosophies for the same.

An overall view of the study shows that most of the guests are satisfied with the overall services of the front office department at Radisson Hotel Pune Kharadi as most of the attributes studied have got an majority overall score good (8-10). The Front office department on the whole seems to be one area which is a key promoter of guest satisfaction. The overall hotel staff is close to follow thus making it safe to assume that the right recruitment and training practices exist in the organization. The study also finds low responses for areas like swimming pool, valet and fitness centre, this could be attributed to the Hotel being a business property with largely business clientele with less time and inclination towards recreation facilities. This identifies an area with further scope for research. Amongst the Food and beverage outlets In Room Dining seems to be doing a phenomenal job with 100 per cent of the respondents rating it as good. Large scope of improvement can be noted in the area of Internet access, internet being a prime necessity for the business traveler now-a-days. Among the other factors of concern in a hotel the housekeeping is found to be another prime area based on the responses received. Among other factors in the room, the bathroom is an area with a scope for improvement.

It was also observed that the Feedback form used by the hotel was very concise and hence did not give a detailed understanding of the finer parameters that led to satisfaction or dissatisfaction; this acted as limitation to the study.

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