Guest Satisfaction in Contemporary Hotels: Tactics for Thriving in the Modern Hospitality Industry

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the key factors that influence guest satisfaction in today's hotel sector. The study is based on six hypotheses, each examining the relationship between guest satisfaction and six specific variables: use of technology, customer delight, hotel appearance, social media impact, service quality, and personalization of services. Data was collected from guests in leading urban centers, focusing on both lodging and dining experiences. The findings confirm that guest satisfaction is significantly linked to all six variables studied. Hotels that invest in smart technologies, offer thoughtful gestures, maintain a premium appearance, engage actively on social media, ensure high service standards, and provide personalized experiences are more likely to achieve high levels of guest satisfaction. The study offers practical insights for hoteliers seeking to thrive in the modern, experience-driven hospitality industry.

Keywords*: Guest Satisfaction, Hotel Management, Strategic Management, Customer Delight, Hospitality, and Service Management.*

I. Introduction

The hospitality industry is growing again after a short break due to the pandemic. People are now traveling more, which is good for hotels. Guests expect more than just a clean room. They want comfort, care, and value for their money. In India, hotels serve a mix of guests—tourists, business travelers, and even patients. Each has different needs. Some want luxury. Others want budget stays. But all expect polite staff, clean rooms, and smooth service. Today, guests also want fast check-ins, Wi-Fi, and smart rooms. They share reviews online, so hotels must perform well every time. Indian hotels now blend modern tools with a personal touch. They also focus on eco-friendly ways and local culture. Places like Chokhi Dhani use local customs to make guests feel special. Food and staff behavior play a big role in guest satisfaction. To stay ahead, hotels must use new ideas and improve often. Guest happiness now depends on many small things done right.

India has a long history of showing great care to guests. In Indian culture, guests are seen as gods. The phrase "Atithi Devo Bhava" means "The guest is like God." It comes from old Indian texts like the Taittiriya Upanishad. The idea is to treat guests with deep respect and love.

This belief is still strong in many homes, especially in small towns. Families serve food and care for guests, even without a prior visit plan. The Indian government also used this phrase in its "Incredible India" tourism campaign to make India more welcoming for tourists.

Many temples across India serve free meals to visitors. Big places like the Golden Temple and Tirupati Temple follow this tradition. Hotels and the hospitality industry also follow this rule to treat their guests with care and kindness. Schools and colleges also teach this value to students. Because of this deep-rooted belief, hotels in India must work hard to meet guest needs. To make guests happy, hotels must give great service and keep improving. This old value still shapes how people treat others in modern times.

i. Customer Satisfaction Theories

Customer satisfaction means making people happy. If customers like the service, they come back. If not, they leave. Every business wants happy customers. But what makes them happy? Some smart people made theories to explain this. One is the Expectation-Confirmation Theory, which says people feel good when they get more than they expect, and feel bad when they get less. Hotels can ask what guests want, then try to give more. The Kano Model talks about three parts: basics like clean rooms and water, extras like fast Wi-Fi, and surprises like cakes or thank-you notes. Doing all three makes guests loyal. The SERVQUAL Model gives five rules—be reliable, give assurance, look good, show care, and act fast. These steps help guests feel safe and happy. The last is the Disconfirmation Theory, which means comparing what the guest got with what they expected. If the service is better, the guest is happy. If worse, the guest is upset. Hotels use this to check if they met guest hopes. All these theories help hotels improve service and make guests feel good.

ii. Contemporary Concerns

Customer satisfaction in hotels depends on many things. Technology helps a lot. Guests can book room online, use UPI to pay, and even control their room with a phone. Smart tools like chatbots and smart locks make things easy and fast, which makes guests happy. A premium appearance also matters. Clean, stylish lobbies, neat rooms, fresh towels, and well-dressed staff leave a strong impression. They show quality and build trust.

Service quality is key. Guests want kind, fast, and helpful staff. A smile, quick help, and polite words make a big difference. Good service makes guests return. Today, social media plays a big role. Happy guests post photos and reviews, bringing more visitors. Bad reviews can harm, so hotels must reply and improve. Some even use influencers to promote their brand.

Personalization is another smart move. Guests love special treatment—like remembering their name or giving their favorite drink. Small surprises on birthdays or during repeat visits make them feel special. This leads to customer delight, which is better than just satisfaction. Delight creates loyalty. Guests feel happy and talk about the hotel to others. In short, hotels must focus on guest needs and give more than expected. Using modern tools and kind service, they can turn happy guests into loyal fans. This is how the hotel business grows.

iii. Types of Hotels in India

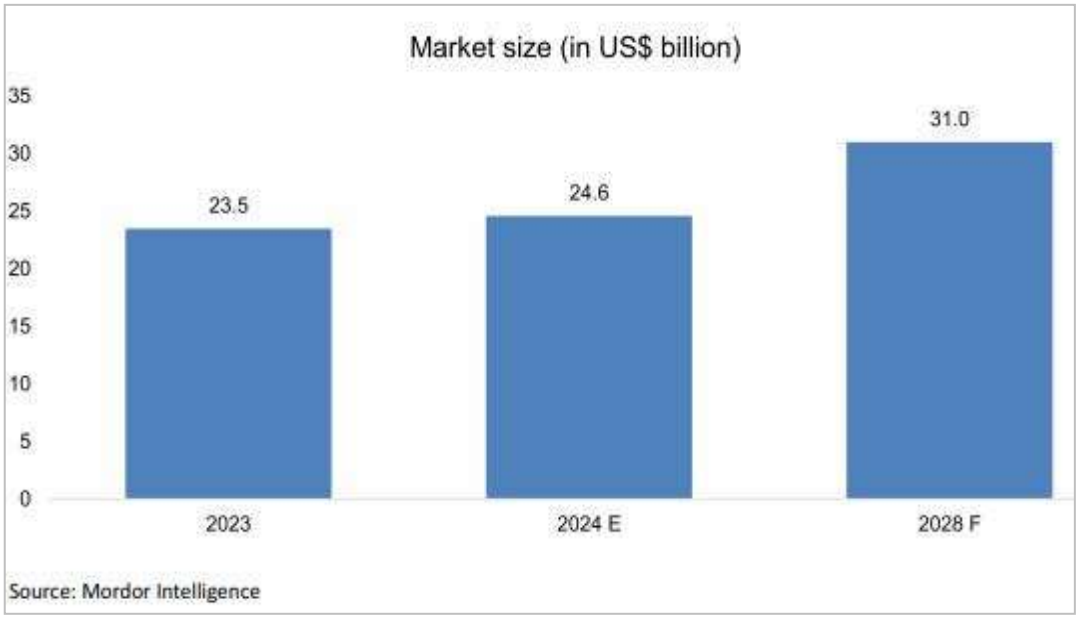
India offers a wide variety of hotels to match the diverse needs of travelers. From luxurious 5-star and 7-star hotels like The Oberoi or Taj Mahal Palace that promise elegance and top-class service, to small boutique hotels that offer themed and personalized stays, the range is vast. Business hotels cater to corporate guests with meeting spaces and tech facilities, while budget hotels like OYO and FabHotels provide affordable options for everyday travelers. Resorts, often nestled in scenic locations, offer nature and comfort together. Heritage hotels give a royal experience by converting palaces and forts into guest spaces. Eco-hotels focus on sustainability, using green practices. Airport and transit hotels offer convenience for short layovers. Home stays and guesthouses allow for a local and cultural stay experience, especially popular with foreign tourists. Spa and wellness retreats promote health and relaxation through yoga and Ayurveda. Together, these types of hotels make India’s hospitality industry rich, varied, and guest-friendly.

1. Luxury Hotels (5-Star & 7-Star): These high-end hotels offer top-tier luxury and comfort. They require formal classification by the Government of India. Examples: Taj Mahal Palace (Mumbai), The Oberoi Udaivilas (Udaipur), The Leela Palace (Delhi)
2. Boutique Hotels: Small, stylish hotels with unique room designs and themed restaurants. They offer personalized experiences for elite guests. Examples: Neemrana Fort Palace (Rajasthan), The Serai (Chikmagalur)
3. Business Hotels: Serve corporate guests with meeting rooms, business centers, and tech support. Ideal for events, seminars, and work travel. Examples: ITC Maurya (Delhi), JW Marriott (Mumbai)
4. Budget Hotels: Affordable stay options offering basic facilities. Popular with budget travelers, backpackers, bloggers, and vloggers. Examples: Ginger Hotels, FabHotels, OYO Rooms
5. Resort Hotels: Set in natural surroundings, these hotels offer leisure and luxury. Guests expect premium nature-based experiences. Examples: The Lalit Golf & Spa Resort (Goa), Club Mahindra (Coorg)
6. Heritage Hotels: Converted forts, palaces, and havelis that offer a royal and historical stay. Guests enjoy living in heritage-rich settings. Examples: Umaid Bhawan Palace (Jodhpur), Rambagh Palace (Jaipur)
7. Eco and Sustainable Hotels: Focused on green practices, local materials, and eco-friendly tourism. Examples: CGH Earth (Kerala), Barefoot at Havelock (Andaman)
8. Airport and Transit Hotels: Located near or inside airports. Designed for short stays before/after flights or during layovers. Examples: Holiday Inn Express (Mumbai Airport), Novotel (Delhi Aerocity)
9. Home Stays and Guesthouses: Locally owned homes offering rooms and local food. Offer a cultural, home-like experience. Growing due to online booking platforms. Examples: SaffronStays, Airbnb homes in hills and heritage areas
10. Spa and Wellness Retreats: Focus on health, yoga, Ayurveda, and relaxation. Popular with wellness-focused tourists. Examples: Ananda in the Himalayas (Rishikesh), Kairali Ayurvedic Healing Village (Kerala)

iv. Hotel Industry in India

The hospitality industry in India is rapidly expanding. It plays a crucial role in the nation's economy and tourism sector. India's rich cultural heritage and diverse landscapes is the reason. It attracts millions of domestic and international travellers.

The Indian hotel industry has seen significant growth. It is due to economic, social, and technological advancements. It has become a key driver of tourism, economic development, and employment. The market may to grow from US$ 24.61 billion in 2024 to US$ 31.01 billion by 2029, with a projected CAGR of 4.73%. The COVID-19 pandemic affected the industry in 2020-21. The effect caused declines in key metrics like revenue per available room (RevPAR).



Source: https://www.ibef.org/download/Growth-of-Hotel-Industry-in-India.pdf

The Indian hotel industry may to grow 7-9% in revenue by FY2025. It is due to rising domestic leisure travel, business tourism, and large-scale events. Occupancy rates could reach a decade-high in tier-II cities and spiritual destinations. Average room rates may reach to US$ 94-96 (Rs. 7,800-8,000) in FY25. Industry expansion is because of infrastructure development, enhanced air connectivity, and digital innovations. It will be positioning Indian hospitality for long-term growth. India's hospitality industry is estimated to be valued at around USD 24.61 billion in 2024. It is expected of reaching approximately USD 31.01 billion by 2029. This growth is predicted to follow a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.73% during the period from 2024 to 2029.

v. Need of the Study

The researcher has found that there is huge need of understanding the factors affecting guest satisfaction in hotels. The researcher has found that Indian hotel industry has been going through major changes since the mass standardization and franchising have increased. Tourism promotion has helped the boom of Indian hotel industry. Companies like OYO, MakeMyTrip, GoIbibo, Agoda and others have revolutionised the hotel industry. COVID born issues have reduced the scope of hotel industry for a while but with the new expectations from guests and new standardization the hotel industry is bouncing back. So, it will become very important to study the need of guests and the factors affecting the guest satisfaction among the hotels.

vi. Problem Statement

Usually, the service quality is considered as a representative of customers satisfaction. But we cannot ignore the establishment quality, efforts of staff for guest satisfaction. Guests in the hotel usually admire the experience in that particular stay. Different studies have used different aspects for the guest satisfaction. Literature review is dedicated to such work. Appearance (theme based, modern housing, royal palace etc.), facilities (Gym, Spa, Swimming pool), assistance (basic help, laundry, room service etc.) and emergency infrastructure (transportation vehicle by hotel, medical emergency etc.) are different aspects on which the hotels are working now a days. With the discussion of key issues the researcher has proposed the research problem for present study as, ‘Guest Satisfaction in Contemporary Hotels: Tactics for Thriving in the Modern Hospitality Industry’

II. Literature Review

The study explores multiple dimensions of hotel guest satisfaction, focusing on trends like service innovation, technology use, and enhanced guest experiences. The researcher reviewed academic literature, case studies, and industry reports, particularly using consumer behavior theories and models like SERVQUAL and Kano. Key areas include employee training, cultural sensitivity, and data-driven service improvements. The literature from 2015 to 2025 was considered based on relevance, citations, and publication quality.

Key Studies Reviewed

- Lu et al. (2015) studied service perception gaps between luxury hotel managers and guests in Taiwan.
- Pozo et al. (2016) focused on customer satisfaction and sustainable practices in different hotel types.
- Yu et al. (2017) analyzed TripAdvisor reviews to understand how green practices affect satisfaction.
- Moise et al. (2018) found that green practices increased satisfaction and loyalty in 3- and 4-star hotels.
- Alrawadieh & Law (2019) used content analysis of guest reviews in Istanbul and highlighted room quality and service.
- Alemayehu (2020) explored tech use in Addis Ababa hotels and found Wi-Fi and Satellite TV most valued by business travelers.
- Olya et al. (2021) studied how sustainability in Kazakh hotels influenced satisfaction and loyalty.
- Shin & Jeong (2022) looked at luxury hotel guests and the impact of tech-fit models on satisfaction.
- Moenga & Rotich (2023) studied ICT in Nairobi hotels, focusing on booking systems and room technology.
- Ravi Kumar (2024) explored service, personalization, green steps, and tech in Finnish luxury hotels using SERVQUAL.
- Chaudhary et al. (2025) analyzed the effects of smart tourism and green tech on guest trust using surveys and SEM.
- Diwan (2025) used AI and machine learning to rank what guests value most in smart hotel tech.

Research Gaps

Broader Aspects of Guest Satisfaction: Most studies focus on service quality; factors like hotel theme, food, and tech need attention.

Post-COVID Concerns: Shared hotel amenities are now viewed with caution. Trust recovery is a key issue.

Role of Social Media: Online reviews and word-of-mouth significantly shape guest satisfaction and should be studied further.

Established Factors in Modern Context: Premium service, quality, and guest delight need to be re-evaluated today.

Bridging the Gaps: This research aims to fill these gaps and explore new angles in guest satisfaction in the hospitality sector.

III. Research Methodology

Objective of the Research

With the discussion of the problem and related aspects the researcher has developed following objectives.

1. To study the guest satisfaction in hotels
2. To study service quality aspects (appearance, assistance, emergency) of the hotels and restaurants
3. To study role of factors like social media, premium appearance, personalization, technology on the guest satisfaction.
4. To study the measures to increase the Guest satisfaction among the guests at hotels.

Hypothesis

Based upon the literature review and objectives the researcher has following hypothesis:

$H_0$1: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and Technology use in hotels
$H_0$2: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and premium appearance of hotel
$H_0$3: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and service quality of hotel
$H_0$4: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and social media impact of hotel
$H_0$5: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and personalization of services in hotels
$H_0$6: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and customer delight

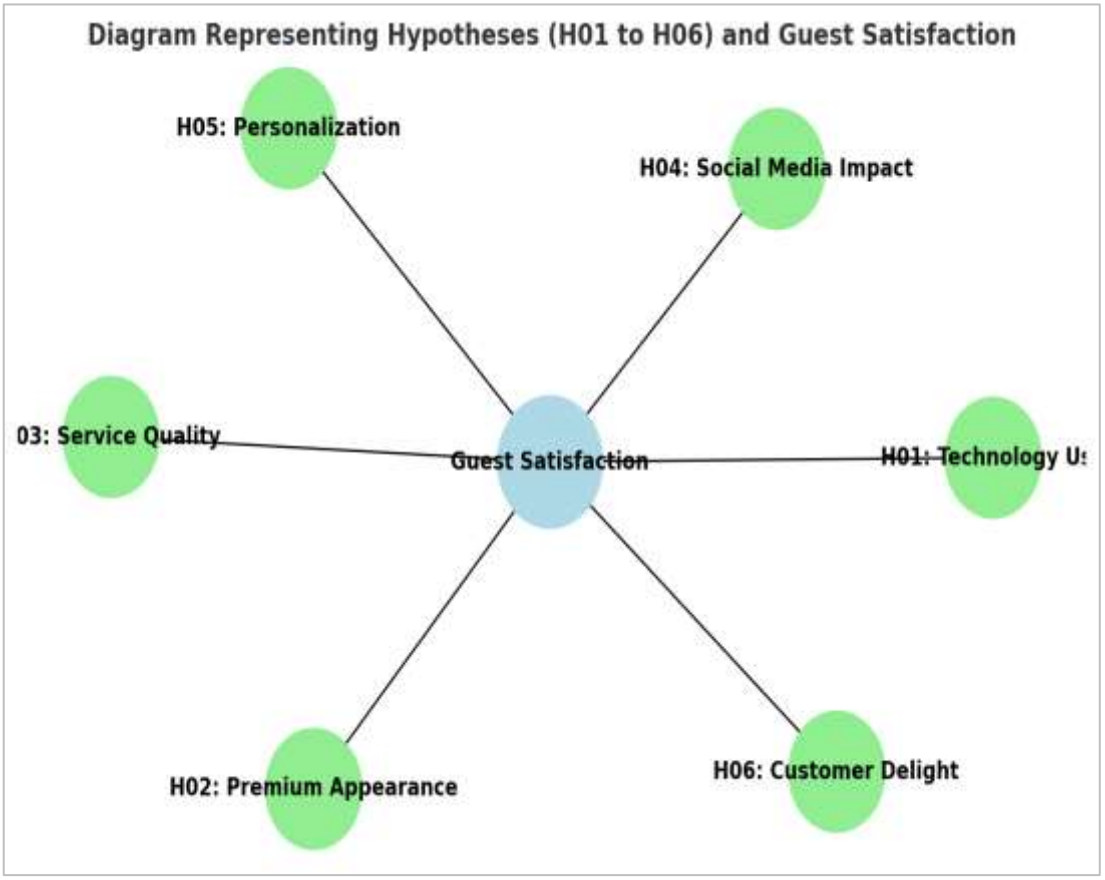


Fig 3.1: Hypothesis

Variables in The Study

The researcher has used the following variables in the study:

Guest Satisfaction

1. I felt happy with the service I received at the hotel.
2. The hotel staffs were kind and helpful during my stay.
3. My room was clean and comfortable.
4. I got quick help when I needed something.
5. I enjoyed my food and dining experience at the hotel.
6. I would like to stay at this hotel again in the future.

Technology Use

1. I could book my room easily using the hotel website or app.
2. I used digital check-in or check-out, and it saved my time.
3. The hotel had good Wi-Fi and internet service during my stay.
4. I used smart devices in the room, like TV or lights, without any problem.
5. The hotel staff used tablets or machines to take orders or give information quickly.

Premium Appearance

1. The hotel building looks modern and beautiful.
2. The furniture and design in the hotel look rich and stylish.
3. The hotel lobby gave me a grand and clean feeling.
4. The lights, colors, and decoration looked premium.
5. The hotel's look made me feel I was in a high-class place.

Service Quality

1. The hotel staff helped me quickly when I asked for something.
2. The workers at the hotel were polite and respectful.
3. I felt safe and cared for during my stay.
4. The staff knew what to do and did their job well.

Social Media Impact

1. I saw good reviews about this hotel on social media before booking.
2. The hotel's pictures and posts online helped me choose this place.
3. I shared my hotel experience on social media.
4. I would trust this hotel more if people post good things about it online.

Personalization of Services

1. The hotel remembered my likes and needs during my stay.
2. I was given services that matched my personal choices.
3. My room had things I like, such as my favorite food or smell.
4. The staff customized dished as per request. (More/less spicy etc.)

Customer Delight

1. The hotel gave me a nice surprise I did not expect.
2. I felt very special during my stay at the hotel.
3. The hotel did more than I thought they would.
4. My stay at the hotel made me feel really happy and excited.

IV. Findings of The Study

$H_0$1: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and Technology use in hotels

Table 4.1: Correlation table H01

Correlations			
		Guest Satisfaction	Technology Use
Guest satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.635**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	500	500
Technology use	Pearson Correlation	.635**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	500	500
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The correlation coefficient between guest satisfaction and technology use in hotels is 0.635, indicating a strong positive relationship. This means that as technology use increases, guest satisfaction also rises significantly. In today's world, guests are surrounded by technology daily and expect similar experiences during their hotel stay. Even in natural or resort settings, guests still want to stay connected with smart services. Technology has moved beyond being a basic need—it is now an expectation and sometimes even a showpiece. Hotels should embrace technology not just for utility but also to impress and delight guests with features like automated doors, smart showers, and visible gadgets, creating a tech-savvy atmosphere that enhances satisfaction.

$H_0$2: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and premium appearance of hotel

Table 4.2: Correlation table H02

Correlations			
		Guest Satisfaction	Premium Appearance
Guest satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.644**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	500	500
Premium appearance	Pearson Correlation	.644**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	500	500
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The correlation value of 0.644 indicates a strong positive relationship between guest satisfaction and the premium appearance of hotels. This shows that how a hotel looks greatly affects how happy guests feel. Over the years, interior design has advanced. It now includes smart lighting, themed rooms, modern

reception counters, and stylish lifts, even in small hotels. Elements like wall colors, staff uniforms, furniture, and cutlery are carefully chosen to create a premium feel. Hotels aim to stand out visually and not appear ordinary. Good appearance often leads to guest satisfaction, sometimes even more than food or service. So, hotels must focus on meeting guests' visual and design expectations.

$H_0$3: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and service quality of hotel

Table 4.3: Correlation table H03

Correlations			
		Guest Satisfaction	Service Quality
Guest satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.659**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	500	500
Service quality	Pearson Correlation	.659**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	500	500
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Service quality is the core of the hotel industry. It creates comfort, care, and trust for guests. When service is good—like fast check-in, clean rooms, tasty food, and polite staff—guests feel valued. This leads to repeat visits and positive reviews. Poor service, on the other hand, damages a hotel's reputation. A strong correlation of 0.659 shows a significant link between guest satisfaction and service quality. Guests expect smooth and quick service across all areas—check-in, gym, pool, lounge, and more. Hotels must focus on maintaining high service standards, as this is the key to guest happiness and business success.

$H_0$4: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and social media impact of hotel

Table 4.4: Correlation Table H04

Correlations			
		Guest Satisfaction	Social Media Impact
Guest satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.598**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	500	500
Social media impact	Pearson Correlation	.598**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	500	500
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Social media has replaced traditional word-of-mouth marketing with a stronger, lasting impact. Guests now share their hotel experiences through posts, photos, and reviews that reach thousands instantly and stay online for others to see anytime. This creates powerful publicity—positive or negative. A good post can attract many new guests, while a bad review can harm a hotel's image. That's why hotels must maintain high service standards and respond quickly and politely online. With a correlation value of 0.598, there is a significant relationship between guest satisfaction and social media impact, making it a key factor in a hotel's success.

$H_0$5: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and personalization of services in hotels

Table 5.5: Correlation Table H05

Correlations			
		Guest Satisfaction	Personalization of Services
Guest satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.601**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	500	500
Personalization of services	Pearson Correlation	.601	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	500	500
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

There is a strong link between guest satisfaction and personalized services in hotels, with a correlation of 0.601. Guests want to feel unique and valued, not like just another visitor. By using social media, hotels can understand guest preferences and tailor services—like custom room setups, welcome messages, or birthday surprises. Some even offer personalized souvenirs. These thoughtful gestures leave a lasting impression, encouraging guests to share their experiences online, which builds trust and promotes the hotel. Using tools like RFM analysis, hotels can identify and prioritize loyal guests, enhancing satisfaction and repeat visits.

$H_0$6: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction level and customer delight

Table 4.6: Correlation Table H06

Correlations			
		Guest Satisfaction	Customer Delight
Guest satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.603**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	500	500
Customer delight	Pearson Correlation	.603**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	500	500
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Customer delight means going beyond expectations to make guests feel special. It includes surprise gestures like free cab pick-up, birthday cakes, welcome drinks, or gym access without being requested. These thoughtful acts create joy and leave a lasting impression. Personalized touches like handwritten notes, early check-in, or pet treats add value. For families, small gifts for children or custom pillow choices show extra care. Such unexpected services boost satisfaction. With a correlation of 0.603, the study confirms a significant link between guest satisfaction and customer delight in hotels.

Multiple Correlation Coefficients

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.896[a]	.803	.798	.31516
a. Predictors: (Constant), Technology use, appearance of hotel, service quality, social media impact, personalization of services, customer delight				

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	170.977	7	24.425	245.903	.000[b]
	Residual	37.447	377	.099		
	Total	208.424	490			

a. Dependent Variable: Guest satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Technology use, appearance of hotel, service quality, social media impact, personalization of services, customer delight

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.514	.180		-4.032	.000
	Technology use	.709	.038	.786	5.110	.000
	appearance of hotel	.189	.012	.357	6.180	.000
	service quality	.547	.033	.530	12.152	.000
	social media impact	.344	.029	.395	10.112	.000
	personalization of services	.343	.031	.373	2.301	.002
	customer delight	.249	.032	.288	7.016	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Guest satisfaction

The value of R is .896. The value of multiple correlation coefficients is good and supports the hypothesis testing. Further, the coefficient table shows that all the beat value for all the variables is above 0.500, t value is above 1.96, and the sig value is below 0.005. The values support the hypothesis testing.

V. Conclusion

The research shows that guest happiness in hotels depends on many small things. The study was done in five big cities of Uttar Pradesh. These were Lucknow, Kanpur, Meerut, Ghaziabad, and NOIDA. The guests included people who came to eat or stay. The researcher did not ask for names or hotel details. This helped guests feel safe and open. The aim was to know what makes guests happy today. The study looked at many areas. These include how hotels use technology, how they look, the service they give, the use of social media, personal service, and customer delight. Each part plays a strong role in guest joy. When hotels do these things well, guests leave happy. They also want to come back. That is every hotel's goal. The study found that smart use of technology helps a lot. It makes things easy. Online booking, fast check-in, and app help are key tools. These give guests control. They also feel respected. Smart tools give faster help and fewer problems. These builds trust. The hotel's look also matters. Clean, fresh, and nice-looking hotels feel good. Small fixes help. Clean walls, new sheets, fresh paint, and neat dining areas work well. These small changes don't cost much. But they give big results. Guests feel like they are in a premium place. That makes them feel special. Next is service quality. It is the heart of hotel work. Clean rooms, hot food, quick help, and polite staff matter. A fast check-in also adds joy. Staff must be kind and solve problems fast. One bad moment can spoil the stay. So, the service must stay strong every day.

Social media is also a key part. Guests now post photos and reviews online. These posts shape the hotel's name. Good reviews bring more guests. Bad ones hurt the hotel.

Hotels must keep their space clean, bright, and ready for photos. They should thank happy guests. They must also reply to bad reviews in a kind way. Personal service also matters a lot. Guests like when they get things they enjoy without asking. This includes a favorite drink, cool room, or a birthday cake. These small acts create big joy. Hotels must note what guests like. They should train staff to use this info. The research shows one thing clearly. When hotels care about details, guests feel happy. A happy guest will come back. That is the key to hotel success.

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