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Impact of Digital Service Quality for Enhanced Customer Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry

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Abstract

This study investigates how the quality of digital services influences customer satisfaction in the luxury hotel industry in Bangkok, Thailand, with particular attention to the factors that shape their digital service experience. Drawing data from 324 respondents who engaged with digital services during their hotel stays, out of 350 distributed questionnaires, the study aims to explore the relationship between various dimensions of digital service quality and customer satisfaction across luxury hotel settings. Methodologically, the study integrates the literature review, online and onsite data collection methods, regression analysis, and consideration of limitations. The findings emphasize the importance of reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness in customer satisfaction within the hotel industry. Particularly notable is the key role of assurance as the primary driver of digital service quality in luxury hotels, closely followed by reliability and tangibility. This underscores the criticality of ensuring customers feel secure and confident through interactions with hotel staff. Creating a safe environment, showcasing effective problem-solving skills, and fostering trust and credibility with clients are pivotal in enhancing satisfaction. This research offers valuable insights for hotel management and organizations in Thailand, especially during uncertain times. Enhancements in digital service quality have the potential to elevate destination amenities, accessibility, and hotel services' attractions, thereby benefiting the tourism industry.

Keywords: Digital service quality, Customer satisfaction, Reliability, Assurance, Tangibility

Introduction

Understanding customer needs and delivering experiences that go beyond their expectations could elevate the competitiveness in the hospitality landscape. (Chu & Choi, 2000). Recognizing business customers' perceptions of service quality enables management to adjust marketing strategies, ensuring the fulfillment of their needs. This process allows hotel managers to identify and address service shortcomings, allocating resources efficiently to improve key areas (Kandampully & Hu, 2007; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). Enhancing service quality in hotels necessitates a focus on the professionalism of the staff, requiring proactive measures from management. Hotel employees need to engage effectively with business customers, catering to their specific and individual requirements. Through training, staff members are equipped to offer prompt services while minimizing errors in hotel record maintenance. Recognizing the significance of training and development in service organizations, it ensures the maintenance of a consistent service standard (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2016; Zeithaml et al., 2006).

The incorporation of the Internet plays a crucial role in both the hotel industry and the travel and tourism market. Not only is the online channel effective for booking, communication, and commercial transactions due to factors like convenience, economic cost, and product diversity (Díaz & Koutra, 2013; Tao & Edmunds, 2018; Yoon, 2002), but it is also influenced by perceived value and trust (Bonsón Ponte et al., 2015). The effective utilization of Information Technology (IT) and innovative management practices for hotel service quality represents a significant bridging of gaps in the social media channel, contributing to the enhancement of hotel competitiveness (Buhalis, 1998). The content, interface, and reliability of information presented on hotel websites and social media platforms have a significant impact on individuals making online bookings (Ferguson, 2014) and directly influence customer decision-making (San Martín & Herrero, 2012). Specifically, for different categories of hotels, such as 4-star and 5-star establishments, the content featured on websites plays a crucial role in shaping customer preferences and decisions (Ting et al., 2012). Moreover, the quality of e-services serves as an appropriated predictor for customer satisfaction and loyalty (Ho & Lee, 2007). In the context of online commerce, customers benefit from reduced prices and time-saving measures (Vincent, 2003).

The evolving outlook of online users plays a crucial role in steering the course of a hotel website. Customer perceptions of website quality, formed during their initial interaction with the service, significantly influence their behaviors. Users assess various dimensions such as opinions, sentiments, and service expectations, shaping their perception (Hsu et al., 2010; Li et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2013). Hotel management on social sites should better assess the nature of customer engagement to boost trust in brand loyalty (Harrigan, 2017; So et al., 2014). Customer engagement behaviors (CEBs) need more focus on psychological and behavioral attributes to consider the role of commitment, involvement, and trust (Bowden, 2014), engagement, telepresence, and interactivity in online consumer experiences (Mollen & Wilson,

2010). Brand loyalty is crucial for minimizing production and marketing costs, thereby boosting profit margins. It materializes when customers consistently choose to purchase products from a specific brand instead of opting for substitutes offered by competitors. Marketing strategies often revolve around cultivating this enduring competitive advantage through concerted marketing efforts (Dick & Basu, 1994).

Research objectives

This research investigates the correlation between various dimensions of digital service quality, reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness, with customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. To explore their relationship with customer satisfaction and how each dimension directly or indirectly affects customer satisfaction. It focuses on evaluating customer satisfaction and digital service quality to implement consistent management practices to enhance digital service quality and improve customer satisfaction, and engagement among hotel guests, ultimately converting online visitors into customers and encouraging repeat visits to Thailand's luxury hotel businesses. The research methodology involves reviewing the literature, collecting data through online and onsite methods, analyzing data using regression analysis, and addressing limitations.

In the hospitality industry, despite the increasing occurrence of digital disruptions amid unpredictable circumstances, there is a lack of research dedicated to evaluating customer experiences with digital service platforms, especially within Thailand's luxury hotel sector. Hence, it is crucial to investigate clients' perceptions of digital service quality, as these insights can effectively guide hotel service providers and determine overall success. The research aims to assess the research framework, explore the connection between various aspects of digital service quality, and take a comprehensive approach by considering both hotel managers' and customers' perspectives. This approach integrates insights from both the industry and customers to inform the development and performance evaluation of digital services.

Literature review

Digital service quality

The enhancement of e-service adoption in the business sector has led to the acknowledgment of the importance of measuring and monitoring e-service quality in practical applications. Numerous academic researchers have already undertaken efforts to gauge e-service quality. In 1985, Parasuraman et al. identified ten dimensions of service quality, laying the foundation for the SERQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1985). This model was subsequently refined in 1988, with Parasuraman et al. establishing five key dimensions—reliability, assurance, tangible, empathy, and responsiveness—to evaluate service quality (Anwar & Balcioglu, 2016).

To measure service quality in hotel industry, service quality is considered as necessary to understand visitors. Five dimensions of service quality were derived which is to judge about a service after consumption by the visitors (Jamal & Naser, 2002). The five dimensions consist of **(1) Reliability** is defined as the

capacity to deliver the promised service consistently and precisely, which is critical in shaping customers' impressions of service quality and building loyalty. It includes a service firm's obligations to on-time delivery, service providing, issue resolution, and price. Understanding and achieving customer expectations for dependability is critical for service businesses (Anwar & Louis, 2017; Seth et al., 2005). **(2) Responsiveness** refers to efficiently assisting customers with their requests and issues, reducing wait times, and promptly addressing their needs. Enhancing responsiveness involves consistently reviewing service processes and fostering a customer-centric approach among staff. Customers judge responsiveness based on response times. Additionally, it involves being flexible and adapting services to meet client requirements (Anwar & Qadir, 2017; Seth et al., 2005). **(3) Assurance** is defined as an employee's knowledge and courtesy, as well as the ability of the company and its staff to build trust and confidence with clients. It's essential to assess how uncertainty affects service businesses. Hotels must exhibit reliability and value to assure customers of their investment. Guests should feel secure and have faith in the hotel during all interactions, ensuring their safety and confidence in financial transactions. (Anwar & Louis, 2017; Cronin & Taylor, 1994). **(4) Empathy** refers to the individualized care and attention that service providers deliver to their consumers, with an emphasis on satisfying various customer demands through tailored services. Service providers must understand their consumers' individual tastes and requirements. This notion encompasses cognitive characteristics, such as comprehending others' emotions, as well as affective features, such as the ability to empathize with others' emotions despite own feelings (Decety J & C., 2006; Seth et al., 2005). **(5) Tangibility** refers to visual aspects of physical facilities, equipment, and technology, providing customers with insights into service quality. Firms prioritize investments in organizing physical spaces to enhance their reputation and signal quality to clients. Tangibles are often integrated with other elements to formulate a comprehensive service quality strategy (Ali & Anwar, 2021; Seth et al., 2005).

Customer satisfaction

Establishing loyalty is contingent upon achieving a certain level of customer pleasure. Increasing customer satisfaction over time would foster a relationship or loyalty that would last a lifetime and assist the business retain customers by reducing the likelihood that they will look for other options (Madzík & Shahin, 2021). Satisfaction refers to the emotional assessment resulting from the overall experience of products or services provided by a supplier or service provider across time. (Song et al., 2019). The goal of customer satisfaction research is to measure overall satisfaction with a service company based on an aggregate judgment of all interactions and touch points with the firm (Chen, 2008).

The hospitality industry works at the constant interface between visitors and service providers. The level of satisfaction of a guest depends on the nature of the service a guest receives. The service characteristics of the hotel industry are hard to define. However, service quality has not only a positive and direct effect on competitiveness, but also an indirect effect on it via other variables.

Understanding the desires of travelers is more essential and being more competitiveness. The offering high quality services helps improve customer satisfaction. Hotel services and customer satisfaction of service fluctuate from culture to culture, and service quality dimensions differ from one sector of hotel industry to another (Barsky & Labagh, 1992).

Relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction assessments are considered as a post-consumption experience that compares experienced quality to predicted quality, whereas service quality is a worldwide appraisal of the system by service providers. Service quality and satisfaction are two different entities with a causal relationship that exists. This indicates that perceptions of service quality influence satisfaction, which in turn influences future purchase intention and behavior. (Hurley & Estelami, 1998). Additionally, the five elements of service quality (reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness) directly correlate with consumer satisfaction. However, the reliability dimension is the most significant towards determining customer satisfaction (Bhuian, 2021).

Methodology

Research design

The research utilized descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis to examine its hypotheses. It employed quantitative methods to measure the relationship between factors, gathering data through a sampling survey. A total of 324 valid responses were obtained from 350 distributed questionnaires. Participants were selected based on their use of digital services during their trips, primarily customers with experience staying at luxury hotels, both domestically and internationally.

Research instrument

The measurement instrument of this study to ensure the content validity of the instrument, and pre-testing of the questionnaire was conducted. Three professional academicians who have in-depth knowledge of hotel management, quality management, and digital service quality have looked at the scales. Based on their feedback, some items were adjusted for semantics, added, or removed. A formulated questionnaire in both Thai and English versions developed on Microsoft Forms slightly adjusted using the SERVQUAL dimension (Parasuraman et al., 1985). It consists of two sections of closed-ended questions (rating scale) used in collecting the data. The initial inquiry encompassed two key aspects: (1) demographic information about the participants and (2) digital service quality. The questionnaire assessed relevance to the digital service quality of the hotel customers towards their satisfaction consisting of 16 items. The scale used for measuring satisfaction was the satisfaction – Likert type scale, whereas point 7 reflected ‘strongly agree’ down to point 1 which reflected ‘strongly disagree’ (Preston & Colman, 2000). Content validity was evaluated involving three experts and utilized the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) for each question and its intended

measurement (Turner & Carlson, 2003). The gathered data is then employed to determine the questionnaire's reliability through the application of Cronbach's alpha coefficient, a statistical technique assessing internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The survey was conducted through direct questionnaires at reception desks using Microsoft Forms and via email surveys. The collected data via questionnaires was then analyzed by using regression analysis.

Hypotheses formulation

Many researchers indicated that service quality has significant impact on customer satisfaction in hotel industry (Eskildsen et al., 2004). Good quality is essential for the service standard of the hotel (Li et al., 2013). Because of the integration of hotel industry has been adopted internet such a significant role which obtains its side-effects on the business (Collins et al., 2021). In formulating hypotheses for this study, the five factors were identified in the quantitative investigation. Acknowledging that customers endorsement of a firm's digital service quality carries significant financial implications, service quality is recognized as a key differentiator in managing leading service firms, fostering customer satisfaction and value (Parasuraman, 1997), influencing marketing share and profitability (Buzzell & Gale, 1987), and guiding strategic development (Gronroos, 2000). To this end, five hypotheses have been developed, based on the relationships between five dimensions in digital service quality and customer satisfaction.

H1: Reliability positively affects customer satisfaction with using digital service platforms.

H2: Assurance positively affects customer satisfaction with using digital service platforms.

H3: Tangibility positively affects customer satisfaction with using digital service platforms.

H4: Empathy positively affects customer satisfaction with using digital service platforms.

H5: Responsiveness positively affects customer satisfaction with digital service platforms.

Data collection

During the survey time, the data collection was performed both online and onsite at the hotel reception counter. The target participants consist primarily of travelers who have been in a premium Thai or international hotel in Bangkok. Foreign travelers who have visited Thai or other luxury hotels are also included in the target group. Both 18-59-year-old Thai and foreign consumers who have experience in product buying and services as hotel clients via digital platforms or in-hotel services within the last four months. The demographic focus of the targeted customer base lies around the metropolitan of Bangkok, Thailand. Individual interviews will be conducted, where participants are invited to engage in one-on-one interviews in conjunction with a self-administered questionnaire. The selection of participants was accomplished through a random sampling approach, encompassing individuals with experience in digital service platforms. The questionnaires will be systematically coded and stored using Microsoft Forms. Five dimensions of digital service quality with their abbreviations and question items as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Abbreviations of the Elements and Their Question Items

Attributes	Abbreviations of Elements	Question Items
Reliability (Res)	**Rel1**	How would you rate your experience accessing our digital services during your stay?
	Rel2	How would you rate the accuracy and up-to-dateness of the information provided through our digital services?
	Rel3	How would you rate your ability to complete transactions quickly and efficiently using our digital services?
Assurance (Ass)	**Ass1**	How noticeable were the backup systems in place to ensure the continuity of our digital services during technical issues?
	Ass2	How satisfied were you with the support and assistance provided when accessing our digital services?
	Ass3	How easily accessible and available were the support channels for our digital services when you needed assistance?
Tangibility (Tan)	**Tan1**	How satisfied were you with the access and use of the digital devices (e.g., tablets, kiosks) provided for accessing our digital services?
	Tan2	How satisfied were you with the digital devices and equipment provided for accessing our digital services?
	Tan3	How satisfied were you with the maintenance and durability of the physical components (e.g., screens, buttons) of our digital devices?
	Tan4	How comfortable was the physical interaction (e.g., touchscreen sensitivity, ergonomics) with our digital devices?
Empathy (Emp)	**Emp1**	How would you rate the accessibility and responsiveness of the support channels when seeking assistance with our digital services?
	Emp2	How consistent was the digital service quality throughout your stay, or did you experience variations in performance?
	Emp3	How satisfied are you with the security measures taken to protect your personal information when using our digital services?
Responsiveness (Res)	**Res1**	How satisfied were you with the response to your inquiries or requests through our digital service channels?
	Res2	How satisfied were you with the resolution of issues or problems through our digital service channels?
	Res3	How proactive were the updates or notifications provided by our digital service platforms regarding your requests or transactions?

Data analysis

Data analysis will be executed employing statistical methods. The literature on Hair in 2014 (Hair Jr et al., 2014) specified a minimum sample size of 60 for the regression research (ten times the largest number of formative indicators: 10x6). All 324 participants successfully tested the hypothesis. The quantitative study was conducted using a conceptual model framework as shown in Figure 1. The analysis sought to discern the relationship between variables and ascertain the significance levels of each independent variable (Hair Jr. et al., 2009).

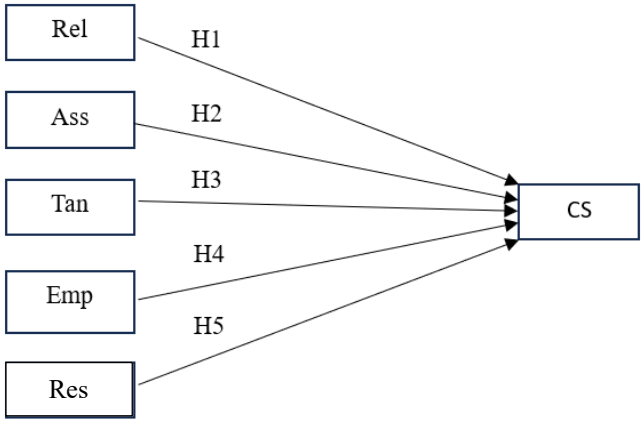


Figure 1 Research model

Validity and reliability

The validity and reliability of the research model were established before measuring the hypotheses. A reliability threshold of 0.7 was set for Cronbach's alpha scores, and Table 3 displays the reliability scores, all of which exceed 0.7 for the variables. Concurrently, the validity is considered by the R-statistic using Pearson correlation with a 2-tailed correlation significant at 0.01 level. To ensure validity, each indicator within the construct must exhibit an r-table value less than the corresponding r-statistic. For the validity test with 324 respondents, the R-statistic for all indicators surpasses 0.6. According to the criteria, the data results are deemed both valid and reliable.

Correlation analysis

The correlation between the indicators of digital service quality and customer satisfaction was analyzed using the Pearson variables. The results are depicted in Table 4.

Result and discussions

Research sample description

The primary focus of this study is to have executives or decision-makers representing their firms. Most of the surveys, completed by 324 respondents, predominantly feature Thai nationals (232 individuals, constituting 71.9%) and other respondents who are foreigners (92 individuals, making up 28.4%). The gender distribution shows a higher participation of men (53.1%) compared to women (46.9%). Among the age groups, the most prevalent range is 45-54 years old (55.9%), followed by 35-44 years old (23.5%). The remaining age categories, accounting for a total of 20.6%, include 55-60 years old, over 60 years old, 25-34 years old, 18-24 years old, and the smallest group, below 18 years old, respectively.

The educational backgrounds of the participants are categorized into five groups, with the largest contingent holding a master's degree (154 individuals, constituting 47.5%). The second-largest group comprises participants with a bachelor's degree (37%). The remaining educational level classifications, making up a total of 15.5%, consist of those with a doctorate (6.2%), a Diploma (5.6%), and the smallest group, individuals with a high school education (3.7%), respectively. Within this survey, individuals engaged in business/management constitute 25.6% of all participants. The subsequent groups include those in healthcare (11.1%), the hospitality/hotel industry (9.6%), education/research (7.4%), and finance/accounting (6.8%). Information technology and tourism/travel both account for an equal total of 5.6% of participants. The remaining participants are individuals working in various other fields.

Concerning the income distribution among Thai and foreign participants, a significant majority, comprising 57.7%, falls within the annual income range of 1,000 to 19,999 US dollars. The second prominent group, accounting for 25.8%, falls within the income bracket of 20,000 to over 150,000 US dollars. A lower income range, specifically in the 200 to 1,999 US dollars category, represents 21.7% of participants. Those with incomes falling outside these specified ranges make up 5.2% of the total participants.

Nearly all patrons of hotels opt for accommodations primarily for travel purposes, constituting 83.0% of the total. A smaller percentage of individuals choose hotels for business-related reasons (7.1%), meetings/seminars (6.5%), stopovers (1.5%), and the remaining percentage is 1.9%, respectively. A significant portion, totaling 40.4% of individuals expressed an intention to stay at hotels 6-10 times annually. Participants representing 34.9% indicated a preference for staying at hotels 3-5 times per year, while 14.2% reported staying at hotels more than 10 times annually. Another 9.9% of respondents mentioned staying at hotels 1-2 times per year, with the remaining percentage representing those who never stay at hotels. Following the primary preference, resort hotels, and business hotels stand out as the second most favored types, constituting 32.7% and 25.9% of the respondents, respectively. Boutique hotels come next, representing 17%, followed by luxury hotels at 12.7%. Budget or economy hotels account for 6.2%, while boutique luxury hotels make up the smallest category with 3.4%, respectively.

Regression analysis

Table 2 shows the value of adjusted R square = 0.719, this indicates that 71.9% of the total variance has been explained. Moreover, the results show that F(5, 318) = 166.228, indicates that the regression model is a good fit with the significant value is 0.000.

Measurement model

The reliability analysis was conducted. The results in Table 3 indicated that Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the five dimensions of digital service quality were greater than 0.7. more specifically, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for reliability (Rel) was 0.946; assurance (Ass) 0.855; tangibility (Tan) 0.965; empathy (Emp) 0.865; and responsiveness (Res) 0.948. Cronbach's alpha values were greater than the cut-off value of 0.7 indicating that all five hypotheses were accepted. It means all five dimensions could be considered reliable and affirm the indicators' good fit with their constructs. The variable relationships of the five dimensions of customer satisfaction explain that the first hypothesis (Rel CS), reliability has significantly predicted customer satisfaction (is weight 0.447, P < 0.01). This indicates that reliability has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction. Therefore, this hypothesis was supported. Based on the coefficient (0.449) and p-value (< 0.01) of the second hypothesis (Ass CS) resulted in assurance has significantly predicted customer satisfaction and indicated that assurance has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction. It means this hypothesis was supported. The tangibility of digital service quality significantly predicted the customer satisfaction using the third hypothesis (Tan CS) with the coefficient (0.264) and p-value (< 0.01). This indicated that tangibility has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and this hypothesis was supported. The fourth hypothesis (Emp CS), empathy does not have a positive relationship with customer satisfaction with coefficient (-0.199), but this hypothesis has significantly predicted customer satisfaction at $p < 0.05$. Therefore, based on results the fourth hypothesis was supported. Finally, the fifth hypothesis (Res CS), responsiveness does not have a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and has not significantly predicted customer satisfaction with coefficient (-0.054) and p-value (0.412). Thus, the hypothesis was rejected.

Among the factors considered, "Assurance" emerged as the most influential in determining digital service quality, followed by "Reliability" and "Tangibility". This suggests that ensuring customers feel secure and confident through the hotel staff plays a crucial role in enhancing satisfaction. "Assurance" encompasses elements such as creating a safe environment and exhibiting effective problem-solving skills, fostering trust and credibility with clients. Dissatisfaction with employees significantly decreases the likelihood of repeat patronage (Delgado-Ballester, 2004). The hotel needs to prove that it's trustable and worth the money, the customer is paying. Customers should feel safe when they consume different services from a hotel and would like to feel secure during, they stay (Ali et al., 2021). Reliability is emphasized as a critical element greatly affecting overall customer satisfaction, bolstered by the varied backgrounds of participants. It signifies the service

provider's ability to deliver services consistently and accurately, aligning with guests' strong preference for getting it right from the start (Ali et al., 2021). The tangibility of digital service quality, amenities, and a broad variety of supplementary services may influence customer satisfaction (Xuan, 2019). The appearance of hotel staff, equipment, and physical facilities has a beneficial influence on client satisfaction (Kumar et al., 2010).

Correlation analysis

The results of the correlation analysis in Table 4 were conducted on the hypotheses that configured the association between dimensions of digital service quality and customer satisfaction in luxury hotels in Bangkok, Thailand. This result indicated the correlation between the cause variable and effect variables. It was found that there exists a positive association between Assurance and Empathy (r = 0.906) followed by the correlation between Assurance and Responsiveness (r = 0.881), Reliability and Empathy (r = 0.863), and Tangibility and Responsiveness (r = 0.841), respectively. The coefficients between variables are higher than 0.7 at a significant level of 0.01. The coefficients reveal that all independent variables (reliability, assurance, tangibility, and empathy) are significantly correlated with customer satisfaction.

Table 2 Model summary (Adjusted R-Square, F Change, and Sig. F Change)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.850[a]	.723	.719	.42480	.723	166.228	5	318	.000

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	149.985	5	29.997	166.228	.000[b]
	Residual	57.385	318	.180		
	Total	207.370	323			

a. Department Variable: CSI

b. Predictor: (Constant), Rel, Ass, Tan, Emp, and Res

Table 3 Reliability, validity, and hypothesis testing results

Constructs	Indicator	Cronbach □	R-statistic	Relationship (Hypotheses)	□ Coefficients	p-value	Results
Reliability		0.946		Rel □ CS	0.447	0.000	Supported
	Rel1		0.929**				
	Rel2		0.963**				
	Rel3		0.959**				
Assurance		0.855		Ass □ CS	0.449	0.000	Supported
	Ass1		0.872**				
	Ass2		0.872**				
	Ass3		0.898**				
Tangibility		0.965		Tan □ CS	0.264	0.000	Supported
	Tan1		0.938**				
	Tan2		0.945**				
	Tan3		0.957**				
	Tan4		0.963**				
Empathy		0.865		Emp □ CS	-0.199	0.016	Supported
	Emp1		0.905**				
	Emp2		0.917**				
	Emp3		0.841**				
Responsiveness		0.948		Res □ CS	-0.054	0.412	Rejected
	Res1		0.959**				
	Res2		0.968**				
	Res3		0.932**				

***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

Table 4 Correlation analysis

	Mean	SD	Rel	Ass	Tan	Emp	Res
Rel	5.965	1.012	1				
Ass	5.953	0.913	0.808**	1			
Tan	5.800	1.045	0.682**	0.877**	1		
Emp	6.046	0.933	0.863**	0.906**	0.790**	1	
Res	5.925	1.026	0.724**	0.881**	0.841**	0.802**	1

***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

Conclusion

Findings show that the value of Cronbach's alpha is greater than the cut-off value for all five indicators. The proposed model could be explained by the five independent variables as the adjusted R-square value is 0.719, revealing a good fit. The results of the hypotheses tested to assess the significance of relationships posited in the research model, employing a significance threshold of a p-value less than 0.05. Evaluating customer satisfaction is crucial in the hotel industry to foster repeat business and positive word-of-mouth. Service quality is a key factor, and understanding and exceeding customer expectations is essential. Empirical studies suggest that while many hotel clients are satisfied, there's room for improvement. The study shows a strong link between reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness aspects and customer happiness in luxury hotels, particularly emphasizing the significant impact of reliability, assurance, and tangibility on customer satisfaction.

This study is beneficial to hotel management and organizations in Thailand, particularly under volatile conditions. Improvements in digital service quality may improve destination facilities, accessibility, and attractions in hotel services. To maintain service quality across both digital and onsite channels, hotels need to consistently train their employees to enhance their skills and service-oriented mindset. Effective management and staff response to guest challenges are essential for achieving excellent service in hotels. With the increasing popularity of e-commerce in travel shopping, digital service quality has become crucial. Customers rely solely on website information, making assurance, reliability, and tangibility vital aspects. To engage customers effectively, hotel managers must allocate additional resources to maintain accurate, current information and establish trust and reliability on their websites.

Recommendations

To enhance customer satisfaction, hotel websites should provide various advantages for both users and suppliers, thereby amplifying a crucial booking and distribution channel (Hsu et al., 2012; Ponte et al., 2015). Nevertheless, caution should be exercised in the context of commonplace online shopping practices, as consumer trust in hotel websites may pose a potential risk to satisfaction and the inclination to make online purchases (Belanche et al., 2012). On the contrary, customer satisfaction and the perceived value of a product represent prospective affirmative contributions emanating from dimensions including perceived ease of use, quality of customer services, diversity in the product portfolio, and the assurance of security and privacy (Yang & Peterson, 2004).

Understanding what customers like and need from a hotel website – like its design, content, and booking system – is key for keeping them happy and coming back. These aspects affect both satisfaction and loyalty. It's important to look at them together. Furthermore, quality service, a favorable reputation, and satisfied customers are interconnected. Hotel managers need to make sure their website works well to attract more customers, make more money, and stay ahead in the market (Gronroos, 2000).

Additional investigations should be conducted in prominent urban centers across Thailand. Outcomes from such extended studies could provide additional insights into supplementary factors influencing the industry, not addressed in the current research. It might be valuable to contemplate future research exploring factors influencing perceived value, customer experience management, and social influencers within the domain of express delivery service providers in Bangkok or even across Thailand as a whole.

Implication

Hotels prioritize assurance by ensuring customers feel secure when making online purchases. They achieve this by offering easy and convenient online shopping experiences, building trust with guests, and maintaining secure websites. Trustworthy information on hotel websites is crucial for customers' purchasing decisions in e-commerce, emphasizing the importance of accuracy and ongoing investment in website maintenance (Amaro & Duarte, 2015; Rather, 2017; Huy et al., 2017; Mustafa, 2011; Delafrooz et al., 2011; Tsai & Yeh, 2010; VO et al., 2020).

The relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction has been supported by evaluating of the decision-making process, customers rely on information quality, making it imperative for hotel managers to offer complete, accurate, and up-to-date content on their websites (Ali, 2016; Nath & Singh, 2010). However, the absence of reliable information may lead to customer disappointment and site abandonment. Customer trust is significantly influenced by the availability of useful information (Goode & Harris, 2007)

In the aspect of the tangibility of digital service quality, the hotel should maintain the quality of the amenities, and a broad variety of supplementary services may influence customer satisfaction (Xuan, 2019). Moreover, the appearance of hotel staff, equipment, and physical facilities has a beneficial influence on enhancing their client satisfaction (Kumar et al., 2010).

Understanding customer preferences, emotions, and interactions with a hotel website is crucial for long-term satisfaction and repeat visits. Enhanced website performance is vital for attracting more customers and stimulating purchase intent, leading to increased profitability and competitiveness (VO et al., 2020). Features like an extended navigation bar facilitate easy access to different sections. Additionally, simplicity and convenience in online operations improve service quality, positively affecting user trust and purchase intentions (Khalifa & Abou-Shouk, 2014; Cho, 2015).

Although the study finds a non-significant relationship, consistently addressing customer needs in a customer-centric way on digital platforms can still improve satisfaction. This involves promptly assisting customers, reducing wait times, and adjusting services to meet their requirements, all of which contribute to enhancing customer satisfaction (Anwar & Qadir, 2017; Seth et al., 2005).

Limitations

The findings of this research might not be fully representative of the entire population of business travelers in Bangkok, Thailand. The investigation was

limited to five-star hotels in the Bangkok area. Thus, for a more comprehensive perspective, data collection should be extended to encompass a diverse array of five-star hotels in various regional settings. This would facilitate a more nuanced understanding of the correlation between customer satisfaction and loyalty within the hotel industry. For future studies, it is advisable to seek input from respondents with diverse demographics. Additionally, data collection should be conducted during both peak and off-peak periods of hotel occupancy in Thailand to gauge customer satisfaction across varying perceptions of service quality.

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