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SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to identify the quality attributes of the hotel services. To measure service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry, there are some models. However, in this study, three most popular and quite complete models which are SERVQUAL, HOLSERV and LODGING QUALITY INDEX are chosen for analysis. Moreover, it reports the difference in the customer expectations and perceptions for men and women, Asian and European guests related to the hotel services. It includes more detailed analysis such as service offerings, hotel facilities, hotels factors, etc. that affect their choices. It also provides suggestions of disable people about the hotel services. To have the statistic data for the study, one survey with 23 questions was implemented. As a result, 114 respondents answered the questionnaire. The last part of this study is to report the findings and analyze the results of survey.

SOMMARIO

Questo studio si propone di identificare gli attributi di qualità dei servizi alberghieri.

Per misurare la qualità dei servizi e la soddisfazione del cliente nell'industria alberghiera, esistono diversi modelli; perciò In questo studio per effettuare l'analisi ne sono stati scelti tre fra i più completi e diffusi: SERVQUAL, HOLSERV e LODGING QUALITY INDEX.

Inoltre nel lavoro esposto si pone l'attenzione sulle differenze nelle aspettative e nella percezione dei servizi alberghieri fra clienti asiatici e non asiatici e di sesso femminile o maschile.

Il presente studio include a seguire una analisi più dettagliata di ogni servizio offerto, delle strutture dell'hotel e dei fattori determinanti che influenzano le scelte dei clienti. A completamento dello studio si forniscono anche impressioni e suggerimenti orientate a migliorare i servizi degli hotel dedicati a persone disabili.

I dati statistici necessari per lo studio sono stati raccolti tramite un sondaggio composto da 23 domande, pubblicato sia su internet che in forma cartacea. I 114 responsi ottenuti sono stati raccolti ed analizzati e compongono la parte conclusiva dello studio; da questi dati infatti sono state dedotte importanti considerazioni a supporto della tesi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW ON HOTEL INDUSTRY

This chapter outlines the concept of hotel industry. It presents the overview of hotel industry, its history and it also discusses about the growth and trend of the hotel industry nowadays. When most of the tourists plan their trips, one of first steps is to look for the hotel and book the room at or near the place where they want to visit. These days, hotel is not as simple as the building; it becomes an industry that employs many people, especially the female.

1.1 What is hotel industry?

 Food, accommodation and dress are the three most essential things of human. Hotel or hotel industry alone provides two basic things: food and accommodation. So, what is hotel or hotel industry?

Hotel is a part of the hospitality industry which is an umbrella term for a broad variety of service industries including, but not limited to, hotels, restaurants and casinos. Hotel is often referred as a "Home away from home". If we consider meaning of hotel in the dictionary, a hotel is a building where you pay to have a room to sleep in and where you can eat meals (Cambridge dictionary) or a hotel is an establishment that provides paid lodging on a short-term basis (Wikipedia)

According to A.M. Sheela, the author of the book "Economics of Hotel Management", hotel is the place where the tourist stops being the traveler and become a guest. Hotel usually offer a full range of accommodations and services, which may includes suites, public dinning, banquet facilities, lounges and entertainment facilities. It is considered as an industry whose main aim is also to make profits for the hoteliers, though this may change at times.

Hence a hotel should provide food, beverage and lodging to travelers on payment and has in turn the right to refuse if the traveler is drunk, not follow the rule of hotels or not pay the service fee.

Traditional hotels provide rooms, banquets and restaurants. Additional hotels get revenues also from telephone call services, laundry services, travel services, internet services and recreational, entertainment activities in the hotels.

1.2 History of hotel industry

The hotel is maybe one of the oldest industries in the world. The history of hotels is connected closely to civilizations of mankind.

According to some documents, the first inn was appeared in the sixth century B.C when some couples provide large halls for travelers to drink and the entire service was done by owners. To other documents, since early biblical times, the Greeks developed thermal baths in villages for rest. Later, the Romans built mansions to provide accommodation for the government business. The first thermal baths in England, Switzerland and the Middle East were developed by the Romans. In the Middle Ages, religious built inns to cater for their colleagues on the move.

At the beginning, inns did not offer meals. They only provided shelter and allowed horses to be changed more easily. Travelling became popular and the impact of the industrial revolution in England spread widely that led to the change from social or governmental travel to business travel. The need for quick and clean service all the time was emerged.

The birth of hotel industry took place in Europe. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, in France, the first time, there was a law required that hotels keep a register. During this period, the first guide books for travelers were also published. English rules for inns also introduced at that time. At the same time, around 1500 thermal spas were developed in Carlsbad and Marienbad.

However, the real growth of the modern hotel industry took place in the USA by the opening of the City Hotel in New York in the year 1794. It emerged the wave of hotel building activity in different cities. Some of the best hotels of the USA were built in this era, but the real boom came in the early of 20th century. This period also saw a beginning of chain operations under the guidance of E.M Sattler which would spread into all the continents. It involved big investments, big profits and trained professionals to manage the hotel business.

Nowadays, architects, designers, developers, engineers, managers, etc realize that taste of guests could be different, according to their wishes or needs. Therefore, they have to catch new trends, define better criteria, present modern standards in order to improve quality of life in hotels.

1.3 Type of hotel industry

There are two ways to categorize hotels: by functions or by star ratings

❖ By functions, hotel has been classified into several types as follows:

- Commercial Hotel
- Airport Hotel
- Conference Center
- Economy Hotel
- Suite or All-Suite Hotel
- Residential Hotel or Apartment Hotel
- Casino Hotel
- Resort Hotel

- Commercial Hotel:

A chain of hotels which have standardized service and amenity structures

- Airport Hotel:

Hotel near the airport but it does not have to be connected or adjacent to the airport (although some are); it could be located up to five miles away. Most airport hotels have a shuttle to and from the terminals (Charlyn Keating Chisholm, about.com. guide)

- Conference Center:

A specialized hotel (usually in a less busy but easily accessible location) designed and built almost exclusively to host conferences, exhibitions, large meetings, seminars, training sessions, etc. A conference center often also provides office facilities and a range of leisure activities (Businessdictionary)

- Economy Hotel:

A hotel offering few amenities (J.K. Krishan, "Dictionary of Tourism", Gyan Books, 2005)

- Suite or All-Suite Hotel:

A hotel in which every rooms has an attached living room and/or kitchen

- Residential Hotel or Apartment Hotel:

A serviced apartment complex uses a hotel-style booking system. It is similar to renting an apartment, but with no fixed contracts and occupants can 'check-out' whenever they wish (Wikipedia)

- Casino Hotel:

A business establishment combines a casino and a hotel or a building that houses both a hotel and a casino.

- Resort Hotel:

A hotel caters primarily to vacationers and tourist and typically offers more recreational amenities and services in a more aesthetically pleasing setting, than other hotels. These hotels are located in attractive and natural tourism destinations and their clientele are groups and couples that like adventure with sophistication and comfort. The attractions vary depending on the region and some might offer golf, tennis, scuba diving and, depending on the natural surroundings, may also arrange other recreational activities.

❖ By Star Ratings, hotel has been classified into several types as follows:

- Five Star Hotel
- Four Star Hotel
- Three Star Hotel
- Two Star Hotel
- One Star Hotel
- No Category Hotels

- Five Star Hotel:

Luxury hotels; most expensive hotels/resorts in the world; numerous extras to enhance the quality of the client's stay, for example, some have private golf courses and even a small private airport. ("Hotel Glossary of Terms", Marsh)

- Four Star Hotel:

First class hotels; expensive (by middle-class standards); has all of the previously mentioned services; has many "luxury" services, for example, massages or a health spa. ("Hotel Glossary of Terms", Marsh)

- Three Star Hotel:

  Middle class hotels; moderately priced; has daily maid service, room service, and may have dry-cleaning, internet access and a swimming pool. ("Hotel Glossary of Terms", Marsh)

- Two Star Hotel:

  Budget hotels; slightly more expensive; usually has maid service daily. ("Hotel Glossary of Terms", Marsh)

- One Star Hotel:

  Low budget hotels; inexpensive; may not have maid service or room service. ("Hotel Glossary of Terms", Marsh)

- No Category Hotels:

  These hotels include motels, cottages, bungalows and others with limited services. However, these hotels represent 41% of the total hotel market share. ("Hotel Glossary of Terms", Marsh)

1.4 Growth and latest trends

In 2009, due to the economic downturn in the whole world, the hotel industry faced many difficulties which revealed in the decrease in all the financial indicators in almost countries all over the world. To overcome the downturn, hoteliers had to apply many methods to cut down the cost as much as they could as well as strike to balance with impact on the customer satisfaction. As a result, in 2010 the hotel industry has the positive growth in the key performance indicators such as occupancy (Occ), ADR (Average Daily Rate) and RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room).

Table 1: Global performance

(Monetary unit in euro)

	Year to Date-June 2010 vs June 2009								
	Occ%		ADR		RevPAR		Change from June 2009%		
	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	Occ	ADR	RecPAR
Asia Pacific	63.9	56.7	97.35	86.3	62.23	48.91	12.8	12.8	27.2
Central & South Asia	62	54.5	123.04	121.45	76.29	66.16	13.8	1.3	15.3
Northeastern Asia	61.4	52.8	91.88	84.25	56.4	44.55	16.1	9.1	26.6
Southeastern Asia	64.8	57.8	91.43	80.2	59.24	46.38	12	14	27.7
Australia & Oceania	71.3	67	108.09	86.85	77.11	58.15	6.5	24.5	32.6
Americas	56.7	54.2	76.55	75.22	43.37	40.8	4.5	1.8	6.3
North America	56.5	54.1	75.62	74.37	42.69	40.21	4.4	1.7	6.2
Caribbean	66.2	64.9	131	125.64	86.72	81.54	2	4.3	6.4
Central America	63	57.5	93.04	94.05	58.57	54.1	9.4	-1.1	8.3
South America	62.4	57.1	88.57	79.56	55.29	45.44	9.3	11.3	21.7
Europe	60.7	57.6	97	95.21	58.91	54.88	5.4	1.9	7.4
Eastern Europe	50.9	47.4	86.38	89.26	43.98	42.35	7.3	-3.2	3.8
Northern Europe	64.1	62.1	92.54	88.81	59.28	55.14	3.2	4.2	7.5
Southern Europe	57.3	53.1	93.71	96.28	53.69	51.08	8	-2.7	5.1
Western Europe	62.4	59	108.49	104.33	67.75	61.56	5.8	4	10.1
Middle East/Africa	62.4	62.1	120.23	116.02	75.04	72.03	0.5	3.6	4.2
Middle East	62.4	63.6	152.91	163.77	95.36	104.2	-1.9	-6.6	-8.4
Northern Africa	68.9	63.1	68.13	62.76	46.96	39.58	9.3	8.6	18.6
Southern Africa	57.1	58.8	114.79	89.18	65.54	52.46	-2.9	28.7	24.9

Source: 2010 STR Global Limited

1.4.1 Asia Pacific

Asia Pacific showed the greatest growth compared to other continents. This led to the strong confidence of the long-term investor on the development of the hotel industry in the region.

Table 2: Performance of key countries in June 2010

(All monetary units in local currency)

Country	Occupancy	% change	ADR	% change	RevPAR	% change
Australia	70.10%	8.40%	AUD159.06	1%	AUD111.46	9.50%
China	62.40%	25.50%	CNY750.36	17.6	CNY468.41	47.60%
India	55.70%	9.60%	INR5829.74	-1.90%	INR3247.77	7.50%
Japan	69.20%	9.60%	JPY12059.97	-4.40%	JPY8348.9	4.80%
Singapore	87.40%	19.50%	SGD269.58	21.20%	SGD235.66	44.80%

Source: 2010 STR Global Limited

Recently, Australian government has set up a long-term strategy for tourism to attract the investor and tourists. This strategy includes growing share of outbound travel which is only less than 1 percent of long-haul travel of outbound U.S. Australia hotel transactions pick up US$570 million in first half 2010. While Tokyo is benefiting from its appreciate yen and June is the peak month with JPY 8348.9 RevPAR.

"With an overall steady increase of new supply, the recovered demand creates a solid base for the region to continue its RevPAR recovery for the rest of the year", according to Elizabeth Randall, managing director of STR Global. Especially in Southeast Asia, strong recover was so clear through the Hotel Pipeline Report which includes hotels in construction, final planning and planning, number of hotels.
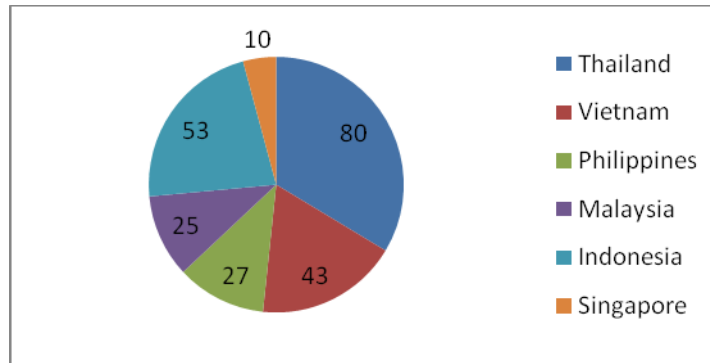
Figure 1: Hotel pipeline report

Thailand, even with the political crisis, reported the largest number in the overall pipeline, followed by Indonesia and Vietnam. While Singapore, an island country, only shows promising signs of recovery. The newly opened Marina Bay Sands resort, which will have 2,500 rooms, includes a casino and plenty of meeting spaces that provide an additional attraction and conference space to this state. Overall, with an impressive number-134,832 guestroom, China leads the global hotel pipeline[1].

1.4.2 Europe

In Europe, in haft of the year 2010, the hotel industry showed the mixed changes. The demand growth in Eastern Europe (10%) was stronger than in Southern Europe (9%). However, the additional supply that entered the hotel market in the Eastern was only 3%; therefore, it did not satisfy the demand and limited the performance.

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[1] Hotels-the magazine of the worldwide hotel industry

Table 3: Performance of key countries in June

(All monetary units in local currency)

Country	Occupancy	%change	ADR	%change	RevPAR	%change
Germany	68.90%	12.70%	EUR90.97	15.90%	EUR62.67	30.60%
Italy	62.30%	8.50%	EUR136.75	-3.90%	EUR85.26	4.30%
Russia	67.20%	16%	RUB6000.57	-9.30%	RUB4033.35	5.20%
Spain	67.30%	9.30%	EUR81.23	2.70%	EUR54.63	12.30%
United Kingdom	76.60%	5.30%	GBP84.41	2.60%	GBP64.62	8.10%

Source: STR Global 2010

Germany had the largest occupancy increase, especially in Munich and Frankfurt rising 26.3% to 77% and 20.7% to 66.5 %, correspondingly. In Italy, Milan reduced 11.5% to EUR77.68 and Venice decreased 10.5% to EUR195.74 in RevPAR.

Totally, in Europe, hotel development pipeline comprises 670 hotels with 117,024 rooms, according to the June 2010 STR Global Construction Pipeline Report. Among them, there are 11084 luxury rooms, 13962 economy rooms, the midscale without food and beverage rooms accounted for the smallest portion (7% with 8,206 rooms). At the end of June 2010, there were 310 projects in the in construction with 57,809 rooms.

1.4.3 Middle East/Africa

The Middle East/Africa was the only sub region saw the negative growth. However, with the help of the FIFA World Cup organized in South Africa, some countries in this area showed the large development in the hotel industry.
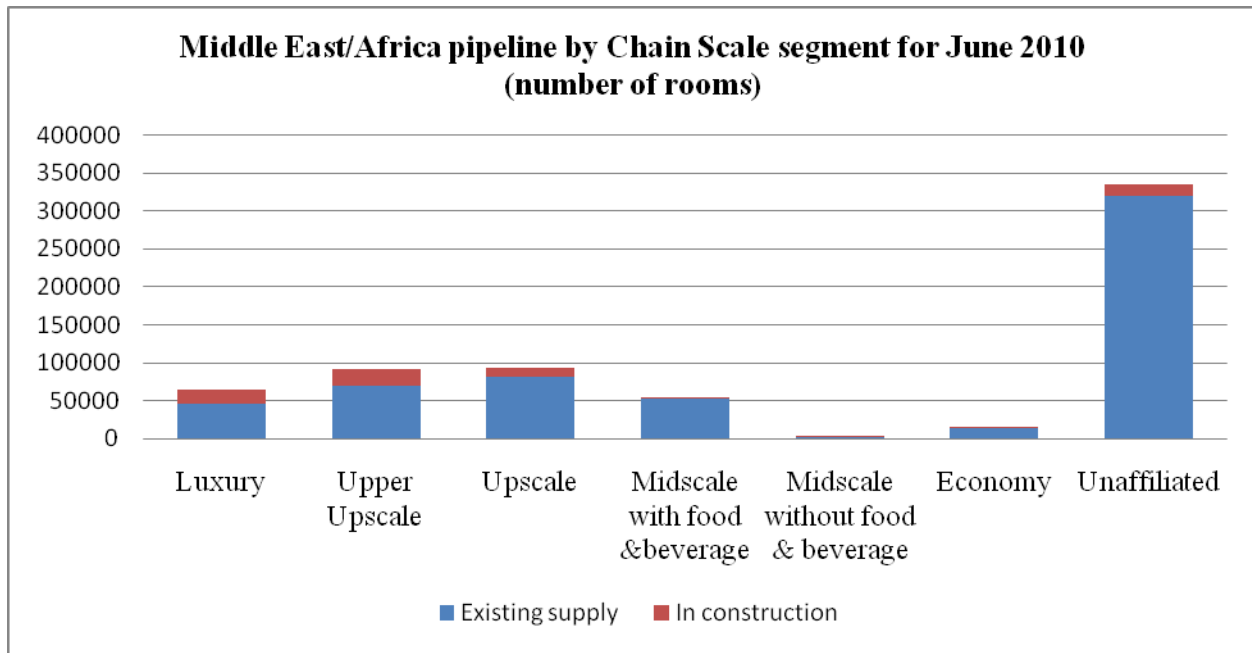
Figure 2: Middle East/Africa pipeline by Chain Scale segment for June 2010

The Middle East/Africa hotel pipeline included 455 hotels with 126,310 rooms, according to the June 2010 STR Global Construction Pipeline Report.

Among the countries in the region, the United Arab Emirates accounted for nearly 50 per cent of total rooms in the total active pipeline for the region. There were 54,814 rooms in the active pipeline in this country. UAE also reported the most rooms in construction with 29,292 rooms. In report, total active pipeline of Saudi Arabia were 16,680 rooms, followed by Egypt (7,332 rooms) and Morocco (6,047 rooms).

1.4.4 America

The Americas region recorded positive growth in the three key performance metrics.
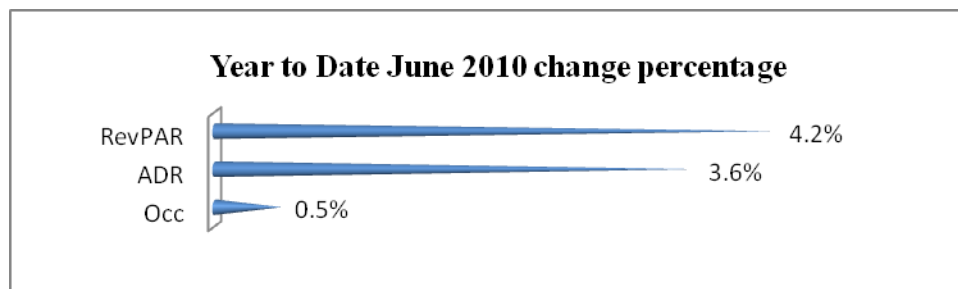
Figure 3: Year to Date June 2010 change percentage

Four out of seven chain scale segments showed the increase in six months of 2010. Among them, luxury rooms raised largest to US$166.20 in RevPAR. Argentina, Mexico and Canada gained highest increase in all indicators. In United States, hotel transactions in the first six months of 2010 gained US$2.2 billion, only in June, occupancy was up 6.9 per cent to 65 per cent, average daily rate ended the month with a 1-per cent increase to US$98.33, and revenue per available room rose 8 per cent to US$63.87.

Nowadays, "the hotel industry has more than operating performance to contend with", panelists said during the Hotel Data Conference on August 5th 2010. Many other factors such as natural disasters and politics must also be considered. Those direct factors as well as indirect factors can be good and/ or bad for hotels. Besides, it is also very important to take into account the growth of related industries, for example, airline industry, tourism industry, etc. The recent Iceland volcano disaster is a strong evidence of affection of group businesses. This disaster led to shrink airline industry all over the world. As a result, many tourists had to cancel their tours and hotels immediately suffer the drop.

Even many countries still suffer from the economic crisis; big hotel companies try to expand their operation through increase the number of properties in their franchise list, merger and acquisition. There is a truth that more and more tourists, instead of spending money on long tours, they enjoy their life in short- time tours to take advantage of their vacation time. To catch up this trend, hotel management try to renew their policy such as providing discount or free stay based on booking times so that they can attract more tourists. In general, all hotel management tries to improve their service quality to gain customer satisfaction.

CHAPTER 2: SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

This chapter outlines the concept of service quality and customer satisfaction. From the last decade, the service sector has become greater economic importance. The elimination of waste due to poor quality and meeting customer expectations are the major challenges facing managers in the service sector. This chapter presents the reasons why we should measure service quality, customer satisfaction in hotel industry as well as their measures. Time by time, different researchers tried to find out the way to measure of service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. Next scientist generation improved the model of the precedents or invented a new one. Among all, three most popular models to measure customer satisfaction and service quality in the hotel industry are SERVQUAL, HOLSERV and LODGING QUALITY INDEX. Each model has its own strong point and has been used flexibly in hotel industry.

2.1 Definition service quality and customer satisfaction

Someone say that service quality and customer satisfaction is critical for the service survival. So what are they? Both of them are intangible but the exact definition is still a controversial issue. Customer satisfaction is a psychological concept that involves the feeling of well-being and pleasure that results from obtaining what one hopes for and expects from an appealing product and/or service (WTO, 1985). To Oliver (1980), customer satisfaction definition is based on the expectation disconfirmation point of view. Before purchasing or using the product or service, customers always have their personal expectation about its performance. After buying or using product or service, if the result is equal or better than expectation, it means the expectation has positive confirmation. In the opposite case, if the result is lower than expectation, we have negative confirmation. Customers are said to be satisfied only if there are positive confirmations of expectation. However, in any case, the level of customer satisfaction is different between

different customers because each of them owns their personal needs, demands as well as experiences.

Nowadays, quality of goods and service is demanding by customers than ever before. We often talk and hear the word "quality" but not all the people actually understand what quality is. Some people mistake quality with luxury or durability. Maybe more than few times in the life, we regret that we spent a lot of money for things which are not "deserved" with their price. We say "I am disappointed" or "it is low quality". In dictionary, quality is defined as "general excellence of standard or level" or "a level of superiority that is usually high". According to David Garvin's analysis, quality is defined in different approaches. To transcendent approach, "quality is synonymous with innate excellence, absolute and universally recognizable: 'You will know it when you see it'"[2]. According to this point of view, a product or service is called qualify if it meets standards or we should say that it gets the highest standard. In this case, quality acts as a relative global value judgment. The research conducted by Parasuraman, Seithaml and Berry (1985) in four different services- retail banking, credit card, securities brokerage and product repair and maintenance also confirm this conclusion. In this research, regardless of the type of service, customers used basically the same general criteria to evaluate the service quality. To user-based approach, quality is 'lies in the eyes of the beholder'. It means quality depending on the customer satisfaction. With the same product or service, some people compliment it high quality but to others it is bad or only so-so. In other point of view, service quality is a way to manage business processes in order to ensure total satisfaction to the customer on all levels (internal and external). It is an approach that leads to an increase of competitiveness, effectiveness and flexibility of the entire company[3].

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[2] Peter Mudie and Angela Pirrie, "Services Marketing Management", 3rd Edition, Butterworth-Heinemann

[3] Oakland, J.S, foreword, in: Tourism and hospitality management, no. 1, Faculty of Tourist and Hotel Management Opatija, Opatija.

2.2 Why measure service quality and customer satisfaction?

According to latest statistics, service sector accounts for 60 per cent of the value added in European Economic Community. In service sector, quality and customer satisfaction play irreplaceable roles. Various researchers such as Knutson, 1988 and Naumann, 1995 succeeded to prove that satisfaction of customers is the cheapest mean of promotion. Each year, billions of dollars are spent for improving the level of service quality. It is said that "doing things wrong" accounts for 30 or 40 per cent of operating costs in service organizations. "It's six to seven times more expensive to gain a new customer than it is to retain an existing customer. A 5% increase in customer retention can increase profits by 25% to 95%"[4].
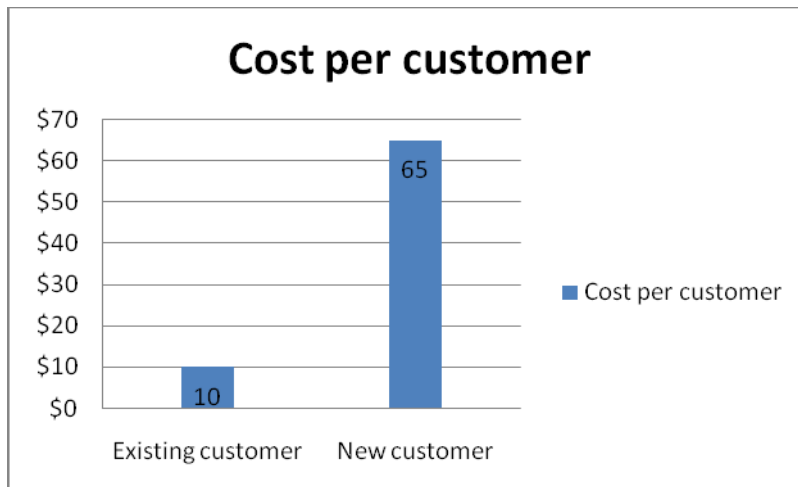
Figure 4: Cost per customer

Understanding the customer satisfaction becomes more and more important these days. One hand, it allows the company to know how customer defines the service and products quality; facilitates the development of customer satisfaction questionnaires (Hayes, 1997). On the other hand, it impacts on the purchase repetition and word of mouth recommendations (Berkman and Gilson, 1986).

 Measurement also helps the organization compare the difference before and after changes, identify the standard of service delivery and it is also a good chance to recognize problems

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[4] *Bain & Company study in Harvard Business Review, 2001*

related to quality of service. Therefore, the measurement of service quality and customer satisfaction benefits company in both qualitative and quantitative way. Gaining high level of service quality and customer satisfaction equal to enhancement in customer loyalty, market share increase, higher returns in investment, cost reduction and guarantee a competitive advantage. (Knutson, 1988; Haksever, Render, Russell, & Murdick, 2000; Wuest, 2001). It also has a positive impact on employee satisfaction.

For the three star hotels or above, measurement of the service quality is a way to prove its quality and it is one of the hotel marketing methods. Those hotels management look at the hotel rating system. The top ten positions in hotel rating websites is the common target of thousands of hotel because those positions are considered as the certificate for their hotels' quality service. When travelers search for the hotels, they also browse those websites. It is usual that travelers who care about high quality only look at some beginning pages which show the highest positions. Having the name here becomes a competitive advantage and helps hotels attract more guests. It is clear that hotel rating systems encourage hotel operators to improve their service quality, which may lead to changes in hotel performance.
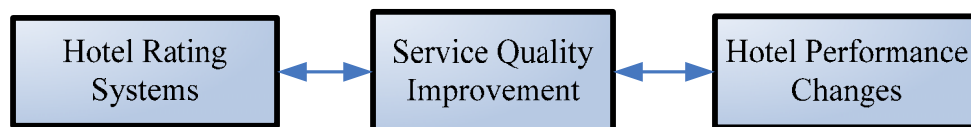
Figure 5: Relationship of Hotel Rating Systems, Service Quality Improvement and Hotel Performance Changes

Those reasons are motivations for researchers try to find out the measurement models of customer satisfaction and service quality in various industries.

2.3 Measurement models of service quality and customer satisfaction in hotel industry

Due to multi-dimensional nature of the service quality, the lack of consensus on how to measure the quality of hotel industry should be admitted. The nature of services which are impalpability, inseparability from provider and receiver of service and impossibility of storage led to creation of specific models.

2.3.1 SERVQUAL MODEL

This is the most popular model to measure the customer satisfaction in almost services industry. The model is based on the client's evaluation of service quality, which is a comparison of the expected and the obtained value as well as a consideration of gaps in the process of service provision. The foundation of SERVQUAL scale was the gap model.
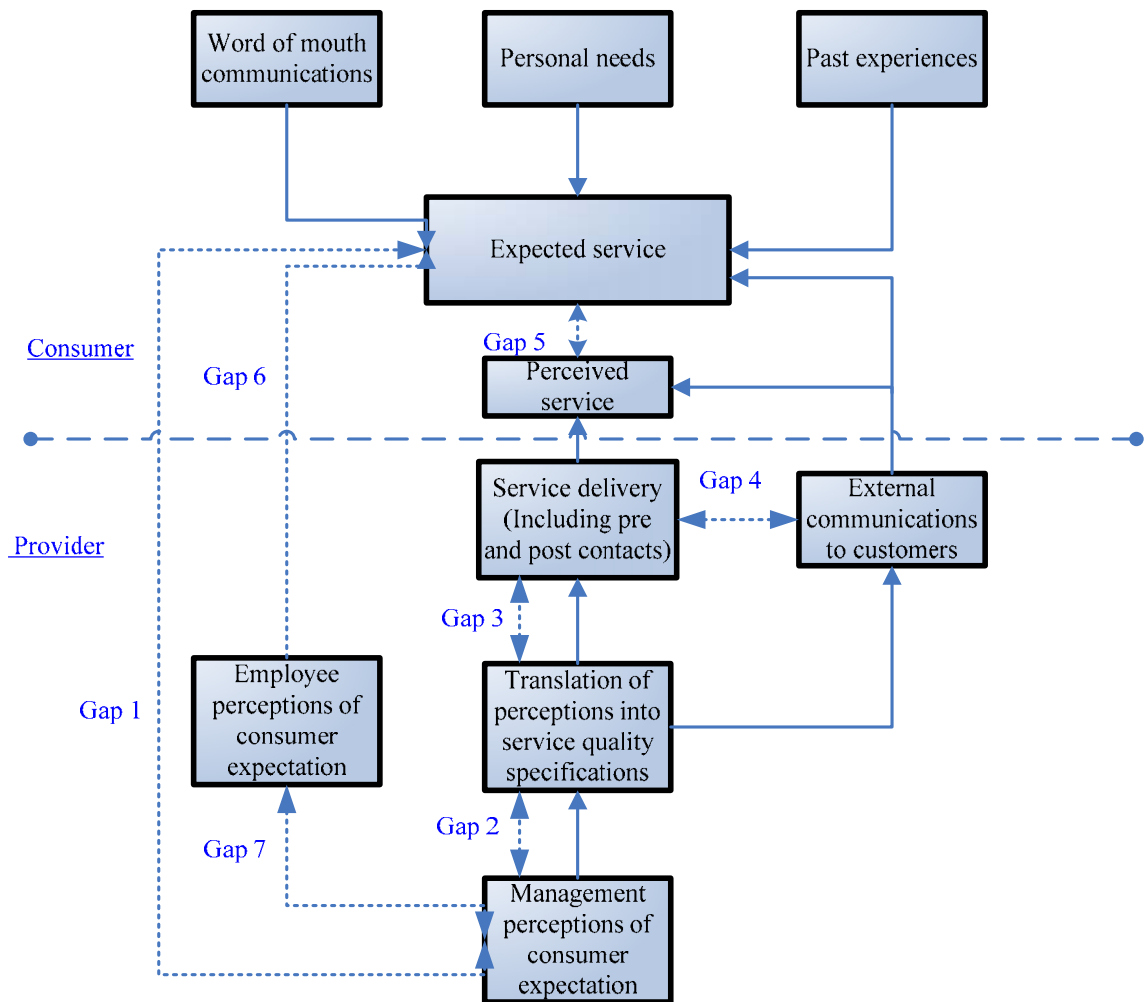
Figure 6: Model of service quality gaps

(Parasuraman et al, 1985; Curry, 1999; Luk and Layton, 2002)

The gap model is an extension of Parasuraman *et al.* (1985). There are seven major gaps in the service quality concept:

- Gap1: Gap between customer expectation and management perception. This gap is one the three important gaps related to the external customers. This gap is big if an organization has a lot of management layers, a wrong orientation in marketing research or lack of the upward communication.
- Gap 2: Gap between management perception and service specifications. This gap is resulted by inadequate commitment to service quality of manager board or employees, a perception of unfeasibility, lack of task standardization and absence or unsuitable goal.
- Gap 3: Gap between service specifications and service delivery. Employees do not perceive clearly their position and/or their tasks that lead to this gap. In other cases, even employees know their roles but they are not able to perform their task well. Besides, lack of team work and inappropriate supervisory control systems can be reasons.
- Gap 4: Gap between service deliveries versus external communication. Over-promise to both external and internal customers as well as the low horizontal communication state can be reasons of this gap.
- Gap 5: The gap between customer expectations versus their perceptions of the service delivered. This gap is very important and considered the true measure of service quality. It has a direct relation with external customer also is the gap that SERVEQUAL model influences on. All of providers try to satisfy the needs and expectations of customers which are really diversified. However, their perception of service delivered is not based only on service itself, their needs and expectations but also external impacts such as word of mouth and the breakthrough of competitors.
- Gap6: The gap between customer expectations and employees' perceptions. This gap also direct related to external customers. If employees understand wrong the customer expectations, immediately it can cause the bad effect to the customer satisfaction.
- Gap 7: The difference between employee's perceptions and management perceptions. It can be reduced if managers and employees have a good communication to resolve the problem.

In the service quality concept, to all the seven gaps, the smaller gap is, the higher service quality level can gain. Even if only one gap arises, the service gaps will appear because it means that customers are dissatisfied.

Based on this model, Parasuraman et al. (1985) built the SERVQUAL scale. The SERVQUAL scale contains desirable characteristics of services with ten dimensions and then it is summed up into five in 1988- tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. However, researchers found that when applying SERVQUAL to different industries, items must be removed or added in order to customize the scale to accommodate differences in service settings (Van Dyke *et al.*, 1997). In the development of quality measurement of hotel industry, all ten original dimensions of SERVQUAL were used in order to reveal any potential dimensions, especially the unique ones to this industry.

These dimensions are defined as follows

- Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service
- Competence: Employees possess the required skills and knowledge necessary to perform the service adequately. It measures the employee's ability to perform a job accurately and be able to address customers' questions with the correct answers.
- Courtesy: How polite, respectful, considerate and friendly contact personnel are toward guests.
- Credibility: A person's inclination to trust the statements that employee has made. Credibility taps into the believability and honesty of the service provider.
- Security: Providing freedom from danger, risk or doubt.
- Access: The extent to which employees are approachable and easy to find.
- Communication: The ability of employees to keep customers informed. Good communication implies good listening skills and using language and terms that all customers can understand.
- Understanding: Making the effort to know the customers' needs.
- Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- Tangibles: Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communications materials.

From these ten dimensions, a pool which included 97 items of SERQUAL instrument was generated. Each dimension generated around 10 items. After combining and shortening, it has 22 items (Appendix 1). Each item was divided into two statements: one to measure expectation about organizations in general within a given service area and another to measure perceptions about given organization whose service quality was being assessed. The scale was pointed from "strongly agree" (7) to "strongly disagree" (1). Fifty percent of statements were worded positively and the rest was worded negatively suitable with the scale development (Churchill 1979).

For each dimension, the SERVQUAL scale provides a score for customer expectations (E) and a score for customer perceptions (P) of service providers' performances. Customer expectations are "wants or desires of customer" (Miller, 1977), what they feel the providers should provide or it can be the prediction of future events. They appear before using service. While customer perceptions are measured directly within and after their experience in using service. They reveal the evaluations of customers about what they gain from service.

According to Parasuraman and his colleagues, the difference between the two scores is service quality (Q).

$$Q = P - E$$

The key to optimizing service quality is to maximize this positive gap score. The negative value of this gap score reveals the dissatisfaction of customers. The input to calculate this score is customers' feedbacks.

Because each dimension has the different influence to the service quality, to calculate the overall service quality each dimension need to be weighted corresponding with its importance. Those weights can be different between hotels in one country as well as in different countries. It depends on the policy of hotels and the culture of each region. In some cases, hotel management uses standards of hotel rating systems to decide the weights.

It seems that SERQUAL model has been used only for gap 5. But in reality, its application could be extended to other gaps. Since its introduction in 1985, SERQUAL model is used in numerous measurement and study of hotel industry. SERVQUAL model is not only very popular in assessment of external service quality but also used in internal service quality measurement with some modifications. It can be used by employees of one department to access another

department within company. Based on the specific data, managers will judge exactly which dimensions need to be improved and which are their strength; how well their employees perform in each dimension. It is also the foundation to allocate the resources as well as redesign the service provision.

Despite its popularity and wide application, SERVQUAL is exposed to numerous criticisms, from both the conceptual and the operational aspect, such as:

- Direction to the process: SERVQUAL directs to the service delivery process but the result of service experience.
- Expectations: the term of expectations has multiple meanings; it is impossible for SERVQUAL to measure the absolute expectations of service quality.
- Moment of truth: in the different moment, customers have different satisfaction levels.
- Polarity: the reverse polarity of the scale elements causes wrong response.
- Data collection: it is not always easy for hotel managers to ask guests to fulfill the long questionnaire to get the statistic data of all ten dimensions.

2.3.2 HOLSERV and LODGING QUALITY INDEX

To overcome some problem related to SERVQUAL in accessing service quality and customer satisfaction in hotel industry, one variation of SERVQUAL which called HOLSERV and another instrument called LODGING QUALITY INDEX are recommended. Not like SERVQUAL which can be used in all the service industry, HOLSERV and LODGING QUALITY INDEX were built and used only for hotel or hospitality industry.

2.3.2.1 HOLSERV

HOLSERV is a new format of SERVQUAL. HOLSERV is the one-column format questionnaire that has produced a reliable instrument specifically for the hotel industry. In HOLSERV, eight items of the original SERVQUAL scale were either modified or added and three items were deleted, leaving a total of 27 items in final scale. The HOLSERV scale is a shorter, more user-friendly compared to SERVQUAL scale.

Table 4: Modifications of the SERVQUAL scale

NUMBER	BASIC WORDING	ORIGION	GROUP
REL1	Promises to provide a service and does so	SERVQUAL	Reliability
REL2	Shows dependability in handling service problems	SERVQUAL	Reliability
REL3	Performs the service right the first time	SERVQUAL	Reliability
REL4	Provides services at the time it promises to do so	SERVQUAL	Reliability
RES1	Tells guests exactly when the services will be performed	SERVQUAL	Responsiveness
RES2	Gives prompt service	SERVQUAL	Responsiveness
RES3	Always willing to help	SERVQUAL	Responsiveness
RES4	Never too busy to respond to guests' requests	SERVQUAL	Responsiveness
ASS1	Instills confidence in guests	SERVQUAL	Assurance
ASS2	Guests feel safe in the delivery of services	SERVQUAL	Assurance
ASS3	Guests feel safe and secure in their stay	New	Assurance
ASS4	Polite and courteous employees	SERVQUAL	Assurance
ASS5	Have the knowledge to answer questions	SERVQUAL	Assurance
ASS6	Have the skill to perform the service	New	Assurance
EMP1	Gives individual attention	SERVQUAL	Empathy
EMP2	Deals with guests in a caring fashion	SERVQUAL	Empathy
EMP3	Has guests' best interests at heart	SERVQUAL	Empathy
EMP4	Understands guests' specific needs	SERVQUAL	Empathy
TAN1	Equipment, fixtures and fittings are modern looking	SERVQUAL	Tangibles
TAN2	Facilities are visually appealing	Customized	Tangibles
TAN3	Neat and professional employees	SERVQUAL	Tangibles
TAN4	Materials are visually appealing	SERVQUAL	Tangibles
TAN5	Fixture and fittings are comfortable	New	Tangibles
TAN6	Equipment and facilities are easy to use	New	Tangibles

TAN7	Equipment and facilities are generally clean	New	Tangibles
TAN8	Variety of food and beverages meet guests' needs	New	Tangibles
TAN9	Services are operated at a convenient time	SERVQUAL	Tangibles

Source: Research And Concepts Analysing Service Quality In The Hospitality Industry; Amy Wong Ooi Mei, Alison M.Dean and Christopher J. White

HOLSERV uses the rating seven-point scale (1 = very poor and 7 = excellent) that is easier for customers to answer the questionnaire. This is useful to indentify the best predictor of overall service. One column questionnaire combined with seven-point scale rating is the biggest advantages of HOLSERV which make HOLSERV become easy to be applied in reality

An example of the one-column format questionnaire:

CRITERIA	LEVEL OF SATISFACTION
1. When Hotel X promises to provide a service, it does so	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Hotel X shows dependability in handling service problems	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

1= Very poor; completely failed to meet my expected service level

7= Excellent; far exceed my expected service level

While applying the HOLSERV scale, managers of hotels should pay attention on the questionnaire. With different types of hotel, managers should use different questions based on the range of facilities available. For example, with a four or five star hotel, questionnaire can refer to the sauna service, service quality of restaurant inside the hotel, etc. But with an one or two star hotel, managers should ask the question associated with the equipment such as television, telephone and internet access. It means that, managers of hotels should consider further modification or deletion of items in order to customize the questionnaire for their guests and supplement the HOLSERV scale with additional qualitative research such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions. In this case, HOLSERV should be considered as a useful starting point, not the final conclusion for assessing and improving service quality of the hotel.

2.3.2.2 LODGING QUALITY INDEX

LODGING QUALITY INDEX (LQI) was built based on SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, 1988). From this main structure and eight-step procedure of Churchill (1979), Getty and Thompson (1994a) developed the lodging quality scale.

At the beginning, the researchers interviewed travelers and executives of both luxury and economic hotels. They based on the ten dimension of SERQUAL scale. In this way, the result was a pool of 63 scale items (Appendix 2). Then the coefficient alpha which was is a measure of reliability or internal consistency of items was computed (Cronbach, 1951). The higher alpha was, the more significant or interested item was. After that the correspondence of each items and the overall scale item pool was considered to eliminate the unimportant items. As a result, only 43 items were kept. With the appearance and appreciation of SERVQUAL scale of Parasuraman in 1988 with five dimensions, researchers one more time collected data and computed again all the items and coefficient based on the new SERVQUAL scale. In the end, the final lodging quality index with 5 dimensions and 26 items was born and has been used until now. Five dimensions are tangible, reliability (includes original reliability and credibility dimensions), responsiveness, confidence (includes original competence, courtesy, security and access dimensions) and communication (includes original communication and understanding dimensions). They are different with the five dimension of SERVQUAL (include tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) and they are considered more suitable to evaluate some unique features of the hotel industry.

Table 5: Lodging quality index 26-items

Dimension	Scale item
Tangibility	The front desk was visually appealing
	The employees had clean, neat uniforms
	The restaurant's atmosphere was inviting
	The shops were pleasant and attractive
	The outdoor surroundings were visually attractive
	The hotel was bright and well lighted
	The hotel's interior and exterior were well maintained
	The hotel was clean
Reliability	My reservation was handled efficiently
	My guest room was ready as promised
	TV, radio, A/C, lights, and other mechanical equipment worked properly
	I got what I paid for
Responsiveness	Employees responded promptly to my requests
	Informative literature about the hotel was provided
	Employees were willing to answer my questions
	Employees responded quickly to solve my problems
	Room service was prompt
Confidence	Employees knew about local places of interest
	Employees treated me with respect
	Employees were polite when answering my questions
	The hotel provided a safe environment
	The facilities were conveniently located
Communication	Charges on my account were clearly explained
	I received undivided attention at the front desk
	Reservationists tried to find out my particular needs
	Employees anticipated my needs

After collecting statistic data, LQI score is calculated. It is low if 1/3 of answers are negative and it is high if 2/3 of answers or more are positive.

While the validity and reliability of items were considered, the researchers discovered the good correspondence between LQI and satisfy. To calculate the satisfaction, the questionnaire which included three bellowed questions was given to customers:

1.   Would you recommend the property to a friend?

2.   Did you experience a problem during your stay?

3.   If yes, was it handled satisfactorily?

One index was constructed from responses of these questionnaires, and then it was translated into "satisfy".

Table 6: Measuring SATISFY based on recommendation of property, experiencing a problem, and handling

Recommended + property	Experienced a problem +	Problem handled well	Score	Satisfaction level
Yes	No	-	6	High
Yes	Yes	Yes	5	High
Yes	Yes	No	4	Moderate
No	No	-	3	Moderate
No	Yes	Yes	2	Low
No	Yes	No	1	Low

To Getty and Thompson (1994b), guests were more satisfied if they didn't experience any problem than when they experienced one problem which had been solved well. However, in case that even guests didn't experience any problem but they didn't recommend the property for their friends means they were less satisfied than when their problems during the stay were not solved but they still recommended to others. According to statistic data, the guests who recommended property to others also gave high LQI scores and vice versa guests who didn't recommended property to anyone else gave low LQI scores.

In reality, using LQI flexibly contributes to redesign the administration system as well as the strategy of hotels. When comparing the deference scores among dimensions, hotel managers can identify not only the problem needed to be solved but also their superior dimension. Besides, LQI is useful to compare hotels performance. Based on this score, hotel managers can understand their position in hotel industry.

In the application of all three models, it is very important to be suitable with the corporate culture. To be a leader but a follower, instead of waiting the complaint from customers to discover the weakness point, the enterprise should seek the continuous feedbacks through frequent customer satisfaction measurement. Moreover, to have the complete vision about hotel, hotel managers should combine both customer satisfaction survey and employee survey.

CHAPTER 3: IMPACT OF GENDER ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

Hotel as well as the hospitality is the few industries of which the majority labor force is women. Moreover, the number of women who choose hotel industry, such as the receptionist and room cleaner positions, as her career more and more increase. There are different evaluations about the service quality of this special service sector, especially difference between men and female guest point of view. This chapter describes the affect of gender on service quality perception in both smooth service provision process and in the service failure cases. This chapter also includes difference of men and women in customer loyalty level -the high level of customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. In addition, this chapter provides the definition of customer loyalty, how much it is important to the survival of hotels and how gender of customers impact on the loyalty emotion.

3.1 Affect of gender on service quality perception in hotel industry

Do men and women have the same valuation of service quality in the same situation? How do male and female guests respond to the same displayed emotion of hotel employees? What men and women think about a service failure?

In the service quality literature (Mohr and Bitner, 1995), there are two type of service quality: process and outcome.

❖ Process of service delivery is the manner in which the core service is transferred to consumers.

❖ Service outcome is the core service that the consumer receives.

Consequently, the process of service delivery is related to the social/psychological factors while the service outcome is related to the physical/instrumental factors (Driver and Johnston, 2001). So quality of a process is interpersonal, whereas service outcome quality is impersonal.

In hotel industry, the service performance is the critical to the customer satisfaction. However, the service failure is inevitable. Service failure is divided into process failure and outcome failure. In his research, Smith et al. (1999) reported that a process is called failure if the core service is delivered in deficient manners, resulting in the loss of social resources; such as status, esteem; for the consumers. Differently, outcome failure is the result of undelivered some aspects of the core service, resulting in the loss of economic resources such as time, money. For example,

Process failure: You booked a luxury room in a four- star-hotel one month before. Today you come to that hotel. It is a nice hotel with an impressive design. You are in front of the reception counter. The receptionist comes to help you check-in. You tell your name. The receptionist does not smile while making the check-in. The receptionist gives you the key but not tell you the way to go there. You ask the receptionist about it. The receptionist then shows you but does not offer an apology or explanation.

Outcome failure: You booked a luxury room in a four- star-hotel one month before. Today you come to that hotel. It is a nice hotel with an impressive design. You are in front of the reception counter. The receptionist comes to help you check-in. You tell your name. The receptionist informs you that the hotel is out of the room you selected. You make another selection. The receptionist informs you that the hotel is also out of your second choice of room.

There is a literature related to gender difference which describes men as goal or outcome oriented and women as a communal or social oriented. This literature supports to the hypothesis that female guests maybe more sensitive to the relational aspects with service encounter and male guests to the core aspects. E. Hall, 1993, concluded "Real-life customer experiences seem to indicate that gender stereotypes are incorporated into customer expectations regarding good service". There are many other evidences suggesting the impact of gender on customer satisfaction. Among them, the research of Anna S. Mattila, Alicia A. Grandey and Glenda M. Fisk, 2003, is quite complete. Their journal shows that men and women have different valuation rating on the same service. This difference exists in both smooth service and failed service. During the using smooth service, women focus on process more than men while men more pay attention on the outcome than women. Women feel less satisfied than men with the negative displays and they also give higher evaluation rating for the positive displays. On the other hand,

the process, such as the service delivery style, is not so important to male customer if they can gain the appropriate outcome. However, this trend is totally changed in the slow, failed service process. In these situations, male customers give lower satisfaction rating for the negative displays and higher rating for the positive displays than female customers.

For example, in smooth service, a woman feel satisfied with the polite and helpful receptionist. This affect to her more than cues regarding to the service efficiency while a male customer does not so much pay attention on it. Another couple comes to ask the receptionist the way to the nearest Japanese restaurant. Only after twenty minutes of researching on internet, the receptionist show them the correct way. The wife does not consider it as successful service providing process, so eventually she gives the low satisfaction level for total service provision. The husband feels better because he received the correct answer for what he needs. However, when the task related problems happen, the effort to find solutions and smiles in the receptionist's face make a man feel comfortable and easier to accept them. The woman next to him does not feel the same. She wants to see the impressive management attempt; the smiling face to her is not enough. So, what do these customers think when task related problem is combined to the rude attitude of the receptionist? With the man, they seem to be unacceptable. But the woman can forgive the negative display because she seems to be more sympathy with the feeling of the receptionist in this situation; she does not require that the service employee have to be friendly and cheerful regardless of whether these expressions indicate actual feelings of wellbeing on the part of her or him.

In addition, in case of service failure in the hotel industry, men are more likely complain to the management than women (Babakus et al, 1991 and Reiboldt, 2002). Huang et al. (1996) also reported that the common pattern for men is assertiveness, aggressiveness, achievement, self-reliance and competitiveness while the common female traits are modesty, humility, nurturing and responsibility. Men tend to be thing and money oriented and while women tend to be people-oriented. Therefore, men seem to want to get things straight, resulting in more complaints from them to the management and to third parties than from women.

What is about the facilities available in the hotel? Is it the same in requirements of both men and women? Until now, there are still lack of evidences expressing the different between male and

female customers' evaluation of the service quality in term of the facilities and leisure service available in the hotel. In reality, minority of hotels provide different facilities for men and women. One of these hotels is Plus Florence.

Plus Florence is a hotel in the Plus brand which has appeared in 13 locations through Italy including Rome, Venice, etc. In this hotel, they have not only the rooms for guests like other hotels all over the world but also the rooms purposely designed for women, called Plus Girl. Plus Girl focuses on space, privacy, relaxation of female customers such as larger bathrooms, free hairdryers and comfortable space. Girls who stay there also receive free personal care packs along with a big fluffy towel to use for the duration of the stay.

3.2 Impact of gender on customer loyalty-the high level of customer satisfaction

Loyal guests always give the high customer satisfaction level and they appreciate the service quality of the hotel. But a guest satisfies with your hotel service, it does not mean that he or she will stay in your hotel next time or he or she will be your loyal guest. So what is the loyalty? Why is it important to the hotel industry? And in what way a hotel can gain the retention of the guest?

3.2.1   Customer loyalty definition

There is no globally agreed definition of loyalty. Loyalty can be defined as something that consumers may exhibit to brands, services, product categories such as hotel's room and activities such as travelling (Uncles, et. al., 2003). Uncles et. al (2003) also propose three concept of loyalty.

- As primarily an attitude that sometimes leads to a relationship with the brand
- Express in terms of revealed behavior (for example, the pattern of past stay)
- Buying moderated by the individual's characteristics, circumstances and/or the purchase situation.

While Oliver (1997) defined customer loyalty as a deeply commitment to re-purchase or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same -

brand or same brand - set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior.

Tideswell and Fredline (2004) reported that the guests who fit into the extremely loyalty cluster have such a high attitudinal attachment to the hotel that many of them are prepared to change the timing of their visit to ensure they are able to stay at their favorite properties. They are also not so sensitive to the pricing issues and are willing to pay more to stay in the preferred properties rather than go somewhere else in favor of cheaper room rate.

3.2.2   Why is customer loyalty important in the hotel industry?

It is easy to realize that the retention of the guests is proportional with the profit of the hotel - a 5 per cent increase in the guest retention rate could lead to a 35-95 per cent profit increase (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). The essence of focusing on loyalty in the hotel industry is to increase rent volume by raising booking or usage levels and /or increasing the range of services used by guests. Building a closer bond between the brand of the hotel and current customers is also a good way to maintain the current customer base. In addition, the loyal customers will say the positive things about the hotel to others. Consequently, repeat guests are the richest source of hotel's revenues and profit. Hotel industry executives continue to emphasize customer loyalty as a key to sustaining a long term business success (Oh, 2002).

3.2.3   How does gender impact on the customer loyalty?

According to Simmerman (1992), the guest defection rate correlated to the way guests was treated by hotel employees. Almost 70 per cent of identifiable reasons why guests switched to competitors were associated with a dissatisfied service experience with a service provider during the service encounter (Whiteley, 1991). Major findings of Fu and Park (2001) showed that the friendly service and individual attention were more important than tangible factors of service in influencing the elderly guests' behavioral intentions. Hokey Min, Hyesung Min and Ahmed Emam (2002) also reported that when one hotel has high performance ratings in term of the courtesy of hotel employees, its guests tend to show some loyalty to the hotel. Then, the attitude

of hotel employees toward the guests directly impact to the gust patronization, consequently, to the profitability of the hotel.

In the same research, Hokey Min, Hyesung Min and Ahmed Emam (2002) also showed that there is a correlation between customer' gender and his/her purpose of the trip. For the travelling purpose, the female customers are five times more than the male ones staying in the hotel. Considering this ratio, the hotel should pay attention to the amenities to satisfy the female tourist so that they can gain more patronization.

Moreover, the young male guests in their 20s are more volatile, therefore, more prone to move to the competitors' hotels than the female guest in their 30s and the male guests in their 30s as well as the female guests in their 40s are likely to stay in the same or similar hotel in the next trip.

3.2.4   Impact of gender on Loyalty Emotion

The Market Metrix Hospitality Index (MMHI) has pioneered some proprietary measures of customer satisfaction, including Loyalty Emotions. Loyalty Emotions correlate specific emotions that a hotel elicits in a guest and how those emotions impact satisfaction of the guest. Several hotels that provide certain Loyalty Emotions obtain higher rates and can increase prices with fewer defections. Those hotels such as Staybridge Suites elicit preferred emotions, but those emotions differ between the genders. Women are more responsive to the "primary" emotions which included comfortable, relaxed, content, secure and welcome; while the "secondary" emotions which included pampered, entertained, inspired, important, extravagant, elegant, sophisticated and hip/cool appear to have a bigger impact on men. This research suggested the significant difference between female and male guests.

Catching this emotion tendency, some hotels make the different packages for the specific gender. But until now, most of the target customers of those special packages are the female customers. Some of them pay attention on the female adult, such as the Rouge- A Kimpton Hotel, one hotel in Washington DC. This hotel provides the "Girl's Weekend Getaway Package":

"Get away with your girlfriends and enjoy a playful weekend in Washington, DC. Enjoy shopping in Georgetown and DuPont Circle, dining at fabulous restaurants, sightseeing at museums and art galleries, and sipping martinis at Rouge Bar with your coolest gal pals.

Girl's Getaway Package includes

Deluxe Guestroom Accommodations

Choice of Wine or Martini Fixin's

Sex & the City DVD In Room

- Take-Home Goodie Bag with Gilchrist & Soames Bath Products
- Option to add in-room manicures/pedicures".

Other hotels pay attention to the female kid. For example, the Sutton Place Hotel Chicago attracts the girl by "American Girl Place Package":

"Make your daughter, sister, niece or other special girl's next visit to Chicago a most memorable one by booking the American Girl Place Package. American Girl Place Package includes:

- Deluxe accommodations (can be a king or two double beds).
- Welcome letter to girl and her doll upon check-in.
- An American Girl® doll-sized travel bed to take home(Available exclusively in hotels participating in program.)
- Sutton Place Hotel Princess breakfast and one adult breakfast**.
- Sedan drop off and pick up service to and from American Girl Place Chicago. Advance schedule required (Mon - Fri: 10am - 6pm, Sat & Sun: 9am - 6pm).
- Complimentary American Girl Place DVD selection to watch during stay.
- Milk and cookies for girl and her doll at turn down service each night.
- 50% off valet parking.
- Complimentary wireless internet service.
- Complimentary local calls"[5]

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[5] http://www.chicago.suttonplace.com/

Understanding the difference between the desire and emotion of men and women, when building the strategic planning, hotel managers should pay attentions on each gender separately. "Hotel offerings and advertising could be developed to focus on select and different emotional themes for women and men," said Jonathan Barsky, Ph.D, Market Metrix co-founder and partner and University of San Francisco marketing professor.

CHAPTER 4: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

As global competition increases, understanding the culture impacts on customer satisfaction becomes more and more important for the hotel management. Culture provides the framework for social interactions, social rules and customer expectations which are related to service encounter are likely vary from culture to culture (Pucik and Katz, 1986). This chapter provides the definition of culture as well as the levels and dimension of culture in the hotel industry. It also describes some impacts of different cultures, especially Asian and Western countries, on customer satisfaction in general and more specifically on consumer complaint behavior.

4.1 Definition of culture

Pizam et al (1996) suggested that culture exists at variety level of society ranging from civilization culture to ethnic culture, occupational culture, organizational culture and industry culture. It makes the definition of culture even broader so it is difficult to aim at define all of them. However, there are some popular definitions about culture: Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group of people from another (Hotstede, 1980). Another definition is stated by Ferraro, 2002, "culture is everything that people have, think and do as members of their society". Culture also can be defined as the sum of learned beliefs, values and customs that create behavioral norms for a given society (Yau, 1994).

4.2 Levels of culture

Culture can describe itself in layers. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2003) compare their initial figure of culture level with "an onion" which consists of three layers of culture:

❖ Artifacts and products (or explicit culture): the outer layer as material culture which is everything necessary to support human life (Urriola, 1989). For example, when a guest enters a hotel, the exterior architecture and interior design reflect the outer layer
❖ Norms and values: Norm is the mutual sense a group has of what is "right" and "wrong"; it can be social control or formally written as laws; while values represent the idea of what is

"good" and "bad" (Trompenaars, 2003). A hotel should be set cultural norms of what behaviors are helpful, should be awarded to gain the customer satisfaction and what behaviors are harmful, should be discouraged.

❖ Basic assumptions (or implicit culture): pattern of taken-for-granted assumptions about how a given collection of people think, act and feel as they go about their daily affairs (Hall, 1976 and Weiermair, 2000)
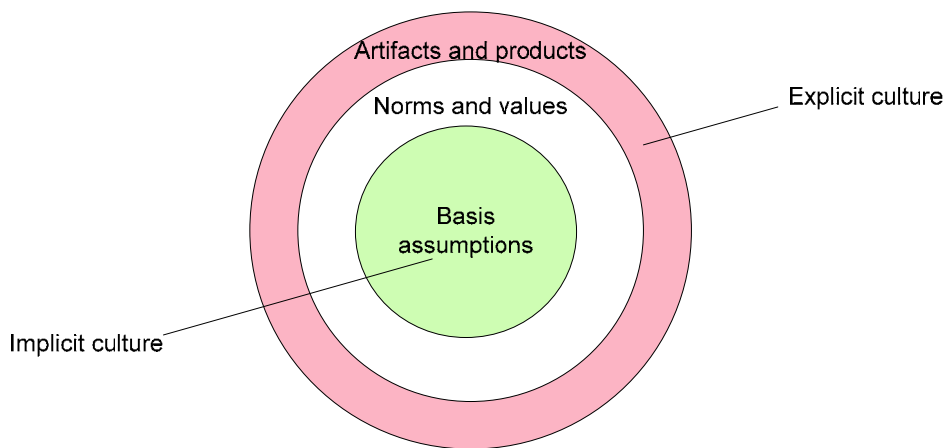
Figure 7: Levels of culture

(Source: Adapted from Trompenaars and Woolliams (2005))

4.3 Dimension of culture difference

There are many ways to divide the culture difference. In the hotel industry, the most popular divisions is based on power distance; individualist versus collectivist culture and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1980); or contextual variation (Hall, 1976).

❖ Power distance: According to Hofstede, 1980, power distance is the extent to which the less powerful members of a society expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. Most of Asian countries (for example, India, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand etc) are high in power distance (Mattila, 2000; Patterson et al. 2006). Whereas, in many Western countries (for example, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Scandinavian nations), the power distance is very low.

❖Individualist versus collectivist culture: Individualism and collectiveness refer to the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups (Huang et al. 1996). Loose ties between people characterize the individualist society such as the United States, United Kingdom, whereas strong and cohesive ties between group members are characteristics of the collectivist society (for example Japan, China). The person in the individualist society is more apt to seek control over her or his own fate while in the collectivist cultures everyone are expected to look after each other. Consequently a high context communication style is a feature of collectivist culture and the low context communication style is a feature belonging to the individualist society.

❖Uncertainty avoidance: "indicates the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations" (Hofstede 1980, p.45). The societies with the high uncertainty avoidance level (for example, Japan) attempt to minimize the possibility of happening uncertainty by adhering to strict laws and measures or establishing the close relationship with the service providers. Many non- Asian countries like Canada, the United States… are low uncertainty avoidance cultures.

❖Contextual variation: According to Hall, 1976, the countries have high context cultures such as Japan, the building of relationships and trust comes before business. Whereas, in low context countries such as Germany and Switzerland the opposite is true. Canada and the United States are considered as a relatively low context countries. The low context cultures emphasize explicit meaning; the meaning is taken from words. In these cultures the topic is handled straightforward. In the other side, the high context cultures pay attention on the context, in which the some information is provided and it need not to be verbalized (for example, the setting and the status of people involved). In low context cultures, individual achievement and individual welfare are the most important factors; whereas, in high context cultures, the welfare of the group and the maintaining of group harmony keep the top positions.

Japan
Arab Countries
Greece
Spain
Italy
England
France
North America
Scandinavian
countries
German-speaking
countries

Low context cultures

Figure 8: High/Low context by culture

(Source: Hall et al, 1976)

4.4 Impact of culture on customer satisfaction

According to Wiermair (2000), "cultural norms have an impact on both tourists' expectations and their perceptions of received service quality"; while expectations and perceptions are both important factors in the customer satisfaction (Parasuraman, 1995). In other words, the service of the hotel service provider is perceived in different ways by different people.

Also refer to the impact of culture on customer satisfaction, Schmitt&Pan, 1994 reported that in Asia, the key ingredient of good service seems to be personal attention or customization and not the efficiency and time savings that appear so highly valued in the Western countries. This service concept is a significant element of overall quality to the Asian consumer. For example, in many Asian luxury hotels, a bellboy accompanies guests to the departing car and waits until the guests have departed. But this situation almost does not appear in the Western countries.

Another research of Riddle, 1992 suggested that hotel guests from cultures preferring low-context communication tend to focus their evaluations on task completion and efficient delivery, whereas guests from cultures that prefer high context communication tend to focus on the quality of the interactions between employees and guests. In large power distance cultures, the lower

status of service employee requires them to provide guests with a high level of service. In those countries, even guests of low-cost services expect a relatively high level of service (Schmitt & Pan, 1994). In other words, Asian guests tend to have higher expectations for the interaction quality in a service encounter. Conversely, Western guests are more likely to focus on the outcome rather than the process component of the service delivery

➢ **Impact of culture on consumer complaint behavior**

Guests in different cultures have different types of complaint behaviors and intentions (Liu and McClure, 2001). One side, customer complaints express the dissatisfaction of customers. In another side, they are the opportunities for managers more understand their guests' desires and find the direct methods to improve the service quality so that they can maintain the competitive advantage. The marketers also agree that guests who were encouraged to complain reported greater increase in satisfaction and service evaluation compared to guests who were not explicitly asked to complain. Therefore, it is important for managers to have knowledge about the impact of culture on consumer complaint behavior.

Jacoby and Jaccard (1981) defined consumer complaint behavior as an action taken by an individual which involves communicating something negative regarding a product or service either to the firm manufacturing or marketing that product or service or to some third-party organizational entity.

Singh (1988) reported that there were three kinds of complaint behavior:

- Voice responses (seeking redress from the seller, the service provider or no action)
- Private responses (word- of- mouth communication)
- Third party responses (implementing legal action)

It is not good for the service providers when dissatisfied guests keep in mind the complaint and only warn to their family, friends about the weakness of the service instead of commenting to service providers. In these cases, service providers are impossible to respond to their guests. Moreover, the service providers do not know the weakness in their service which leads to unimproved service quality. Besides, in the serious incident that a guest could not tolerate, he or she will induce to complain (Nyer, 2002).

Villarreal Camacho (1983) reported that consumers did not complain because they were not familiar with the complaint channels or complaint system. Some research suggested that the high educated people more often complain than the low educated one because they are more familiar with the complaining channel (Han et al, 1975 and Landon, 1977), except the case of Mexican-American in which the complainants seem have a lower educated level (Babacus et al, 1991). However, in any situations, a hotel should provide guests with accessible complaint channels as a way to encourage them to complain.

Guests in different culture have different complaining behaviors. According to Becker, 2000, Americans enjoy complaining about dissatisfying service. They feel that they have responsibility to complain and it will help to improve the service quality. In other low power distance countries or in the low context cultures, guests also more often complain to the hotel or the third party than the high power distance countries or the high context cultures.

In other research, Patterson et al, 2006 stated that Asian guests were less complains for fear of "losing face". They responded less actively to dissatisfaction than Western guests. They often use word-of-mouth communication or boycotts rather than contact with the hotel management or authorities. This has happened frequently in the high power distance countries or high context cultures because they want to maintain the group harmony and to protect the service providers avoid of "loosing face". Moreover, in those countries, the cooperation, reasonableness and understanding of others are the most admired virtues (Gannon 2001). Therefore, the consumers in those countries often suppress their true feeling for the goodness of the group or for a relationship. It is revealed clearly in Japan, the country has group conformity pressure and the concept of "losing face" (Lee, 1990). In addition, when the guests from higher power status complaint about the service quality, they prefer to deal the problem with employees who also have high status or position (Patterson, 2006). Consequently, in Asian countries, the low level of expressed customer satisfaction should not be considered equal to the high level of customer satisfaction.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH GOAL AND METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, it reports the reason for study of the subject and the research goals. As described before, the research objective is to evaluate the customer satisfaction and service quality in the hotel industry. Besides, this session provides the methodology of research which includes approach of the research, how data has been collected, who is the participants and construction of survey questionnaire.

5.1 Research goals

The primary objective of the study is to develop a reliable statistic profile of the hotel sectors and the attitude of the hotel guests. It contains the overview of the industry, the analysis of demand and supply characteristics and the quality attributes. The previous chapters have set an overview about the hotel industry; its history and its growth trend; different research about impact of culture and gender on customer satisfaction. They also provide three models which are SERVQUAL, HOLSERV and LODGING QUALITY INDEX to analysis the customer satisfaction and service quality in the hotel industry. Besides, intensive questionnaire interviews aim to collect the statistic data about customer expectations, customer perceptions based on different cultures and gender.

There are different hotels for different people. Even you are rich or poor, you live in a big city or on a mountain, you are a man or a woman; you can find a hotel suitable to your demand and your budget. After a slowdown period, hotel industry has shown the growth again from 2009 together with the various demands of customers. To satisfy those demands, there is more and more requirement for the hotel professionals. The study about hotel industry was chosen, because:

❖ Hotel is an service sector which is very popular nowadays
❖ There is lack of standard about difference between men and women in their expectation to the hotel.
❖ There is lack of best practices and identity about the impact of culture on the customer satisfaction in the hotel services.

The aim of this study is to gain an insight into the hotel industry and the quality attributes of hotel services in different continents. They include:

- ❖   Gain understanding of the scope of hotel industry
- ❖   Identification of profile of critical service quality components in the hotel services
- ❖   What are the expectations of customers to the hotel services?
- ❖   How do customers evaluate the services?
- ❖   How to measure the customer satisfaction and service quality in the hotel industry?
- ❖   Are there differences in perception and expectation of male and female customers from different cultural background to the hotel services?
- ❖   Will guests continue to choose the hotel or introduce to others if they are satisfied with the service quality of the hotel? And
- ❖   How can the hoteliers improve the customer satisfaction to gain the excellent service?

5.2 Overview of approach

A questionnaire for the hotel guests has been developed based on the components of the service quality in the hotel industry classified in the LODGING QUALITY INDEX. Moreover, it is supported by the marketing elements.

SERQUAL (Parasuraman, 1988) approach has been the most popular method for choosing because it is quite complete measure for all the service industry. It covers all ten factors of quality of the hotel services. However, it still has some weakness as referred in chapter 2; consequently, it is not a perfect choice.

HOLSERV scale (Hunter and Gerbing, 1982; Parasuraman 1991) is a simpler method compared to SERQUAL. HOLSERV is a customized version of SERQUAL; it is one column questionnaire so it is easier to answer each question. However, to develop this questionnaire, it will be such a long survey that it is difficult to collect a large number of respondents if HOLSERV is applied.

Therefore, the LODGING QUALITY INDEX (Getty and Thompson, 1994) has been chosen to develop the questionnaire. LODGING QUALITY INDEX not only solved some weakness of SERQUAL but also very specific for the hotel industry.

The questionnaire is a complete survey of 23 questions covering mostly hotel services, offerings for men and women together and separately. At the end of questionnaire are the questions about demographic profile.

5.3 Data collection

The technical specification of the survey is presented in the table 7.

Table 7: Characteristic of survey

Characteristics	Survey
Sample size	114
Method of information gathering	Personal interview Online survey

In order to identify important quality attributes for the hotel services and the different expectation of male and female customers from different continents, a total 114 respondents were asked to participate. The respondents are got to know from outside of the hotels, at the airport, in the city centers and online survey. Most of respondents have had experiences with the hotel services, they would provide an evaluable respond regarding to the services. Moreover, the response rate was quite high, so this survey method was chosen.

The participants answered the questionnaire. Then the results was gathered from the all survey and computed for interpretation.

5.4 Managerial implications

It is suggested from the results that the service quality is a dynamic concept that should be continuously monitored because some changes always exist over the time.

There are some service quality components which have low scores corresponding to their importance. However, this should be re-measured to capture the changes customer expectation and perception in different period.

5.5 Construction of survey questionnaire

The survey (see Appendix 5) consists of 23 questions collecting the information about hotel choice, expectations and attitudes of guests, the different expectation between female and male guests; and the last 4 questions collecting demography information.

Hotel staying purpose

1. On which occasions do you need to stay in a hotel?

    This question figures out the purpose for what a guest choose a hotel for staying. It also helps hotel managers have an idea how hotel rooms should be designed, facilitated for the targeting group.

Hotel pattern

2. Which type of hotels do you most likely stay in?

    This question is to see what kind of hotel the customers choose regularly

Hotel selection/promotion

3. Which sources help you choose a hotel?(please choose all that apply)

    This is to explore what are the channels the respondents use when choosing a hotel. This is to give an idea for the hotel managers how to market their service

4. Which factors do you need to consider when you choose a hotel?

    This question is to identify the most important factor respondents consider when they choose a hotel for staying.

5. Choose top 3 offers of your interest

    The hotel offering/promotion is very important to attract customers. By knowing what offers are preferred by customers, hotel can develop the effective promotion strategy.

Hotel services and customer expectations

6. Please rate the following hotel service by its importance

7. Which other properties in a hotel are you also interested in? (Please check all that apply)

8. Which additional services do you expect from a hotel?

    Questions 6, 7 and 8 are to identify what services, properties customers expect from hotels and the importance level of those services. From understanding the customer expectation, hoteliers/hotel managers can give the better decision in improving the service quality.

9. Which facilities do you need in the bathroom of a hotel?

10. Refer to bathroom amenities; do you think if it is necessary?

The aim of questions 9 and 10 also is to identify customer expectation but they are more specific on the bathroom amenities in the hotels.

Customer expectation of a specific kind of guests (family)

11. When you travel with your family, you prefer (please check all that apply)

Question 11 is used to suggest services that hotels should provide to guests when they are family.

Customer expectation of specific gender

12. Do you prefer a separate package for your gender?

Question 12 suggests if the men and women like a specific package for them.

13. According to you, a package for women should include: (please check all that apply)

(This question is only for female customers)

14. According to you, a package for men should include: (please check all that apply)

(This question is only for male customers)

Different guests have different demands. Questions 13 and 14 are to explore the expectation of female and male customers separately. Understand the different desire between men and women, hoteliers / hotel managers can improve customer satisfaction as well as better strategy when the hotels focus on the targeting guests.

Three questions 12, 13, 14 combined with all others questions can draw a quite complete picture about the differences of gender and culture in customer evaluations and expectations.

Customer satisfaction in service failure

15. Which kinds of issues that have you encountered in terms of hotel services? (please check all that apply)

This question is to understand which problems respondents often meet when they stayed in the hotels. From its result, hoteliers/hotel managers can identify what the popular problems are so that they have suitable method to improve it.

16.   When a problem happened, you perceived (please check all that apply)

The way that service provider solve problem is important to the customer evaluation about the service quality. This question is to find out those ways.

17.   How long did you have to wait for the responses from the hotel about your problem?

This question is to reveal the time that customer have to wait to receive the response for their problem.

18.   In your experience, which should be improved? (please check all that apply)

Answering this question, respondents directly suggest what hotels should improve in all areas from facilities, design to service providers' profession

Customer loyalty

19.   If you are satisfied with the hotel service, you will (please check all that apply)

This question explore the action and the level of loyalty of customers that hotels can gain if they satisfy customers

Survey group demographic

20.   What is your continent of origin?

21.   What is your gender?

22.   What is your employment status?

23.   Your age is

The above four questions are to report the demographic profile. This would be very useful for analyze the differences in selecting hotels, offerings, services and the expectation of different gender according to their demographic pattern.

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Analysis of the findings is generated from the results of survey which conducted in person or through the online survey. They would deliver the following objectives:

- Understanding the important factors based on which guests choose and evaluate the hotel services
- Understand the customer loyalty
- Reveal the difference between male and female customers in service evaluation and desire.
- The impact of culture on customer satisfaction in Europe and Asia

6.1 Demographic profile

In the research, the female hotel guests are account for 58%; while 42% is the portion of the female guests. Because 100% of the respondents have experiences of staying in the hotel, this ratio cannot lead to the conclusion that there are more men staying in the hotels than women.
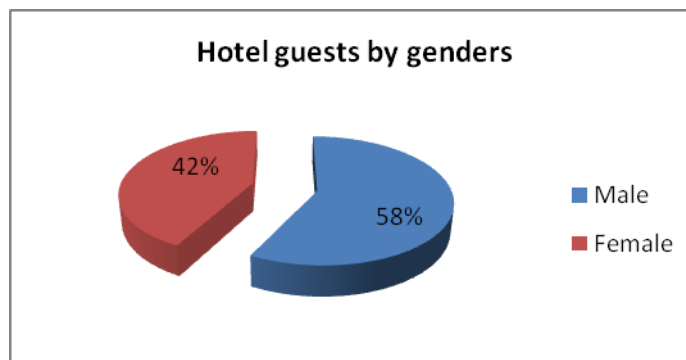

Figure 9: Hotel guests by genders

Guests of the hotel come from all over the world. However, due to the restriction of collecting the respondents, the Asian hotel guests are account for around 40%; 55% of guests are from Europe; only 3% and 1% of them come from America and Africa correlatively. This ratio also suggests that the European and Asian travel more than the people come from other continents. Therefore, they more often stay in the hotels.
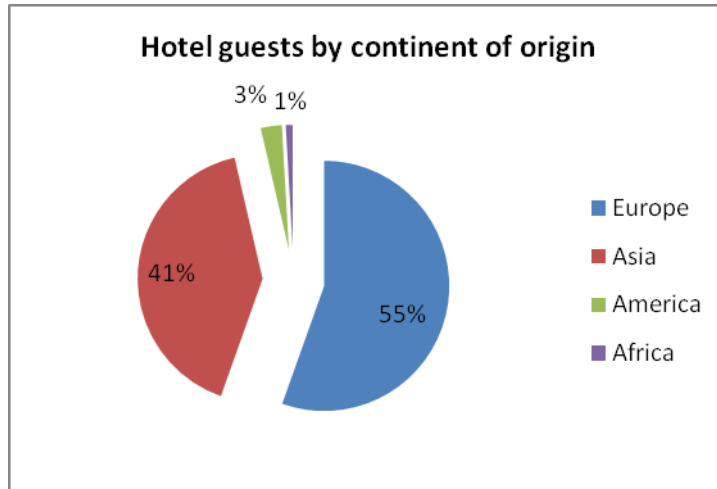
Figure 10: Hotel guests by continent of origin

In the research, more than 60% of guests are students, 32% of them employ full- time, 5% of guests work part-time and only 1% is unemployed. It seems to be that the students have more free time compared to other people so they take advantage to travel more. For this reason, most of guests who stay in hotels are students. The guests who have full-time jobs also spend their time in hotels but for both vacation and business reasons. Consequently, they are account for 1/3 of all guests in hotels.
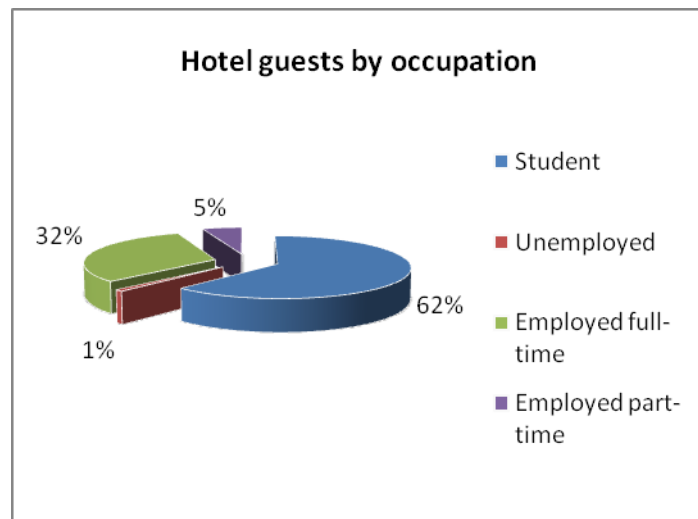

Figure 11: Hotel guests by occupation

Most of the guests are 35 years old or younger, accounts for 95%. Among them, 63% are from 20 to 25 years old and 32% of guests are from 26 to 35 years old. Only 3% of guests' age are in

the range of 36 to 45 and 2% of guests are more than 45 years old. This is correlative with their occupation.
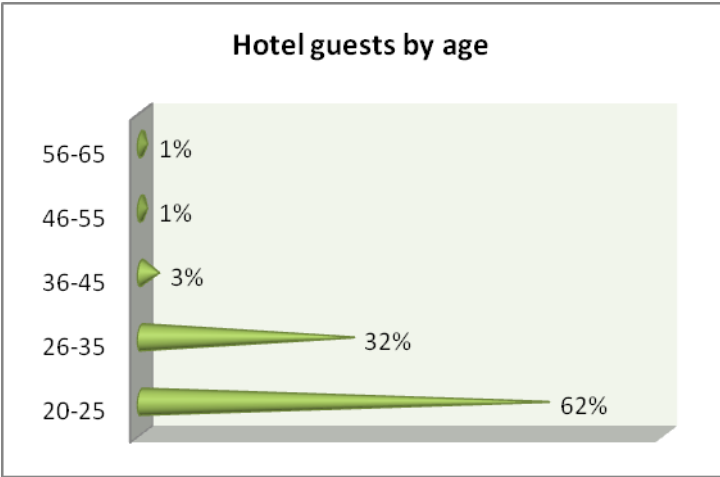

Figure 12: Hotel guests by age

6.2 Hotel staying purpose

Around 90% of reasons that people stay in the hotel is for vacation, among them 94% are female and 83% are male guests. The second one is business purpose. In this sector, the male guests are 20% more than the female. In other words, hoteliers should pay attention on this high ratio to have more proper orients when building the business plan so that they can gain more customer satisfaction. Only few per cent of guests stay in the hotels for daily life, temporary living place or other which includes sport competition and spa treatments. Except for vacation and spa treatments; in other sections, majority of guests are men.
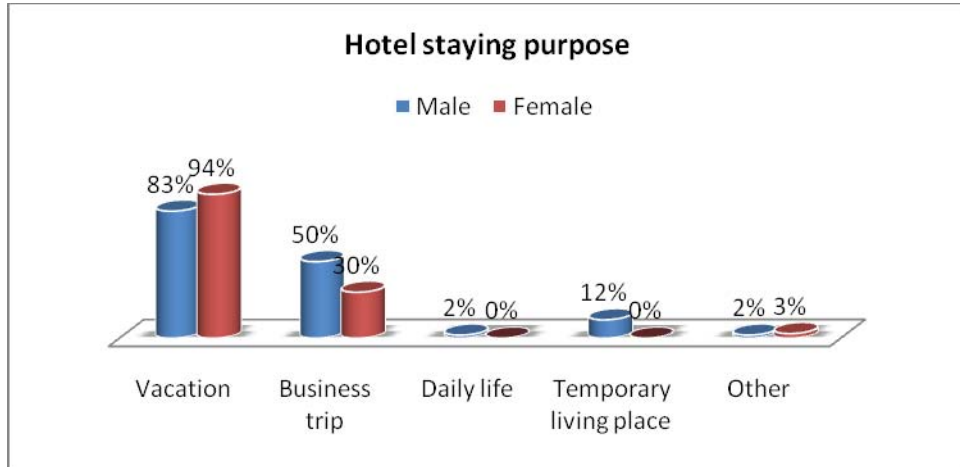
Figure 13: Hotel staying purpose

❖ Hotel staying purpose in Europe and Asia

Both male and female European seems to be stay in the hotel on vacation more than the Asian. Vice versa, the female and male Asian use hotels for the business purpose almost 30% more than guests coming from Europe. For other reasons, Asian also keeps the bigger percentage comparing to European.
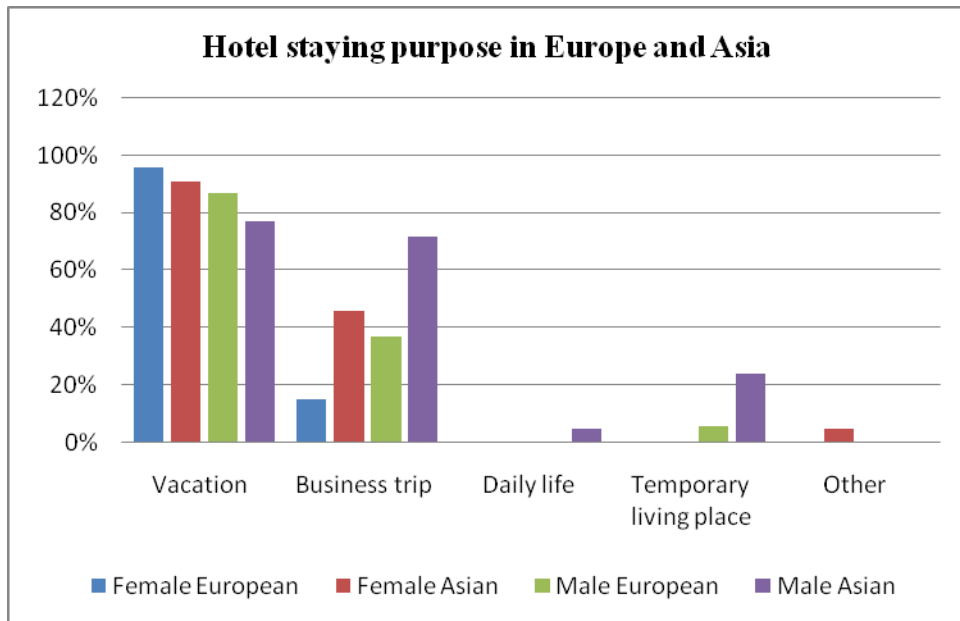

Figure 14: Hotel staying purpose in Europe and Asia

6.3 Hotel pattern

More than 40% of guests choose three star hotels for staying. The second popular choice is four star hotels or budget hotels/hostels. Due to the high price, 17% of people choose five star hotels. Two other alternatives accounts for only few per cent.

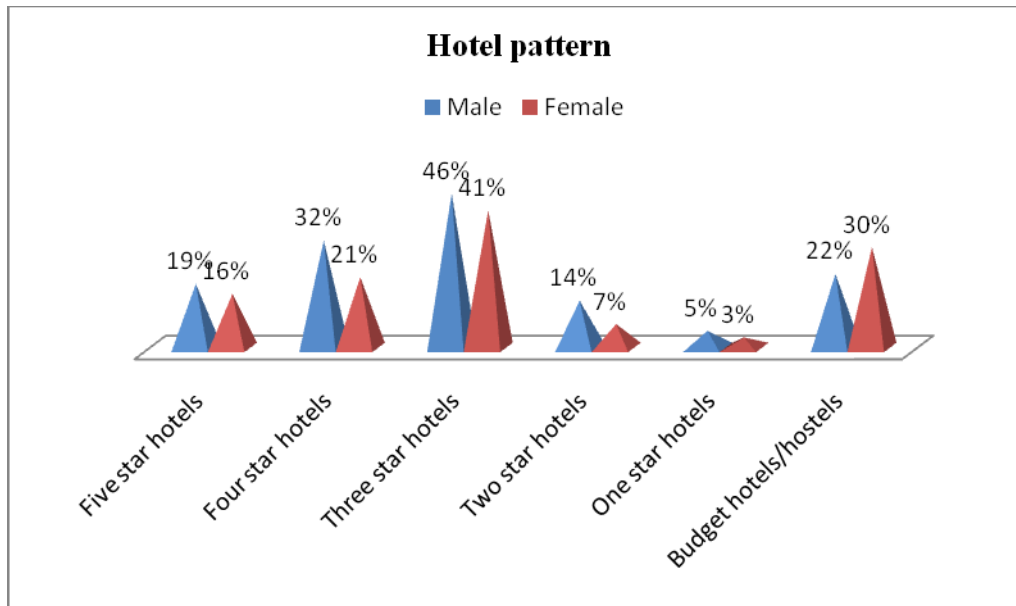In all over the world, except in budget hotels/hostels, majority of guest of other hotel pattern are men.

Figure 15: Hotel pattern

❖ Hotel pattern in Europe and Asia

The male Asian often chooses three star hotels while the female Asian prefers the budget hotels/hostels. Differently, male European wants to stay in four star hotels most and female European like staying in three star hotels. One-star hotels are chosen least in both continents, for both men and women.
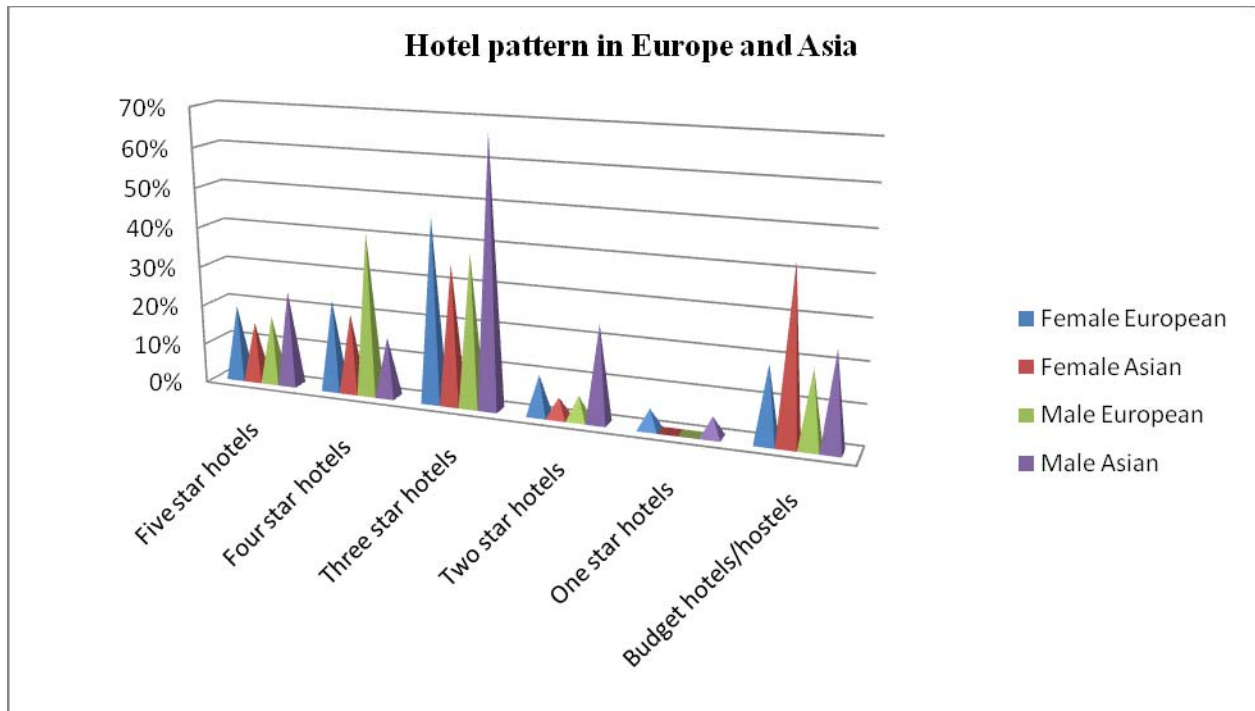
Figure 16: Hotel pattern in Europe and Asia

6.4 Hotel selection/promotion

❖ Sources of choice

91% of people search internet to find the hotels, 29% and 26% of them find out the hotels they want to book from word of mouth or travel agencies correctively. Radio and television are almost not useful promotion channels. 17% men and 12% women read newspapers to discover the information about hotels.
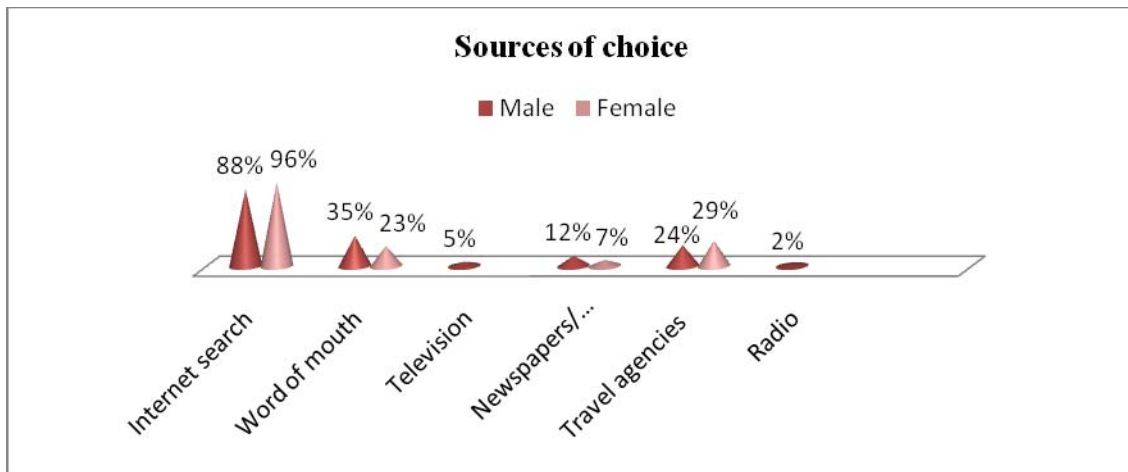

Figure 17: Sources of choice

❖ Sources of choice in Europe and Asia

100% female Asian finds out the hotels from internet; while to female European, it is 91%. None of them use television or radio to search hotels' information. The second choice for male European and Asian guests is word of mouth while to European women, it is the word of mouth with 41%.
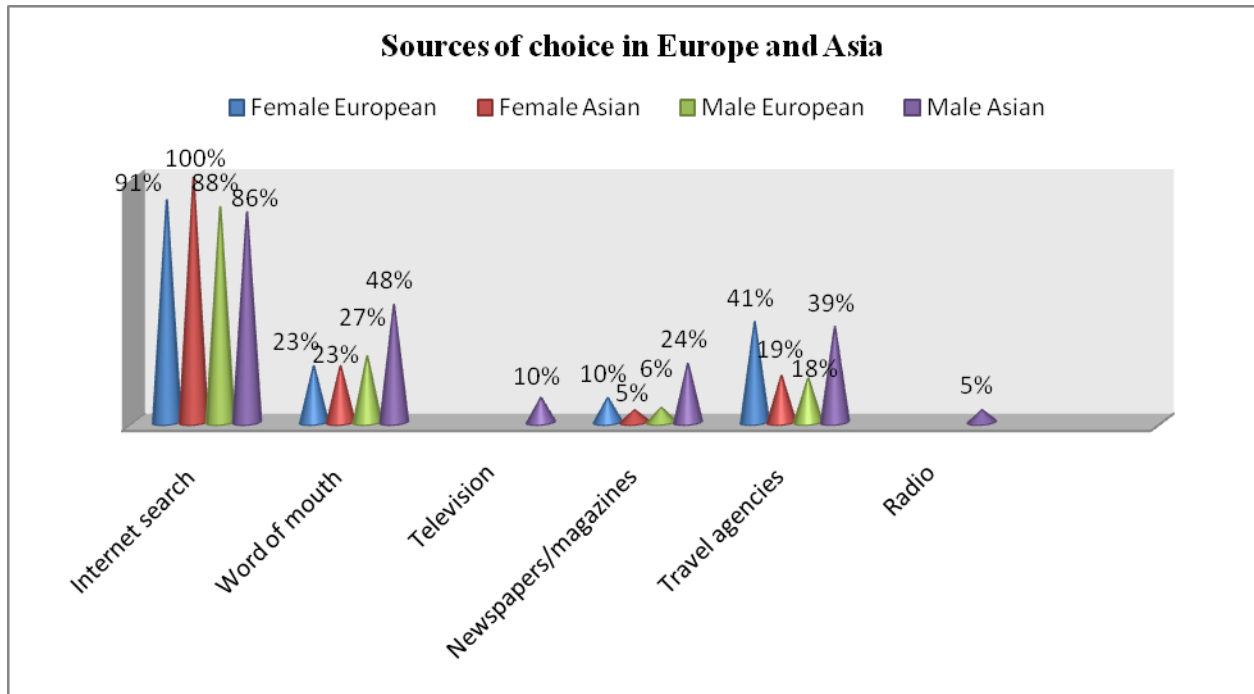

Figure 18: Sources of choice in Europe and Asia

❖ Important level of input factors

Above all, price is the most important factor that 71% of both female and male customers in all over the world consider when they book a hotel. Around 50% consider position as very important or somewhat important factor to consider. Hotel Rating System in websites as well as concrete evidences such as customer review/testimonials and certificates are only the somewhat important factors according to approximate 47% of guests. Those percentage only change very few when comparing the customers consideration in both Europe and Asia, to both male and female.
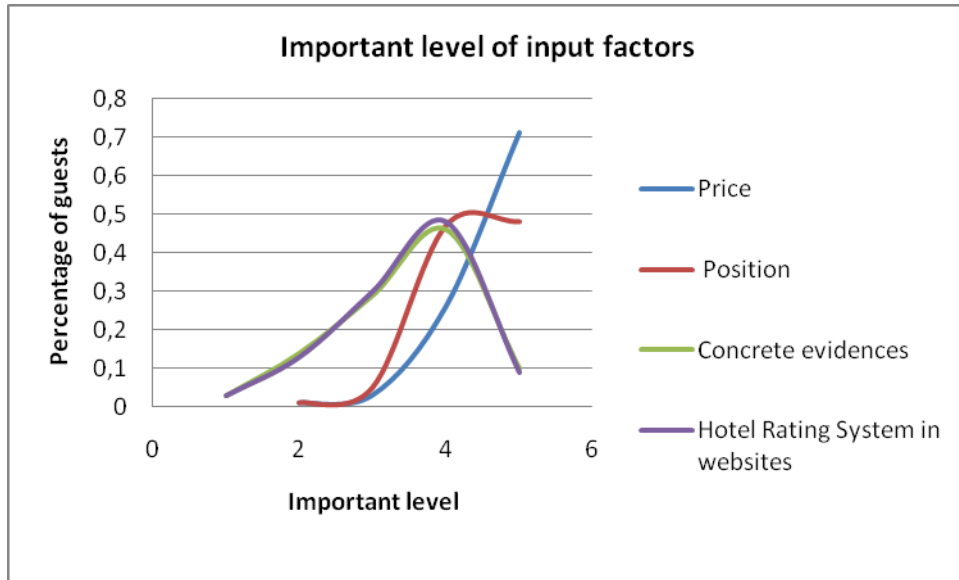
Figure 19: Important level of input factors

❖ Preferable offers

More than 80% of both male and female guests prefer discounted price package. The second and third preferable offers are hotel staying package and reduced services for a lower rate package with 53% and 41% correctively. Reduced services for a lower rate packages are the choice of 46% men that is 10% more than female guests' choice. Both genders have the same point of view in choosing "bring a friend for free" package, which accounts for 38%. Deal for frequent guest package is the last choice of female with 12% while with male customers, the last favorable offer is deal for introducing others, also with 12%. This number suggests that women seem to introduce to others about good service than men while men are more loyalty with the favorite hotel than women. This suggestion will be checked in the survey about customer loyalty below.
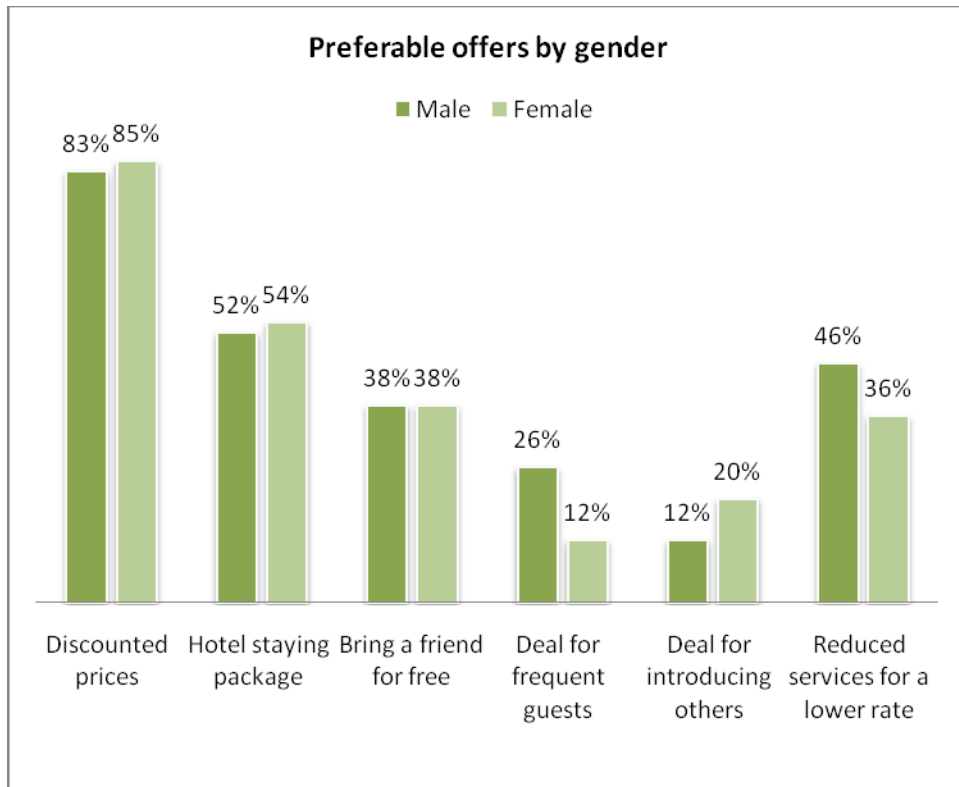
Figure 20: Preferable offers by gender

The difference between Asia and Europe in preferable offers is quite big, especially in choices of hotel staying package and deal for introducing others with approximately 20% gap. Both continents like the discounted price package most but the second preferable offer is not the same. Hotel staying package is satisfying European guests with 61% while "bring a friend for free" package is more attractive to Asian guests with 45%. The graph shows that two packages including "bring a friend for free" or "deal for introducing others" are more favorable in Asia than Europe, which seems to coincide with the comment in chapter 4: "The person in the individualist society is more apt to seek control over her or his own fate while in the collectivist cultures everyone are expected to look after each other".
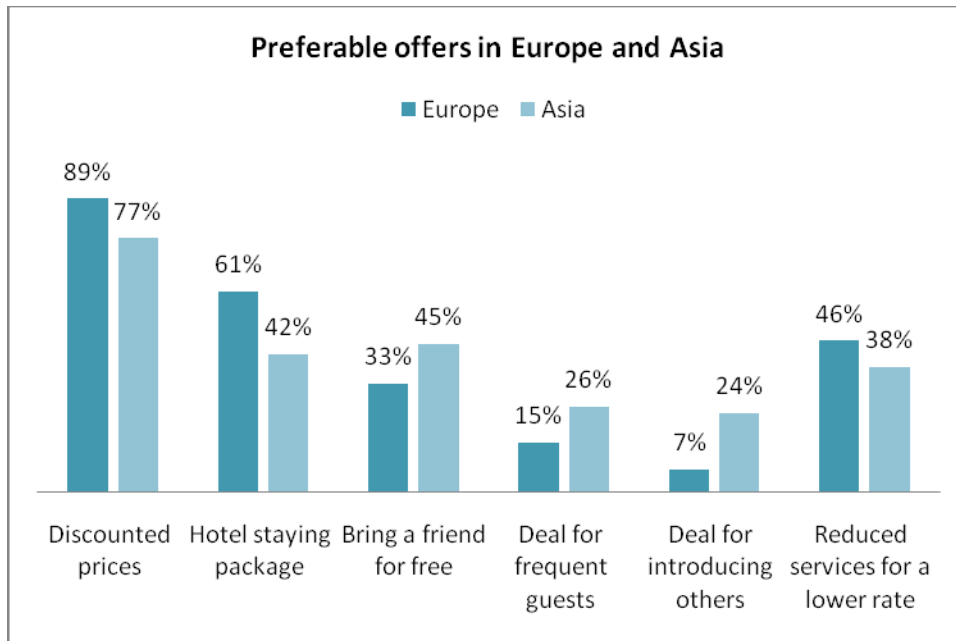
Figure 21: Preferable offers in Europe and Asia

6.5 Hotel services and customer expectations

When being asked about the important level of hotel services, both men and women agree that "the atmosphere in the room", "discipline and the cleanness of hotel staff" and "quality of service, food& beverage in restaurant/ bar" are very important factors; the other factors such as service completion, "a quick check in/check-out procedure" and "new & modern facilities of the room" are only somewhat important. More than 40% of female guests consider room services and friendly staff very important while to male guest they are only somewhat important. To "a friendly welcome on arrival" factor, 40% of female consider it somewhat important while with 39% of male guests, it is neutral factor.

It is coincident with the comment in chapter 3, women care about others emotion than men, so they pay attention to friendly staff, warmly welcome and atmosphere in the room more than men. Women also pay attention on "discipline and the cleanness of hotel staff" and "quality of service, food& beverage in restaurant/ bar" more than men because to them, they are very essential service and need to be done well. On the other hand, about technology, men pay more attention than women. 56% men want "new & modern facilities of the room" while with women, it is 44%.

Table 8: Important levels of hotel service by gender

Male/Female	Very important (%)	Somewhat important (%)	Neutral (%)	Somewhat unimportant (%)	Very unimportant (%)
Room services	35/**48**	**40**/35	16/14	8/5	2/0
Service completion	19/29	**46/38**	33/25	4/9	0/0
Friendly staff	27/**42**	**50**/35	21/22	4/3	0/0
A friendly welcome on arrival	24/20	29/**40**	**39**/37	9/5	2/0
A quick check- in/ out procedure	30/18	**41/66**	25/16	4/3	2/0
The atmosphere in your room	**44/64**	42/37	10/0	5/0	0/0
New and modern facilities of the room	27/31	**56/44**	12/24	5/3	2/0
Discipline and the cleanness of hotel staff	**49/58**	38/36	10/5	4/3	2/0
Quality of service, food& beverage in restaurant/ bar	**44/49**	36/25	15/20	7/7	4/0

There are not so much different between European and Asian people in evaluation of important level of the service quality; except a friendly welcome on arrival. To this factor, with 38% of European, it is somewhat important while it is only neutral to 40% Asian. However, European seem to pay more attention on the "discipline and the cleanness of hotel staff" when 62% of them consider it very important while only around 40% of Asian agree with that idea. In other side, 60% of Asia quite desires "a quick check-in/check-out procedure" while to European, only 45%.

Table 9: Important levels of hotel service in Europe and Asia

Europe/Asia	Very important (%)	Somewhat important (%)	Neutral (%)	Somewhat unimportant (%)	Very unimportant (%)
Room services	**40/44**	33/**44**	19/12	10/3	0/0
Service completion	16/32	**39/46**	38/21	9/3	0/0
Friendly staff	**37/25**	**37/55**	23/21	5/0	0/0
A friendly welcome on arrival	21/24	**38/31**	34/**40**	7/7	2/0
A quick check- in/ out procedure	33/16	**45/60**	21/21	2/5	2/0
The atmosphere in your room	**48/56**	43/38	7/5	4/3	0/0
New and modern facilities of the room	36/21	**43/56**	19/17	2/7	2/0
Discipline and the cleanness of hotel staff	**62/42**	29/49	5/7	4/3	2/0
Quality of service, food& beverage in restaurant/ bar	**48/41**	29/37	12/21	9/3	4/0

Favorable services in the hotel are also the topic that needs to be considered by hoteliers. Responding to the survey, more than 50% of guests prefer to have swimming pool and restaurant & bar in the hotel. While only few people prefer casino, beauty salon and souvenir shop. The survey also reports that gyms are favorable by 40% of male and 32% of female guests. However, until now, there are not so much hotels having gym in hotel area; while souvenir shops which are not attractive to guests often find inside hotels, especially the three star and above hotels. 13% of men want a casino in the hotel while women do not like it. In the opposite side, 18% ladies desire a beauty salon while only 5% of men agree with this idea. Opinion about restaurant & bar is also different between men and women. Men like it almost 20% more than women.
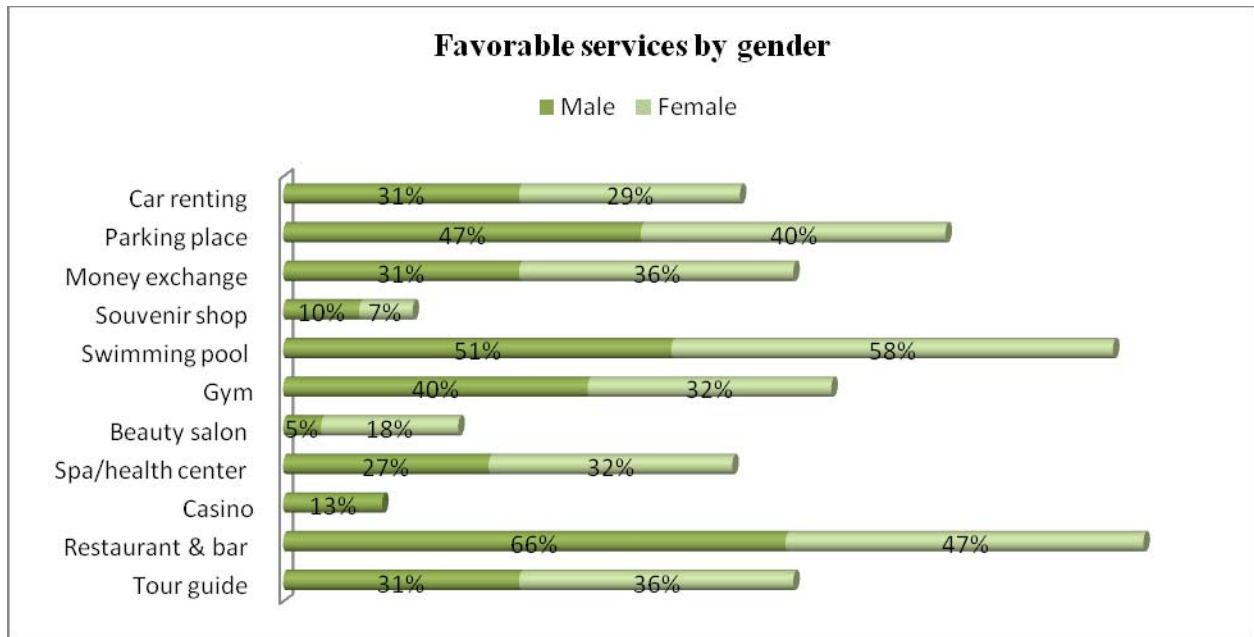
Figure 22: Favorable services by gender

European and Asian have different point of view about parking place, swimming pool, casino, tour-guide and money exchange available in the hotel. People in Europe care about parking place two time more than Asian. None of Asian wants a casino inside the hotel while 14% of European likes it. Vice versa, Asian guests prefer swimming pool, tour-guide and money exchange from 15% to 20% more than European guests.
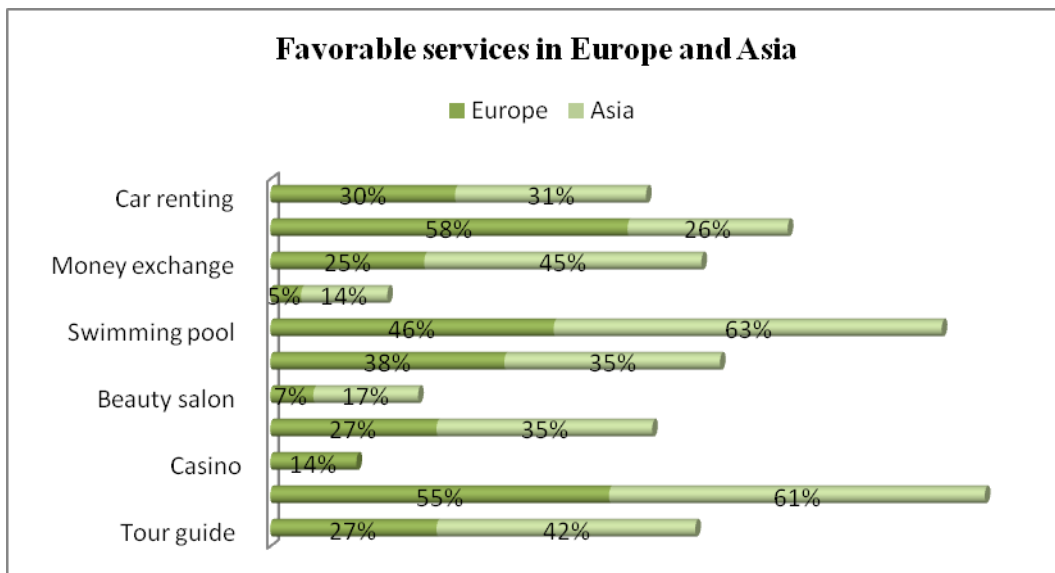

Figure 23: Favorable services in Europe and Asia

Beside above services, "alternative dietary meal", "tea/coffee maker in room" and "late check-out" are also expected by more than 40% female customers while male customer prefer the wake-up service. Women are reported to take care about their meal than men. 46% and 41% of female guests quite expect alternative dietary meal and tea/coffee maker in room correlatively; even they are very expected by around 20% of female. Over all, late check-out is expected most by both male and female. The most unexpected thing is the gift from the hotel in the anniversary which is voted by 46% of male and 36% female.

Male/Female	Very expected (%)	Somewhat expected (%)	Neutral (%)	Somewhat unexpected (%)	Very unexpected (%)
One gift/ congratulation on your birthday/wedding anniversary	7/14	17/19	**33 /33**	18 /19	28/17
Different rooms for different styles	5/19	37/28	**40 /30**	10 /23	10/3
Alternative dietary meal	14/19	25/**46**	**43** /12	12 /21	9/5
Tea/coffee maker in room	13/21	34/**41**	**36** /23	12 /16	7/0
Plant/flower in room	7/21	28/23	**47 /48**	12 /10	9/0
Wake up service	24 /23	**30**/23	29 /**46**	13 /10	7/0
Breakfast in bed	5 /14	30/20	**40 /44**	15 /22	12/3
Late check out	27 /39	**42/46**	23/ 16	8 /0	2/0

When comparing between Europe and Asia, the attitude of guests are quite different. Except wake-up service and late check-out, Asian expect from other service more than European. Especially, a gift/ congratulation on the birthday/wedding anniversary is very unexpected by 37% of European while only extremely few Asian guests totally do not expect it.

Europe/Asia	Very expected (%)	Somewhat expected (%)	Neutral (%)	Somewhat unexpected (%)	Very unexpected (%)
One gift/ congratulation on your birthday/wedding anniversary	2/22	12/ 27	27/**41**	24/10	**37**/3
Different rooms for different styles	9/15	23/**46**	**39**/34	23/8	9/0
Alternative dietary meal	14/20	**33/39**	31/31	17/10	7/3
Tea/coffee maker in room	9/29	28/**46**	**43**/15	15/12	7/0
Plant/flower in room	9/19	19/38	**53/40**	12/5	9/0
Wake up service	32/14	28/26	**33/40**	5/19	4/3
Breakfast in bed	11/5	21/35	**41/44**	21/16	9/3
Late check out	35/28	**45/45**	15/24	4/5	2/0

Bathroom facilities are indispensable in a hotel. Until now, when guests stay in a hotel, they only often receive the shampoo, body lotion and toothpaste. But according to the research, the most wanted thing is hair dryer. Hair dryer is chosen by 92% of female and 67% of male. Shampoo & conditioner for different type of hair keep the second position in the most wanted list. Body lotion is also chosen by guests. But more than the normal things that we often see in the hotels' bathrooms, the others such as music, comb also is favorable by 30% to 40% of guests. Besides, grab bars are also required by disabled people. When equipping the hotels' bathrooms, hoteliers should pay attention on them to gain more customer satisfaction.

The most different choices between men and women are hair dryer and big towers in the bathroom. While 92% and 74% female prefer hair dryer and big tower correlatively, 67% and 49% male want to equip them in the bathroom of the hotel. However, big percentage of both men and women choose them which should be noticed by hoteliers.
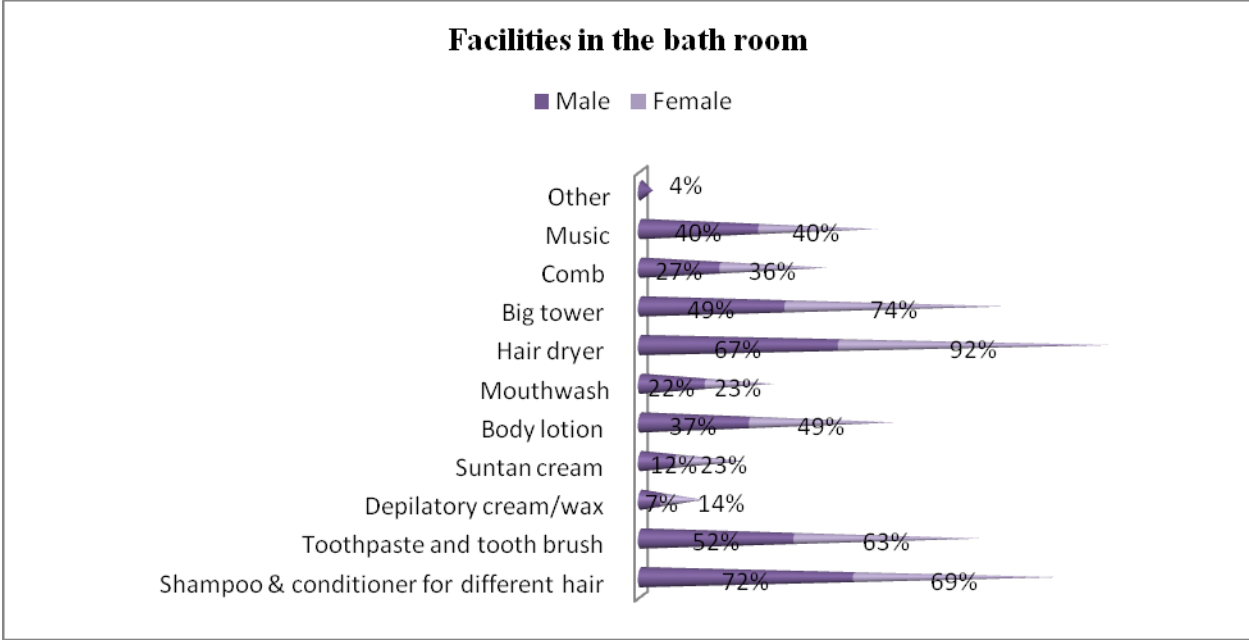
Facilities in the bath room

■ Male ■ Female

Facility	Male	Female
Other		4%
Music	40%	40%
Comb	27%	36%
Big tower	49%	74%
Hair dryer	67%	92%
Mouthwash	22%	23%
Body lotion	37%	49%
Suntan cream	12%	23%
Depilatory cream/wax	7%	14%
Toothpaste and tooth brush	52%	63%
Shampoo & conditioner for different hair	72%	69%

Figure 24: Facilities in the bathroom

The most different point of view of Asian and Europe is about comb. 59% of Asian wants to have a comb in the bathroom, while only 10% of European wants it. And except for the body lotion, other facilities are more favorable to Asian than European.
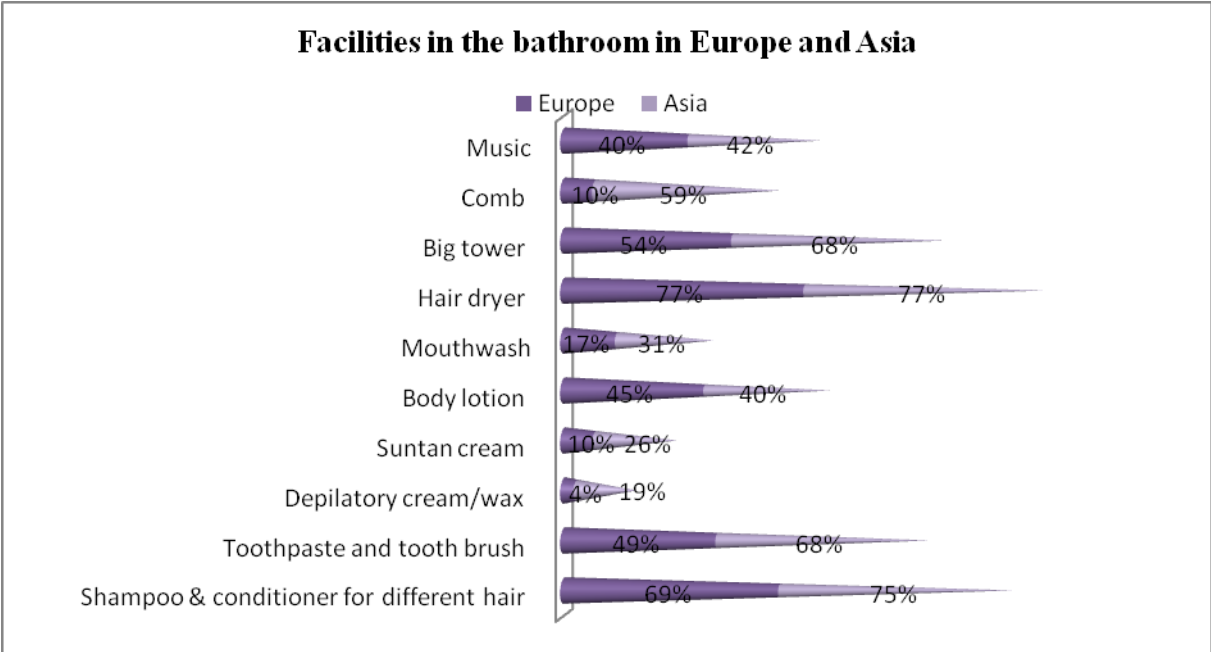
Facilities in the bathroom in Europe and Asia

■ Europe ■ Asia

Facility	Europe	Asia
Music	40%	42%
Comb	10%	59%
Big tower	54%	68%
Hair dryer	77%	77%
Mouthwash	17%	31%
Body lotion	45%	40%
Suntan cream	10%	26%
Depilatory cream/wax	4%	19%
Toothpaste and tooth brush	49%	68%
Shampoo & conditioner for different hair	69%	75%

Figure 25: Facilities in the bathroom in Europe and Asia

Beside the common things in the bathroom, some special facilities are also referred in the research. Around 50% of both men and women prefer their specific thing for their own gender such as intimate cleanser for women and razor & shaving cream for men. From 40% to 70% of guests feel Jacuzzi shower, cream, tower warming drawer, big illuminated mirror, radiant floor heating and sleeper are necessary in the bathroom. Among them slipper almost is not seen in any hotel, now. Especially, the big illuminate mirror is the favorite thing of 56% women and 27% men. Most of things are favorable by women more than men, except tower warming drawer. But this report also proves that all the things in the list are interested by guests. Therefore, they should be present in the bathrooms of hotels.

Male/Female	Very necessary (%)	Somewhat necessary (%)	Neutral (%)	Somewhat unnecessary (%)	Very unnecessary (%)
Jacuzzi shower inside the room	14/10	28/ 31	30 /38	22/ 17	9 /7
Hand/ foot/body/face cream	5/18	38/40	32 /29	14/ 11	14 /5
Nail-scissor and nail-file	4/12	26/25	43 /37	23/ 14	7 /14
Tower warming drawer	21/12	25/35	28 /48	20/ 5	9 /3
Big illuminated mirror	27/56	34/29	29 /12	10/ 5	2/ 0
Radiant floor heating	9 /19	33/31	44 /35	11/ 14	6 /3
Bath pillow	9 /12	23/21	45 /45	17/ 17	9 /7
Slipper	22 /30	32/39	30 /25	12/ 7	7 /0
For women, intimate cleanser	20	32	34	12	5
For men, razor and shaving cream	14	35	23	21	9

There is not so much difference between Asia and Europe in those facilities. In general, Asia seems more exciting with those facilities than guests coming from Europe. It is a indicator for the Asian hoteliers.

Europe/Asia	Very necessary (%)	Somewhat necessary (%)	Neutral (%)	Somewhat unnecessary (%)	Very unnecessary (%)
Jacuzzi shower inside the room	7/20	28/**35**	**31/35**	26/10	11/3
Hand/ foot/body/face cream	7/17	**37/42**	32/31	14/7	12/5
Nail-scissor and nail-file	7/8	21/35	**42/40**	23/10	9/10
Tower warming drawer	14/24	23/**40**	**41**/31	17/5	7/3
Big illuminated mirror	**38/43**	34/29	23/20	6/10	2/0
Radiant floor heating	11/17	20/**48**	**49**/31	17/5	6/0
Bath pillow	9/12	14/34	**51/36**	19/15	9/5
Slipper	18/37	29/**39**	**37**/19	13/7	6/0
For women, intimate cleanser	6/20	18/31	**47/39**	22/12	10/0
For men, razor and shaving cream	14/18	**32/44**	24/26	24/13	8/0

6.6 Customer expectation of a specific kind of guests (family)

When travelling with family, both men and women prefer bed for kid & doll, refrigerator, baby sitting service, laundry service and free meal to ked up to age 12 most, with more than 40%. Those services are still not popular until now but hoteliers should pay more attention on it. Because nowadays, many families want to have holidays together, then they stay together in the hotel and they need the room suitable for the family. Also almost 40% of guests want to have a passport to the dinning for all family but only 16% of them want a passport for spa and more than 10% want a game website for kids.
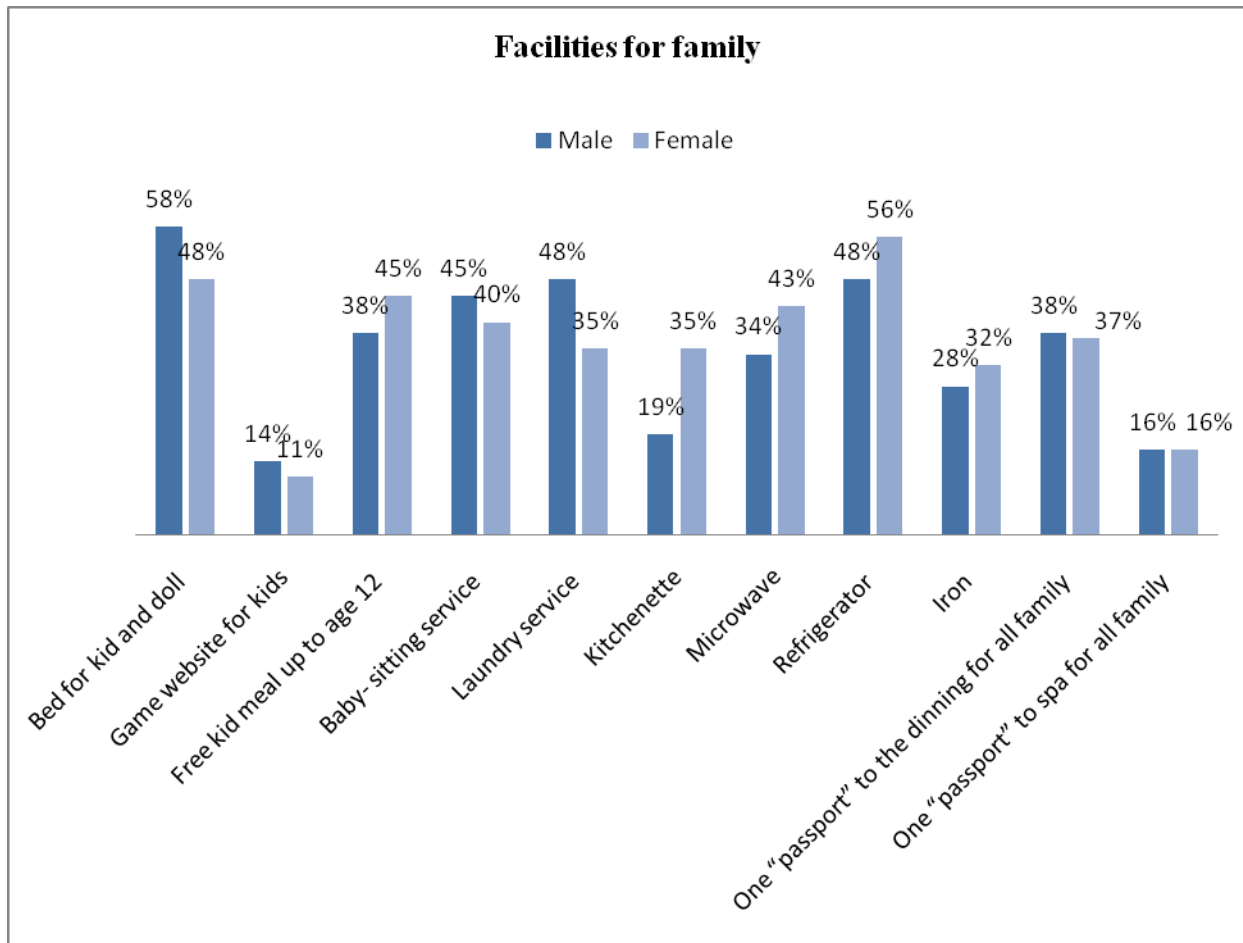
Figure 26: Facilities for family

Like other sectors, most of the service for the family is preferred by Asian more than European, especially to the need of microwave with 34% gap. To other services including free kid meal up to age 12, baby- sitting service, refrigerator and iron, the gap is around 20%.
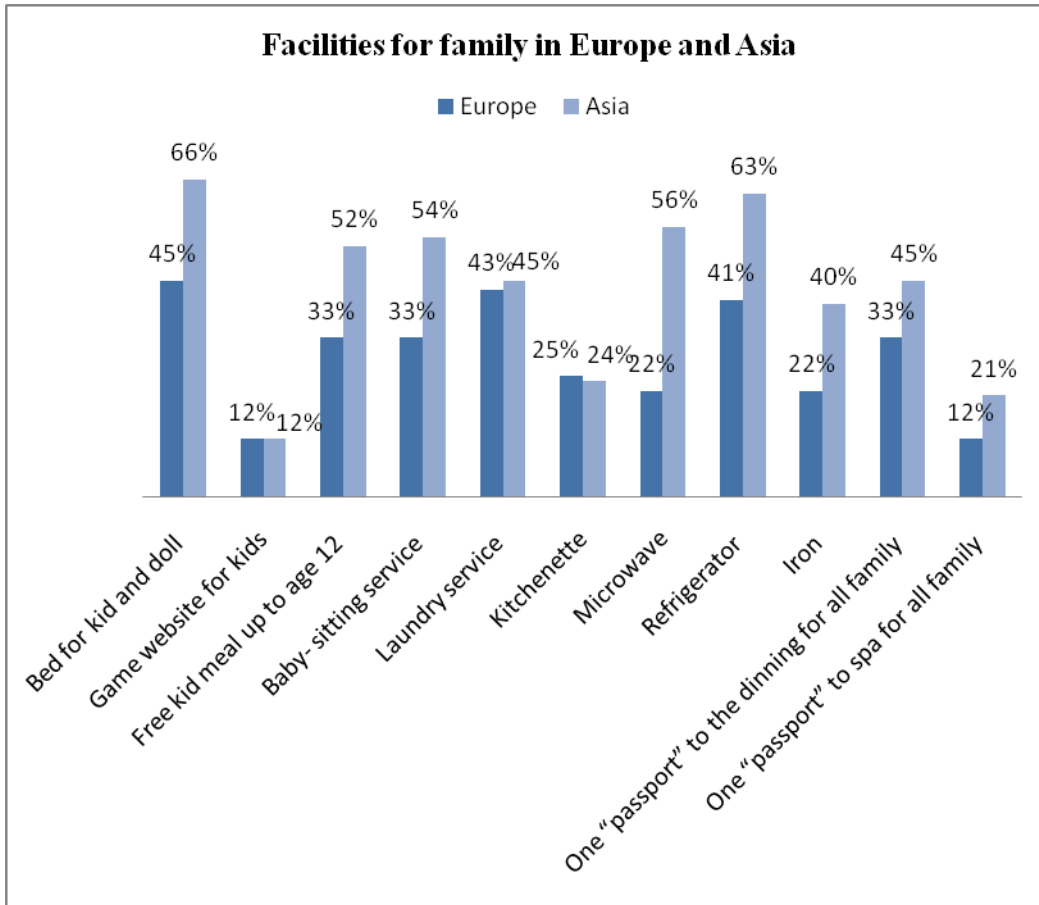
Figure 27: Facilities for family in Europe and Asia

6.7 Customer expectation of specific gender

47% of female and 19% of male when being asked, they prefer have a package for their specific gender.

According to around 50% of women in Europe and Asia, a package for women should include the shopping package, one "passport" to beauty salon/spa, king-size bed and make-up kit. Almost idea about the package is not very different between Asian and Europe, except "the room for only girls" factor. To 56% Asian, they want this idea but with female European, it is not important and only 9% of them like it.
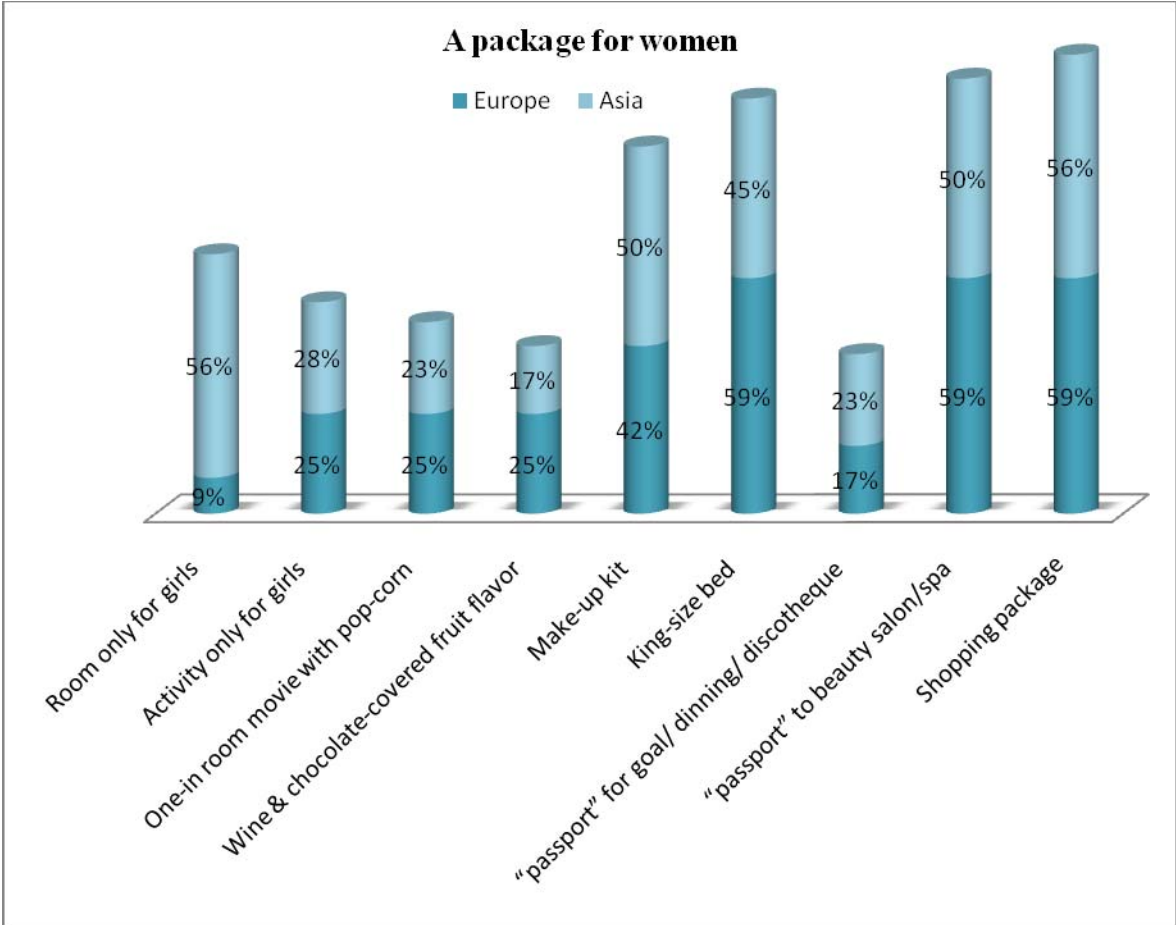
Figure 28: A package for women

Men have different idea about what should include in their package. 73% and 55% of European men like king-size bed and one "passport" for goal/ dinning/ discotheque correlatively while only 44% of Asian men like them. Room only for men and wine/ champagne are preferred by Asian male guests 20% more than European ones. Oppositely, 37% European men want a "passport for spa" while only 7% Asian men are eager with this idea.
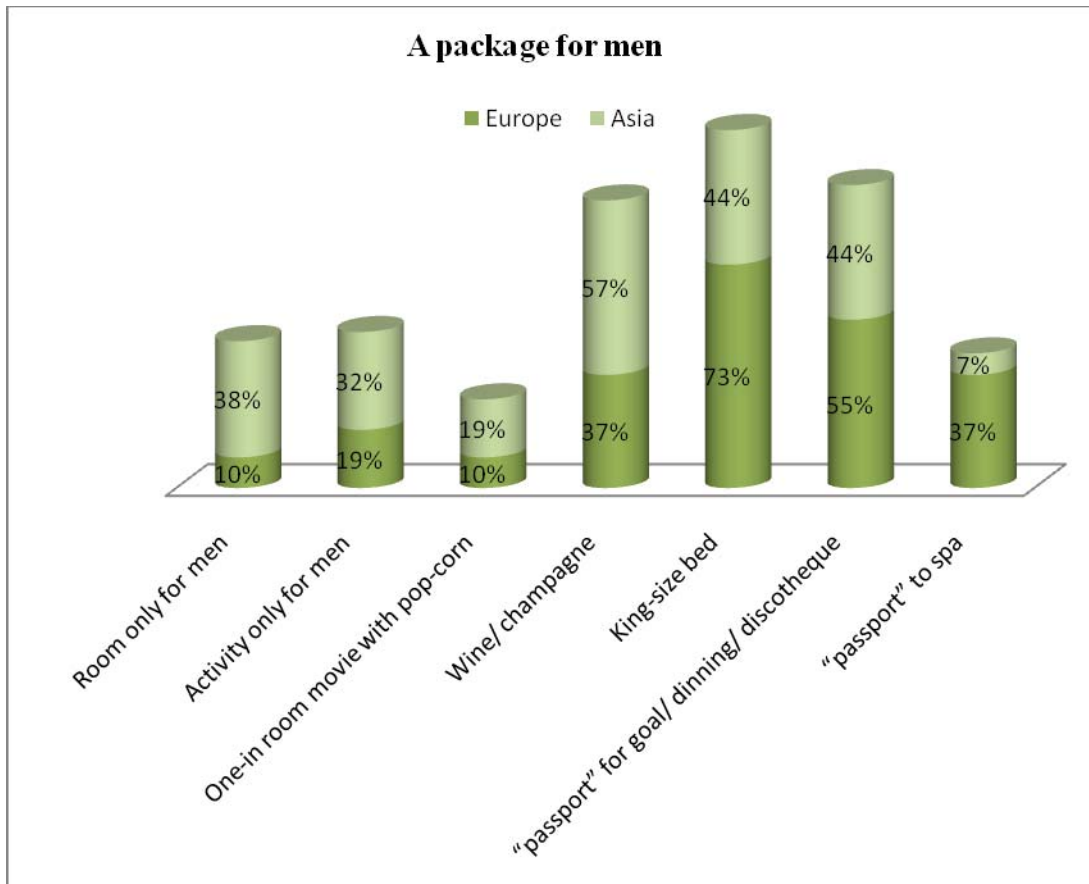
Figure 29: A package for men

6.8 Customer satisfaction in service failure

Both men and women face with some problems on hotel services. The most popular one is cleaning service which accounts for 65% to European and 58% to Asian. There are big differences about number of problems related to emotional expression of hotel staff, room facilities and responsiveness of hotel staff of Asian and European. 55%, 58% and 43% of Asian correlatively face with emotional expression of hotel staff, room facilities and responsiveness of hotel staff while those numbers are only 20%, 34% and 27% to the European. Around 10% of both continents have no problem with any hotel services. According to the survey, the disable people also face to the accessibility issues because only minority hotels in the world pay attention on it.
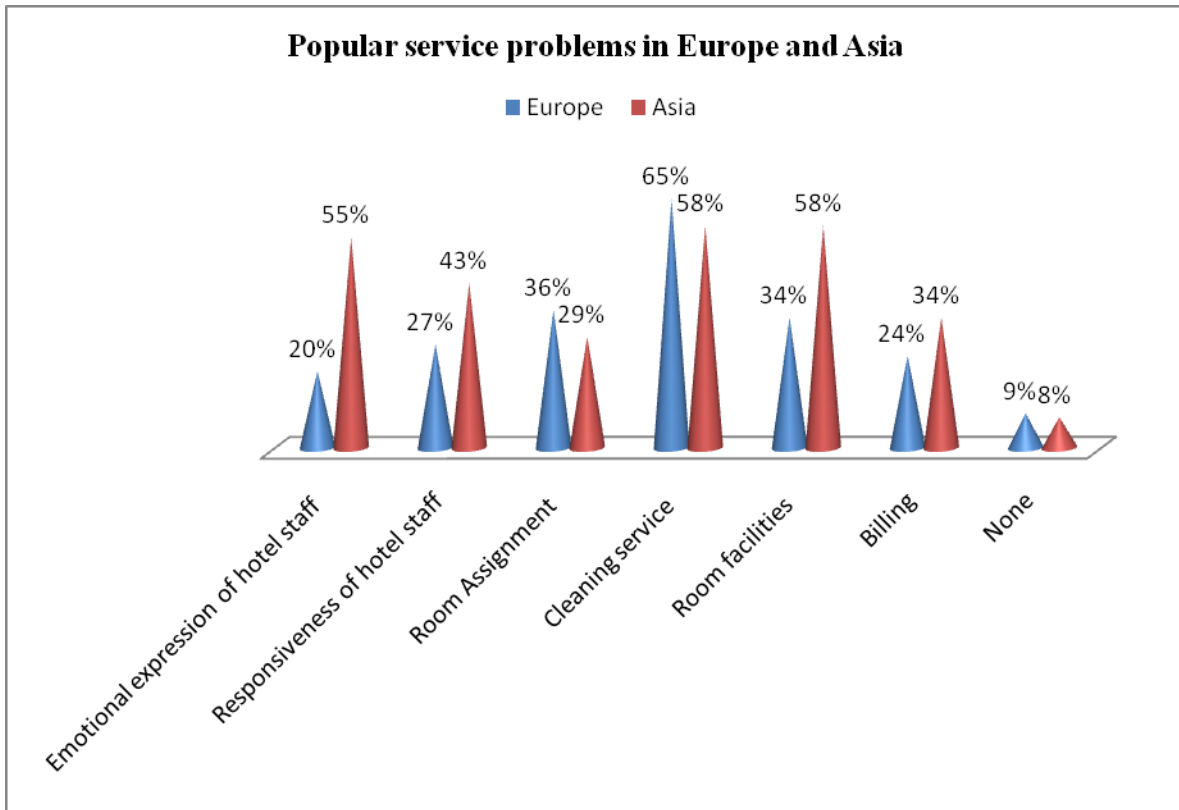
Figure 30: Popular service problems in Europe and Asia

When problem happened, most of customers receive the effort of hotel staffs and responsibility of managers. However, it is different between European and Asian. To European, 57% of them perceive the efforts of the hotel staffs in solving the problem while 80% of Asian perceives that. And the Asian managers also seem to be more available to solve problem than European ones. Around 16% of hotels staffs ignore the problems and 10% of guests are impossible to connect to hotel staffs to solve problems. It means around 26% of people having the problem with hotel which cannot be solved. 26% is a high percentage and it is not good to a service. Hoteliers should improve their staffs' skill in solving guests' problems.
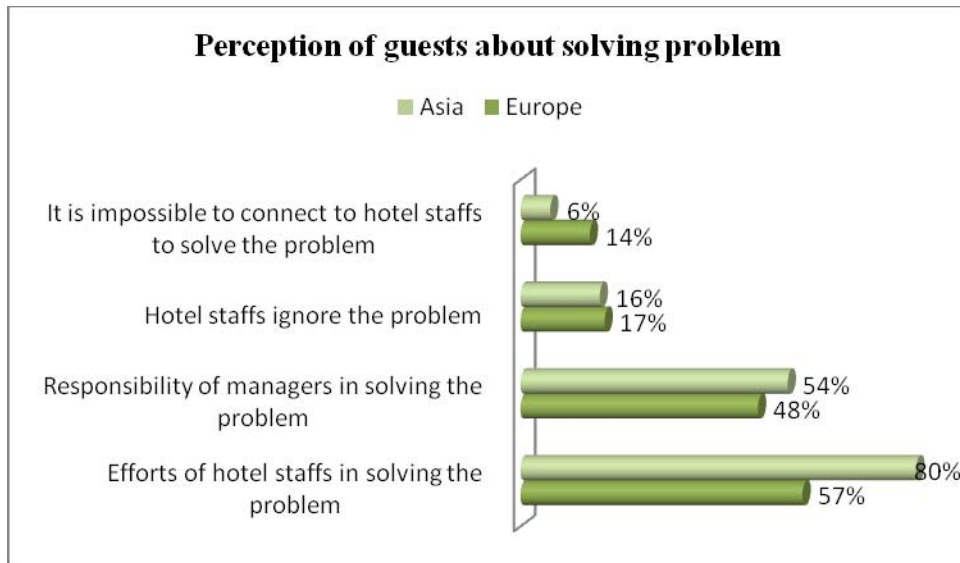
Figure 31: Perception of guests about solving problem

Refer to time for responses, 33% of European said that their problem was solved immediately, while this ratio is even higher to Asian guests, with 44%. 50% of European and 34% of Asian received the responses within 24hours and only 4% of European was responded more than 24 hours. However, in the bad cases, 13% of guests had to contact to the hotel again to talk about their problem and 6% of guests was not responded to their issues. If within 24 hour response time is acceptable, the European service provider seems to respond customers faster than Asian ones do.
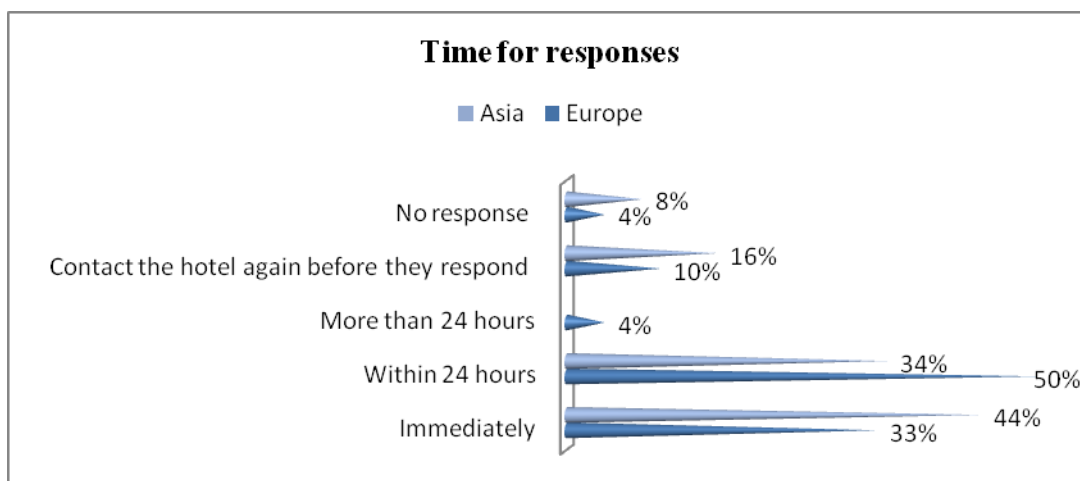

Figure 32: Time for responses

With the experiences in the hotels, more details about the services, speed of response to problems and availability of the staff are most expected by customers. Female guests seem to be more satisfied with the service quality than male ones because in most of the expectation on the improvement of the service, percentage of the male guests is higher than the female. It shows most clearly in expatiation on the increase of response speed and detailed information about the service where male customers account for 55% and 58% while the rates of female customers are 43% and 41% correlatively. In addition, the disable people suggested that the accessibility should be improved to be more continent for them in the use of hotel services.
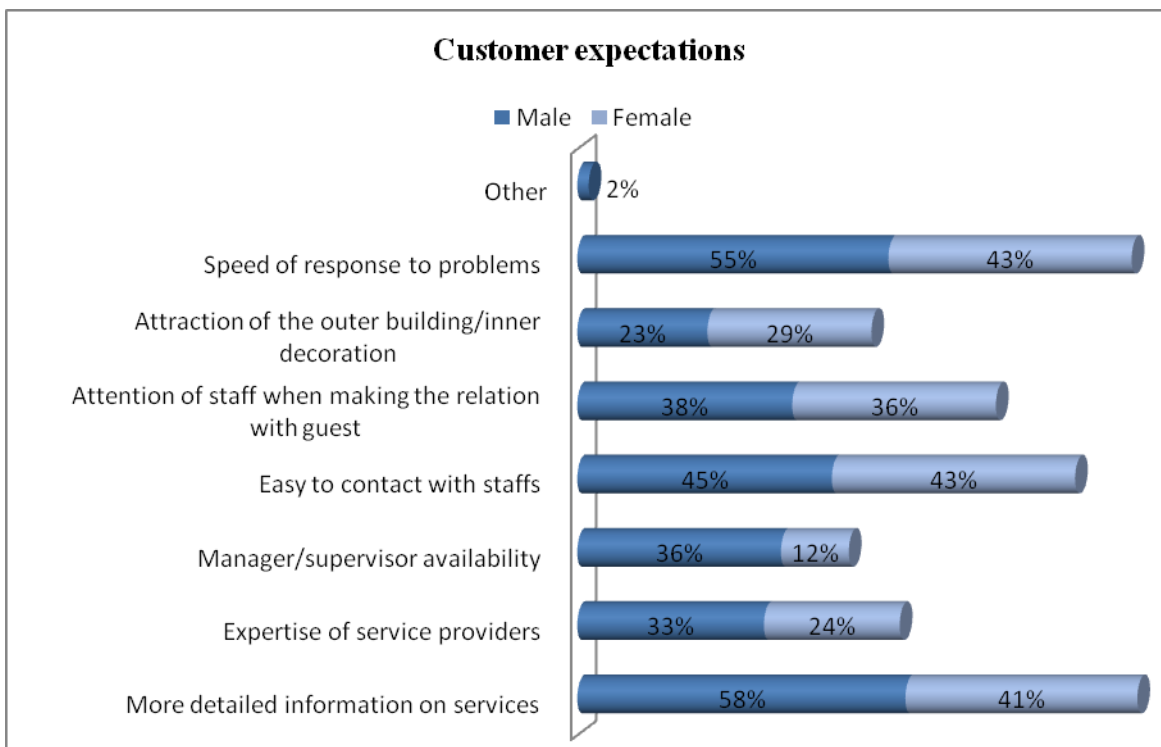

Figure 33: Customer expectations

In Europe and Asia, more than 50% customers suggest that hotel service providers should improve the speed of response to problems and provide more details about the services. 59% of Asian expects the availability of hotel staffs increase, while 33% of European wants it. Except "attention of staff when making the relation with guest" and "speed of response to problems of hotel services" suggestions, the Asian expect more the improvement of service quality than European. In other words, it seems that European is more satisfied with the service quality in the hotel industry than Asian.
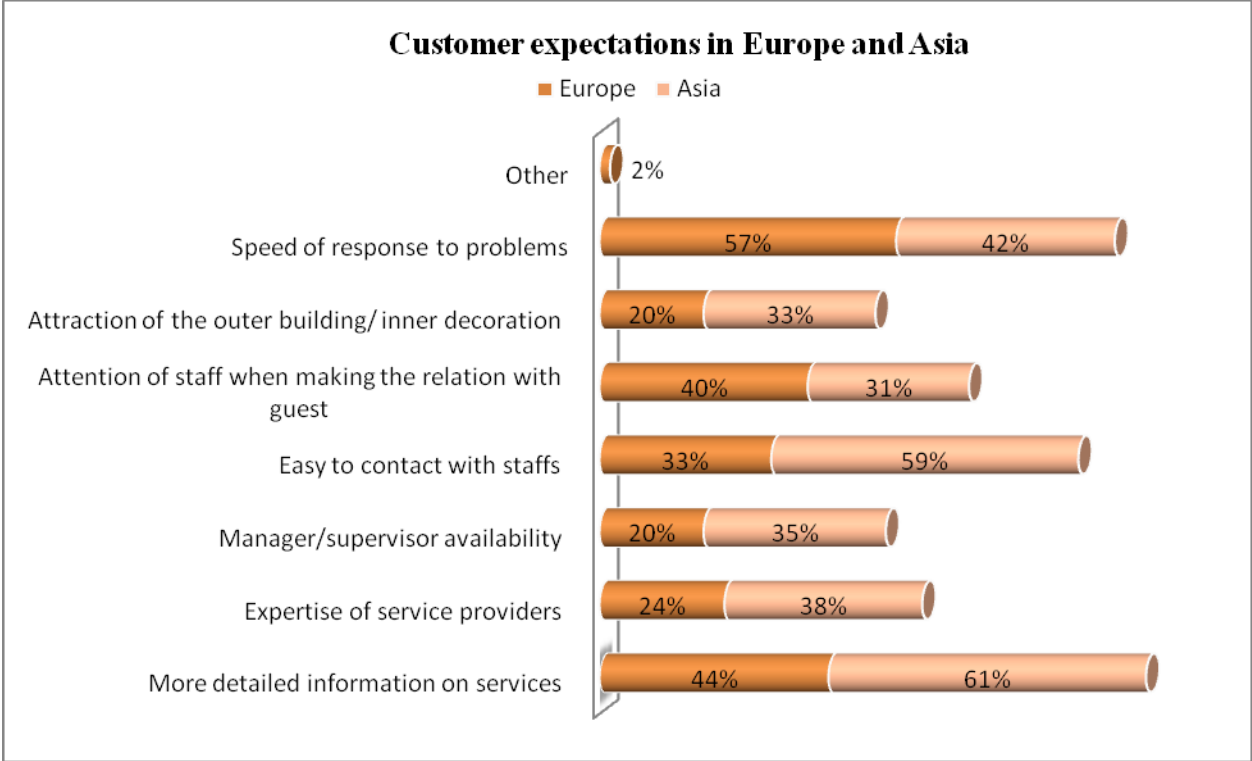
Figure 34: Customer expectations in Europe and Asia

6.9 Customer loyalty

To both men and women from all over the world, 79% of them choose to continue to select the hotel of which service quality they are satisfied with for the next time and also 79% of them tell others about this hotel. It is very important because in Asia almost 35% choose the hotel through word of mouth and in Europe more than 20% do the same. Moreover, the loyalty customers staying in the same hotel many times through their life are the great source of revenue for hotel.
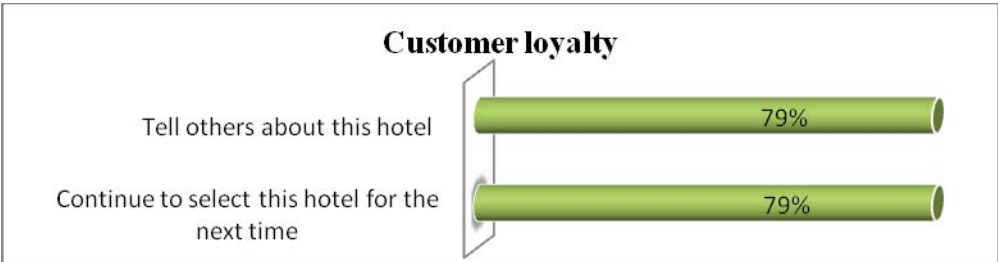

Figure 35: Customer loyalty

CONCLUSION

This section summaries the main findings of this study and draws out their implications for hotel industry. It aims to enrich our understanding about attribution and measuring methods of customer satisfaction and service quality of this industry. In addition, it emphasizes the impact of gender on the satisfaction of hotels' guests and the comparison of Asians' point of views about hotel services to Europeans' ones. Moreover, it provides some expectation of the disable people on the service quality of hotels. The framework of this study focuses on the customers aging from 20 to 45 years old.

➢ **Market trend**

The research has gained an insight in understanding the scope of hotel industry. In the analysis of the environment of hotel industry, some general trends have been found:

❖ After some downturn years, hotel market has recovered since 2009 in all over the world.
❖ Asian market which is called new growing market has gained impressive achievements. It is the reason why more and more new big hotel chains have appeared in Asian market and attracted the flow of investment from investors of this area as well as from other continents.
❖ In the past, people often spent long days in each vacation. But now, number of public holidays has increased in many countries which have lead to the rise of number of vacations as well as the decrease of length of each vacation.
❖ Guests are looking for the higher quality experiences and their demands are more various and complicated.

➢ **Industry insight**

Hotels appear all over the world with different types which are suitable with many kinds of budget. Some like to relax in five or four star hotels, others spend their nights in hostels or camping. Hotels are everywhere and for everyone.

In our framework, besides trying to understand what are the important quality attributes of the hotel industry and the market place; the questionnaire for the research which are

described in chapter 5 aims at discovering what customers expect from a hotel; how they perceive the quality attributes; and how gender and culture impact the customer satisfaction, especially in Europe and Asia.

❖ Hotel service attributes

Our research data proved that all five factors which are tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, confidence and communication directly influence the customer expectations and perceptions about service quality. However, due to limitation of time, it is impossible to cover all aspects of above defined attributes.

Characteristics based on LODGING QUALITY INDEX (Getty and Thompson, 1994) which are rated as important to more than 30% of customers are outlined and described below:

Table 10: Important hotel service attributes

Dimension	Scale item

Tangibility	➢ Promotion:
	    • Discounted price,
	    • Hotel staying package,
	    • Reduced service for lower rate,
	    • Bring friends for free
	    • Free kid meal up to age 12
	 ➢ Price and position
	 ➢ Employee: discipline& cleanness of hotel staff
	 ➢ Quality of the service, food & beverage in restaurant/bar
	 ➢ Breakfast in bed
	 ➢ Different room for different style
	 ➢ Atmosphere in the room
	 ➢ Attraction of outer building/inner decoration
	 ➢ Late check-out
	 ➢ Packages for women
	 ➢ Hotel facility:

- Restaurant & bar
- Parking place
- Gym
- Tour guide
- Spa/health center
- Car renting
- Money exchange
- Laundry service
- Baby sitting service
- Inside room:
  - Plant/flower in room
  - Tea/coffee maker in room
  - Bed for kids and dolls
  - Refrigerator
  - Microwave
  - Iron
  - Bathroom:
    - Hair dryer
    - Big tower
    - Shampoo & conditioner for different types of hair
    - Toothpaste & tooth brush
    - Body lotion
    - Music
    - Cream for face/body/foot/hand
    - Tower warming drawer
    - Big illuminated mirror
    - Radiant floor heating
    - Jacuzzi shower
    - Nail-scissor and nail-file
    - Slipper

	o Bath billow o Intimate cleanser for women and o Razor & shaving cream for men
Reliability	➢ My guest room was ready as promised ➢ New & modern facilities ➢ Service completion ➢ Billing issues
Responsiveness	➢ Speed of response to problem ➢ Detailed information on service ➢ Easy to contact with staff ➢ Quick check-in/ check-out procedure ➢ Manager responsibility in solving problem
Confidence	➢ Emotional expression of hotel staff (polite, respect) ➢ Expertise of service provider ➢ Accessibility for disable people
Communication	➢ Friendly staff ➢ Friendly welcome on arrival ➢ Attention of staff when making relation with guests ➢ Manager availability

Look through the table; it is easy to realize that some important things which are preferred by customers are still not common in the hotels nowadays. Therefore hoteliers should listen the voice of customers to improve the service quality so that they can gain more customer satisfaction.

❖ **Impact of gender on customer expectation and perception**

Men and women are different in the perception and expectations about hotel service quality. The differences are listed bellowed with the gap is around 10% or more.

Table 11: Differences between men and women expectations and perceptions

	Preferred by women	**Preferred more by men**
Hotel staying purpose	On vacation	• Business trip • Temporary living place
Hotel pattern	Budget hotels/hostels	• Four star hotels • Two star hotels
Sources of choice	Internet search	• Word of mouth
Preferable offers	Deal for introducing others	• Reduced services for a lower rate packages • Deal for frequent guest package
Hotel services	• Room services • Service completion • The atmosphere in the room • Discipline and the cleanness of hotel staff • One gift/ congratulation on your birthday/wedding anniversary • Alternative dietary meal • Tea/coffee maker in room • Plant/flower in room • Late check out	• Quick check-in/ check-out procedure • New and modern facilities of the room • Wake up service
Hotel facilities	• Swimming pool • Beauty salon	• Parking place • Gym • Casino • Restaurant & bar

Facilities in the bathroom	• Comb • Big tower • Hair dryer • Body lotion • Suntan cream • Depilatory cream/wax • Toothpaste & toothbrush • Jacuzzi shower • Hand/ foot/body/face cream • Nail-scissor and nail-file • Big illuminated mirror • Radiant floor heating • Slipper • For women, intimate cleanser	For men, razor and shaving cream
Facilities for family	• Free kid meal up to age 12 • Kitchenette • Microwave • Refrigerator	• Bed for kid and doll • Laundry service
Package for specific gender	Package for women: • Room for only girls • Make-up kit • King-size bed • "Passport" to beauty salon/spa • shopping package	Package for men: • Wine/champagne • King-size bed • "Passport" for goal/ dinning/ discotheque
Factors should be improved		• Speed of response to problems • Manager availability

		• Expertise of service providers • More detailed information on service

According to the research, women's demands on service quality as well as hotel facilities are more than men's. As a woman, she cares about service and facilities for the beauty, cooking and preserve food than the other gender does. However, the research also reported that men are less satisfied than women about the service quality provided now. That is the reason why they expect more services to be improved. It is surprising that men found the hotel through word of mouth more than women and women use internet for searching the hotel more than men. Catching those differences is a good way for hoteliers to discover the new packages which are more interesting for specific gender; therefore increase the customer satisfaction.

❖ **Difference point of view of Asian and European guests**

Through the research, the big differences between customer expectations and perceptions of Asian and European guests are revealed clearly. In most of factors, Asian guests require and expect more than European ones. Asian guests also prefer to the services or facilities which is not common in the majority of the hotels. It is proved more clearly when at the end of the survey Asian guest suggests the improvement for almost indicators. It can be generalized that Asian feel less satisfied about the current hotel services provided compared to the European.

❖ **Hotel service quality for the disable people**

This research also indicates the expectations of disable people on the service quality of the hotel industry. Until now, only minority of hotel pay attention on the service for disable people. For this reason, it is suggested that the hoteliers should make all the hotel services more convenient for the disable people so that they can use all the services provided by hotels such as grab bar in the bathroom and accessibility to the hotel and/or to the room.

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APPENDIX 1: 22 statements of the SERVQUAL instrument

(Source: Servequal: A multiple- item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality, A.Parasuraman, Valarie A. Zeithaml and Leonard L.Berry 1988)

DIRECTIONS**:** This survey deals with your opinions of——— services. Please show the extent to which you think firms offering ———— services should possess the features described by each statement. Do this by picking one of the seven numbers next to each statement. If you strongly agree that these firms should possess a feature, circle the number 7. If you strongly disagree that these firms should possess a feature, circle 1. If your feelings are not strong, circle one of the numbers in the middle. There are no right or wrong answers. All we are interested in is a number that best shows you expectations about firms offering ———— services.

E1. They should have up-to-date equipment.

E2. Their physical facilities should be visually appealing.

E3. Their employees should be well dressed and appear neat.

E4. The appearance of the physical facilities of these firms should be in keeping with the type of services provided.

E5. When these firms promise to do something by a certain time, they should do so.

E6. When customers have problems, these firms should be sympathetic and reassuring.

E7. These firms should be dependable.

E8. They should provide their services at the time they promise to do so.

E9. They should keep their records accurately.

E10. They shouldn't be expected to tell customers exactly when services will be performed. (-)

E11. It is not realistic for customers to expect prompt service from employees of these firms. (-)

E12. Their employees don't always have to be willing to help customers. (-)

E13. It is okay if they are too busy to respond to customer requests promptly. (-)

E14. Customers should be able to trust employees of these firms.

E15. Customers should be able to feel safe in their transactions with these firms' employees.

E16. Their employees should be polite.

E17. Their employees should get adequate support from these firms to do their jobs well.

E18. These firms should not be expected to give customers individual attention. (-)

E19. Employees of these firms cannot be expected to give customers personal attention. (-)

E20. It is unrealistic to expect employees to know what the needs of their customers are. (-)

E21. It is unrealistic to expect these firms to have their customers' best interests at heart. (-)

E22. They shouldn't be expected to have operating hours convenient to all their customers. (-)

DIRECTIONS: The following set of statements relate to your feelings about XYZ. For each statement, please show the extent to which you believe XYZ has the feature described by the statement. Once again, circling a 7 means that you strongly agree that XYZ has that feature, and circling a 1 means that you strongly disagree. You may circle any of the numbers in the middle that show how strong your feelings are. There is no right or wrong answers. All we are interested in is a number that best shows your perceptions about XYZ.

P1. XYZ has up-to-date equipment.

P2. XYZ's physical facilities are visually appealing.

P3. XYZ's employees are well dressed and appear neat.

P4. The appearance of the physical facilities of XYZ is in keeping with the type of services provided.

P5. When XYZ promises to do something by a certain time, it does so.

P6. When you have problems, XYZ is sympathetic and reassuring.

P7. XYZ is dependable.

P8. XYZ provides its services at the time it promises to do so.

P9. XYZ keeps its records accurately.

P10. XYZ does not tell customers exactly when services will be performed. (-)

P11. You do not receive prompt service from XYZ's employees. (-)

P12. Employees of XYZ are not always willing to help customers. (-)

P13. Employees of XYZ are too busy to respond to customer requests promptly. (-)

P14. You can trust employees of XYZ.

P15. You feel safe in your transactions with XYZ's employees.

P16. Employees of XYZ arc polite.

P17. Employees get adequate support from XYZ to do their jobs well.

P18. XYZ does not give you individual attention. (-)

P19. Employees of XYZ do not give you personal attention. (-)

P20. Employees of XYZ do not know what your needs are. (-)

P21. XYZ does not have your best interests at heart. (-)

P22. XYZ does not have operating hours convenient to all their customers. (-)

For each item, the scale was pointed from "strongly agree" (7) to "strongly disagree" (1)

Appendix 2: Modifications of the SERVQUAL scale

NUMBER	BASIC WORDING	ORIGION	GROUP
REL1	Promises to provide a service and does so	SERVQUAL	Reliability
REL2	Shows dependability in handling service problems	SERVQUAL	Reliability
REL3	Performs the service right the first time	SERVQUAL	Reliability
REL4	Provides services at the time it promises to do so	SERVQUAL	Reliability
RES1	Tells guests exactly when the services will be performed	SERVQUAL	Responsiveness
RES2	Gives prompt service	SERVQUAL	Responsiveness
RES3	Always willing to help	SERVQUAL	Responsiveness
RES4	Never too busy to respond to guests' requests	SERVQUAL	Responsiveness
ASS1	Instills confidence in guests	SERVQUAL	Assurance
ASS2	Guests feel safe in the delivery of services	SERVQUAL	Assurance
ASS3	Guests feel safe and secure in their stay	New	Assurance
ASS4	Polite and courteous employees	SERVQUAL	Assurance
ASS5	Have the knowledge to answer questions	SERVQUAL	Assurance
ASS6	Have the skill to perform the service	New	Assurance
EMP1	Gives individual attention	SERVQUAL	Empathy
EMP2	Deals with guests in a caring fashion	SERVQUAL	Empathy
EMP3	Has guests' best interests at heart	SERVQUAL	Empathy
EMP4	Understands guests' specific needs	SERVQUAL	Empathy
TAN1	Equipment, fixtures and fittings are modern looking	SERVQUAL	Tangibles
TAN2	Facilities are visually appealing	Customized	Tangibles
TAN3	Neat and professional employees	SERVQUAL	Tangibles
TAN4	Materials are visually appealing	SERVQUAL	Tangibles

TAN5	Fixture and fittings are comfortable	New	Tangibles
TAN6	Equipment and facilities are easy to use	New	Tangibles
TAN7	Equipment and facilities are generally clean	New	Tangibles
TAN8	Variety of food and beverages meet guests' needs	New	Tangibles
TAN9	Services are operated at a convenient time	SERVQUAL	Tangibles

Source: Research And Concepts Analysing Service Quality In The Hospitality Industry; Amy Wong Ooi Mei, Alison M.Dean and Christopher J. White

Appendix 3: Lodging quality index 26-items

Dimension	Scale item
Tangibility	The front desk was visually appealing
	The employees had clean, neat uniforms
	The restaurant's atmosphere was inviting
	The shops were pleasant and attractive
	The outdoor surroundings were visually attractive
	The hotel was bright and well lighted
	The hotel's interior and exterior were well maintained
	The hotel was clean
Reliability	My reservation was handled efficiently
	My guest room was ready as promised
	TV, radio, A/C, lights, and other mechanical equipment worked properly
	I got what I paid for
Responsiveness	Employees responded promptly to my requests
	Informative literature about the hotel was provided
	Employees were willing to answer my questions
	Employees responded quickly to solve my problems
	Room service was prompt
Confidence	Employees knew about local places of interest
	Employees treated me with respect
	Employees were polite when answering my questions
	The hotel provided a safe environment
	The facilities were conveniently located
Communication	Charges on my account were clearly explained
	I received undivided attention at the front desk
	Reservationists tried to find out my particular needs
	Employees anticipated my needs

Appendix 4: Original 63-item scale (items in italics were eventually removed to produce final LODGING QUALITY INDEX)

Dimension	Scale item
Tangibility	Check-out procedures were easy to understand
	The guestroom was quiet
	The front desk was visually appealing
	The employees had clean, neat uniforms
	The guestrooms were comfortable and inviting
	The guestroom furnishings met my needs
	The TV, radio, telephone, A/ C, lights, and other mechanical equipment were modern and clean
	Room service offered a good variety of menu items
	Room service served food at a satisfactory temperature
	The restaurant's atmosphere was inviting
	The food was good
	The shops were pleasant and attractive
	The facilities (health club, pool, meeting rooms, banquet halls, etc .) were clean and inviting
	The outdoor surroundings were visually attractive
	The hotel was bright and well lighted
	Furnishings throughout the hotel were appealing
	The hotel's interior and exterior were well maintained
	The hotel was clean
Reliability	Room service was consistent
	Employees were able to accurately answer my questions
	My reservation was handled efficiently
	My guestroom was ready as promised
	I received the type of room requested
	Enough towels, soap, etc ., were found in m y room
	Wake -u p calls were received as promised

	I received my messages
	TV, radio, A/C, lights, and other mechanical equipment worked properly
	Charges at check out were accurate
	Restaurant orders were filled correctly
	Meeting arrangements were carried out as planned
	The employees did what they said they would do
Credibility	I got what I paid for
	Managers were frequently seen throughout the hotel
	The hotel had a good reputation
Responsiveness	Restaurant service was prompt
	Employees responded promptly to my requests
	Informative literature about the hotel was provided
	Employees were willing to answer my questions
	Employees responded quickly to solve my problems
	Room service was prompt
	Check-in and check-out procedures were fast and efficient
Competence	Employees were knowledgeable about available services
	Reservationists offered available options
	Employees were knowledgeable about the mechanical equipment
	Employees knew about local places of interest
Courtesy	Employees were consistently courteous
	Employees treated me with respect
	Employees were polite when answering my question
Security	The hotel provided a safe environment
	Employees at the front desk protected my privacy
	Safe storage of my belongings was available
Access	The restaurant was open at convenient hours
	Room service was available at convenient hours
	My room was conveniently located
	Parking arrangements were convenient

	The facilities (health club, meeting rooms , banquet halls, etc.) were conveniently located
	A manager was available if I had a problem
Communication	Charges on my account were clearly explained
	I received undivided attention at the front desk
	Employees at this hotel listened to me
Understanding	Reservationists tried to find out my particular needs
	Employees anticipated my needs
	Employees made every effort to fulfill my requests

Appendix 5: Questionnaire

This survey is part of the research for master thesis on the Service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. Through this survey I wish to analyze these determinants from a customer's perspective and expectation. The survey is anonymous and all the information provided will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any other party in any case. I greatly appreciated your help for completing the survey!

1. On which occasions do you need to stay in a hotel?

☐ On a vacation

☐ On a business trip

☐ In daily life

☐ For temporary living place

☐ Other (please specify): [   ]

2. Which type of hotels do you most likely stay in?

☐ Five star hotels

☐ Four star hotels

☐ Three star hotels

☐ Two star hotels

☐ One star hotels

☐ Budget hotels/hostels

3. Which sources help you choose a hotel?(please choose all that apply)

☐ Internet search

☐ Word of mouth

☐ Television

☐ Newspapers/magazines

☐ Travel agencies

☐ Radio

☐ Other (please specify): [＿＿＿＿＿]

4. Which factors do you need to consider when you choose a hotel?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Neutral	Somewhat unimportant	Very unimportant
- Price	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Position	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Concrete evidences (customer reviews/testimonials, certificates …)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Hotel Rating System in websites	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Choose top 3 offers of your interest

☐ Discounted prices

☐ Hotel staying package

☐ Bring a friend for free

☐ Deal for frequent guests

☐ Deal for introducing others

☐ Reduced services for a lower rate

6. Please rate the following hotel service by its importance

	Very important	Somewhat important	Neutral	Somewhat unimportant	Very unimportant
- Room services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Service completion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Friendly staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- A friendly welcome on arrival	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- A quick check- in/ out procedure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- The atmosphere in your room	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- New and modern facilities of the room	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Discipline and the	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

cleanness of hotel staff

- Quality of service, food&
beverage in restaurant/ bar

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. Which other properties in a hotel are you also interested in? (Please check all that apply)

☐ Tour guide

☐ Restaurant & bar

☐ Casino

☐ Spa/health center

☐ Beauty salon

☐ Gym

☐ Swimming pool

☐ Souvenir shop

☐ Money exchange

☐ Parking place

☐ Car renting

☐ Others (please specify)

8. Which additional services do you expect from a hotel?

	Very	Somewhat	Neutral	Somewhat	Very

	expected	expected		unexpected	unexpected
- One gift/ congratulation on your birthday/wedding anniversary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Different rooms for different styles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Alternative dietary meal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Tea/coffee maker in room	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Plant/flower in room	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Wake up service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Breakfast in bed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Late check out	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Which facilities do you need in the bathroom of a hotel?

☐ Shampoo and conditioner for different types of hair

☐ Toothpaste and tooth brush

☐ Depilatory cream/wax

☐ Suntan cream

☐ Body lotion

☐ Mouthwash

☐ Hair dryer

☐ Big tower

☐ Comb

☐ Music

☐ Other (please specify): ▢

10. Refer to bathroom amenities; do you think if it is necessary?

	Very necessary	Somewhat necessary	Neutral	Somewhat unnecessary	Very unnecessary
- Jacuzzi shower inside the room	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Hand/ foot/body/face cream	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Nail-scissor and nail-file	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Tower warming drawer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Big illuminated mirror	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Radiant floor heating	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Bath pillow	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
- Slipper	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

| - For women, intimate cleanser | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| - For men, razor and shaving cream | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

11. When you travel with your family, you prefer (please check all that apply):

☐ Bed for kid and doll

☐ Game website for kids

☐ Free kid meal up to age 12

☐ Baby- sitting service

☐ Laundry service

☐ Kitchenette

☐ Microwave

☐ Refrigerator

☐ Iron

☐ One "passport" to the dinning for all family

☐ One "passport" to spa for all family

☐ Other (please specify): _____

12. Do you prefer a separate package for your gender?

(In case it is not in your interest please move to question 15)

☐ A separate package for women ☐ A separate package for men

13. According to you, a package for women should include: (please check all that apply)

(This question is only for female customers)

☐ Room only for girls

☐ Activity only for girls

☐ One-in room movie with pop-corn

☐ Wine and chocolate-covered strawberries or other flavor

☐ Make-up kit

☐ King-size bed

☐ One "passport" to the goal/ dinning/ discotheque

☐ One "passport" to beauty salon/spa

☐ Shopping package: map of shopping center, taxi voucher, eco-friendly shopping bags

☐ Other (please specify): _____

14. According to you, a package for men should include: (please check all that apply)

(This question is only for male customers)

☐ Room only for men

☐ Activity only for men

☐ One-in room movie with pop-corn

☐ Wine/ champagne

☐ King-size bed

☐ One "passport" to the goal/ dinning/ discotheque

☐ One "passport" to spa

☐ Other (please specify): [   ]

15. Which kinds of issues that have you encountered in terms of hotel services? (please check all that apply)

(If you have never encountered any problems related to hotel services before, please go to the question 18)

☐ Emotional expression of hotel employees

☐ Responsiveness of hotel employees

☐ Room Assignment

☐ Cleaning service

☐ Room facilities

☐ Billing

☐ None

☐ Other (please specify): [   ]

16. When a problem happened, you perceived (please check all that apply)

☐ Efforts of hotel staffs in solving the problem

☐ Responsibility of managers/supervisors in solving the problem

☐ That hotel staffs ignore the problem

☐ That you cannot connect to hotel staffs to solve the problem

☐ Other (please specify): [   ]

17. How long did you have to wait for the responses from the hotel about your problem?

○ Immediately

◉ Within 24 hours

○ More than 24 hours

○ You had to contact the hotel again before they responded

○ No responses

18. In your experience, which should be improved? (Please check all that apply)

☐ More detailed information on services

☐ Expertise of service providers

☐ Manager/supervisor availability

☐ Easy to contact with staffs

☐ Attention of staff when making the relation with guest

☐ Attraction of the outer building and/or inner decoration

☐ Speed of response to problems of hotel services

☐ Other (please specify): [   ]

19. If you are satisfied with the hotel service, you will: (please check all that apply)

☐ Continue to select this hotel for the next time

☐ Tell others about this hotel

20. What is your continent of origin?

☐ Europe ☐ Asia ☐ America ☐ Africa ☐ Oceania ☐ Antarctica

21. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female

22. What is your employment status?

☐ Student

☐ Unemployed

☐ Employed fulltime

☐ Employed part-time

☐ Other (please specify): [   ]

23. Your age is