

An Investigation into the Determinants of Customer Satisfaction: The Case of the Hotel Industry in Qatar

Khalid I. Al-Sulaiti

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the Arabian Gulf, Asian, and Western travellers' perceptions and levels of satisfaction with services provided by hotels in Qatar. A questionnaire for this purpose was distributed to a random sample of 323 respondents at the departure area of Qatar International Airport. A principle component factor analysis with a Varimax technique was also applied in order to reduce the large number of explanatory variables (32 service attributes) to a limited number of underlying factors. Eight different perception dimensions of hotel service attributes were identified.

The factor scores were then applied as predictive variables in regression analysis to determine the relative importance of the eight perception dimensions in contributing to the variance of the travellers' levels of satisfaction. Statistical findings from regression analysis suggested that the "frequent travellers' programme" was the most important determinant of customers' satisfaction for both Asian and Arabian Gulf travellers. Whereas, the "supplementary services" was the most important determinant of Western travellers. The findings of this research have important implications for decision makers in Qatari hotel industry. Finally, these findings may also be applicable to other Gulf Cooperation Council members.

Introduction

Qatar is a small country situated on the Arabian peninsula. It covers 11,427 sq/km. It is also a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and has a population estimated at 744,029 (The Planning Council, 2005, p. 5). The climate of Qatar is tropical and hot in summer and pleasant in winter. The Qatari economy is based mainly on oil and gas, and is classified as one of the fastest growing in the region. Oil and gas sector contributed to more than 70% of the GDP in 2004.

However, as far as the tourism sector is concerned, its contribution to the GDP is still insignificant. While the tourism sector has contributed to more than 15% of the GDP in some of the neighbouring countries, its contribution to the Qatari economy is still negligible. However, in recent years, the government has put this sector as one of its top priorities. The Tourism National Council was established to develop this sector, and huge investments were allocated to tourism projects.

Today, the hotel industry in Qatar has been recognised as an international entity, with producers and consumers spread around the world. Moreover, in the last decade, demand for and supply of hospitality services beyond that of traditional services has escalated the growth of the hospitality industry globally. This has led to intense competition in the marketplace. As a result of huge investments in the industry in Qatar, the number of hotels has increased rapidly during the last three years. It has increased from 21 hotels in 2001 to 35 hotels in 2003. This number is expected to exceed 50 hotels with an estimated 7500 beds by 2005 (The Planning Council, 2004, p. 219).

It is worth-mentioning that one of the greatest challenges facing Qatari hotel organisations today is the ever-growing volume and fierceness of the competition. This will increase in 2006 due to the Asian Games which will be held in Qatar.

Background

Customer Satisfaction

Considerable attempts have been made in the past by researchers to define the concept of satisfaction. Many argue that satisfaction is the final state of a lengthy psychological process (Oh and Parks, 1997; Marzo-Navarro et al., 2005). On the other hands, customers form judgements about the value of marketing offers and make their buying decisions based on the results of interactions and post-purchase evaluations of a product or service (Oliver, 1980; Gunderson et al., 1996). Some scholars argued that customer satisfaction depends on performance vis-à-vis the customer's expectations (Al-Sulaiti et al., 2005; Gerpott et al., 2001). Whereas other scholars argue that the customer's experience plays a vital role in satisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 1994; Teas, 1993). Some research shows that customers experience different levels of satisfaction based on the collective information gathered from prior experiences with the product or service provider.

Satisfaction is often associated with performance that fulfils expectations (Barsky, 1992) while dissatisfaction occurs when performance falls below expectations (Swan and Combs, 1976; Gerpott et al., 2001). However, if performance exceeds expectations, the customer is highly satisfied. Therefore, customer satisfaction can be defined as the key that leads to repeat purchases, retention, positive word-of-mouth, less price sensitivity, and increased customer loyalty (Fornell, 1992; Zineldin, 2000; Heung, 2000; Stauss et al., 2001). On the other hand, failure to pay close attention to customer satisfaction may result in a negative evaluation and may lead to unfavourable word-of-mouth (Chon et al., 1995).

In conclusion, a customer's interaction with a service provider and the service producing-process have a significant impact on the customer's perception of service quality and, subsequently, influence levels of satisfaction. Therefore, marketing concepts such as customer satisfaction should be implemented into the management's operational decision-making process (Law et al., 2004).

Since customer satisfaction is critical for the hotel industry, it is necessary to investigate international travellers' perceptions and levels of satisfaction with services provided by hotels operated in Qatar.

Hotel Service Attributes

Research regarding hotel choice criteria has centred on the relationship between travellers' satisfaction and the service quality or services and facilities (Choi and Chu, 2000; Heung, 2000). Due to the specific characteristics of services, such as intangibility, inseparability, variability, and perishability, customers' perceptions of satisfaction criteria may include contextual cues that they use to evaluate the quality of provided services and decide what to use for their future patronage even if they have not experienced the hotel's products and services before (Bitner, 1990; Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Some studies view consumer products and services as a bundle of attributes, or features, and benefits which directly influence consumers' decisions in selecting a hotel (Alpert, 1971; Kivela, 1996). A study by Wuest et al., (1996) examined the travellers' perceptions towards hotel attributes. The results of their research reveal that the travellers usually use those attributes as important factors affecting their lodging choice.

A comprehensive review of the literature on the subject suggests that most travellers or tourists consider the following hotel attributes when assessing their satisfaction with hotel stays: cleanliness, convenience of the hotel location, room fare, a safe and secure environment, service quality, and the reputation of the hotel (Lewis, 1984, 1985; Knutson, 1988; Rivers et al. 1991; Clow et al. 1994; LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1996; Shergill and Sun, 2004).

Beside the above mentioned attributes, accommodation value for money, courtesy, and helpfulness of the hotel staff also rank high for travellers when choosing a hotel (Atkinson, 1988; Wilensky and Buttle, 1988). Furthermore, personal service, physical attractiveness, opportunities for relaxation, standard of services, and an appealing image also rank significantly. (Lewis, 1984, 1985; Wilensky and Buttle, 1988; LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1996; Shergill and Sun, 2004). Other research shows that price and quality are the most important factors for traveller's choice decisions (Ananth et al. 1992; Qu and Li, 1997).

More recent research (Choi and Chu, 2000; Heung, 2000; Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000), however, that investigates the perceptions and levels of satisfaction of customers while travelling, suggests other important factors: service quality and value, food and beverage quality, augmented product quality, reliability, core product quality, availability of supplementary services, value added services, security, and availability of international direct dial in the room.

In summary, most research to-date has focused primarily on travellers' perceptions and satisfaction levels towards hotel services in Western countries with the exception of a few studies that have been done in non-Arab Asian countries. However, no research has been written in understanding how tourists evaluate services provided by hotels in Arab world, especially in Arabian Gulf Region. It seems that researchers in tourists behaviour have neglected the importance of services (attributes) provided by hotels in that market segment. To a great extent, the aforementioned attributes will have an impact upon delivering services successfully in hotel industry in this part of the world. From the viewpoint of hotel operators, the delivery of quality and right services is one strategy to success. These services and their quality make up the criteria of selecting a hotel (Choi and Chu, 2000; Heung, 2000).

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate the needs of tourists by identifying their perceptions and levels of satisfaction in regards to the services and attributes of hotels in an Arabian Gulf country such as Qatar.

Methodology

A self-administered questionnaire in both Arabic and English versions was developed in order to assess the travellers' attitudes towards services provided by Qatari hotels in August 2004¹. The source of the ideas for the questions followed a comprehensive review of the literature available regarding the subject under study.

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the questions that were to be used in this research, the studies of Choi and Chu, 2000 and Heung, 2000 were closely consulted since they had been shown to possess a high level of validity and reliability. The questionnaire was comprised of three parts. The first part dealt with the travellers' characteristics, while the second part collected information about their demographic data. The third part consisted of 32 hotel service attributes in which travellers were asked to indicate their degree of agreement using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). The Likert scale is reasonably easy to construct and administer. The simplicity of the instructions and the judgements task allows its use on self-administered questions (Baker, 2003). Lastly, a five degree Likert scale question was included in the questionnaire in order to measure overall levels of satisfaction.

Pre-testing the questionnaire is an important stage in the refinement process. Prior to finalising the questionnaire, it was decided to pre-test it among a small

sample of thirty (30) travellers obtained from the departures area in Qatar International Airport. Comments were provided from those travellers on some aspects of the questionnaire particularly the hotel attributes. The completion of the pre-test proved that the questionnaire was able to solicit the data needed to accomplish the purpose of the study.

After validating the methodology, a systematic sampling method was used (Choi and Chu, 2000 and Heung, 2000). A total of 350 travellers were surveyed at the departure area of the Qatar International Airport. Every tenth traveller passing through the immigration checkpoint was surveyed. After discarding the unusable questionnaires, 323 were used for analysis resulting in a response rate of 92.3%. The survey results were analysed using the SPSS programme.

Factor analysis was used to test the possibility of reducing the 32 hotel service attributes to a smaller number in order to account for their inter-correlation. The principal component analysis was utilised for factor extraction along with considering factors that accounted for variances greater than one (eigenvalue > 1) as a factor selection criteria. A varimax rotation was also used on the suggestion of Thompson (2004) who advises that this method is appropriate if the theoretical expectations suggest that more than one factor may occur, which was the case in this study.

Multiple regression analysis was also employed to investigate the relative impact of perception factors in affecting Arabian, Asian, and Western travellers' levels of satisfaction with the hotel attributes in Qatar. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) was used to test the reliability and internal consistency of those attributes. The results indicated an acceptable coefficient for this research.

Analysis and Results

Main Characteristics of the Sample

Table 1 gives the main characteristics of the respondents. The data in this table suggests that:

1. Approximately 71.8% of all respondents were males and 28.2% females.
2. The vast majority of the respondents (74.4%) were 31 to 50 years of age, and almost 84% of the respondents were married.
3. Most people surveyed (60.4%) reached an education level of high school or secondary level. However, around one-third of the respondents completed at least a university degree.
4. 46.7% of the respondents had an average monthly income of US\$1,500 to US\$4,500, while 12.1% had a monthly income of US\$4,501 to US\$6,000, and 24.4% had a monthly income over US\$6,000.
5. Of the 323 respondents 137 (42.4%) were of Gulf Arabian origin, 107 (33.1%) were of Asian origin, and 79 (24.5%) were of Western origin.

6. Skilled workers represented 20.1% of the total respondents, while more than 70% of the respondents held a professional and/or managerial position.
7. More than 30% of the respondents were travelling for pleasure and shopping, 30.3% were for business, 16.4% were for sport and 20.8% were for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives.

Table 1
Main Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	No.	%
Gender		
Male	232	71.8
Female	91	28.2
Age:		
20 or below	6	1.9
21-30	50	15.5
31-40	130	40.2
41-50	117	36.2
Above 50	20	6.2
Educational level:		
Primary school	17	5.3
Secondary school	47	14.6
High school	148	45.8
University	102	31.5
Post-graduate	9	2.8
Monthly income level:		
Less than US\$1500	54	16.7
US\$1500-US\$3000	108	33.4
US\$3001-US\$4500	43	13.3
US\$4501-US\$6000	39	12.1
Over US\$6000	79	24.4
Marital Status:		
Single	55	17.1
Married	268	83.9
Nationality		
GCC Travellers	137	42.4
Asian (Non-GCC) Travelers	107	33.1
Western Travelers	79	24.5
Purpose of Visit		
Pleasure	81	25.1
Shopping	24	7.4
Business purpose	98	30.3
Sport	53	16.4
Visit friends and relatives	69	20.8
Profession		
Self employed	16	4.9
Skilled worker	65	20.1
Un-skilled worker	8	2.5
Professional	115	35.0
Management position	121	37.5

Structure Underlying the Perceptions of Hotel Service Attributes

The hotel service attributes (32 variables) were subjected to a principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation to define travellers' perceptions towards hotel services attributes in Qatar. Using a loading cut-off of 0.50, eight hotel factors with 26 variables were obtained from the original 32 variables (Baker, 2003).

Table 2 provides the final statistics and gives relevant information after the desired number of factors had been extracted. One can see that the percentage of total variance explained by these factors was acceptable (60.4%), see Hair (1999).

Table 2
Results of Factor Analysis

Final Statistics					
Variable	Communality	Factor	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
VAR1	.482	1	9.217	28.804	28.804
VAR2	.627	2	2.378	7.432	36.235
VAR3	.576	3	1.688	5.276	41.511
VAR4	.578	4	1.520	4.750	46.262
VAR5	.606	5	1.256	3.925	50.187
VAR6	.570	6	1.170	3.655	53.842
VAR7	.579	7	1.048	3.275	57.117
VAR8	.499	8	1.040	3.249	60.366
VAR9	.577				
VAR10	.576				
VAR11	.595				
VAR12	.589				
VAR13	.599				
VAR14	.527				
VAR15	.679				
VAR16	.700				
VAR17	.612				
VAR18	.680				
VAR19	.704				
VAR20	.589				
VAR21	.694				
VAR22	.614				
VAR23	.515				
VAR24	.594				
VAR25	.639				
VAR26	.595				
VAR27	.674				
VAR28	.544				
VAR29	.600				
VAR30	.614				
VAR31	.680				
VAR32	.611				

Reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) was also calculated in order to examine the reliability and internal consistency of each factor. The results indicate that the alpha coefficients for the eight factors ranged from 0.54 to 0.79. These coefficients are considered acceptable as an indication of reliability for basic research since they were above the cut-off value of 0.50 (Choi and Chu, 2000).

Table 3 shows factor analysis results with varimax rotation of perceptions of hotel service attributes in Qatar. The rotated factor matrix obtained by varimax procedure suggests the following:

1. Factor one has high coefficients on Var1 (helpfulness, friendliness of hotel staff), Var2 (efficiency of check-in-out services), Var3 (providing efficient and prompt services), Var12 (staff are neat), and Var19 (nice physical appearance of the hotel). According to Hair et al., (1999) a variable with a higher loading influences to a greater extent the name or label selected to represent a factor. Hair et al., (1999) believe that naming or labelling factors is not very scientific and is based on the subjective opinion of the analyst. Different analysts, in many cases, assign different names to the same results because of the differences in their background and training. Therefore, this factor may be labelled "service quality".
2. Factor two has high coefficients on Var11 (fast baggage handling service), Var24 (excellent wake-up call system), Var25 (prompt laundry service), Var26 (provide international call service), and Var29 (Accept major credit cards). Therefore, this factor may be labelled "reliability".
3. Factor three has high coefficients on Var5 (room price is fair), Var9 (has a good reputation), Var16 (reasonable price of food and beverages), and Var17 (easy to control room temperature). Hence, this factor may be labelled "value".
4. Factor four has high coefficients on Var4 (multilingual staff), Var6 (rooms are clean and quiet), and Var7 (room size is reasonable). Hence, this factor may be labelled "room comfort".
5. Factor five has high coefficients on the items that represent Var13 (variety and quality of food and beverages), and Var15 (availability of mini-bar). This factor could be labelled "quality of food and beverages".
6. Factor six has high coefficients on three variables dealing with the location of the hotel (Var20), free transportation to-from the major shopping malls (Var21), and availability of fire alarm system (Var22). This factor may be labelled "convenience".
7. Factor seven has high coefficients on two items. Those are: Var31 (provides special room equipment for families with children), and Var32 (provides airline ticket reservation services). Therefore, this factor may be labelled "supplementary services".
8. Factor eight has high coefficients on two items also. Those are: Var27 (availability of business centre), and Var30 (availability of frequent travellers' programme). Thus, this factor may be labelled "frequent travellers' programme".

Table 3
Factor Analysis Results With Varimax Rotation of Perceptions of Hotel Service
Attributes in Qatar

Hotel Service Attributes	Factor Loading							
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8
Factor 1: Service Quality								
V1. Helpfulness, friendliness of hotel staff	.551							
V2. Efficiency of check-in-out services	.675							
V3. Staff ability to provide efficient & prompt service	.556							
V12. Staff are neat	.594							
V19. Nice physical appearance of the hotel	.732							
Factor 2: Reliability								
V11. Has fast baggage handling service		.645						
V24. Excellent wake-up call system		.582						
V25. Prompt laundry service		.664						
V26. Provides international call service		.599						
V29. Accept major credit cards		.589						
Factor 3: Value								
V5. Room price is fair			.516					
V9. The hotel has a good reputation			.660					
V16. Reasonable price for the food & beverages			.613					
V17. Easy to control room temperature			.634					
Factor 4: Room comfort								
V4. Staff ability in speaking different languages				.509				
V6. Room are clean and quite				.706				
V7. Room size is reasonable				.701				
Factor 5: Quality of food and beverages								
V13. Variety and quality of food and beverages					.719			
V15. Availability of mini-bar					.776			
Factor 6: Convenience								
V20. Good location of the hotel						.677		
V21. Free transportation from/to major shopping malls						.681		
V22. Availability of Alarm system						.571		
Factor 7: Supplementary Services								
V31. Provides special room equipments for families with children (such as, bassinets,...)							.590	
V32. provides airline ticket reservation services							.645	
Factor 8: Frequent travellers' programme								
V27. Availability of business centre								.625
V30. Availability of frequent travellers' programme								.701
Cronbach's alpha	.78	.78	.59	.67	.79	.68	.54	.56

Importance of Hotel Factors Affecting Travellers' Overall Satisfaction

As stated earlier, three types of travellers were distinguished and are as follows:

Arabian Gulf Travellers

To determine the relative importance of the travellers' perception dimensions to the level of satisfaction for the three types of travellers, regression analysis was used. Travellers' overall satisfaction level was considered as a dependent variable, while the eight factors derived from the factor analysis were considered as independent variable.

Table 4 shows a satisfactory level of goodness-of-fit in predicting the variance of Arabian Gulf travellers' overall satisfaction in relation to most hotel factors, as examined by R (.720), R square (.603) and F-ratio (57.31656, significant at .0000 level). The relative importance of the eight perception factors in contributing to the variance of the Arabian travellers' overall satisfaction was investigated by the Beta Coefficient. Results revealed that of the eight hotel factors, five factors weighted heavily in explaining Arabian travellers' overall satisfaction. These were: frequent travellers' programme, quality of food and beverages, reliability, supplementary services, and room comfort with Beta coefficient 0.553, 0.501, 0.473, 0.381, and 0.304 respectively. On the other hand, Value, convenience, and service quality factors were not statistically significant in influencing the Arabian travellers' overall satisfaction levels since their Beta values were less than 0.1.

Table 4
Regression Analysis results of Hotel Factors Based on Arabian Gulf Travellers' Overall Satisfaction Levels

Arabian Gulf Travellers			
<i>Goodness-of-fit</i>			
Multiple R	.783		
R Square	.614		
Adjusted R Square	.603		
Standard Error	.720		
F = 57.31656; Sig. F = .0000			
<i>Variables:</i>		<i>Beta Value</i>	<i>Significance</i>
F(8) Frequent travellers' programme		0.553	0.000
F(5) Quality of food and beverages		0.501	0.000
F(2) Reliability		0.473	0.000
F(7) Supplementary services		0.381	0.008
F(4) Room comfort		0.304	0.046
F(3) Value		0.093	0.089
F(6) Convenience		0.078	0.303
F(1) Service Quality		0.057	0.571

Asian Travellers

Results in Table 5 suggest an acceptable level of goodness-of-fit in predicting the variance of Asian travellers' overall satisfaction in relation to the eight hotel factors, as investigated by R (.737), R square (.644) and F-ratio (43.0234, significant at 0.000 level of significance). The beta coefficient was examined in order to investigate the relative impact of the hotel factors in relation to their contribution to the variance in Asian travellers' overall satisfaction levels. Results revealed that of the eight factors, five factors also remained significant in the regression analysis. These were frequent travellers' programme (beta = 0.417), reliability (beta = 0.368), supplementary services (beta = 0.328), Value (beta = 0.312), and service quality (beta = 0.114). Whereas, room comfort, quality of food and beverages, and convenience were not important factors in influencing Asian travellers' overall satisfaction levels.

Table 5
Regression Analysis results of Hotel Factors Based on Asian Travellers' Overall Satisfaction Levels

Asian Travellers			
Goodness-of-fit			
Multiple R	.737		
R Square	.644		
Adjusted R Square	.631		
Standard Error	.706		
F= 43.0234; Sig. F=.0000			
Variables:		Beta Value	Significance
F(8) Frequent travellers' programme		0.417	0.000
F(2) Reliability		0.368	0.000
F(7) Supplementary services		0.328	0.000
F(3) Value		0.312	0.000
F(1) Service Quality		0.114	0.000
F(4) Room comfort		0.087	0.296
F(5) Quality of food and beverages		0.065	0.533
F(6) Convenience		0.006	0.898

Western Travellers

As can be seen in Table 6, satisfactory findings of the regression analysis were evidenced. The correlation coefficient of the eight hotel factors on travellers' overall satisfaction levels was .781, showing that Western travellers pay more importance to six out of eight hotel factors. The coefficient of determination was .610, indicating that around 61% of the variation of travellers' overall satisfaction was explained by most of the hotel factors. F-ratio was investigated in order to know whether or not the results of the regression could have occurred by

chance (Choi and Chu, 2000). However, results revealed a satisfactory value of 56.46998 with a significance level of 0.0000.

To verify the relative importance of the eight factors in contributing to the variance of Western travellers' overall satisfaction, beta coefficients were examined. Results reported that six factors stayed significant with differing values of beta coefficients. Supplementary services and service quality carried the heaviest weight in verifying Western travellers' overall satisfaction. This was followed by reliability, convenience, room comfort, and frequent travellers' programme.

Table 6
Regression Analysis results of Hotel Factors Based on Western Travellers' Overall Satisfaction Levels

Western Travellers			
Goodness-of-fit			
Multiple R	.781		
R Square	.610		
Adjusted R Square	.599		
Standard Error	.619		
F= 56.46998 ; Sig. F=.0000			
Variables:		Beta Value	Significance
F(7) Supplementary services		0.685	0.0000
F(1) Service Quality		0.289	0.0000
F(2) Reliability		0.188	0.0000
F(6) Convenience		0.142	0.0000
F(4) Room comfort		0.127	0.0247
F(8) Frequent travellers' programme		0.113	0.0459
F(3) Value		0.030	0.3261
F(5) Quality of food and beverages		0.029	0.4252

Conclusions and Policy Implications

Conclusions:

Based on the above analysis, the following conclusions and policy implications are derived as follows:

1. The hotel industry in Qatar has been given more attention by decision makers.
2. The tourism sector has grown rapidly in recent years, but its contribution to GDP is still insignificant.
3. Most research on this subject was oriented to Western countries and very few studies were conducted in Arab countries especially the GCC countries.

4. Statistical results of factor analysis identified eight factors underlying the perceptions of travellers.
5. Regression findings indicate that a frequent travellers' programme is the most important factor determinant of customers satisfactions for both Asian and Arabian Gulf Travellers (Beta = 0.55 and 0.41 respectively).
6. Results of regression analysis show that supplementary services are the most important factor determinant of Western customer travellers (beta = 0.68).
7. Statistical results revealed that: value, convenience and service quality are not important factors determinant of Arabian Gulf travellers (beta = 0.09, 0.07, and 0.05 respectively).
8. Room comfort and quality of food and beverages were found to be less influential factors in determining the overall satisfaction levels among Asian travellers.
9. The value and quality of food and beverages were not influential factors in determining the overall satisfaction levels among Western travellers.

Policy implications:

The policy implications to be derived from such analysis are as follows:

1. More importance should be given to develop and improve the highly influential factors such as supplementary services and reliability. Additional resources should be allocated to maintain and develop these services.
2. The results of the study clearly indicate that all hotel service attributes were not equally important to all customers. Therefore, hotel operators should identify these differences and try to satisfy the demand and needs of different groups of their customers.

REFERENCES

- Al-Sulaiti, K. I., Al-Khulaifi, A., and Al-Khatib, F. (2005), "Banking Services and Customer's Satisfaction in Qatar: A Statistical Analysis, *Journal of Business and Economics*, Vol. 11, May, pp. 130-154.
- The Planning Council, (2005), The Millennium Development Goals in State of Qatar, Qatar.
- The Planning Council, (2004), Annual Statistical Abstracts, Qatar.
- Alpert, M. I. (1971), "Identification of Determinant Attributes: a Comparison of Models", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 8, May, pp. 184-91.
- Ananth, M., DeMicco, F. J., Moreo, P. J., and Howey, R. M. (1992), "Marketplace Lodging Needs of Mature Travellers", *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, pp. 12-24.
- Atkinson, A. (1988), Answering The Eternal Question: What Does The Customer Want?", *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, pp. 12-14.
- Baker, M.J. (2003), The Marketing Book, 5th Edition, Butterworth-Heinemann.

- Barsky, J.D. (1992), "Customer Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry: Meaning and Measurement", *The Hospitality Research Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 51-73.
- Bitner, M. (1990), "Evaluating Service Encounters: The Effects of Physical Surroundings and Employee Responses
- Choi, T. Y. and Chu, R. (2000), "Levels of Satisfaction Among Asian and Western Travellers", *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 116-131.
- Chon, K.S., Christianson, D. J. and Lee, C. L. (1995), "Modeling Tourist Satisfaction: Japanese Tourists' Evaluation of Hotel Stay Experience in Taiwan", *Australian Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-6.
- Clow, K. E., Garretson, J. A. and Kurtz, D. L. (1994), "An Exploratory Study Into The Purchase Decision Process Used by Leisure Travellers in Hotel Selection", *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 53-72.
- Fornell, C. (1992), "A National Customer Satisfaction Barometer: The Swedish Experience", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 65, pp. 6-21.
- Gerpott, T. J., Rams, W., and Schindler, A. (2001), "Customer retention, Loyalty, and Satisfaction in German Mobile Cellular Telecommunications Market", *Telecommunication Policy*, Vol. 25, No. 4, pp. 249-69.
- Gundersen, M. G., Heide, M. and Olson, U.H. (1996), "Hotel Guests' Satisfaction Among Business travellers", *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, pp. 72-81.
- Hair, J. F., Anderson, R.E., Tatham, W.C., Black, W. C. (1999). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. 5th Edition, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.
- Heung, V. C. S. (2000), "Satisfaction Levels of Mainland Chinese Travellers With Hong Kong Hotel Services", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 12, No. 5, pp. 308-315
- Kandampully, J. and Suhartanto, D. (2000), "Customer Loyalty in the Hotel Industry: The Role of Customer Satisfaction and Image", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 12, No. 6, pp. 346-351.
- Kivela, J. (1996), "Marketing in the Restaurant Business: A Theoretical Model for Identifying Customers' Determinant Choice Variables and Their Impact on Repeat Purchase in the Restaurant Industry", *Australian Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 13-23.
- Knutson, B. (1988), "Frequent Travellers: Making them Happy and Bringing Them Back", *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, pp. 83-7.
- Law, A. K. Y., Hui, Y.V. and Zhao, X. (2004), "Modelling Repurchase Frequency and Customer Satisfaction For Fast Food Outlets", *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, Vol. 21, No. 5, pp. 545-563.
- LeBlanc, G. and Nguyen, G. (1996), "An Examination of The Factors That Signal Hotel Image to Traveller", *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 32-42.
- Lewis, R. C. (1984), "Getting the Most From Marketing Research: The Basis of Hotel Selection", *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, pp. 54-9.
- Lewis, R. C. (1985), "Getting the Most From Marketing Research: Predicting Hotel Choice: The Factors Underlying Perception", *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, pp. 82-96.
- Marzo-Navarro, M., Pedraja-Iglesias, M., and Rivera-Torres, M. P. (2005), "Measuring Customer Satisfaction in Summer Courses", *Quality Assurance in Education*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 53-65.
- Oh, H. and Parks, S.C. (1997), "Customer Satisfaction and Service Quality: a Critical Review of the Literature and Research Implications for the Hospitality Industry", *Hospitality Research Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 35-64.

- Oliver, R. A. (1980). "A Cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 17, pp. 460-69.
- Qu, H. and Li, I. (1997). "The Characteristics and Satisfaction of Mainland Chinese Visitors to Hong Kong", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 35, No. 4.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V., and Berry, L. (1985). "A Conceptual Model of Service Quality and Its Implications For Future Research", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 48, pp. 41-50.
- Rivers, M. J, Toh, R. S. and Alaoui, M. (1991). "Frequent Stayer Programs: The Demographic, Behavioural, and Attitudinal Characteristics of Hotel Steady Sleepers", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 41-5.
- Shergill, G. S. and Sun, W. (2004), "Tourists Perceptions Towards Hotel Services in New Zealand", *International Journal of Hospitality of Tourism Administration*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 1-29.
- Swan, J. E. and Combs, L.J. (1976). "Product Performance and Customer Satisfaction: a New Concept", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 40, pp. 25-33.
- Teas, R.K. (1993). "Expectations, Performance Evaluation, and Consumers' Perceptions of Quality", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 57, October, pp. 18-34.
- Thompson, B. (2004), *Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Understanding Concepts and Applications*, Amer Psychological Assn.
- Wilensky, L. and Buttle, F. (1988). "A Multivariate Analysis of Hotel Benefit Bundles and Choice Trade-Offs", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 29-41.
- Wuest, B. E., Tas, R. F. and Emenheiser, D. A. (1996), "What Do Mature Travellers Perceive as Important Hotel/Motel Customer Service?", *Hospitality Research Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 77-93.
- Zineldin, M. (2000). TRM Total

¹ This questionnaire was intended to be distributed directly to the travellers through hotels' front-desk. Unfortunately, due to the lack of cooperation from hotels' management, the author was obliged to take permission from the airport authority and stay at the departure area where questionnaires were distributed and collected directly by the author. This task was not easy but, it was the only way to tackle this issue.

Dr. Khalid I. Al-Sulaiti is an associate Professor of Marketing at College of Business and Economics, University of Qatar and he is the General Director of The Institute of Administrative Development, P. O. Box 22129 Doha - Qatar.
