

What Influences Consumer Satisfaction and Behaviour Intention in Hotel Industry? A Case Study of Goa, India

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Abstract *The present study examines the determinants affecting consumer satisfaction and behaviour intention in the hotel industry using the SERVQUAL model. The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire through online and offline modes using convenience sampling techniques from November 2022 to April 2023. A total of 556 responses were received, but only 514 were found suitable for further analysis. The study's findings revealed that reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy positively influence customer satisfaction towards hotel services. Tangibility does not positively impact customer satisfaction. Moreover, results also revealed that satisfaction influences hotel guests' behaviour intention. The proposed model explained 67 percent variation in customer satisfaction and 65 percent variation in behaviour intention. The present study provides valuable insight to hotel operators to improve service quality, which will help them retain existing customers and attract new customers through positive word of mouth.*

Keywords: *Behaviour Intention, Consumer Satisfaction, Hotel Services, Hotel Guest Satisfaction, SERVQUAL Model, Service Quality*

INTRODUCTION

The tourism and hospitality industry acts as a backbone and plays a vital role in the development and growth of the national economy. In order to unlock the enormous future potential of the tourism and hospitality industry, many states in India are investing in infrastructure and implementing effective strategies into action. According to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), India is the fastest-growing economy in the world and ranked 10th among 185 countries in terms of travel and tourism, making a total contribution of 6.8 percent to GDP in the year 2019 (WTTC, 2023; IBEF, 2023). The travel market in India is projected to reach US\$ 125 billion by 2027 from US\$ 75 billion in 2020 due to an expected increase in international tourist arrivals (IBEF, 2023). Furthermore, IBEF argued that overall hotel room revenue from the Indian hotel industry is expected to reach from US\$ 32 billion in 2020 to US\$ 52 billion in 2027 (IBEF, 2023).

In Hotel Industry, guest satisfaction is the significant factor that hotel operators need to focus more on as guests seek

comfortable hotels so they may feel at home when they are away from their homes. Thus, the hotel operators must identify and understand the customers' needs, improve the service quality, and achieve customer satisfaction and loyalty. The literature suggested that the SERVQUAL model has been widely used to identify the particular quality concerns that have an impact on customer satisfaction across five dimensions, namely, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and assurance (Marinkovic et al., 2013; Minh et al., 2015; Omar et al., 2016; Ahmad et al., 2019; Shafiq et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021; Ezech et al., 2022). Most researchers stressed the service quality in conventional hospitality, focusing on the major determinants of customer satisfaction. However, few studies focused on hotel customers' behaviour intention (Omar et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2021). Thus, the present study tries to fill the research gap in the literature. Moreover, customer satisfaction and behaviour intention in India's hospitality industry, particularly in Goa, have been rarely studied in the existing studies. Goa being a tourist destination, there arises a need to study. Hence, the present

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study aims to examine the determinants affecting consumer satisfaction and behaviour intention in hotels in Goa, India. As far as the author's knowledge, limited studies are carried out, and this paper sheds some insight on a currently undiscovered area that has to be thoroughly investigated and how management can best improve the service quality provided to its customers to ensure their satisfaction level and revisit intention. This paper offers valuable insight into service quality performance for practitioners, academicians, researchers, and other stakeholder groups.

The remainder of this study is divided into the following sections. A theoretical review is provided in the second section, followed by methodology. In the fourth section, data analysis and findings are presented. In the fifth section, discussion and study implications are shown. Finally, the study draws a conclusion and suggests future research directions.

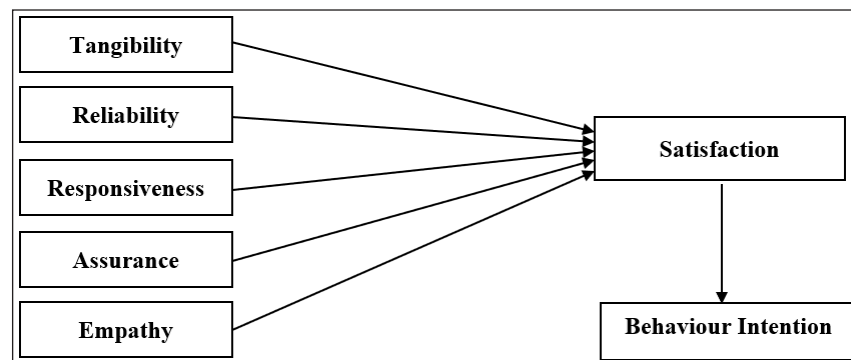
THEORETICAL REVIEW

Over the years, service quality has been a crucial topic of research due to its impact on business performance and profitability, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty (Sohail, 2003). Even though quality is a subjective concept, as perceptions and expectations vary from person to person, quality assessment is still a crucial factor. Researchers initially focused on assessing the quality of tangible products. Later, the distinctive qualities of services, such as their intangibility and variety, inspired academics to concentrate on creating techniques to gauge service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985). The service quality is assessed by the number of services that meet customer expectations, and there are many models developed to measure it.

The SERVQUAL model is one of the most widely used research models for measuring the perceived service quality developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985). This model focuses on identifying the gap between the customer's expectations

before receiving the service and their experience after receiving the service, also known as Gaps Model. Initially, the SERVQUAL model contained ten dimensions; after fine-tuning it, the dimensions were reduced to five (Parasuraman et al., 1988). These dimensions are tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. However, it has received much criticism (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Babakus & Boller, 1992; Carman, 1990; Buttle, 1996; Newman, 2001; Clemes et al., 2007). These criticisms led to the development of new models such as LODGSERV (Knutson et al., 1990), SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1992), DINESERV (Stevens et al., 1995), HOLSAT (Tribe & Snaith, 1998). LODGSERV measures the customer's expectation, with 26 specific items, in the lodging industry, while DINESERV measures the service quality in the restaurant industry with 29 items. Moreover, the SERVPERF model is developed to measure only the service performance received by the customers, whereas HOTSAT measures the tourist's satisfaction with their experience at the destination. Despite the critiques of the SERVQUAL model and the subsequent development of new models, the model remains the most widely used due to its ability to diagnose the shortcomings of service quality (Jain & Gupta, 2004).

In the context of the hotel industry, SERVQUAL has emerged as the standard instrument for evaluating service quality (Marinkovic et al., 2013; Ahmad et al., 2019; Li, 2020; Wang et al., 2021; Ezech et al., 2022). Hence, the present study adopted the SERVQUAL model to measure customer satisfaction towards hotel services. Customers assess the aspects of service quality, which is a key factor in the success of organizations since it predicts customer satisfaction and behaviour intentions (Minh et al., 2015; Omar et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2021). Serving better than competitors creates customer loyalty, ultimately leading to revisit intention and positive word of mouth. Thus, service quality explains customer satisfaction and influences their behaviour intention. Hence, the study proposed the following research model, as shown in Fig. 1.



Source: Author's compilation.

Fig. 1: Proposed Research Model

Tangibility

Tangibility in the context of hotel services is defined as the physical attributes of services, including appearance, equipment, written materials, and features used to provide the services (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Zeithaml et al., 2018). The physical components include the organizational physical environment, such as design, decorations, overall layout, parking facilities, and ambiance (Wang et al., 2021), and based on how the consumers perceive it, it has a major impact on consumer evaluation of satisfaction. Various studies proved that tangibility directly influences consumer satisfaction towards hotel services (Marinkovic et al., 2013; Omar et al., 2016; Ahmad et al., 2019; Shafiq et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021). Hence, the study proposed the following hypothesis:

H1: Tangibility positively influences guest satisfaction with hotel services.

Reliability

In the context of hotel industry, reliability is defined as the ability of the company to perform and deliver all the promised services accurately and dependably (Parasuraman et al., 1988). It includes promises about service provision, problem-solving, pricing, and delivery (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003; Omar et al., 2016). Customers typically prefer the organization that gets things right the first time and keeps its promises about service outcomes. As a result, reliability is the crucial service quality dimension to measure customer satisfaction. Previous studies on the hotel industry also show that reliability has a significant effect on customer satisfaction (Marinkovic et al., 2013; Minh et al., 2015; Ahmad et al., 2019; Shafiq et al., 2019; Li, 2020; Wang et al., 2021; Ezech et al., 2022). Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H2: Reliability positively influences guest satisfaction with hotel services.

Responsiveness

In the SERVQUAL model, the responsiveness dimension is defined as the willingness of the service provider to assist customers and provide prompt services (Parasuraman et al., 1988). This dimension includes attentiveness and promptness in dealing with guest problems, questions, requests, and complaints (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003; Omar et al., 2016). The hotel service providers can maintain a good relationship with their guests by responding to their requests on time, as the length of time they need to wait for the reply will directly impact the satisfaction level. Previous studies on the hotel industry, such as Marinkovic

et al. (2013), Minh et al. (2015), Li (2020), Wang et al. (2021), Ezech et al. (2022), proved that the responsiveness dimension of service quality positively influences the guest satisfaction towards the hotel services. As a result, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H3: Responsiveness positively influences guest satisfaction with hotel services.

Assurance

Assurance refers to employees' knowledge and courtesy and ability to gain trust and confidence (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Zeithaml et al., 2018). It is demonstrated through knowledgeable hotel staff, well-trained employees, hotel staff skills and competence, and consistency in on-time services (Parasuraman et al., 1988 & 1991). Therefore, assurance is a critical dimension of service quality that affects customer satisfaction, as proved in many contexts, such as Marinkovic et al. (2013), Minh et al. (2015), Omar et al. (2016), Ahmad et al. (2019), Shafiq et al. (2019), Li (2020), Wang et al. (2021), Ezech et al. (2022). Thus, the present study proposed the following hypothesis:

H4: Assurance positively influences guest satisfaction with hotel services.

Empathy

Empathy is defined as caring and personalized attention given to customers by service providers (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Zeithaml et al., 2018). The hotel service providers must give a feel to guests that they are unique and special through personalized service. Guests want specialized treatments from the hotel service providers and want them to understand their needs. Thus, having trained and competent staff to understand the guest's requirements and act in their best interest is the need of the hour and will directly impact their satisfaction level (Kanyama et al., 2022). The empathy dimension of service quality positively influences guest satisfaction towards hotel services (Minh et al., 2015; Omar et al., 2016; Shafiq et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021; Ezech et al., 2022). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Empathy positively influences guest satisfaction with hotel services.

Behaviour Intention

In literature, behaviour intention is the likelihood to engage in a behaviour which is essentially measured in three components, one, customer's intention to repurchase or revisit, two, word of mouth/ recommendation intention, and three, loyalty intention (Oliver, 1997 & 1999). The present

study evaluates behaviour intention as hotel guests' intention to revisit the same hotel and to recommend the hotel to their friends, relatives, and peer groups. Past literature supported that if customers are satisfied with the services provided, they are more likely to engage in behaviours intention (Berezina et al., 2012; Minh et al., 2015; Han & Hyun, 2017; Li, 2020; Wang et al., 2021). Based on this, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H6: Hotel guest satisfaction positively influences the behaviour intention of the guest.

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to examine factors influencing consumer satisfaction and its effects on behaviour intention toward hotel services using the SERVQUAL model. The study adopted five factors from the service quality model: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, influencing satisfaction and behaviour intention. For service quality items, the scale was adopted from Parasuraman et al. (1988, 1991); Shafiq et al. (2019); Stefano et al. (2015). For satisfaction items, the scale was adopted from Ezech et al. (2022), Ahmad et al. (2019), and Shafiq et al. (2019). Moreover, the behaviour intention scale was adopted from Bravo et al. (2019), Jia et al. (2021), Wang et al. (2021). The items are then modified to meet the requirement of current needs. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data, which was further divided into two parts; Part A contained demographic characteristics with four items: age, gender, occupation, and length of stay in the hotel. Part B included questions based on tangibility (3 items), reliability (3 items), responsiveness (3 items), assurance (3 items), empathy (2 items), satisfaction (3 items), and behaviour intention (3 items). A five-point Likert scale was used to measure these items, ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 denotes strongly disagree and 5 denotes strongly agree.

The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire through online and offline modes using convenience sampling techniques from November 2022 to April 2023. In total, 556 participants responded to the survey, and after eliminating the missing responses, 514 responses were found to be suitable for further data analysis. The present study fulfills the minimum sample size criteria suggested by Hair et al. (2019). The Smart PLS was the statistical software used for data analyses, and the results were shown in three stages. Firstly, the demographic profiles of the participants were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Secondly, the confirmatory factor analysis was estimated to check the model's reliability and validity, as suggested by Hair et al. (2010). And lastly, the structural model was estimated to test the proposed research model, as Gefen et al. (2000) indicated.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 exhibits the demographic profile of the respondents. It can be seen that around 52 percent of the participants belong to the age group of up to 30 years, whereas 43 percent belong to the 31-50 age group. Regarding gender, respondents were equally distributed as female respondents were 51 percent, and the remaining 49 percent were male respondents. Concerning occupation, the majority of the respondents are from the working class (71 percent) working in the private and public sector; also, some are self-employed, whereas 29 percent belong to the non-working class (students, housewives, and retired personnel). Around 59 percent of the respondents stayed in the hotel during the last six months, which means data is capturing the recent experience of the participants towards the hotel services.

Table 1: Demographic Profiles

Characteristics (N=514)	Frequency (#)	Percentage (%)
Age		
Up to 30 years	267	52.0
31-50 years	219	42.6
Above 50 years	28	5.4
Gender		
Male	253	49.2
Female	261	50.8
Occupation		
Working class	366	71.2
Non-Working class	148	28.8
Last stay in Hotel		
Less than 3 Months	193	37.5
3-6 Months	111	21.6
6-12 Months	76	14.8
More than 1 Year	134	26.1

Source: Author's compilation.

Measurement Model

The measurement model, known as confirmatory factor analysis, is used to check the model's reliability, convergence, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2016; Shaw & Sergueeva, 2019), as shown in Tables 2 and 3. The factor loadings values of all 20 items were within the acceptable limits of 0.7, ranging from 0.793 to 0.947, which indicates the items are strongly related to their associated constructs (Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2010). The

Cronbach alpha values of all seven constructs range from 0.762 for reliability to 0.903 for behaviour intention and were within the acceptable limits of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010; Shaw & Sergueeva, 2019). The composite reliability values of all constructs range between 0.767 and 0.907. Moreover,

the average variance extracted values are within the acceptable limits of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2010). The empathy construct has the highest AVE value of 0.895, whereas the reliability construct has the lowest value of 0.677.

Table 2: Measurement Model Assessment

Items	Loadings	CA	CR	AVE
Tangibility		0.777	0.788	0.690
1. The hotel interior and exterior are visually appealing and well maintained	0.825			
2. The hotel staffs are polite and appear to be neat	0.860			
3. The hotel has modern-looking equipment	0.807			
Reliability		0.762	0.767	0.677
1. My hotel reservation and billing were handled efficiently	0.815			
2. My room was ready with all facilities as promised	0.817			
3. Hotel staff shows sincere interest in solving the consumer's problems	0.836			
Responsiveness		0.802	0.816	0.718
1. Check-in and check-out procedures are fast and efficient	0.793			
2. The hotel staff provides quick services	0.899			
3. The hotel staff are always willing to help the consumers	0.846			
Assurance		0.848	0.852	0.767
1. The hotel provides a safe and secure environment to stay	0.872			
2. The hotel staff are friendly and know the surrounding places	0.874			
3. The hotel staff has the proper knowledge to answer consumer's request	0.882			
Empathy		0.882	0.882	0.895
1. The hotel staff gives personal attention to the consumers	0.947			
2. The hotel staff understands the specific needs of the consumers	0.945			
Satisfaction		0.890	0.891	0.819
1. I am happy with the services provided by the hotel	0.914			
2. My experience with the hotel was very enjoyable	0.913			
3. I am satisfied with my decision to stay in this hotel	0.889			
Behaviour Intention		0.903	0.907	0.838
1. I will strongly recommend my friends and relatives to visit this hotel	0.910			
2. I intend to revisit this hotel in future	0.942			
3. I will prefer this hotel over others	0.893			

CA = Cronbach Alpha; CR = Construct Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

Source: Author's compilation.

Table 3 shows the discriminant validity results using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which suggests that the values of each construct should be greater than any correlation between any other construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair

et al., 2016). Moreover, discriminant validity shows how each latent construct is distinct from other latent constructs used in the study (Hair et al., 2010). Since all the conditions of the measurement model are satisfied, the proposed model is reliable and suitable for further analysis.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity Assessment using Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Tangibility	0.831						
2. Reliability	0.718	0.823					
3. Responsiveness	0.629	0.743	0.847				
4. Assurance	0.655	0.693	0.760	0.876			
5. Empathy	0.627	0.669	0.756	0.781	0.946		
6. Satisfaction	0.633	0.685	0.717	0.775	0.730	0.905	
7. Behaviour Intention	0.590	0.650	0.680	0.722	0.714	0.811	0.915

Source: Author's compilation.

The Structural Model

After establishing the model's reliability and validity, the path coefficient was estimated using structural equation modeling to assess the structural model. The result of the structural model assessment is shown in Table 4, which indicates four constructs: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, which positively influence the guest's satisfaction

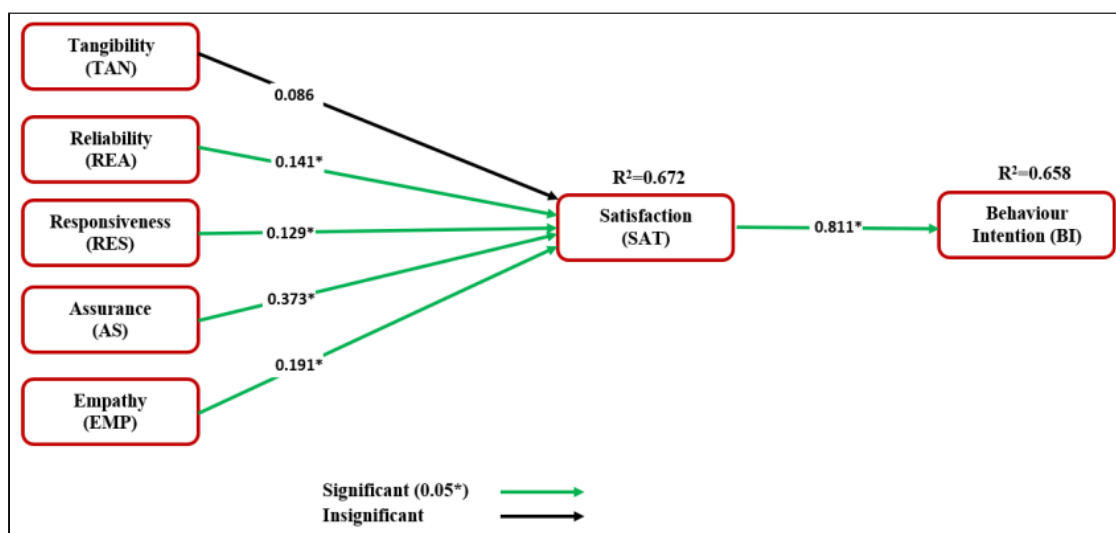
towards the hotel services. Moreover, guest satisfaction also influences behaviour intention. Hence, Hypotheses, namely, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6, were supported, whereas H1 was not supported in the present study. Additionally, the proposed model is able to explain 67.2 percent of the variance for guest satisfaction and 65.8 percent for behaviour intention, which is moderately high.

Table 4: Structural Model Assessment

Path/Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	P Values	Decision	R-Square
Tangibility → Satisfaction (<i>H1</i>)	0.086	0.063	Not Supported	0.672
Reliability → Satisfaction (<i>H2</i>)	0.141	0.007*	Supported	
Responsiveness → Satisfaction (<i>H3</i>)	0.129	0.027*	Supported	
Assurance → Satisfaction (<i>H4</i>)	0.373	0.000*	Supported	
Empathy → Satisfaction (<i>H5</i>)	0.191	0.002*	Supported	
Satisfaction → Behaviour Intention (<i>H6</i>)	0.811	0.000*	Supported	0.658

Note: * $p < 0.05$

Source: Author's compilation



Source: Author's compilation.

Fig. 2: Result of Structural Model

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The present study used a service quality model to measure the satisfaction level of customers towards hotel services, and the study revealed insightful results. The model is able to predict 0.672 of guest satisfaction towards the hotel services and 0.658 of behaviour intention of hotel guests, which is in moderating range from 0.5 to 0.75 (Hair et al., 2011). For instance, the earlier studies reported the r-square value between 0.570 to 0.642 (Marinkovic et al., 2013; Omar et al., 2016; Han & Hyun, 2017; Shafiq et al., 2019). Based on p-values at 5 percent significance level, it is found that four factors, namely, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, have a significant and positive relationship with guest satisfaction. As presented in the results section, assurance is the strongest determinant of guest satisfaction towards hotel services, with a coefficient of 0.373. The guests are more concerned with communication delivered by the hotel personnel. As hotel guests are far from home, they expect a safe and secure environment along with knowledgeable staff giving them proper information about the surrounding places. These results are in line with previous studies, namely, Marinkovic et al. (2013), Minh et al. (2015), Omar et al. (2016), Ahmad et al. (2019), Shafiq et al. (2019), Li (2020), Wang et al. (2021), Ezech et al. (2022).

Empathy is the second strongest determinant of guest satisfaction, having a path coefficient of 0.191. The results of the present study contradict the results of earlier studies by Marinkovic et al. (2013), Ahmad et al. (2019), and Li (2020). However, it is in similar line with studies such as Minh et al. (2015), Omar et al. (2016), Shafiq et al. (2019), Wang et al. (2021), Ezech et al. (2022), which states that hotel service providers should offer customized services, provide personalized attention and work for the guests' best interests. It can be achieved by implanting an in-depth customer relationship management strategy that will enable hotel staff to articulate the guest's needs, as it helps the service providers to deliver maximum satisfaction to the hotel guest.

Reliability is the third significant determinant of guest satisfaction towards hotel services, with a coefficient of 0.141. The result is in line with previous works of Marinkovic et al. (2013), Minh et al. (2015), Ahmad et al. (2019), Shafiq et al. (2019), Li (2020), Wang et al. (2021), Ezech et al. (2022). It means that hotel guests expect all hotel services to be provided as promised by the hotel operators, along with efficiently handling and solving their problems on time and effectively. This will deliver maximum satisfaction to the hotel guests. The last significant predictor of guest satisfaction in the hotel industry is responsiveness, weighing 0.129. The results are inconsistent with the earlier studies on hotel services by Marinkovic et al. (2013), Minh et al. (2015), Li (2020), Wang et al. (2021), and Ezech et al. (2022). The hotel staff's willingness to serve the guest and

flexibility in meeting the guests' requirements greatly impact their satisfaction level.

The study results indicate no relationship between tangibility and guest satisfaction towards hotel services as the p-value is greater than 0.05; hence, the hypothesis is not supported. The findings of the study contradict the previous works on hotel services by Marinkovic et al. (2013), Omar et al. (2016), Ahmad et al. (2019), Shafiq et al. (2019), and Wang et al. (2021). However, in line with Ezech et al. (2022) and Minh et al. (2015). This implies that hotel customers are inclined to professional, courteous, reliable, and accurate service that needs personalized attention. The visually appealing facilities are slightly or not at all considered by the hotel guests in this study. Lastly, the findings disclosed that guest satisfaction is positively and strongly associated with guest behaviour intention, with a weight of 0.811, and the result supports the previous works of Li (2020) and Wang et al. (2021). Thus, continuous improvement of overall guest satisfaction will positively impact guest revisit intention and motivate them to spread positive word of mouth about the hotel.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

The present study tries to identify the determinants of guest satisfaction towards hotel services and their impact on behaviour intentions. The study proposed a model based on the service quality model (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The study's findings supported the theoretical model, which explained a 67.2 percent variation in guest satisfaction and a 65.8 percent variation in behaviour intention towards hotel services. Moreover, it was found that reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy positively influence guest satisfaction towards hotel services. Among these factors, assurance was the strongest determinant of guest satisfaction, followed by empathy, reliability, and responsiveness. It was also found that satisfied guests have a greater impact on behaviour intention as they are likely to revisit and spread positive word of mouth about the hotel services. However, the study concluded that tangibility does not influence guest satisfaction towards hotel service.

The present study inherits specific limitations, which gives a viable prospect for future research. The study participants belong to the state of Goa, having mixed participants belonging to different states or regions will provide better insights and more perception of the customers towards the hotel services. Moreover, researchers may conduct a cross-sectional study in other countries, and this will give a better understanding of guest satisfaction towards hotel services, emphasizing more on which determinants in which country influence the most, accordingly, hotel service providers can develop their marketing strategies. Additionally, the

moderating effects of demographic variables such as gender, age, education level, and income can be examined in future research.

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