

A Study of Delegate's Perceptions of Service Quality in Five Star Hotels and Convention Centers in Delhi NCR

– Jatin Vaid*

Assistant Professor, School of Business Studies, Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies

 jatinvaid@gmail.com  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6612-117X>

– Subodh Kesharwani

Associate Professor, School of Management Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi

 skesharwani@ignou.ac.in  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8565-1571>



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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to examine the delegate's perception of quality of services provided by select five-star hotels and convention centers with respect to business tourism in Delhi NCR. Also, the paper seeks to analyze the socio-demographic profile of delegates participating in various MICE events hosted in these hotels and convention centers. Service quality is considered to be the key to organizational success, and insights in this regard can be useful for managers to compete for loyal customers and higher profitability.

Design / Methodology/ Approach: The present study is descriptive in nature and has a cross-sectional design. The data has been collected through structured questionnaires personally administered to 372 business delegates attending MICE events in 20 five-star hotels and 2 convention centres in Delhi NCR. The data has been analyzed using frequency distribution, descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using MS Excel, SPSS 21 and AMOS 20 software.

Findings: The results indicate the relative relevance of various service quality dimensions of Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy to business delegates and also highlight some important suggestions received from them that can be useful for strategic managers to design their offerings in the most optimal way.

Research limitations: The generalizability of the research is limited by its time scope and sample size. Future researches may be replicated for hotels in other geographical areas, or may analyze the relationship of service quality with delegate satisfaction or may consider using a longitudinal design.

Originality / value: The study is the first attempt to analyze service quality with special reference to business tourist, considering the SERVQUAL model in the Indian context.

Paper Type: Empirical research paper using servqual

KEYWORDS Service Quality | Business Tourism | MICE | Delegates | Hotels | Delhi

*Corresponding Author (Jatin et Al)

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Introduction

Business Tourism

Business tourism, popularly known as MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) tourism is a niche tourism which involves visitors to travel for a specific professional or business purpose to a place outside their workplace and residence with the aim of attending a meeting, an activity or an event (UNWTO, 2019). It is one of the fastest growing tourism segments worldwide, contributing significantly to the economic growth. The total turnover from the Indian MICE Segment has been estimated to be Rs.37576 crores, which is less than 1 percent (.96%) of the world's total MICE turnover. Of this, hotel's contribution is about 60 percent, or Rs. 22360 crore (MoT (GOI) - MRSS, 2019).

New Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR) is an exclusivemodel of inter-state local planning and development. It is one of the prominent destinations for hosting various MICE events in five-star hotels and convention centers, as it has the highest Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTA), i.e., 2.85 Million, which is 28.35% of India's 10.04 Million (India Tourism Statistics 2018, 2019).

Service Quality

Service quality is a focused evaluation that reflects the customer's perception of specific dimensions of service namely *Reliability* (ability of service organization to perform the promised service dependably and accurately); *Responsiveness* (willingness of employees to help customers and provide prompt service); *Assurance* (employee's knowledge and courtesy and their ability to inspire trust and confidence amongst the customers); *Empathy* (caring, individualized attention given by service employees to customers of service); and *Tangibility* (appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication material). The consumers organize information about service quality in their minds on the basis of these dimensions. It is a judgment that a product or service provides a pleasurable level of consumption – related fulfillment (Zeithaml, Bitner, Gremler, & Pandit, 2016).

Apart from customer's perception about the quality, their satisfaction is determined by the price of services, situational factors, and personal factors. For instance, satisfaction of delegates from a convention organized by a hotel would depend upon their perception about the quality of services provided; the price they have to bear- both financial cost such as delegation fee paid as also the non-financial cost such as travelling time to the venue; the situational factors like weather conditions, and personal factors like their emotional state of mind at the time of availing services. Increasing levels of customer satisfaction leads to customer loyalty and profits. Service quality is thus considered to be the key to organizational success (Padlee, Thaw, & Zulkiffli, 2019). Service quality in hotels continues to be an area of wider global research. Its strong significance is related to customer

satisfaction and repeat business, which are determinants of profitability of business (Mohsin & Lockyer, 2010).

Review of Literature

The Indian hospitality sector is one of the key contributors to the GDP and a booming industry. The discovery of off-beat locations, increased disposable income and increased business travel are the key contributors to its growth. Various research studies have been conducted to examine the role of service quality in luxury hotels. This section gives a pertinent and elaborate picture of the research studies conducted in this area.

Understanding the needs and wants of consumers is vital for sustaining success in the tourism and hospitality industry (Goeldner, Ritchie, & McIntosh, 2000). It will not be wrong to state that customer satisfaction and service quality are the objectives service firms must pursue to survive in a highly competitive environment, as it is observed that organisations which are high on service quality tend to have more satisfied and loyal customers, leading to higher profitability (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Malhotra, 2000). The tourism industry is one such industry wherein customer satisfaction is of supreme importance. The choices in customers' consumption pattern have significantly changed, as they look for quality in services and value for money (Sharpley & Forster, 2003). Higher service quality will lead to higher satisfaction and subsequently to positive reputation of the destination, hotels and other peripheral services, which may further lead to repeat visits (Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2007).

(Gundersen, Heide, & Olsson, 1996), measure satisfaction levels amongst the business travellers and highlight the methods of reducing errors in service quality. The researchers have used a 22 item Likert questionnaire to assess the business travellers' perception about the front desk, food and beverage, and housekeeping from 315 business travellers. Results show business travellers were concerned with the tangible aspects of housekeeping like comfort and amenities of the room.

(Robinson & Callan, 2002), in her research takes a qualitative approach to assess gaps between the attributes employed to measure the quality of a UK conference venue. The authors conduct focus groups and telephonic interviews to identify increased safety awareness; leisure facilities; and product quality as key factors which influence consumer decision-making.

(Juwaheer, 2004), in her paper examines the significance of service quality in Mauritius hotels. The authors further look into the perception of international tourists towards these hotels by using a modified SERVQUAL scale. The findings identify 9 factors instead of 5 factors spread over 39 attributes, with reliability emerging as an important factor in determining service quality.



(Nadiri & Hussain, 2005) in their research observe the importance of measuring service quality in hotels of North Cyprus. The authors with the help of regression analysis established a positive causal relationship between independent variables under study and customer satisfaction.

(Narayan, Rajendran, Sai, & Gopalan, 2009), consider the views of both management and delegates to gain deep insights into service quality. The authors have developed a 10 – factor structure to include core tourism experience; information; hospitality; fairness of price; hygiene; amenities; value for money; logistics; food; and security as factors to represent service quality in tourism.

(Wan & Cheng, 2011), investigated the service quality of Macao’s world heritage site in an empirical study. The findings of the research indicate high levels of service quality at Macao’s world heritage site, with exceptions in empathy and consumables, as these factors need further improvement. Also, a significant difference was observed in the perception of the local residents and international tourists, with the former showing lesser satisfaction score as compared to the latter.

(Chiang, King, & Nguyen, 2012) in their quantitative research investigate the motivational and socio-demographic characteristics of MICE visitors to Taiwan. The motivation based MICE segment was divided into three tiers namely value seekers, no-value seekers, and education seekers. The outcome cites that there are vital socio-demographic differences between these three segments.

Liat, Mansuri & Huei (2014) takes a quantitative approach to establish significant linkages between four parameters namely service quality, customer satisfaction, corporate image, and customer loyalty. These factors play an important role for hotel operators as they help in promoting and sustaining long term organizational growth.

(Wu, Pearce, & Dong, 2017), in their study examine the experiences of international tourists towards the 5-star hotels in Shanghai. Using Leximancer concept mapping to analyse 2000 reviews posted on Agoda.com about superior hotels in Shanghai, the results showed a high level of satisfaction was observed by international tourists. Various factors like physical characteristics of the hotel, location, professional attitude of the employees and beautiful experiences played an important role in customer satisfaction. The behaviour of the staff was one of the predominant factors which led to which shaped the overall customer experience.

(Oh & Kim, 2017) conducted a literature review in which various articles and research papers from various established journals in hospitality and tourism from a period of 2000-2015 were considered. The review consolidates the relationship between customer satisfaction, service quality, and customer value and provides lessons, paving the way for future research.

(Padlee, Thaw, & Zulkiffli, 2019) in their research study the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in hotels. The researchers highlight four dimensions of service quality namely employee behaviour, room amenities, physical evidence and food quality that play a distinguished role in assessing customer satisfaction.

A classified presentation of the major studies in the area of service quality is given below in Table 1:-

S. No	Name of the Author	Methodology	Tools & Techniques	Findings & Conclusion
1	Robinson & Callan (2002)	Qualitative	Focus groups: 6, Telephone interviews: 30 In-depth interviews: 727	Increased safety awareness, leisure facilities, product quality play a vital role in consumer decision-making process.
2	Juwaheer (2004)	Quantitative, Questionnaire (Modified SERVQUAL, n=410)	Regression Analysis	Identifies 9 factors instead of 5 factors across 39 attributes. Reliability emerges as one of the important factors
3	Wan & Cheng (2009)	Quantitative Questionnaire (n= 1056 & 27 world heritage attractions in Macao)	Chi Square Test	Service quality perceived by local residents is less than that perceived by international tourists
4	Liat, Mansuri & Huei (2014)	Quantitative Questionnaire (200 respondents)	Regression Analysis	Service quality, customer satisfaction, corporate image, & customer loyalty can enhance profit margins
5	Oh & Kim (2017)	Qualitative Literature review	242 articles in 6 tourism journals and 71 studies in 4 business journals for 2000-2015.	Customer satisfaction, service quality, and customer value are related.
6	Padlee, Thaw & Zulfiklli (2019)	Questionnaire (275) Malaysian hotels	Multiple regression	4 factors of service quality: employee behaviour, room amenities, physical evidence and food quality are important in assessing customer satisfaction

Table 1: Snapshot of literature on service quality

It cannot be undermined that a large amount of studies have been conducted in the area of service quality in tourism. However, most of these studies measure service quality provided by hotels in a customised manner, instead of considering SERVQUAL as an all-embracing tool. These studies observe service quality as two factors, three-factor or in few cases as nine-factor phenomena depending on the context of the research. Moreover, it is difficult to identify any study which undertakes the measurement of service quality with special reference to business tourists. This creates a huge research gap as the expectations of MICE and other categories of travellers might be distinct. This gap in previous research needs to be plugged in to develop concrete strategies for the future in the hospitality sector to help meet the demands of the business (MICE) tourists.

For the purpose of the current study, the researchers shall take an all-inclusive view of service quality dimensions with special reference to business tourists.

Objectives of the Study

The present study examines the quality of services provided by hotels and convention centres with respect to business tourism in Delhi NCR. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To study the service quality provided by hotels and convention centres in the business tourism sector in NCR, from delegate's perspective.
- ii. To understand the demographic profile of delegates participating in various MICE events hosted in select five-star hotels and convention centers in Delhi NCR.

Research Methodology

Research design

The present research study is descriptive in nature. It makes an effort to analyze the quality of services of selected five-star hotels and convention centres in the business tourism sector from delegate's point of view.

Data Collection

The data for the present study has been collected using both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources comprised of surveys through a structured questionnaire administered to select delegates attending MICE events in the hotels and convention centres, to know their perceptions about various dimensions of the quality of service at the venue.

The secondary data was collected using Tourism statistics reports from ICPB and Ministry of Tourism – Government of India; Websites of various hotels and convention centres; Journal articles and other publication on the subject from various online databases like ProQuest, EBSCO and Emerald.

Sample Size

The sample for the present study consisted of 372 delegates attending various MICE events in 20 five-star hotels and 2 convention centres in NCR. Five-star hotels were considered for this study as these hotels place substantial strategic focus in the area of defining service standards and performance compared with lower star category hotels (Jonsson & Devonish, 2009).

Sampling Method:

In order to select samples for the present study, the following sampling methods were used:

- i. *Snowball sampling method*, to select hotels and convention centres in NCR.
- ii. *Convenience sampling* to select delegates attending various MICE events in leading five-star hotels and convention centres

Data Analysis:

Primary data collected from managers and delegates through surveys have been analyzed using frequency distribution, descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The results in this study have been analyzed using MS Excel, SPSS 21 and AMOS 20 software.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

In hotels and convention centers catering to the business tourism sector, the service quality plays an important role in determining customer satisfaction. (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988), in their pioneering research, identified five dimensions of service quality. These are *tangibility*, *reliability*, *responsiveness*, *assurance* and *empathy*. Several statements representing each of the dimensions of service referred to above were selected. In all there were twenty four statements for the five dimensions. These include six statements representing Tangibility, five statements each for Empathy, and Reliability, and four statements each for Responsiveness and Assurance. Each construct was measured using a five-point Likert scale with 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). All measures used to construct these questionnaires have shown acceptable levels of construct validity. However, the wordings of some of the items were slightly modified to match the specific context of the present study (Lee J., 2012).

Reliability and Validity Analysis

The internal consistency and reliability of the different dimensions of service quality taken up for the study have been measured with the help of Cronbach alpha. The results of the analysis are shown in the table 1.



Dimensions of service quality	Statements	Cronbach Alpha
Tangibility	Six	0.890
Reliability	Five	0.895
Responsiveness	Four	0.892
Assurance	Four	0.891
Empathy	Five	0.921

Table 1: Internal consistency and reliability

The results presented in the Table 1 indicate that the Cronbach alpha value of all the five dimensions of service quality provided by the responding hotels and convention centres is greater than 0.7, which is the critical value for

acceptance. Thus, internal consistency and reliability is assured in the responses received against all the statements of the five dimensions of service quality.

The Measurement Model

The measurement model of service quality indicates the different factors along with the items used to measure these dimensions. The construct validity (i.e. convergent and discriminant validity) of the service quality dimensions provided by the hotels and convention centres is examined using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) method. All the service quality dimensions included in the measurement model are of first order and are reflective in nature. The CFA diagram representing the measurement model of service quality factors is shown in figure 1.

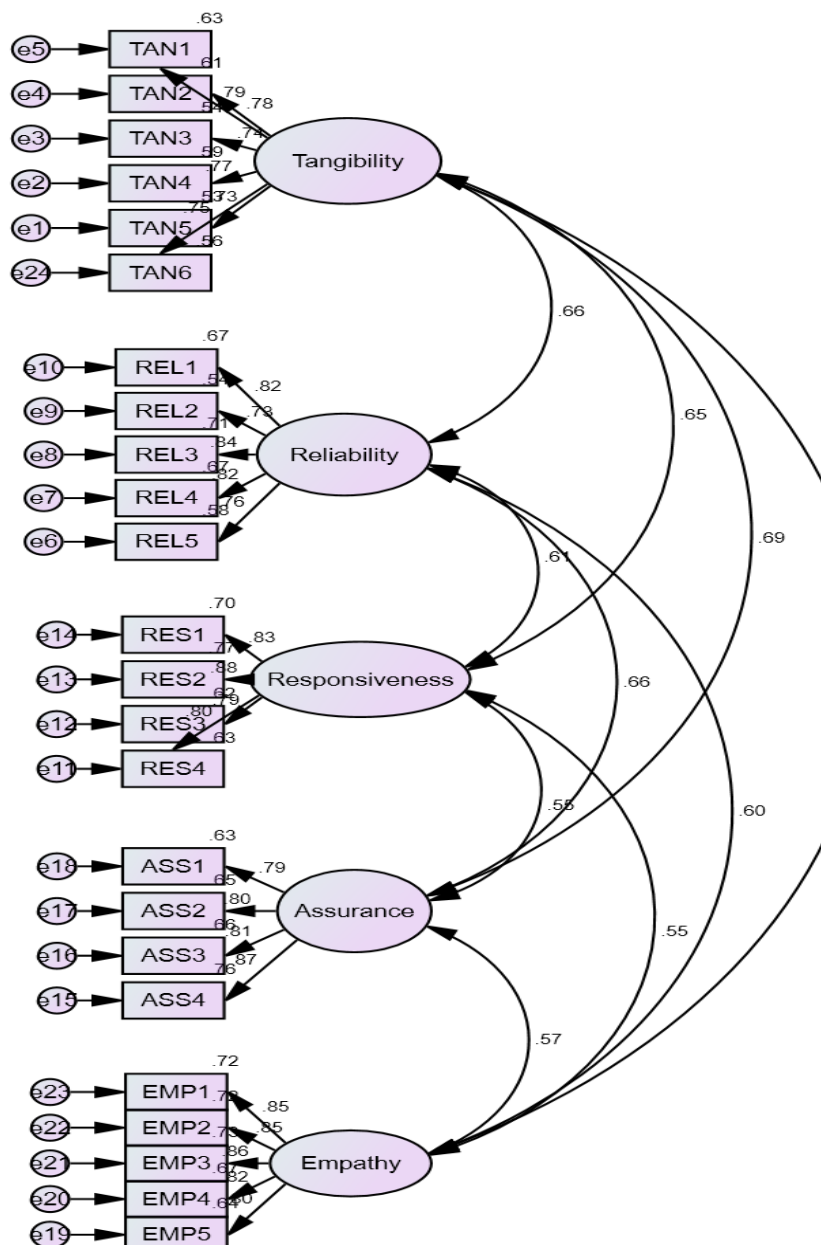


Figure 1: Measurement model of service quality dimensions

Results of CFA Analysis

The results, as shown in table 2, indicate the estimated measures of unstandardized regression weight, standardized construct loadings, standard error (S.E.), critical ratio (CR) and probability value (p value) of the critical ratio.

The result of the measurement model representing the different aspects of service quality provided by the hotels and convention centres depicts that the standardized slope coefficient (correlation between the service quality and the statements) were found to be more than 0.6. This high positive and significant value represents that all the statements included in the study significantly represent the respective service quality dimension. Similarly, the critical ratios for all the statements of different service quality aspects are found to be greater than 1.96 indicating that the statements are significantly representing their respective service quality dimension. Therefore, convergent validity of the different aspects of service quality is ensured.

The correlation between different aspects of service quality, considered for the study has been estimated and are shown in Table 3.

Between the constructs			Estimate
Tangibility	<-->	Reliability	0.663
Tangibility	<-->	Responsiveness	0.656
Tangibility	<-->	Assurance	0.682
Tangibility	<-->	Empathy	0.649
Reliability	<-->	Responsiveness	0.609
Reliability	<-->	Assurance	0.658
Reliability	<-->	Empathy	0.599
Responsiveness	<-->	Assurance	0.550
Responsiveness	<-->	Empathy	0.550
Assurance	<-->	Empathy	0.564

Table 3: Correlations between constructs of service quality

Item Code	Constructs	Construct Loadings	Regression Weight	Standard Error	Critical ratio	P Value
TAN6	<--- Tangibility	0.749	0.995	0.071	14.078	***
TAN5	<---	0.732	1.000			
TAN4	<---	0.764	0.969	0.067	14.369	***
TAN3	<---	0.732	0.884	0.064	13.745	***
TAN2	<---	0.781	1.056	0.072	14.703	***
TAN1	<---	0.796	1.017	0.068	14.985	***
REL5	<--- Reliability	0.764	1.000			
REL4	<---	0.820	1.191	0.072	16.447	***
REL3	<---	0.844	1.159	0.068	16.989	***
REL2	<---	0.732	0.994	0.069	14.428	***
REL1	<---	0.816	1.205	0.074	16.354	***
RES4	<--- Responsiveness	0.794	1.000			
RES3	<---	0.787	0.927	0.056	16.409	***
RES2	<---	0.880	1.000	0.053	18.787	***
RES1	<---	0.834	1.098	0.062	17.646	***
ASS4	<--- Assurance	0.869	1.000			
ASS3	<---	0.814	0.852	0.044	19.156	***
ASS2	<---	0.804	0.844	0.045	18.813	***
ASS1	<---	0.795	0.871	0.047	18.480	***
EMP5	<--- Empathy	0.801	1.000			
EMP4	<---	0.821	1.065	0.059	17.897	***
EMP3	<---	0.855	1.117	0.059	18.905	***
EMP2	<---	0.851	1.136	0.060	18.799	***
EMP1	<---	0.851	1.160	0.062	18.791	***

Table 2: Results of measurement model for service quality dimensions



The results of the correlation analysis, as given in the Table 3, indicate that all the pairs of service quality dimensions included in the study are found to be less than 0.7, which stipulates that moderate level of correlation exist between them. It also represents the presence of discriminant validity in the developed scale of service quality.

In the study, the composite reliability (CR) statistic, average variance extracted (AVE), and maximum shared variance (MSV) have been estimated for all dimensions of Service Quality, as shown in the Table 4.

	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted	Maximum Shared Variance
Assurance	0.892	0.674	0.465
Tangibility	0.891	0.577	0.465
Reliability	0.896	0.634	0.440
Responsiveness	0.895	0.680	0.430
Empathy	0.921	0.699	0.421

Table 4: Indicators of construct validity for service quality

The results indicate that the composite reliability (CR) of the service quality dimensions have been found to be greater than 0.7 and average variance of all the service quality dimensions to be greater than 0.5. Thus, ensuring convergent validity of the factors. Also, AVE has been found to be greater than MSV, which indicates the presence of discriminant validity among the different service quality dimensions.

Table 5 explains the estimates of the variance and covariance between the regression coefficients. The diagonal entries are the square root of the AVE of each different service quality dimensions and the off-diagonals are its correlation with other different service quality dimensions selected in the measurement model.

	Assurance	Tangibility	Reliability	Responsiveness	Empathy
Assurance	0.821				
Tangibility	0.682	0.759			
Reliability	0.658	0.663	0.796		
Responsiveness	0.550	0.656	0.609	0.825	
Empathy	0.564	0.649	0.599	0.550	0.836

Table 5: Square root of AVE and correlation of service quality dimensions

The results in Table 5 indicates that the square root of the AVE of each different service quality dimension is greater than the correlation with all other service quality dimensions, indicating the presence of discriminant validity in the scale.

The results for the measurement model indicating the different service quality dimensions revealed the following fit indices: CMIN/d.f. (2.249) less than 5 indicate a good model fit (Hair, et.al.2010), as depicted in Table 6. Similarly,

other indices were also used to analyze the model fit like root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA = .058) (less than 0.05 for a good fit), goodness of fit index (GFI = .892), comparative fit index (CFI = .951) (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2013). Thus, it is concluded that the overall statistical fitness of the measurement model is acceptable.

Statistical Fit Indices	CMIN/ Df	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	RMSEA
Estimated Value	2.249	.892	.866	.951	.916	.944	.058
Required value	Less than 5	Greater than 0.8	Greater than 0.8	Greater than .9	Greater than 0.8	Greater than 0.9	Less than 0.08

Table 6: Goodness of fit indices

Findings of the study

Descriptive Analysis: Service Quality Dimensions

In order to ensure maximization of customer satisfaction, it is important for any service provider to understand how customers evaluate the various dimensions of service quality provided to them.

i. Tangibility

The findings show that the mean score of the responses in respect of different dimensions of tangibility are lying in the range of 3.6 and 3.93 in the scale of 1 to 5. This means the delegates have positively higher perception with respect to tangibility. The aspect of tangibility having the highest mean score is found to be the appearance of well-dressed employees available at the facilities (Mean score 3.933), followed by the appearance of the physical facilities at the location (Mean score 3.847). This indicates the selected hotels and convention centres are highly professional in maintaining the physical facilities and presenting their employees nicely to the delegates. However, the variety of food and beverages served at the convention venue is found to have the lowest mean score of 3.062. This means that there is a need to work hard in order to improve the quality of food and beverages served to the delegates.

ii. Reliability

The results indicate that the mean score of the responses are lying in the range of 3.538 and 3.720 in the scale of 1 to 5. This shows that delegates are reasonably satisfied with the 'reliability' dimension of service quality. The ability of employees to show a sincere interest to resolve any service issue with empathy has the highest mean score of 3.720, followed by their commitment to provide services as promised (mean score 3.653). This reflects that select hotels and convention centres are professional in keeping up to their commitments and highly sincere in resolving any service issue that might occur during the delivery of services. It is evident from

the results that though hotels and convention centres are doing well in various aspects, they need to improve their timeliness of service delivery and have more accuracy in maintaining client records.

iii. Responsiveness

It can be observed from the table that the mean score of the responses of the delegates, for all the four components of responsiveness lie between 3.699 to 3.84 on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating that the responding delegates are reasonably satisfied with all the dimension of responsiveness of the service quality. In respect of the individual dimensions, it may be observed that the perceived average score for 'Employees of the convention venue are always willing to help delegates' was the highest at 3.84, followed by 'Delegates receive prompt services from employees' with a score of 3.79. However, there is some improvement needed in terms of timeliness in responding to delegates.

iv. Assurance

In respect of the different dimensions of Assurance, it may be observed that the perceived average score was highest at 3.909 for 'Delegates feel safe in their transactions at the convention venue', followed by 3.866 for 'Employees of the convention venue are polite and courteous towards the delegates', this indicates higher degree of satisfaction amongst the delegates about these two dimensions of service quality.

v. Empathy

The results indicate that the delegates are quite satisfied with the operating hours of the organizations, as it has received the highest mean score of 3.876. This is followed by the perception that the convention venue has delegate's best interest at heart (Mean: 3.710). However, the ability of employees to understand the specific need of delegates, with a lower score of 3.659 indicates that there is a need to improve the situation in this respect.

Delegate's Suggestions for Improvement in the Services at the Venue

Since the delegates or participants are the end consumers of business tourism services, the suggestions received from them act as useful insights for strategic managers to design their offerings in the most optimal way. This section discusses the various suggestions received from the delegates attending various MICE events, which are grouped under logical headings to enable better comprehension.

i. Access to the Venue

Most of the responding delegates particularly participating in various exhibitions at convention centres, suggested *improving the access to the venue* by way of introducing feeder busses from nearest metro station and golf carts from the entrance gates to various exhibition halls within the venue. It is important

because, as a result of poor access roads and lack of in-venue transportation facilities, lot of delegates missed out on visiting all the exhibition halls, resulting in a poor footfall and low business opportunities for exhibitors.

ii. Parking facilities

A few hotels and one of the conventions centres considered for the purpose of data collection did not have conveniently accessible parking spaces for organizers, exhibitors, employees and delegates. This caused a lot of inconvenience to the participants. Thus, management of the hotels and convention centres should consider improving the parking experience for their delegates by either introducing valet parking services at nominal rates or by way of capacity enhancement.

iii. Signage and Directions

Participating delegates of various conferences, meetings and exhibitions in a variety of hotels and convention centres have suggested improvements in signage boards and directional boards to various facilities within the venue. There should be proper signage and route plan installed at appropriate places to guide visitors along with information desks at convenient places with helpful staff to direct them to facilities in the venue.

iv. Food and Beverages

One of the most cited concerns by participating delegates was related to availability of reasonably priced food and beverage services. The food that was available for purchase in food courts was reportedly very expensive. It was, therefore, suggested that venue management should look in to ensuring availability of good quality food and drinking water facilities at reasonable prices to the delegates and organizers. Such initiatives are believed to go a long way in ensuring high satisfaction amongst delegates.

v. Convenience and Facilities

In organizing large scale MICE events, it often happens that venue organization skips paying due attention in making certain facilities available to delegates, which are crucial in ensuring delegate's satisfaction. A large number of responding delegates suggested that *facilities like a first-aid room, hygienic and clean toilets, complementary Wi-Fi connectivity and bank ATMs* are important and were either not present or were not at par with international standards at many venues. Since Delhi NCR is one of the leading cities for business tourism in India, hotels and convention centres should consider *revamping their facilities to match international standards*.

vi. Other Services

A considerable number of delegates travelling outside their city of residence to participate in MICE events, reported security issues and concerns in finding reasonably priced accommodations near the venue. Convention centres may consider tying up with other hotels in the neighborhood to



provide accommodation facilities to delegates and investing in security arrangements by employing professional security agencies and installing high-end CCTV cameras.

Demographic profile of responding delegates

The sample for the study consisted of more males (64.2%) than females (35.8%). Age groups between 26 and 35 represented the highest portion of respondents, accounting for 35.5%. A majority (51.6 %) of the respondents reported their educational qualification to be graduation; followed by 40.3 % as post-graduation. Service (48.1%) was a dominant occupation of responding delegates, followed by self-employed (34.7%) and students (16.4%). About 34.4% of respondents reported their annual income to be 'up to Rs.5 lakhs', followed by 25.5% as that lying between 'Rs. 5 and 10 lakhs'. A large majority of respondents were Indians (92.7%), while the remaining (7.3%) were foreigners. A large number of respondents (39%) indicated their purpose of travel to be only for business, whereas 21% of respondents reported their additional purpose as participating in cultural events, and another 14% as shopping. While, 60% of participating delegates received funding from their company or university, 40% would finance their attending costs themselves. In terms of type of accommodation, nearly 48.7% delegates were staying at their homes and 15.6 % with their family and friends, compared with 35.8 % of respondents staying at a hotel during the period of the event.

Conclusion and Implications

Whilst the body of knowledge on service quality in business tourism is growing, there is considerable scope for more research in this field, particularly given the importance of MICE tourism to economies worldwide. This study makes useful contributions in understanding the importance of service quality dynamics in business tourism and analyzing the socio-demographic profile of MICE delegates. There are a number of limitations which might usefully be addressed by future researches. Firstly, since the present study was carried out on select five-star hotels and convention centres in NCR, its findings may not be generalized to other hotels and convention venues, especially the ones located in other cities. In this regard, it would be useful to replicate the study under different settings or geographical areas, e.g., three – star hotels or smaller convention venues in NCR; or five-star hotels and convention centres in other cities. Secondly, the present study focuses only on understanding the perceptions of delegates attending various MICE events, future studies may try to analyse the relationship between service quality and delegate satisfaction; and lastly, this study has a cross-sectional design, as data has been collected from respondents at a single point in time. Future studies may consider using a longitudinal design to further validate the findings of this study.

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Annexure 1

Submission Date	Submission Id	Word Count	Character Count
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Reviewers Comment



Reviewer Comment 1:

The study is well supported by various past literatures in the review of literature section. Tabulated analysis of Review of Literature makes the study more lucid and understandable for the readers.

Reviewer Comment 2:

The study has been supported by the very recent and updated data and facts & figures from various credible sources. Moreover, analysis of primary data using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) enhances the acceptability of the results.

Reviewer Comment 3:

The theme of the study is very interesting and contemporary, greatly contributing to the field of analysis of service qualities for five-star hotels and convention Centre in Indian perspective.

Reviewer Comment 4:

The topic seems to be relevant in the current scenario. Also the findings of the paper justify the objectives of the study. Manuscript has been written appropriately, however the author may have included a few more literature reviews to support the study. Minor formatting changes need to be made and spelling errors need to be rectified.



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Conflict of Interest: Author of a Paper had

no conflict neither financially nor academically. To execute the research the self-funding model has been created for collection of data and preparation of a questionnaire.

Editorial Excerpt



At the time of submission, the paper had 10% of plagiarism which is an accepted percentage as per the norms and standards of the journal for the publication. As per the editorial board’s observations and blind reviewers’ remarks the paper had some minor revisions which were communicated on timely basis to the authors (Jatin & Subodh) and accordingly all the corrections had been incorporated as and when directed and required to do so. The comments related to the manuscript are related to the theme “**Service Quality in Five Star Hotels and Convention Centers**” both subject-wise and research-wise. In order to sustain in today’s competitive environment customer satisfaction and the service quality are the objectives the firms must pursue. As the organizations which are high on service quality tend to have more satisfied and loyal customers which in turn leads to higher profitability. The study analyzes the delegate’s perspective of service quality provided by hotels and convention centers in the business tourism sector in Delhi NCR by considering the SERVQUAL model. The paper is well written and some important considerations are highlighted. Overall, the paper promises to provide a strong base for further studies in this area by considering a large sample in other cities. After considering the comprehensive reviews and editorials boards remarks, it is decided to publish the manuscript under the category of “**Empirical Research Paper (ERP)**”..

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Author (Jatin) is highly indebted to his research supervisor and Indira Gandhi national open university, research cell, libraries and researchers whose literature reviewed. The data presented and analyzed in this paper by (jatin & subodh) were collected first handily and wherever it has been taken the proper acknowledgment and endorsement depicts. The author is highly indebted to their co-authors and others who had facilitated in accomplishing the research. Last but not least endorse all reviewers and editors of GJEIS in publishing in a present issue.

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