AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED DIMENSIONS OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN SELECTED HOTELS IN THE STATE OF GUJARAT

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*P*URPOSE
THIS empirical research study was carried out to evaluate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices followed in selected hotels from selected cities viz., Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, and Rajkot of the Gujarat State.

Methodology: Structured questionnaire has been used to collect the primary data. Exploratory cum descriptive research design has been used in order to identify and evaluate the responses collected from conveniently drawn, 1200 hotel guests or customers on selected aspects viz., responses on frequency and reasons for visit to the hotels; expectations and experiences on selected dimensions of ambience of the hotels, service quality, and facilities as offered to them by the selected hoteliers. SPSS and AMOS software have been used to analyse the data with the help of Structural Equation Model (SEM) technique.

Key Findings: The research study aims to give meaningful insights pertaining to intention of hotel guests to visit the hotel again based on ambience considering well furnished hotel, pollution free environment, sufficient parking place in the hotel as well as the selected dimensions of service quality viz., provision of quick service in dining section, arrangement for purchase of movie tickets if required, provision of 24 hours online reservation, and provision of babysitter. The findings also supported the fact that, preference to stay in next visit were determined by four service facilities of the hotel viz., swimming pool, Gymnasium, sports, and money changing facilities.

Limitations: The study suffers from limitations of geographical coverage. The limitations of time, cost, and biasedness of hotel guests in answering questions may have affected results.

Implications: Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is the business strategy for maintaining and developing relationships with profitable customers along with handling the less profis generating customers. The cost of doing business with them is the focal theme of this research study.

Originality: The present study is significant due to availability of few research studies in India focussed towards measuring Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices followed by selected hotels of Gujarat state so as to uncover attitudinal dispositions towards intentions of the guests to visit/stay in the hotel.

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Introduction

In India, the proportion of tourism sector to GDP is 6.8 per cent and stands on third rank as foreign exchange source for the country. The epected growth in terms of the direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP by 2015 is 7.2 per cent per annum amounting to US$ 88.6 billion (2.5 per cent of GDP). The growing tourism industry has a significant impact on the hospitality sector with an increase in the occupancy ratios and average room rates. Hospitality can be defined as the friendly and generous reception of visitors for social or commercial reasons. Indians are famous worldwide in terms of their hospitality. 'Atithi Devo Bhavah' (The Guest is like a God) has been our axiom from ancient time. Due to significant numbers of hotels in India, it has been considered as one of the world's top hospitality locations (Raghubalari & Raghubalan, 2010). Accommodation is the elementary requirement of tourism activity. Without accommodation, it would not be anything but difficult to develop the hotel industry even on the world's most wonderful spots (Carr, 2011). Hospitality industry is a part of service industry divided into lodging and restaurants, planning an event, theme parks, transportation, cruise line, and additional fields in the tourism industry. There are various units of hospitality viz., restaurant, hotel, servers, housekeepers, porters, kitchen workers, bartenders, etc., which require proper management, marketing, and human resources. The increasing growth of tourism and travel sector simultaneously leads to growth of the Indian hotel industry. Indian hotel industry is getting flourished due to increased number of foreign as well as domestic tourists.

Majority of tourists demand for affordable stay, therefore, the number of such cost effective hotels which suits their budget is increasing rapidly in India. International companies are also progressively focussing on establishing such hotels. According to the research report of ICRA, bookings in the hotel for financial year 2015-2016 are expected to go up by 2 to 4 per cent and revenue per room will also grow by 3 to 5 per cent. The hotel industry is expected to create huge employment (around 13.45 million jobs) across all of its sub-segments such as restaurants (10.49 million jobs), hotels (2.3 million jobs), and travel agents/tour operators (0.66 million).

In order to support the industry in matching up with the rising demand for human resources which are skillful and trained, the Tourism Ministry is planning to initiate education programs related to hospitality sector for the students as well as certifying and upgrading skills of existing service providers.

CRM is a need of the hour. Its main focus worldwide is on customers. If an organization consistently delivers marketing, sales, service, and support interaction to the customers, it may be rewarded with more opportunities to sell and increase quality of customer service, which results in improved customers' behaviour patterns. To prevent the customer switching from one company to another, CRM can be used as a powerful competitive advantage. (Nykamp, 2012).

It has different meaning for different people. It also depends on the working environment in which it is used. "CRM has been described by various researchers and academia using various related terms such as Customer Relationship Marketing; Continuous Relationship Marketing; Collaborative Customer Relationship Marketing; Supplier Relationship Marketing; Mobile Customer Relationship Marketing; Partner Relationship Marketing; Enterprise Customer Relationship Marketing, and Electronic Customer Relationship Management respectively" (Rao, 2005, p. 65).

CRM has likewise been characterized as programming package, framework or innovation; as an information storage centre; as a social change inside the organization itself; as an administrative practice that centres around relations instead of exchange; as a mechanism to handle demand; as a technique that centres around current clients (Baran, Galka, & Strunk, 2008). CRM focuses on the importance of customer knowledge for their better understanding and accordingly serving them. It is

an umbrella concept, which put the customer at the centre point of an organization.

Factors Responsible for the Growth of CRM

An attempt has been made by the researcher to highlight the factors that lead to growth of Customer Relationship Management practices which are as follows:

Lifecycle of products gets shorter: Brands normally have a shorter life span than the product category to which they belong. Introduction of new technology drives new product with it, therefore, the emergence of new brands take place. Thus, there are many brands for the same product in the market which creates a need to satisfy the customer to the highest extent and thus, mend continuous amicable relationship with customers.

Firm's offering new products rapidly: Due to the advent of new technology, firms are ready to offer new product very frequently. CRM creates a path for the manufacturer to create new products according to the needs and expectations of the customers.

Customer share has become more demanding: The overall demand of products and services has increased in today's world. The customers are becoming more demanding while purchasing goods and services with a hope of getting many benefits from a particular product.

Increase in the number of educated customers: The level of awareness among customers too has increased due to the exposure of media and print ads. The customers have become more conscious about the availability of different type of products and their brands.

Thus, CRM is helpful to companies in increasing the customer base by developing long term relationship with their present and future customers.

Increase in competition: Increase in competition among several companies has provided same products and services which have aroused the need of retaining old customers and creating new ones. If one company is good in maintaining successful relationship with their customers in comparison to other companies, there are chances that other company may lose the game. Thus, it has become essential for companies to develop long lasting relationships with customers, with the help of CRM practices.

Customers have become less loyal towards the brand and the company: In today's scenario, customers have become less loyal towards brand and the company as new and superior products and services are being introduced into the market every time. Thus, it has become necessary for the firms to improve or revise their products and services and to create trust through appropriate care of customers' needs and regular communication which is possible by coming closer to customers, understanding their needs through CRM practices (Bhatt, 2009).

Key Terms of the Research Study

It mainly includes the following terms:

> **Customer Relationship Management [CRM]:** "CRM is a process that involves identification of customer wants and expectations and managing them, closely monitoring the customer experience, anticipating problems, and taking appropriate actions to foster and nurture relationships" (Nancarrow, Rees, & Stone, 2003, p. 27).

> **Hotel:** A hotel may be characterized as a place that provides lodging, meals, and beverages at a reasonable cost with profits (Raghubalari & Raghubalan, 2010).

> **Guest**: Guest especially with reference to hotels is one, who is a beneficiary of hospitality at the

home or outside, to whom hospitality has been extended by someone as a host or hostess, at a party or at a restaurant, hotel, or other establishment; a patron.

Service Quality: Service quality is the reflection of customer's perception for reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility. Satisfaction is more inclusive based on the perceptions regarding service and product quality, price, situational and personal factors (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003).

Review of Literature

The following section presents a brief review of few research studies that have been undertaken by various research scholars on Customer Relationship Management, ambience of the hotel, and service quality.

"Customer service is an important component of CRM, however, it is also concerned with coordinating customer relations across all business functions, points of interaction, and audiences" (Bose & Sugamaran, 2003, p. 4). Yastrow (2007) had revealed that relationships have become powerful differentiators and also argued that companies should enhance personal relationships with their customers, and should also take interest in the products they are offering, additional elements of service that they can offer like greeting guests when they enter hotel, and to give sorry note in case of complaint about a poor service that they have paid for. CRM is a process of managing clients through identifying and satisfying their needs, which in turn, shall be helpful in attracting new prospects by using customers specific strategies.

Customer Relationship Management emphasis on the evaluation and implementation of customer relationship strategies that would serve the interests of all stakeholders (Mohamed & Sagadevan, 2003). Mukhopadhyay (2003) had explored the strategies adopted by hospitality industry to maintain customer relation-ship. There were various facets, viz., satisfaction, loyalty, retention measures, complaint management failure, and recovery. These are reflected in strategies such as segmentation and targeting with appropriate product offer, product innovation, demand and quality management, complaint management, and redressal/feedback system.

The study had focused on the above mentioned facet to know their usage by industry in order to maintain relationship but the linkages among these facets were not identified. The study revealed that segmentation and targeting with appropriate product and pricing for the restaurants, along with product innovation were the major strategy thrust in the industry. The study indicated that a balanced mix of tangibles and intangibles would achieve the desired result (Mukhopadhyay, 2003).

Luck & Lancaster (2013) had identified the "role of Customer Relationship Marketing or CRM as a strategic solution to hotels or part of their strategies. It was found that the spirit of a customer-focused environment remains a preliminary indication of the benefit received by hotel industry from a strategic and focused approach of CRM. The hotels, in evidence, had recourse to basics of CRM for a large number of strategic and tactical reasons. It is contended that, the success of a strategy depends upon the company's ability to identify target customers' genuine needs and wants, as well as on the company's ability to deliver improved value in terms of specific needs and wants. It was suggested that, hotels should identify the target customers' requirement and they should also ensure themselves to understand the dynamics of CRM strategy" (p. 55).

It is necessary to understand the fundamentals of CRM to optimally mix it in their strategies for getting maximum benefit from available opportunities. The researchers revealed that hotels should agree to emphasize on the three strategies associated with CRM which are acquisition of customer, retention of customer, and customer account development. Chauhan & Vora (2014) had provided an understanding in order to meet and satisfy the expectations of guest regarding hotel services; hoteliers

have adopted a Customer Relationships Management practice which is combined with information technology, which has resulted into e-CRM. The study had also concluded that CRM practices in hotels would lead to retention of existing customers and addition of new customers. The researchers had attempted to highlight the past literature undertaken by the various researchers in the area of CRM. The relationship between CRM practices and customer satisfaction was studied by Angamuthu (2015). Further, impact of customers' satisfaction on customer loyalty and customer retention policies has also been examined in the area of hotel industry and a positive relationship between CRM practices (like customer relationship upgrading capability; customer orientation strategies, customer value, customer interaction management practices, customer contact programmes, and CRM technology) and customers' satisfaction was found.

It was also found that the customer satisfaction was significantly and positively related with customer's loyalty and their retention practices in the hotel industry.

The study also highlights the significance of ambience and facilities in the hotel in affecting the customer satisfaction. The researcher provided that most travellers consider various hotel attributes while making a hotel choice decision which includes cleanliness, location, room rate, security, service quality, and the reputation of the hotel or chain (Wuest, Tas, & Emenheiser, 1996).

Kimes & Fitzsimmons (1990) had discovered that "selecting a good site plays a critical role in the success of a hotel, considering the rise in competition that has become increasingly important. The study presents a regression model for La Quinta Motor Inns, a mid-sized hotel chain headquartered in San Antonio, Texas which predicted profitability for sites under consideration. It was found that, if the predicted profitability was higher than the decision rule, the decision was to accept the site, while if the prediction was lower than the decision rule; the decision was to reject the site" (p. 12). The risks of rejecting a good site and accepting a bad site associated with the use of this rule were known (Kimes & James, 1990). Countryman & Jang (2006) had examined "the atmospheric elements viz., color, lighting, layout, style, and furnishings that make up the physical environment of a hotel lobby. It was found that atmospheric elements impact overall guest perceptions and impressions. These atmospheric elements viz., colour, lighting, and style were significantly related with regard to overall impression of a hotel lobby, and colour emerged as the most significant atmospheric element" (p. 534).

The below section presents significance of service quality on customer satisfaction in hotels:

The term service quality is an evaluation of customer's perception for the explicit dimensions of services viz., reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility.

Satisfaction is more inclusive and is influenced by customers' perception of service quality, product quality, and price as well as situational factors and personal factors respectively. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1985) had concluded that service quality is the comparison between what the customer felt, what should be offered, and what was provided. Other marketing researchers' viz., Yoo & Park (2007) had examined how firms enhanced their service quality to increase customers' satisfaction and thus financial performance.

The researchers had considered four factors such as viz., employees, perceived service quality, customers, and financial performance to judge the success of service firm. The study had revealed that a shared understanding among employees played a critical role in enhancing perceived service quality. In addition, customers' satisfaction mediated between perceived service quality and financial performance. It was suggested that service firms should understand how important elements viz., employees, customers, perceived service quality, and financial performance are to interact and how it influences the overall performance (Yoo & Park, 2007).

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Padhy & Patnaik (2008) stated that Customer relationship management (CRM) is the strategic process of shaping the interactions between a company and its customers with the goal of maximizing current and lifetime value of customers for the company as well as maximizing satisfaction for customers. Vyas & Patel (2004) stated that successful implementation of e-CRM strategy calls for web design considerations with regard to target audience, website navigation, customer personalization and sound, video and other special design considerations and its integration with eMarketing processes to direct efforts towards establishing, developing. Aggarwal, Handa, & Singh (2010) concluded that the attribute aesthetic appeal is rated high on both expectation and satisfaction by the tourist for all - land, air and water based sports. Facilities are rated high on expectation and satisfaction for land and water based sports and accommodation is rated high on expectation and satisfaction for air and water based sports. The major areas of concern are food safety and security which are rated low on satisfaction as well as expectation for water and air based sports.

Rationale of the Study

The primary research study, following exploratory cum descriptive research design, has been conducted with its chief objective to identify and evaluate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices in order to develop long lasting relationship with selected hotel guests' or customers'. The primary data were, therefore, gathered to measure selected hotel guests' expectations versus experience concerning selected CRM practices that mainly included ambience, service quality, and facilities which would be instrumental in maintaining and retaining guests in hotels in the selected cities viz., Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, and Rajkot in the State of Gujarat.

Research Methodology

The researcher has used exploratory and descriptive research design to identify and evaluate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices in the selected hotels of four major cities of Gujarat. The primary data were collected using self-administered, structured, and non-disguised questionnaire supported with personal interviewing of hotel guests. Out of the total numbers of 1,294 duly filled up structured questionnaires that were collected by the researcher, after editing, finally it was decided to consider total number of 1,200 qualifying responses from 51 hotels located in Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat, and Rajkot cities of the Gujarat state for the purpose of data analysis and interpretation. Those customers or hotel guests who had stayed and availed hotel services at the time of collection of the primary data were regarded as a representative sampling unit in this research study. The collected data have been analysed through Chi-Square test and Structural Equation Model (SEM) to offer findings, implications as well as recommendations for formulation and modifications of marketing strategies concerning Customer Relationship Management practices for the hotel industry.

Reliability of the Structured and Non-Disguised Questionnaire

The reliability tests were run and composite score was computed to determine how strong the experience of selected customers was, who had stayed and availed hotel services on selected criteria. The value of Cronbach's alpha, as shown in table no. 1, ranged from 0.618 to 0.878 which depicts internal reliability of the scale.

Table No. 1: Summary of Indicators (Experience) and Reliability Alpha Score

S. No.	Grouped Indicator Items	Cronbach's Reliability Alpha Coefficient
1.	Ambience	0.878
2.	Facilities	0.618
3.	Service quality	0.639

Data Analysis & Interpretation

Profile of Selected Hotel Guests' in the State of Gujarat

The researcher has attempted to outline profile of hotel guests considering their selected demographic variables viz., age, educational qualifications, marital status, and gender.

Table no. 2 shows that, more than half of the hotel guests were from the age group of 26 to 45 years. Male respondents were found to be around 80 percent; 45 percent of them were found unmarried, and maximum number of them were found to be belonging to occupation category of "Profession", followed with "Service", and thereafter, "Businessman/Women" and "Self-employed" categories, respectively. Maximum numbers of hotel guests were found to be professionally qualified followed with post-graduation as their educational qualifications.

Selected Hotel Guests' or Customers' Responses on Mode of Booking of the Hotel

The data analysis yielded similar results for mode of booking of the hotel in each of the four selected cities of Gujarat state, where internet had topped the list with maximum number of them who had booked their hotel through internet, followed by booking through phone as the second option. In case of booking through internet, Rajkot topped the list with 47.2 percent whereas, in case of booking of hotel done through phone, Ahmedabad city had topped the list. It was also found that, the least preferred option for booking hotel was through office (18.2 percent), followed by booking through travel agency (13.6 percent), respectively.

The data analysis, in table no. 3, had revealed that information and technology has changed the facets of business. Nearly, 40 percent of the bookings in the hotels were being done through internet. The data is also indicative of the fact that bookings using telephone are also not completely out-of-date as 28.8 percent respondents had booked hotel telephonically.

Selected Hotel Guests' or Customers' Responses on Reasons for Visit of the Hotel

The similar trends were found in the Ahmedabad, Surat, and Rajkot cities. In case of the Baroda city, 70.4 percent of selected respondents had affirmed that business commitments served the main purpose of visiting hotels at various occasions followed by meeting friends (16.3 percent) as another key reason for visiting hotels in Baroda city.

Table no. 4 shows that, maximum number of selected respondents i.e., hotel guests had agreed upon that business, meeting friends, attending conferences as well as seminars, and meeting relatives are the key reasons for visiting hotels amongst selected cities in the state of Gujarat. Besides, rest and relaxation, fun, sports, recreation, health, and religious reasons (18.1 percent) too were cited as reasons for availing hotel facilities. It implies that hoteliers need to be innovative in bringing guests for the reasons viz., rest and relaxation, fun, sports, recreation, health, and religious motives that can act as a support system to tourism and health sector.

Selected Hotel Guests' or Customers' Responses on Ambience of the Hotel

Table no. 5 suggest that, 80 to 86 percent of the hotel guests have rated the selected criteria viz., sufficient lighting, furnishings, paintings, convenient location, and lesser 2.03pollution as most important. The study revealed similar trend in most of the criteria in each of the cities of the Gujarat state. It was found that out of seven criteria selected for ambience of the hotel, the most important criteria emerged were furnishing and sufficient lighting.

Selected Hotel Guests' or Customers' Responses on Facilities in the Hotel

Table no. 6 suggest that, most of selected criteria concerning "Facilities in the hotel" viz., money changing, gym., and swimming pool were rated by around 51 to 62 percent guests as most important.

The study revealed similar trend in the selected cities in most of the criteria, except in Rajkot city,

Table No. 2: Profile of Selected Hotel Guests' in the State of Gujarat

S. No.	Selected Background Variables of Selected hotel Guests		City-Wise Number and Percentages of Selected Respondents [hotel guests']				
			Baroda	Ahmedabad	Surat	Rajkot	Total
1.	Gender	Males	234(77.7)	367(81.7)	155(77.5)	193(77.2)	949(79.1)
		Females	67(22.3)	82(18.3)	45(22.5)	57(22.8)	251(20.9)
		Total	**301(100)**	**449(100)**	**200(100)**	**250(100)**	**1200(100.0)**
2.	Marital Status	Un-Married	128(42.5)	173(38.5)	95(47.5)	143(57.2)	539(44.9)
		Married	173(57.5)	276(61.5)	105(52.5)	107(42.8)	661(55.1)
		Total	**301(100)**	**449(100)**	**200(100)**	**250(100)**	**1200(100)**
3.	Age Group	Below 25 years	40 (13.3)	67(14.9)	24(12.0)	42(16.8)	173(14.4)
		26 to 35 years	89(29.6)	154(34.3)	94(47.0)	114(45.6)	451(37.6)
		36 to 45 years	90 (29.9)	105 (23.4)	43 (21.5)	46 (18.4)	284 (23.7)
		Above 46 years	82 (27.2)	123 (27.4)	39 19.5)	48 (19.2)	292 (24.3)
		Total	**301(100)**	**449(100)**	**200(100)**	**250(100)**	**1200(100.0)**
4.	Educational Qualifications	Less than Graduate	4(1.3)	6(1.3)	3(1.5)	5(2.0)	18(1.5)
		Graduate	69(22.9)	90(20.0)	52(26.0)	37(14.8)	248(20.7)
		Post-Graduate	110(36.5)	157(35.0)	72(36.0)	112(44.8)	451(37.6)
		Professional Qualification	113(37.5)	180(40.1)	70(35.0)	91(36.4)	454(37.8)
		Diploma	3(1.0)	3(0.7)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	6(0.5)
		Others	2(.7)	13(2.9)	3(1.5)	59(2.0)	23(1.9)
		Total	**301(100.0)**	**301(100.0)**	**449(100.0)**	**200(100.0)**	**1200(100.0)**
5.	Occupation	Housewives	0(.0)	11(2.4)	3(0.015)	5(2.0)	19(1.6)
		Student	4(1.3)	6(1.3)	3(0.015)	5(2.0)	18(1.5)
		Businessman/ Women	65(21.6)	124(27.6)	41(0.215)	51(20.4)	281(23.4)
		Self-employed	63(20.9)	72(16.0)	34(0.215)	48(19.2)	217(18.1)
		Service	84(27.9)	97(21.6)	75(0.415)	69(27.6)	325(27.1)
		Professional	85(28.2)	136(30.3)	44(0.215)	72(28.8)	337(28.1)
		Others	0(0.0)	3(0.7)	0(0.015)	0(0.0)	3(0.3)
		Total	**301(100)**	**301(100)**	**200(100)**	**250(100)**	**1200(100)**

Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage.

wherein, more than 65 percent of hotel guests' considered gym. facility in hotel as the most important.

Table No. 3: Selected hotel Guests' (or) Customers' Responses on
Mode of Booking of the Hotel

S. No.	Cities Booking in hotel	City-Wise Classification of Respondents (Number and Percentages of Respondents)				Number & Percentage of Selected Respondents
		Baroda	Ahmedabad	Surat	Rajkot	
1.	Via Internet	112 (37.2)	161 (35.9)	83 (41.5)	118 (47.2)	474(39.5)
2.	Via Phone	85 (28.2)	148 (33.0)	62 (31.0)	50 (20.0)	345(28.8)
3.	Via Travel Agency	52 (17.3)	51 (11.4)	19 (9.5)	41 (16.4)	163(13.6)
4.	Office	52 (17.3)	89 (19.8)	36 (18.0)	41 (16.4)	218(18.2)
	Total	301 (100.0)	449 (100.0)	200 (100.0)	250 (100.0)	1200(100.0)

Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage.

Table No. 4: Selected hotel Guests' (or) Customers' Responses on
Reasons for Visit of the Hotel

S. No.	Cities Purpose	City-Wise Classification of Respondents (Number and Percentages of Respondents)				Number & Percentage of Selected Respondents
		Baroda	Ahmedabad	Surat	Rajkot	
1.	Rest and Relaxation	24 (8.0)	34 (7.6)	17 (8.5)	15 (6.0)	90(7.5)
2.	Relatives	33 (11.0)	48 (10.7)	11 (5.5)	17 (6.8)	109(9.1)
3.	Friends	49 (16.3)	67 (14.9)	34 (17.0)	43 (17.2)	193(16.1)
4.	Business	212(70.4)	277 (61.7)	136 (68.0)	168 (67.2)	793(66.1)
5.	Attend a Conference, Seminar	20 (6.6)	56 (12.5)	20 (10.0)	36 (14.4)	132(11.0)
6.	Fun	3 (1.0)	3 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.2)	9(0.8)
7.	Sports	13 (4.3)	22 (4.9)	4 (2.0)	13 (5.2)	52(4.3)
8.	Recreation	4 (1.3)	12 (2.7)	3 (1.5)	4 (1.6)	23(1.9)
9.	Health	3 (1.0)	14 (3.1)	2 (1.0)	3 (1.2)	22(1.8)
10.	Religious reasons	4 (1.3)	9 (2.0)	4 (2.0)	4 (1.6)	21(1.8)
11.	Any Other	0 (0.0)	4 (0.9)	1 (0.5)	1 (0.4)	6(0.5)

Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage.

It was found that out of four criteria for "facilities in the hotel", the most important criteria for the guests' in each of the selected cities except Rajkot city, was money changing facility.

Selected Hotel Guests' or Customers' Responses on Service Quality of the Hotel

In case of "Service Quality of the hotel", overall it was found that most of the selected criteria viz., simple and quick check-in process, prompt room service, quick service in dining section, and wake-up calls were rated by around 78 to 88 percent of respondentsas most important.

The study yielded mixed result in all the selected cities in the state of Gujarat which revealed that out of eleven criteria for "Service Quality of the hotel", the most important criteria for the guests'

Table No. 5: Selected Hotel Guests' (or) Customers' Responses on Ambience of the Hotel

S. No.	Selected Criteria	City-Wise Classification of Respondents (Number and Percentages of Respondents)									
		Baroda		Ahmedabad		Surat		Rajkot		Total	
		UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM
1.	Located at a convenient place	43 (14.3)	258 (85.7)	74 (16.5)	375 (83.5)	24 (12.0)	176 (88.0)	45 (18.0)	205 (82.0)	186 (15.5)	1014 (84.5)
2.	Is well signposted	83 (27.6)	218 (72.4)	91 (20.3)	358 (79.7)	32 (16.0)	168 (84.0)	53 (21.2)	197 (78.8)	259 (21.6)	941 (78.4)
3.	Sufficient parking space	88 (29.2)	213 (70.8)	90 (20.0)	359 (80.0)	50 (25.0)	150 (75.0)	52 (20.8)	198 (79.2)	280 (23.3)	920 (76.7)
4.	Free from pollution	51 (16.9)	250 (83.1)	82 (18.3)	367 (81.7)	38 (19.0)	162 (81.0)	49 (19.6)	201 (80.4)	220 (18.3)	980 (81.7)
5.	Is well painted	53 (17.6)	248 (82.4)	48 (10.7)	401 (89.3)	30 (15.0)	170 (85.0)	40 (16.0)	210 (84.0)	171 (14.3)	1029 (85.8)
6.	Is well furnished	42 (14.0)	259 (86.0)	61 (13.6)	388 (86.4)	19 (9.5)	181 (90.5)	39 (15.6)	211 (84.4)	161 (13.4)	1039 (86.6)
7.	Sufficient lighting	57 (18.9)	244 (81.1)	54 (12.0)	395 (88.0)	23 (11.5)	177 (88.5)	39 (15.6)	211 (84.4)	173 (14.4)	1027 (85.6)

Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage.

amongst all the selected cities were simple & less time consuming check-in process.

Table no. 7 revealed that in case of cities of Baroda, Ahmedabad, and Surat, more than 50 percent of hotel guests perceived the provisions of babysitters service, movie ticket from multiplexes, and

Table No. 6: Selected Hotel Guests' (or) Customers' Responses on Facilities in the Hotel

S. No.	Selected Criteria	City-Wise Classification of Respondents (Number and Percentages of Respondents)									
		Baroda		Ahmedabad		Surat		Rajkot		Total	
		UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM
1.	Sports facility	185 (61.5)	116 (38.5)	292 (65.0)	157 (35.0)	119 (59.5)	81 (40.5)	127 (50.8)	123 (49.2)	723 (60.3)	477 (39.8)
2.	Gym. facility	131 (43.5)	170 (56.5)	194 (43.2)	255 (56.8)	85 (42.5)	115 (57.5)	87 (34.8)	163 (65.2)	497 (41.4)	703 (58.6)
3.	Swimming pool Parking space	162 (53.8)	139 (46.2)	238 (53.0)	211 (47.0)	80 (40.0)	120 (60.0)	100 (40.0)	150 (60.0)	580 (48.3)	620 (51.7)
4.	Money changing facility	98 (32.6)	203 (67.4)	183 (40.8)	266 (59.2)	75 (37.5)	125 (62.5)	93 (37.2)	157 (62.8)	449 (37.4)	751 (62.6)

Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage.

arrangement for the local market visit as important dimensions for deriving satisfaction, followed by Rajkot city where more than 54 percent hotel guests felt that provision of babysitters service was unimportant. But, more than 50 percent of guests' considered criteria viz., arrangement for movie ticket from multiplexes and local market visit for hotel guests as important.

Findings of the Research Study

The researcher has applied Chi-Square test to offer findings, implications as well as recommendations of the research study as given below. The researcher has used few abbreviations in following section as A= Age, G = Gender, MS = Marital Status, O = Occupation, EQ = Educational Qualifications, I = Income, S = Significant, NF = Not Significant.

Hypotheses

$H_0 1$: The actual expectation of selected hotel guests' on "Ambience of the hotel" vis-a-vis selected hotel guests' background variables viz., age, gender, marital status, occupation, educational qualifications, and income is independent.

Table No. 7: Selected Hotel Guests' (or) Customers' Responses on Service Quality of the Hotel

S. No.	Selected Criteria	City-Wise Classification of Respondents (Number and Percentages of Respondents)									
		Baroda		Ahmedabad		Surat		Rajkot		Total	
		UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM	UI	IM
1.	Provides 24 hours online reservation	78 (25.9)	223 (74.1)	97 (21.6)	352 (78.4)	32 (16.0)	168 (84.0)	60 (24.0)	190 (76.0)	267 (22.3)	933 (77.8)
2.	Check-in process in hotel is simple	50 (16.6)	251 (83.4)	35(7.8)	358 (92.2)	19 (9.5)	181 (90.5)	37 (14.8)	213 (85.2)	141 (11.8)	1059 (88.3)
3.	Check-in process takes less time	60 (19.9)	241 (80.1)	64 (14.3)	385 (85.7)	28 (14.0)	172 (86.0)	48 (19.2)	202 (80.8)	200 (16.7)	1000 (83.3)
4.	Prompt room Service	68 (22.6)	233 (77.4)	56 (12.5)	393 (87.5)	29 (14.5)	171 (85.5)	53 (21.2)	197 (78.8)	206 (17.2)	994 (82.8)
5.	Offers wake-up calls	82 (27.2)	219 (72.8)	84 (18.7)	365 (81.3)	40 (20.0)	160 (80.0)	55 (22.0)	195 (78.0)	261 (21.8)	939 (78.3)
6.	Offers restaurant reservations	83 (27.6)	218 (72.4)	95 (21.2)	354 (78.8)	61 (30.5)	139 (69.5)	59 (23.6)	191 (76.4)	298 (24.8)	902 (75.2)
7.	Provides baby-sitters service	189 (62.8)	112 (37.2)	266 (59.2)	183 (40.8)	133 (66.5)	67 (33.5)	135 (54.0)	115 (46.0)	723 (60.3)	477 (39.8)
8.	Arranges purchase of movie ticket from multiplexes, if required	186 (61.8)	115 (38.2)	273 (60.8)	176 (39.2)	129 (64.5)	71 (35.5)	118 (47.2)	132 (52.8)	706 (58.8)	494 (41.2)
9.	Take for visit to the local market	156 (51.8)	145 (48.2)	260 (57.9)	189 (42.1)	106 (53.0)	94 (47.0)	123 (49.2)	127 (50.8)	645 (53.8)	555 (46.3)
10.	Arranges for doctor when required	112 (37.2)	189 (62.8)	145 (32.3)	304 (67.7)	67 (33.5)	133 (66.5)	78 (31.2)	172 (68.8)	402 (33.5)	798 (66.5)
11.	Provides quick service in dining section	64 (21.3)	237 (78.7)	78 (17.4)	371 (82.6)	29 (14.5)	171 (85.5)	38 (15.2)	212 (84.8)	209 (17.4)	991 (82.6)

Note: Values in parentheses indicate percentage.

Table No. 8: Selected Hotel Guests' Expectation on "Ambience of the Hotel" Vis-À-Vis Selected Background Variables of Hotel Guests

S. No.	Selected Criteria	'P' Value of χ^2					
		A	G	M S	O	EQ	I
1.	Hotel is located at a convenient place	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
2.	Hotel is well signposted	S(0.027)	S(0.000)	S(0.019)	S(0.000)	S(0.002)	S(0.000)
3.	Hotel is having sufficient parking space	NS(0.057)	S(0.035)	NS(0.205)	S(0.007)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
4.	Hotel is free from pollution	S(0.001)	S(0.006)	S(0.000)	S(0.013)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
5.	Hotel is well painted	NS(0.323)	NS(0.444)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.028)	S(0.000)
6.	Hotel is well furnished	NS(0.423)	S(0.000)	NS(0.304)	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)
7.	Hotel is having sufficient lighting	S(0.004)	NS(0.075)	S(0.002)	NS(0.307)	S(0.036)	S(0.000)

In table no. 8, the demographic variable 'age' was found significantly associated with selected criteria concerned with ambience of the hotel except for factors like sufficient parking space, paint, and furnishing of hotels. Sufficient lighting was the only criterion where gender and occupation have not influenced the expectations of the hotel guests, otherwise, actual expectations for all other criteria were found to be influenced by gender and occupation. Further, in case of gender an insignificant relationship was also found for criteria 'hotel is well painted'. The marital status was found having no association in majority of the selected criteria except parking space and furnishings. Educational qualifications and income were found significantly associated with actual expectation of selected hotel guests.

$H_0 2$: The actual expectation of selected hotel guests' on "Facilities offered by the hotel" vis-a-vis selected hotel guests' background variables viz., age, gender, marital status, occupation, educational qualifications, and income is independent.

In table no. 9, the actual expectation of hotel guests towards facilities provided by hotel was found to be influenced by age, occupation, educational qualification, and income. It was also found that gender and marital status too were also affecting the actual expectations of hotel guests' except selected criterion of "gym. facility". In case of selected items viz., availability of 'swimming pool' was found insignificant in influencing the actual expectation of hotel guests considering marital status.

$H_0 3$: The actual expectation of selected hotel guests' on "Service quality of the hotel" vis-a-vis selected

Table No. 9: Selected Hotel Guests' Actual Expectation on "Facilities Offered by the Hotel" Vis-À-Vis Selected Background Variables of Hotel Guests

S. No.	Selected Criteria	'P' Value of χ^2					
		A	G	M S	O	EQ	I
1.	Sports Facility	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.003)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
2.	Gym. Facility	S(0.000)	NS(0.252)	NS(0.792)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
3.	Swimming Pool	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	NS(0.147)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
4.	Money Changing Facility	S(0.000)	S(0.003)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)

hotel guests' background variables viz., age; gender; marital status; occupation; educational qualifications; and income is independent.

In table no. 10, majority of the variables were found having significant association with service quality of the hotel. Age and gender were found as having no significant association with selected criteria viz., 'check-in process in hotel is simple', and 'provides quick service in dining section'. The marital status was found as not significantly associated with criteria of provision of wake-up calls and quick service in dining section. Educational qualifications too was found as not having significant association with selected criteria of provision of 24 hours online reservation and restaurant reservation.

$H_0 4$: The actual experience of selected hotel guests' on "Ambience of the hotel" vis-a-vis selected hotel guests' background variables viz., age, gender, marital status, occupation, educational qualifications, and income is independent.

Table No. 10: Selected Hotel Guests' Actual Expectation on "Service Quality of the Hotel" Vis-À-Vis Selected Background Variables of Hotel Guests

S. No.	Selected Criteria	'P' Value of χ^2					
		A	G	M S	O	EQ	I
1.	Provides 24 hours online reservation	S(0.000)	S(0.002)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	NS(0.526)	S(0.000)
2.	Check-in process in hotel is simple	NS(0.064)	NS(0.439)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
3.	Check-in process takes less time	S(0.000)	NS(0.240)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.009)	S(0.000)
4.	Prompt room service	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.014)	S(0.000)
5.	Offers wake-up calls	S(0.008)	S(0.002)	NS(0.130)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
6.	Offers restaurant reservations	S(0.014)	S(0.000)	S(0.011)	S(0.000)	NS(0.323)	S(0.000)
7.	Provides babysitters' service	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
8.	Arranges purchase of movie ticket from multiplexes, if required	S(0.004)	S(0.003)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
9.	Arranges visit to the local market	S(0.002)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)
10.	Arranges for doctor when required	NS(0.568)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
11.	Provides quick service in dining section	NS(0.143)	NS(0.958)	NS(0.553)	S(0.000)	S(0.014)	S(0.000)

Table no. 11 suggest that the selected hotel guests' actual experience on ambience of the hotel was significantly associated with each of demographic variables except the selected criterion 'Painting of the hotel'. Gender was not found to have significant relationship with location, and furnishing of the selected hotel, while marital status too was found as having no association with furnishing, painting, and lighting of the hotel.

$H_0$5: The actual experience of selected hotel guests' on "Facilities Offered by the hotel" vis-a-vis selected hotel guests' background variables viz., age, gender, marital status, occupation, educational qualifications, and income is independent.

Table No. 11: Selected Hotel Guests' Actual Experience on "Ambience of the Hotel" Vis-À-Vis Selected Background Variables of Hotel Guests

S. No.	Selected Criteria	'P' Value of χ^2					
		A	G	M S	O	EQ	I
1.	Hotel is located at a convenient place	S(0.000)	NS(0.142)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
2.	Hotel is well signposted	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.002)	S(0.000)
3.	Hotel is having sufficient parking space	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.003)	S(0.000)
4.	Hotel is free from pollution	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.002)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)
5.	Hotel is well painted	NS(0.322)	NS(0.911)	NS(0.059)	S(0.000)	NS(0.063)	S(0.000)
6.	Hotel is well furnished	S(0.000)	NS(0.694)	NS(0.284)	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)
7.	Hotel is having sufficient lighting	S(0.000)	S(0.094)	NS(0.389)	S(0.001)	S(0.006)	S(0.000)

Table no. 12 suggest that the selected hotel guests' actual experience towards selected facilities is not significant with respect to gender and marital status. Age was found as associated in case of swimming pool and money changing facility. Similarly, income too was also found as associated in case of gym. facility and money changing facility, respectively. Occupation and educational qualifications significantly affected the experience of hotel guests towards availability of facilities in the hotel.

$H_0$6: The actual experience of selected hotel guests' on "Service Quality of the hotel" vis-a-vis selected hotel guests' background variables viz., age, gender, marital status, occupation, educational qualifications, and income is independent.

Table No. 12: Selected Hotel Guests' Actual Experience on "Facilities Offered by the Hotel" Vis-À-Vis Selected Background Variables of Hotel Guests

S. No.	Selected Criteria	'P' Value of χ^2					
		A	G	M S	O	EQ	I
1.	Sports Facility	NS(0.887)	NS (0.750)	NS(0.101)	S(0.020)	S(0.001)	NS(0.751)
2.	Gym. Facility	NS(0.989)	NS (0.348)	NS(0.667)	S(0.004)	S(0.001)	S(0.007)
3.	Swimming Pool	S(0.025)	NS (0.434)	NS(0.513)	S(0.004)	S(0.001)	NS(0.108)
4.	Money Changing Facility	S(0.000)	NS (0.850)	NS(0.107)	S(0.000)	S(0.008)	S(0.000)

Age, occupation, educational qualifications, and income revealed diverse actual experience amongst selected hotel guests with reference to service quality of the hotel, as shown in table no. 13. Age was found as insignificant in case of babysitter's service. Marital status was found as having no association in case of 24 hours online reservation, prompt room service, arrangement for visit to the local market and doctor when required. Gender too was found as having an insignificant association in case of selected criteria viz., 24 hours online reservation, simple and quick check-in process in hotel, prompt

room service, wake-up calls service, arrangement of purchase of movie ticket from multiplexes if required, and provision of quick service in dining section.

Table No. 13: Selected Hotel Guests' Actual Experience on "Service Quality of the Hotel"
Vis-À-Vis Selected Background Variables of Hotel Guests

S. No.	Selected Criteria	'P' Value of χ^2					
		A	G	M S	O	EQ	I
1.	Provides 24 hours online reservation	S(0.000)	NS(0.710)	NS(0.175)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
2.	Check-in process in hotel is simple	S(0.000)	NS(0.808)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.016)	S(0.000)
3.	Check-in process takes less time	S(0.000)	NS(0.580)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.011)	S(0.000)
4.	Prompt room service	S(0.002)	NS(0.195)	NS(0.108)	S(0.000)	NS(0.089)	S(0.000)
5.	Offers wake-up calls	S(0.000)	NS(0.811)	S(0.016)	S(0.000)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)
6.	Offers restaurant reservations	S(0.022)	S(0.001)	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
7.	Provides babysitters' service	NS(0.112)	S(0.001)	S(0.003)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
8.	Arranges purchase of movie ticket from multiplexes, if required	S(0.002)	NS(0.161)	S(0.007)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
9.	Arranges visit to the local market	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	NS(0.113)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
10.	Arranges for doctor when required	S(0.001)	S(0.000)	NS(0.102)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)	S(0.000)
11.	Provides quick service in dining section	S(0.000)	NS(0.589)	S(0.024)	S(0.000)	S(0.002)	S(0.000)

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) considering ambience, service quality, and facilities

The researcher has developed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) considering ambience, service quality, and facilities offered to the hotel guests by the hoteliers are depicted as figure no. 1.

Figure no. 1 represents, a simple linear regression model in which one dependent variable, viz., 'preference to stay in next visit' is estimated on the basis of the other seven independent variables, viz., located at a convenient place, hotel is well signposted, sufficient parking space, free from pollution, hotel is well painted, hotel is well furnished, and sufficient lighting in hotel. Prediction cannot be perfect on the basis of selected independent variables as there might be some other external factors which can have an effect on the dependant variable for which the model represents standardized regression weights equal to '1' which further stipulates that other variables must have standardized regression weights equal to '1' in the model.

Standardized regression weights have been represented by single headed arrows which are 0.27, 0.22, 0.14, 0.120, and 0.02. Two sided arrows indicate the correlations among seven independent variables i.e., 0.68, 0.55, 0.52, 0.42, 045, 0.47, 0.57, 0.46, 043, 050, 0.51, 064, 058, and 0.40.
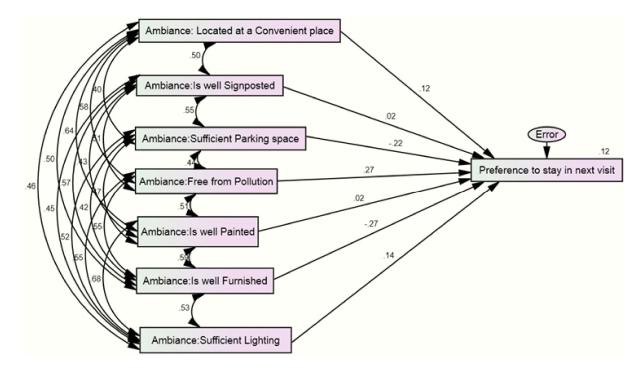
Figure No. 1: Structural Equation Model (SEM) of Relationship between Ambience in the Hotel and Preference to Stay in Next Visit

The value 0.12 is the squared multiple correlation of preference to stay in next visit and seven variables that affect preference to stay in next visit. It means the preference to stay in next visit considering seven variables is influenced by the criteria 'free from pollution' and 'is well furnished' (0.27); followed by 'sufficient parking space in hotel' (0.22); 'sufficient lighting in hotel' (0.14); and 'located at a convenient place' (0.12). It also suggests that a guest's intention to visit the hotel again is based on ambience considering well furnished hotel, pollution free environment, and sufficient parking place in the hotel. In other words, people visit the hotel with an expectation that hotel is well furnished, in the pollution free environment, and there is sufficient parking place in the hotel.

Figure no. 2 represents a simple linear regression model predicting one observed variable i.e., 'preference to stay in next visit' on the basis of the other eleven independent variables, viz., check-in process takes less time and simple; prompt room services are provided; local market visits are arranged by hotel; quick services are provided in dining section; hotel arrange purchase of movie tickets if required; provide 24 hours online reservation; arranges for doctor when required; offers wakeup calls; provide babysitter services, and restaurant services are offered by the hotel.

There are some other variables (other than selected eleven variables) that also assumed to have an effect on preference to stay in next visit for which the model assumes '1' as standardized regression weight which specifies that other variables must have a weight of '1' in prediction of the preference to stay in next visit. Each single-headed arrow represents a regression weight. The value shown against two sided arrows (0.09 0.58, 0.23, 0.31, 029, 0.45, 0.02, 0.28, 023, 0.06, and 0.51) is the correlation between seven observed variables. The values shown with single sided arrow (0.31, 0.18, 0.12, 0.12, 0.07, 0.06, 0.05, and 0.03) are standardized regression weights. The value 0.14 is the squared multiple correlation of preference to stay in next visit and eleven variables that affect preference to stay in next visit. It means the preference to stay in next visit considering eleven variables is influenced by hotel arranges for doctor when required (0.31), followed by hotel provides quick service in dining section
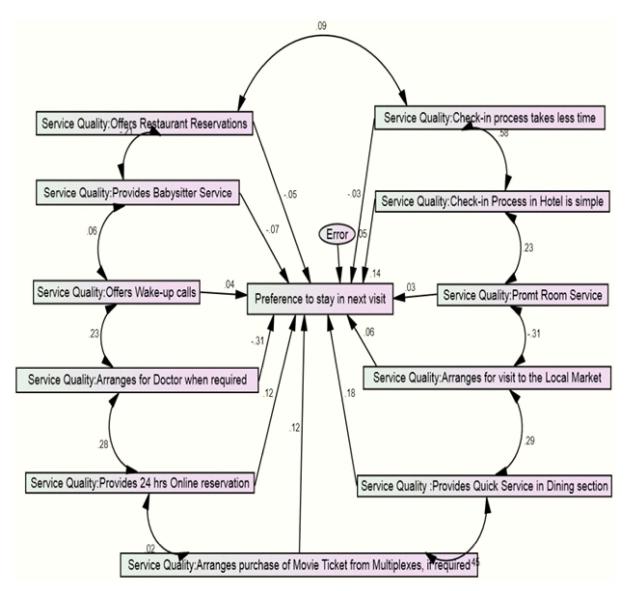
Figure No. 2: Structural Equation Model (SEM) of Relationship between Service Quality in the Hotel and Preference to Stay in Next Visit

(0.18), hotel arrange purchase of movie tickets if required and provide 24 hours online reservation (0.12), hotel provide babysitter services (0.07), and local market visits are arranged by hotel (0.06). In other words, it suggest that guest intention to visit the hotel again is based on service quality considering hotel arranges for doctor when required, hotel provides quick service in dining section, hotel arrange purchase of movie tickets if required, hotel provide 24 hours online reservation, and hotel provide babysitter services.

In figure no. 3, a simple regression model is depicted in which one observed variable, the preference to stay in next visit, is predicted as a linear combination of the other four observed variables, viz., hotel provides facility of swimming pool, hotel provides facilities of gymnasium, hotel provide sports facilities, and money changing facilities. There are some other variables (other than selected four variables) that
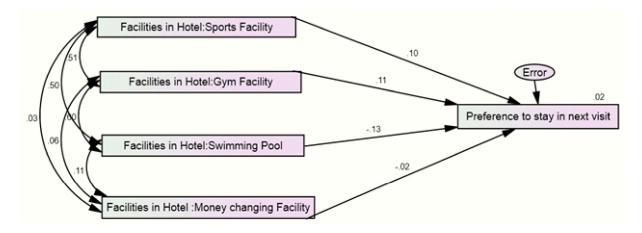
Figure No. 3: Structural Equation Model (SEM) of Relationship between Facilities in the Hotel and Preference to Stay in Next Visit

also assumed to have an effect on preference to stay in next visit for which the model assumes '1' as standardized regression weight.

Each single-headed arrow represents a regression weight. The value shown against two sided arrows (0.11 0.06, 0.60, 0.03, 050, and 0.51, is the correlation between seven observed variables. The values shown with single sided arrow (0.13, 0.11, 0.10, and 0.02) are standardized regression weights. The value 0.02 is the squared multiple correlation of preference to stay in next visit and seven variables that affect preference to stay in next visit. It means the preference to stay in next visit considering four variables is influenced by hotel provides facility of swimming pool (0.13), hotel provides facilities of gymnasium (0.11), hotel provide sports facilities (0.10), and money changing facilities (0.02).

Implications and Recommendations of the Research Study

● The measurement of the selected hotel guests' expectations in case of one of the selected and identified factors concerning 'ambience of hotel' reveled that it is highly dependent on gender. It means that the hoteliers' should understand the perception of selected hotel guests considering gender as the case may be.

● In case of hotel being well signposted, the male hotel guest generally finds it convenient to read the information, whereas relatively the female hotel guest are found to be more receptive and favourable to use of pictures in addition to sign boards as displayed in hotels.

● Male and female guests have different perception towards the availability of parking space and different types of parking like underground parking, outdoor parking, parking by concierge, which implies that hoteliers should take care of parking on the basis of gender like in case of female customers hoteliers should prefer parking by concierge.

● Each and every hotel guest desire for easy and speedy check-in process. The old aged and younger hotel guest were found as having less patience so check –in process should be made quick and user-friendly. In the process of online booking of the hotel, guest visit the website of the hotel and search the photographs of the room as well as the feedback of guests who have stayed and availed services, which plays crucial role in deciding to book the room in the hotel. The hoteliers should put efforts to match their expectations to reduce switching over by them.

● Considering variations in the expectations of the hotel guests due to their differing age groups, occupation, educational qualifications, income, and marital status, the hoteliers should provide,

speedy, and timely customized service quality to the hotel guests while they check-in and checkout.

As in the era of technology, the hotel guests prefer to avail facility of online booking so it should be offered without fail. The hoteliers should also process their feedback seriously to ensure that its reoccurrence can be minimized.

- It was found that majority of the hotel guests were having their annual family income of more than Rs. 10 lakhs. The hoteliers should segment its hotel guests considering their income to offer personalized hotel services as required by them such as viz., room service, customized food if required. The hoteliers should pay critical attention to each of the service encounters that take place with them viz., check in, room service, restaurant service, and any other service if required so as to create pleasant experience capable of meeting his or her expectations. This positive experience will make them to respond in choosing same hotel again and also in increasing and improving their customer loyalty.

- It implies that the hotelier should take utmost care in it because the impression it makes on hotel guest should be attractive, calm, and conducive through proper furnishing. It was found that furnishing too is one of the most important criteria of ambience in all the selected cities. There are various important areas of the hotel like lobby where guests would usually start his or her visit, and end their visit, so it also need to be considered by the hoteliers. The restaurants is a place where hotel guest would indulge for diverse type of food and rooms, and special attention, therefore, furnishing is required as guest checks-in, also for good night's sleep bedding too deserve special attention of the hoteliers.

- Sufficient lighting should be provided in each and every corner of the hotel, it is one of the easier and relatively inexpensive ways to complement architecture and make every corner of hotel lively.

- As each area of hotel requires different lighting, the hoteliers should be vigilant enough for the requirements of different types of lighting. To illustrate, lighting at work place should be bright, direct light would be preferred in serving food, soft, comfortable general light should be made available while watching TV or while having a conversation, and decorative lighting helps to portray some architectural effect, or piece of artwork or to create relaxing mood of the hotel guest.

- Hotel should offer money changing facility as those hotel guests who had stayed and availed hotel services also come from the different parts of the world such as Turkey, Germany, Denmark, China, Italy, Poland, Singapore, Spain, Australia, California, New Jersey, Washington DC, Netherlands, Tanzania, Canada, Sydney, Malaysia, Chicago, etc. respectively. Availability of such facility in hotels would, therefore, be helpful in attracting more hotel guests' from various countries.

- It implies that in the era of online booking, hotels should change the way guests check in to their rooms, eradicating the conventional stop at the front desk to speed up, simplify and, in some cases, personalize the process. In case of guests, who have booked the hotel online, the task of hotel staff becomes much easier as guest even mention their expected arrival time which helps the housekeeping staff well prepared with the room cleaning schedule and check-in becomes speedy and fast. The hotel staff should put efforts to make guest comfortable while they enter the hotel by offering welcome drinks or refreshments and some of the staff member should handle the process of check-in to make it simple and fast. But, in case of manual booking extra care need to be taken by the hotel staff to make each touch point of guest simple, fast and memorable when they check-in to the hotel as the case may be.

Conclusions

The research study has attempted to identify and evaluate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices in order to develop long lasting relationship with selected hotel guests' or customers'. CRM is a need of the hour. Its main focus worldwide is on customers. If an organization has good ambience as per the expectation of customer, delivers quality services, and provide required facilities, they may be

rewarded with more opportunities to attract and retain customer. CRM is a managerial process of acquiring customers by understanding and fulfilling their requirements to retain them in a way that would meet their expectations and shall be helpful also in attracting new customers through customer specific strategic marketing approaches.

The results of the research study had revealed that the hotel guests belonging to different age groups and gender expected different facilities from the hotel. To illustrate, some guests had expressed to have facility for playing tennis while others would like to swim. The researcher had also found variations in expectations amongst selected hotel guests considering their occupation, educational qualifications, and income as few of them had stressed upon for personalized trainer and gym. In case of those hotel guests who are in the category of the long stairs and or the hotel guests from other countries expressed need for the facility of money changing that should be made easily available to them in the hotel itself.

In case of overseas guests, non –availability of the facility of money changing in the hotel not only results in the loss of business but also negative word of mouth and, therefore, to stay competitive in the business it is strongly recommended that the hotel must provide the facility for money changing in the hotel. In all, it is evident from the research study that, guests of different background have different perceived importance as well as they had different levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction for each criterion.

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