

# Hotel Ammenities, Customer Satisfaction and Customer Experience: A Test of Mediation

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## Abstract

Optimistic service experience, with its final effect on revisiting and repurchasing by customers, it appears to have gained little attention. This study starts by first outlining the concept of service experience and proceeds to differentiate between hotel amenities and customer satisfaction. The survey included 300 people who stayed at Malaysian three-star hotel. In a structured questionnaire, a five-point Likert scale was used. The unidirectional correlations between hotel room amenities, customer satisfaction, and customer experience were investigated using SPSS, as well as predictions about model construct relationships were tested. A mediational model is proposed that connects hotel room amenities to customer satisfaction through the customer experience. Customer experience does mediate the effect of hotel room amenities on customer satisfaction, according to the findings. The study's implications are examined, as well as the study's recommendations and possible research fields.

## Keywords:

Customer experience; hotel amenities; customer satisfaction

## 1 Introduction

Besides from visiting intriguing places, tourists are concerned about their accommodation while they are on vacation. Customer satisfaction is determined by the services offered by the hotel operator, whether it is a 5-star hotel or a motel. Majority of the time, tourists will consider the accommodation's comfort as well as the facilities offered by the hotel. Apart from the room facilities, guests of a hotel will consider the food and beverages offered, as well as the hotel staff's professionalism. The number of guests who visit a hotel determines its sustainability, according to Krishna, Rao, and Anuradha (2020). To cover the expense of the service, the consumer will pay a set amount. As an outcome, most hotel management are working to rally the quality of their services and facilities (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2017). Customers assess the amenities provided by the hotels in which they stay. As a result, hotel owners and operators must take special care of their facilities, particularly room amenities, in order to maintain their business. Customers may return to the hotel in the future if they are satisfied with the hotel's facilities and services (Amoako et al., 2012). In addition, the similarities and differences between hotel and other service operations are seen not just in their overall respectable name and overall services provided, but also in the specifics of their service area and qualities such as front desk service happenstances, housekeeping services, and room amenities.

Customer's experience is another significant part of the service marketing sector. As a result, when it came to discovering exclusive and personal encounters with certain company products and services, customers were willing to pay extra for outstanding experiences (Ali et al., 2014). Because hotel industry is a thrilling service industry, customers continued to devote a countless deal of devotion to their lodging and communications (Ali et al., 2014; Smith, 1994). Ali and Omar (2014) also proposed that hoteliers receive their customers as an integral element of their customer's experience rather than perceiving it as a secondary factor in assessing overall customer satisfaction. Past service experience has been demonstrated to be a significant signal for customers when re-selecting and purchasing a hotel brand (Gilmore & Pine, 2011; Yuan & Woo, 2008) since the hotel industry is seen as an experience and understanding service industry (Gilmore & Pine, 2011; Yuan & Woo, 2008). Ren et al. (Ren et al., 2015). Customer satisfaction with the entire functioning product involvement has been linked to post-purchase behaviour intentions (Clemes et al., 2011; Cronin et al., 2000). (Zins, 2002; Chen & Chen 2010), Customers' experiences with the company, according to Cass and Grace (2004), have a substantial impact on the service branding, and experience is a key consideration for customers when determining which service brand to purchase (Keller, 1998). In reality, a regular customer engagement with a specific product or service makes a significant contribution to the service brand's attributes.

Customer satisfaction has always been a priority in the service industry. Customer satisfaction and high-quality service are commonly recognised as key aspects in the success of hotel, cookery, and travel businesses (Deye, Vincent, Michel, Ehrmann, Da Silva, Piagnerelli, Laterre, 2016). According to Susyarini, Hadiwidjojo, Gede Supartha,

and Rohman (2014), pleased customers are more expected to produce loyalty, reappearance sales, and positive word-of-mouth. Customer satisfaction, as well as the hotel support offered, will undoubtedly influence customer fulfilment, loyalty, and the probability of them returning (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2016). Apart from that, the high level of service offered by hotel workers would contribute significantly to hotel customer satisfaction.

Based on the foregoing argument, this study will examine the relationship between hotel amenities and customer satisfaction using customer experience as a mediating variable. This is because the customer experience in terms of hotel services is still insufficient, necessitating greater research into how it affects hotel amenities ratings and customers' satisfaction. Previous hospitality and hotel studies (Heung, V, 2000) only investigated at customer satisfaction in terms of service excellence, food superiority, room facilities, revenue, and hotel brand, but lack of investigation in the connection between customer experience and the variables listed above. Furthermore, the majority of these studies were performed in western countries, with Asia, especially Malaysia, receiving little attention. In addition, a recent study on customer experience in hospitality focused on tourism destinations rather than the hotel and accommodation industry itself (Giovanni & Monica, 2020).

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Hotel Amenities**

Several academics have participated in studies on the quality of customer expectations of hotel features and their effects on total customer satisfaction in previous centuries. In the hospitality industry's competitions, the focus remained on the vital function of client satisfaction (Alexandris, 2002; Oh, 1999). Room amenities, in addition to food and beverage, are considered typical hotel attributes (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2016) that have a significant impact on consumer satisfaction with hotel services.

The hotel's amenities include a swimming pool, concierge desk, health spa, and various ancillary products and services (Vallen & Vallen, 2005). Guest amenities are "non-reusable goods" or "stuff that guests are expected to use at the conclusion of their trip or can leave with themselves," according to Casado (2000). According to Jones, Mak, and Sim (2005), "the term amenity is often used to imply supplementary products that a hotel gives out to its guests at no additional cost, even though the price of those goods is often hidden in the accommodation bill." In addition, a room amenity is a word that applies to the soaps, body lotions, shampoos, conditioners, or other items that are placed in a guest's room. Although there is a substantial amount of non-academic literature on the topic of guest room amenities in the form of business magazines and trade journals, there is very little scholarly research on this crucial topic. As a result, the current study will concentrate on guest room amenities, with the assumption that these amenities will improve a hotel's customer ratings and raise their disposition to pay based

on what they obtain from the room amenities. As a result, the degree of customer satisfaction with the hotel's services will improve.

## **2.2 Customer Experience**

There has been a growing trend in the service business to improve client experience and emotional relationships through service fundamentals (Gross, 2003). Through showbiz (Wolf, 1999), a dream culture (Jensen, 1999), sentiment (Gobe, 2001), and devotion, the rise of customer experience is gradually being a part of the industry (Davenport, 2002). As service commoditization (the progression of turning service area into standardised, saleable items) lasts, these authors argue that businesses must find new ways to gain a competitive advantage, particularly by directing on scheming and managing customer experience and building customer loyalty to the company or products through well-designed experiences (Davenport, 2002; Ahmad & Buttle, 2002). Pine and Gilmore (1999) initially highlighted the shift in the paradigm from the service economy to the experience economy. They stated that rather than simply serving clients, it is more necessary to engage them through experience in order to generate value in an ever-increasing competitive market setting. In this regard, Walls et al. (2011) stated that the emotional factor is a natural feature of client interactions in the hotel and tourism industry. Emotion had received attention as a significant aspect in comprehending service interactions and experiences, according to Lin and Liang (2011), because emotional responses could alter consumers' perceptions, behaviour, and actions inside a service environment (Martin et al., 2008; Simpeh et al., 2011).

## **2.3 Customer Satisfaction**

According to executives and researchers (Vera & Trujillo, 2017; Wieseke, Geigenmüller, & Kraus, 2012), customer satisfaction is a major determinant of a product or service's long-term consumer loyalty. Oliver (2010) defines satisfaction as a customer's reaction to and choice of a receive a service, a product, or the service on its own supplying (or offering) a pleasurable tier of intake satisfaction, which include levels of under or over fulfilment that are consistent with the conceptual and empirical proof. Aron et al. described an attitude as a conclusion reached after a purchase or a series of experiences with consumer goods (2010). Wirtz & Lovelock (2010) described customer satisfaction as a demeanor decision made after a customer encounter, with the verification or rejecting of pre-consumption expectations as significant determinants. Hotel customer satisfaction is affected by a combination of elements, including the hotel's location and hospitality service. Few researches in travel and hospitality have examined the impact of customer satisfaction on behavioural intent. Customer satisfaction can be achieved if customers' expectations are met or exceeded (Mohajerani & Miremadi, 2012). According to Marandon (2016), customer satisfaction is defined as an individual's perception of a product or service performance that meets his or her expectations. Furthermore, Ekinci et al. (2008) claimed that customer satisfaction influenced the decision to return to a restaurant or hotel, whereas Clemens (2011) claimed that higher customer happiness enhanced the likelihood of a client returning to a hotel.

Customer satisfaction was closely linked to the desire to return to a location, according to several studies (Han & Kim, 2010; Ryu & Han, 2010, Han & Back, 2007; Han & Ryu, 2007). Customer satisfaction had a significant impact on the reason of return visits to hotels, according to a study done by Han & Back (2007). Hotels were more likely to succeed if they could recruit, retain, impress, and retain customers. Customer satisfaction has also been acknowledged as a critical factor in the service industry.

### 3 Methodology

The sample population of this study consists of customers that stayed at a 3-star hotel in Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia, in order to determine customer experience for the data collection technique. The data for this study was gathered using a non-probability sampling strategy, which consisted of a simple random sampling of individuals. The researcher calculated the total number of rooms, divided by the average occupancy rates for hotel and restaurant, and then calculated the final number of respondents by surveying 300 people (as indicated in Kreijns & Kirschner, 2004).

Since this study is concerned with a mediating variable, it is necessary to first explain this variable before conducting the test and reporting the results. According to Barron and Kenny (1986), mediation in research is the variable that tempts mediation in the dependent and independent variables and explains the relationship between them. The whole intervention of the mediator variable is defined as the entire mediation procedure. According to MacKinnon (2008), a mediator represents asymmetric relationships between research variables. Hair et al., (2006) argue that because of the mediator's position, it will have an adverse effect on the link between independent and dependent variables, and the mediator will contribute to the overall variance accounted for in the model, which attempts to describe the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Hayes, 2013).

According to the above-mentioned nation, the most prevalent strategy or methodologies used in assessing the mediator are Baron and Kenny (1986) and Kraemer, Kiernan, Essex, and Kupfer's MacArthur Approach for Treatment (2008). Both approaches have a slightly different argument. The MacArthur technique is constructed on the predictor's effect size on the result, whereas the Baron and Kenny method focuses on null hypothesis significance testing. Many earlier academic studies have used Baron and Kenny's (1986) traditional technique, however Preacher and Hayes (2008) argue that it is ineffective. Both approaches, however, employ identical mediation principle (Figure 1.0), which is based on the classical mediation model, in which X substantially predicts Y (overall impact) and the indirect influence (ab) is substantial. The mediation test can be explained by path c' (path c' = c + ab).

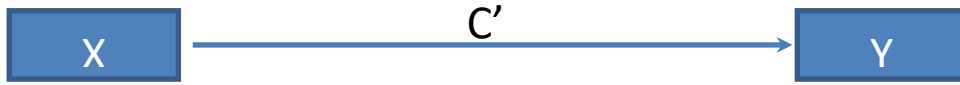


Figure 1: Classic Mediation Key Concepts

Based on the foregoing arguments and considering recent techniques, the mediation test was chosen for this investigation through a particular PROCESS menu in SPSS designed by Hayes (2013).

#### 4 Findings

PROCESS was used to conduct a mediation study of Customer Experience (CE) on the link between Hotel Amenities (HA) and Customer Satisfaction (CS), with 1000 bootstrap samples used to compensate for bias and construct 95 percent confidence intervals. Figure 1.0 and Table 1.0 show the findings of the analysis.

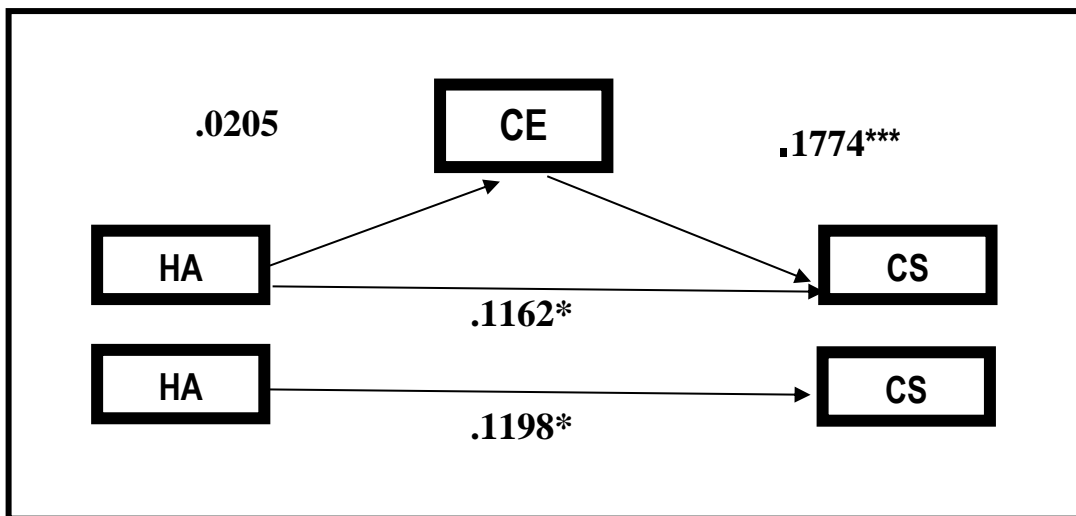


Figure 2: Customer Experience (CE) on Hotel Amenities (HA) and Customer Satisfaction (CS) Mediation Test (CS)

Table 1: Summary of Mediation test on Customer Experience, Hotel Amenities and Customer Satisfaction.

Path	Relationship	Result	Bootstrapping result	
			LL 95 CI	UL 95 CI
Path a	Effect of HA on CE	-.0205	-.1246	.0837
Path b	Effect of CE on CS	.1774***	.0988	.2560

Path c	Effect of HA on CS	.1162*	.0232	.2092
Path c'	Effect of HA on CS mediated by CE	.1198*	.0285	.2111

With a standardized coefficient of 0.1162, the path from Hotel Amenities (HA) to Customer Satisfaction (CS) appears to be significant in Figure 1.0. Customer Experience (CE) and Customer Satisfaction (CS) have a significant relationship (.1774\*\*\*). Customer Experience (CE) mediated the association between Hotel Amenities (HA) and Customer Satisfaction (CS) with an indirect effect of 0.1198 that is significant with an R2 of 0.1113, it was also discovered. According to this finding, Customer Experience (CE) has an indirect impact on the link between Hotel Amenities (HA) and Customer Satisfaction (CS).

The impact of hotel amenities on customer satisfaction will improve with the presence of the customer experience, according to the results of this section. In other words, the hotel amenities, which are luxury products that a hotel provides to its customers at no additional cost, are more influenced by the customer experience. This may support Oliver's (1981) claim that consumer satisfaction is subject to alteration or adjustment contingent on their consumption involvement, which includes food flavor, hotel atmosphere (Minor et al., 2004), and amenity facilities (Brocato & Kleiser, 2005) of a hotel.

## 5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it has shed more light on the connection between customer experience, hotel amenities, and customer satisfaction. The findings are intended to not only supplement current data and support the works of literature on hotel customer behaviour, but also to serve as a basis and platform for future study, predominantly in the areas of high-end hotel branding and customer happiness.

## 6 About the author

Faizal Azrin Abdullah is a chef instructor in Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management. This journal is a part of his study in social science due to his thesis submission for Master's degree.

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