The Effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty and Word of Mouth; Evidence from Tourists in Antalya, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Referring to social exchange theory and expectancy theory, the present study attempts to investigate a conceptual model using deductive approach. The model examines the impact of the service quality on customer satisfaction and the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty and positive word of mouth.

The result of this study is based on the sample gathered from 205 customers in a hotel in Antalya. Based on the results, this study suggests that the quality of service in hotels and direct effect on customer satisfaction and customer satisfaction respectively has direct and positive impact on customer loyalty and positive word of mouth. However, like any other studies, the present inquiry bears some limitations which are discussed at the end of this thesis. Moreover, implication and future research direction are also discussed in this thesis.

Keywords: Service quality, customer satisfaction, word of mouth, customer loyalty, hotel industry

ÖZ

Bu çalışma sosyal değişim teorisi ile beklenti teorisine atfen, tümdengelim yaklaşımının kullanımı ile oluşturulan kavramsal bir model üzerine kurulmuştur. Model hizmet kalitesinin müşteri memnuniyeti üzerindeki etkileri ile müşteri memnuniyetinin müşteri sadakati ile kulaktan kulağa iletişimde olumlu etkilerini incelemektedir.

Çalışmanın uygulama bölümünde, Antalya'da bir otelde 205 müşterilerden toplanan anketlerin bulguları, otellerde hizmet kalitesinin müşteri memnuniyeti üzerinde doğrudan etkili olduğu ve müşteri memnuniyetinin de müşteri sadakati ve kulaktan kulağa iletişimde doğrudan ve pozitif bir etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermektedir . Ancak diğer çalışmalarda olduğu üzere, bu tezin de bazı sınırlamalar taşıdığı ortadadır. Çalışmanın sonunda bu kısıtlamalar ile çalışmanın sonuçları ve gelecekteki çalışmalara yapılan öneriler yer almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hizmet kalitesi, müşteri memnuniyeti, kulaktan kulağa iletişim, müşteri sadakati, otel endüstrisi.

…To My Family

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all I want to thanks my dear supervisor for his support. Without this provision I cannot do anything.

Second I want to thanks faculty dean and vice dean of this department to provide lots of opportunities for people like me.

And most of all I want to thanks my family for their unconditionally love and kindness. It is because of them that today I can stand here. To my mom, Nasrin, love you so much from the bottom of my heart. My dad, Rahman, thanks for your guide, love and support and all the people who help me to reach this step.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In this competitive and challenging age, organizations must try to concentrate on consumers' wants and needs to encounter their expectations and fulfill them because client satisfaction was a strategic issue in the past two decades (Zaibaf, et al., 2013). Customer satisfaction is viewed as affecting repurchasing aims and arrogances that, in turn, inspire company's future return and profit (El-garaihy, 2013). Wilkins et al. (2010) specified that greater service quality increases consumer satisfaction, loyalty, enhances client retention, boosts profitability, and helps sustainable competitive improvement.

Service quality has been documented as a major matter in the tourism and hospitality industry (Cheng et al., 2012). In a progressively competitive market, providing extraordinary quality service is viewed as a critical factor for the triumph of tourism and hospitality businesses (Tsaur et al., 2014). Therefore, organizations concentrated on customers' expectations and attempts to satisfy them by delivering superior quality of service that is a central issue to retain satisfied and loyal customers (Lim, 2014). Marketers have recently begun to consider and advance strategies to manage and measure service excellence to their personal advantage (Zaibaf, et al., 2013).

The growing reputation of the service segment as part of the experience economy has glowed a significant amount of curiosity in service research (Binkhorst & Dekker,

2009; Chan, 2009; Hartman et al., 2009; Volo, 2009). Most business experts recognize that service processes link with customers and thus have developed countless customer experience improvement programs to advance their operations and performance to achieve competitive success (Jennings et al., 2009; Lin & Mattila, 2010; Silber et al., 2009). The scope of the hospitality business comprises a variety of businesses that provide services and facilities, such as lodging, restaurants, and spa (Hjalager & Konu, 2011; Millar et al., 2012; Oyewole, 2013; Tsai et al., 2012).

Numerous service quality explanations take their origin in gap examination and SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al.,1985 & 1988). Accordingly, clients understand service quality in form of the differences between their expectations and the service performance or at least apparent performance. Parasuraman et al (1985) recognized ten fundamental factors of quality, which explain the service quality for customers' perception and expectations. In 1988, these researchers abridged the previous factors to five to evaluate the concept of the service which are tangibles, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy with the customers.

1.1 Purpose of the Thesis

In light of the evidence give above, the aim of this study is to recommend and test a research model that explores the effects of service quality with the indicators of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy on customer satisfaction and the effect of this concept on tourist behavior and word of mouth.

This study is significant and relevant for the following reasons:

First, there is a lack of hospitality and tourism industry-specific literature related to the service quality (Zaibaf et al., 2013). Secondly, it appears that there is a gap between customer expectations and the performance of the service (Torres, 2014).

1.2 Contribution of the Thesis

As stated earlier, in hospitality industry delivering great quality of service is an important issue to please customers. Therefore, this study has contribution to hospitality literature:

First, Zaibaf and his collogues in 2013 mentioned that there is a shortage of hospitality and tourism literature related to the service quality and Torres (2014) stated that there is a gap between customer expectations and the performance of the service.

1.3 Justification of the Study Sample

The Republic of Turkey is located in Western Asia with the share of Eastern Thrace in Southeastern Europe. Turkey is surrounded by eight countries: Bulgaria to the northwest; Greece to the west; Georgia to the northeast; Armenia, Iran and the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhchivan to the east; and Iraq and Syria to the southeast. The Mediterranean Sea is in the south; the Aegean Sea is in the west; and the Black Sea is in the north. The Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles (which together form the Turkish Straits) delineate the boundary between Thrace and Anatolia; they also separate Europe and Asia (National Geographic Atlas of the World). Turkey's location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia makes it a country of significant geostrategic importance.

Tourism in Turkey intended to provide extensions to management and implementation of strategic planning effort and boosting the cooperation between public and private

sector of tourism with reference to the principal of governance. This perspective has the primary objective of guiding the tourism and travel industry at production management and implementation phases but putting forth a roadmap for the sector. This approach allows for improving itself not on an individual land plot but regional basis within a guideline rather than imperative and dynamic rather than static framework (http://www.kultur.gov.tr/).

Antalya, the Turkish Riviera is the most stunning part of Turkey's Mediterranean coast. It is typical of Turkey, a thriving modern city, with a historic heart in the center of Kaleiçi within the old city walls. This area has seen something of a renaissance in recent years, with many of the wooden Ottoman mansions being restored and turned into boutique hotels. No cars are allowed in the narrow streets of the old town so it is a good place to soak up the atmosphere around the charming harbor. The symbol of Antalya is the fluted minaret or Yivli Minare built by the Seljuks in the 13th century. There are plenty of interesting pieces in the Archaeological Museum, from the Palaeolithic Age right through to Ottoman times (http://www.gototurkey.co.uk/).

Antalya has a backdrop of stunning mountain scenery, and the city is set high on cliffs, with many of its grandest hotels overlooking the sea on the outskirts of the town. The beach area of Lara, approximately 12 km to the east is home to the best beach in the area, known for its golden sand, which is rapidly becoming a resort in its own right. To the west, the long pebble beach of Konyaaltı is also popular. Heading up into the mountains, you can make the most of the beautiful scenery by visiting the spectacular Düden or Kurşunlu waterfalls. At Saklıkent, just 50 km away from the city center, you can even ski, where they usually have snow on the slopes until early April (http://www.gototurkey.co.uk/destinations/antalya/).

Based on the statistics publish by ministry of culture and tourism, around twelve million tourists had visited Antalya in 2013 (http://www.kultur.gov.tr/).

1.4 Content of the Thesis

This thesis is containing of five chapters. The first chapter, introduction, is about the information related to purpose, contribution and justification of the study sample.

Chapter two is provided for literature review. It consists of theories related to the relationship between variables. The variables of this study are service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and word of mouth.

Chapter three introduces research hypothesis. Conceptual model will be presented and the related hypothesis will be designed.

Chapter four is about information related to the methodology. Information about research philosophy, research approach, research method, sampling, questionnaire structure and measures will be discussed.

The result of the study, discussion and conclusion will be in the fifth chapters.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study used service quality as a predictor of customer satisfaction and tries to investigate customer satisfaction effect on tourist loyalty and positive word of mouth in the hospitality industry.

More specifically this study tries to investigate the effect of tangibles, reliability, empathy, assurance and responsiveness, the indicators of service quality on customer satisfaction and the effect of this important concept on the outcomes namely tourist loyalty and positive word of mouth. This study examines the relationship the above mentioned variable on tourists in five-star hotels in Antalya, Turkey.

2.1 Theoretical Background

This study applied expectancy theory and social exchange theory to clarify the relationship between the research dimensions.

2.1.1 Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) recommends that an individual will choose to perform or act in a particular way because they are inspired to select a precise action over other actions due to what they accept the result of that selected performance will be. Because of the desirability of the outcome, the behavior has been selected.

By applying expectancy theory, the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction will be explained.

2.1.2 Social Exchange Theory

According to social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), individual would adopt exact behaviors based on the norm of reciprocity to express appreciation to the group or business. Within this situation, individual perform in a assured way and they understand the sense of the activities and they form their behavior to achieve goal and bring benefits for them to adopt a specific behavior to express the gratitude to the industry.

By applying social exchange theory, the relationship between customer satisfaction, tourist loyalty and word of mouth will be explained.

2.2 Service Quality

The conception of quality is one of excessive interest in service and hospitality literature. The character of service quality in the triumph of hotel businesses cannot be starved of. It is vigorous for the hotel supervisors to have a good sympathetic on what precisely the consumers want. Recognizing the detailed expectations of consumers, the scopes of the service quality, and their virtual importance for consumers for each specific section of this industry would absolutely help supervisors and leaders in the challenge of refining the service quality (Akbaba, 2006).

From the evaluation of literature on quality, it has been originate those early investigation efforts focused on crucial and determining the quality in the industrial sector. Though the efforts started in the manufacturing sector in the 1920s and investigation in services started to rise in the late 1970s in several parts of the world (Gummesson, 1991).

Over the past three decades, especially in the industrialized nations the service sector has become the dominant part of the economy and the researches exposed that service quality is a precondition for success and survival in this competitive environment, the interest in service quality has increased conspicuously (Ghobadian et al., 1994).

Therefore, different explanations have been suggested throughout the years. Nightingale (1985) explained service quality as an evolving individual construct of values and expectations in contradiction of which an individual evaluates a product or service. Gronroos (1984) elucidated it as the consequence of an evaluation process, where the user compares his or her expectations with the service he or she perceived and received. Parasuraman et al. (1988) clarified service quality as an attitude, associated but not equivalent to satisfaction and results from a contrast of expectations with perceptions of performance. Gummesson (1991) verified that many goods quality ideologies could be applied to the examination of service quality, as long as the "L-factor: love, compassion, empathy, sense of humor, tacit knowledge, knowledge by acquaintance, and insights" are taken into account. Johns in 1992 illuminated quality contains of chains of sub-qualities or quality characteristics. Oliver (1993) defined it as the customer's perception of what service ought to be may change from what they believe they will likely receive. Ideal expectations drive quality, whereas desired expectations drive satisfaction. Brady and Cronin in 2001 confirmed that service quality is formed by three attributes: interaction quality, physical environment quality, and outcome quality; and nine sub-attributes: attitude, behavior, expertise, ambient conditions, design, social factors, waiting time, tangibles, and valence. Lopez-Fernandez and Serrano-Bedia (2004) believed that quality is related with the delivery of service according to customer expectations more than to establishment classification. Presbury et al. (2005) cleared that there is a misunderstanding between

customer expectations and the service they actually receive. Narangajavana and Hu (2008) mentioned that service quality results from associating a consumer's real experience with his or her expectation of service.

Available literature provides sufficiently of service quality measurement methods projected by various researchers (Erto & Vanacore, 2002; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Philip & Hazlett, 1997; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Franceschini & Rossetto, 1997; Teas, 1994; Schvaneveldt et al., 1991). These methods can be generally categorized incident-based or attribute-based service quality measurement methods (Stauss & Weinlich, 1997). The incident-based methods apply the incidents that customers experience in service contact circumstances. Attribute-based methods exist in a wide range of alternatives. Among these variants, the SERVQUAL instrument has concerned the greatest consideration as a result of its privilege of being able to measure the relevant magnitudes of the perceived service quality, regardless of which service industry is being measured (Gilbert & Wong, 2002; Tsang & Qu, 2000; Brown & Swartz, 1989; Carman, 1990; Parasuraman et al., 1988, 1991, 1994). The SERVQUAL tool still lasts to appeal to both researchers and specialists despite plentiful criticisms pointed at the measure (Caruana et al., 2000).

Various service quality explanations take their origin in gap examination and SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Parasuraman et al. (1985) defined the concept of service quality as a contrast between customer expectations and actual services performed. SERVQUAL has been recognized as a framework of service quality. The SEFVQUAL scale has been widely used by both academics and practicing managers across industries in different countries. Parasuraman et al., (1985) suggest 10 dimensions of service

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quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, understanding the customers, access, communication, credibility, security, competence and courtesy. Later, Parasuraman et al. (1988) cut the original 10 dimensions to five of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy, resulting in the widely used tool known as SERVQUAL.

Tangibles are one of the SERVQUAL magnitudes that are generally retained in influence analyses (Mels et al., 1997). Reliability or trouble-free service denotes to providing services based on promises. Responsiveness refers to willingness to help clienteles. Assurance can be defined as building trust and certainty, personnel knowledge and the organization ability to reduce purchase risks and doubts (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). Empathy includes feeling sympathy for others in a social or interpersonal context.

2.3 Customer Satisfaction

In the previous studies, the issue of consumer satisfaction has also expanded much consideration. Customer satisfaction received a great deal of consideration in the literature due to its possible influence on consumer buying intentions and their retention (Solnet et al., 2010; Kim, 2011; Rust & Oliver, 1994). It is generally approved that satisfaction is connected to consumer expectations and is defined as a overall feeling or emotion subsequent from the consumer's disconfirmed expectations (Bolton & Drew, 1994; Rust & Oliver, 1994). This denotes that satisfaction influence on whether an individual senses that the product or service offered provides positive value (Rust & Oliver, 1994). In this sense, satisfaction is observed as a subjective feeling, which implies the degree to which the consumer's expectations regarding a particular purchase encounter are encountered.

Customer satisfaction may be appraised according to whether it meets a determined level of expectation. Such estimate can influence repurchase intentions (Tsiros & Mittal, 2000), tendency to provide recommendations (Baker & Cameron, 1996), positive word of mouth (Lin, 2010) and repurchase intentions (Han & Back, 2007).

In today's world of powerful competition, the key to sustainable competitive advantage is in distributing high quality services that will in turn consequence in satisfied customers. Therefore, there is not even a bit of doubt about the importance of service quality as the final goal of service providers throughout the world. Many studies communicated about the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, (Fornell.et al, 1996) determined that service quality is one of the most significant determinants of the American customer satisfaction, (Parasurman.et al, 1988) demonstration that service quality is the difference between the expected service and perceived service.

Cardozo (1965) suggested satisfaction happen when consumers either authorize their pre-purchase opportunities for an obtained service or completely surpass their expectations about purchased services. Howard and Seth (1969) explained it as the purchaser's cognitive form of being sufficiently or inadequately pleased for the detriments he or she has suffered. Engel and Blackwell (1982) verified as estimation that the chosen alternative is dependable with prior beliefs with consideration of alternative. In a similar manner, Pizam and Ellis (1999) recommended that customer satisfaction a psychological concept that includes the feeling of happiness and pleasure that results from gaining what one hopes for and expects from an pleasing product and/or service. Oliver in 1993 stated that the swift psychological state subsequent when the sentiment adjacent disconfirmed anticipation is joined with the user's prior

sensation about the consumption experience. Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) identified it as the individual's awareness of the performance of a product or service in relation to his or her expectations. Therefore, clients can have numerous levels of satisfaction for the similar service grounded on their predetermined notions.

2.4 Customer Loyalty

As an essential concept in marketing, consumer loyalty is closely related to organization performance (Reichheld, 1993). It was exposed that a 5% upsurge in consumer retention harvests 85% more incomes in service business (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). In addition, retaining and keep of current consumers costs fewer than gaining of new consumers (Reichheld, 1996). Consequently, managing consumer association and growing their loyalty has been a subject of strategic reputation for establishments.

Customer loyalty is often evaluate by an individual's willingness to repurchase a product, willingness to recommend the product to others (Han et al., 2010), desire to spend more for the product or service, purchasing of a higher quantity of the product, and making the product the first choice among substitutes (Chen et al., 2014). Loyalty is often preserved as a one-dimensional construct. For some goods, such as in restaurants, occasions for repurchase occur quite frequently. Nevertheless, the prospect that an individual will reappearance to the similar tourist destination in a short period of time is far smaller. For such reason, loyalty activities in this study contain supportive actions as well as the purpose to visit the target in the future (Wai Long et al., 2015).

In marketing texts, consumer loyalty has been proposed and explained in numerous methods (Jacoby & Kiner, 1973). The leading description of loyalty is what is called attitudinal. Consumers' principles about the importance established clue to their comprehensive attitude to a good or service, such as the aim to rebuying (Fourner, 1994; Hawkiins et al., 1989). Another explanation of loyalty as behaviors, comprising sustained support and performance of endorsement (Hughes,1991; Sonmez & Graife,1998). A substitute conceptualization is the incorporation of the 2 visions, which describes consumer loyalty as the connection among relative approach and reappearance patronage (Dicke & Baesu, 1994; Oliiver, 1999). Vacationer loyalty has been preserved as an extent to which consumer loyalty in tourism situation (Bakman & Cromptone,1991; Baluglu, 2001); which is, if the target experience is deliberated as a good, tourists might select to reconsider or endorse it to associates and families (Youn & Uysal, 2005). Explicitly, tourist faithfulness has been hypothesized in one of the succeeding approaches: interactive loyalty, attitudinal loyalty, and compound loyalty (Jaccoby & Chestnute,1978).

Interactive loyalty emphases on the interactive result such as repeat official visit. This style typically fails to reveal the casue aspects that affect consumer allegiance (Youn & Uysall, 2005). Attitudinal loyalty states to tourists' psychological expression like intention to come back to a terminus or endorse to other potential travelers. The compound or shared approach of loyalty proposes the integration of together assertiveness and behavior (Backeman & Cromton, 1991; Iwakaki & Havitz, 1998); that is, visitors who reveal behavioral faithfulness toward precise terminuses incline to have an affirmative attitude toward those endpoints. At operative level, revisit purpose and references to others would be the most frequently used measured for visitor loyalty (Alcaniz et al., 2009; Hoorng et al., 2012; Hung & Petrick, 2012; Opermann, 2000).

Repeat tourists represent a much preferred market segment for several tourism products and purposes (Lau & McKerchere, 2004). They have a tendency to stay elongated at a destination (Operman, 1998), extent positive word of mouth (Opermann, 2000; Shomaker & Lewis, 1999), and contribute in consumptive activities additional intensively (Lethto et al., 2004).

2.5 Word of Mouth

Word of mouth is considered as part of the generic procedures of the recommendation and statement of information that happen between consumers (Bergmann, 1983; Noun & Dellbridge, 1993). This everyday notion based on consumer–consumer announcement, offers a mode of engaging with the communal relationships around obtaining, thereby providing a substitute to concentrating on the manufacturer–consumer relationship (Arndit, 1967; Cova, 1997; Mazarol et al., 2007). Within the texts, "word of mouth" is cleared in terms of the statement of positive or negative appraisals of products, passing on news or info about products amongst consumers (Mazarol et al., 2007).

Some consumptions pass through the eyes of others unchallenged and some purchases requisite careful accounting for. Once we are unable to validate the goods we have purchased, it can simply lead into either distress for the purchasers in terms of their appeal in the judgments of others or, otherwise, trouble for the things, which hints to their reappearance to the seller (Browne & Lauriere, 2014). A widespread literature has studied what "word of mouth" would be (Bellk, 1995; de Burghe & BraceGovan, 2007; Chevalier & Mayzliin, 2006; Kozints et al., 2010; Matos & Rossi, 2008; Ringeberg & Reihllen, 2008; Schau et al., 2009). In another meta-study, de Matos and Rosi (2008) dismembered at length the backgrounds that yield "word of mouth," inspecting the features that lead to discussion around different products. In contrast, Ringberge and Reihlen (2008) acquired a socio-cognitive tactic to understanding the part of communication in creation talk. The beginning of online communities has similarly provided a authoritative resource for investigating word of mouth.

Goodes and Mayzline (2004) commented that through word of mouth since "the information is exchanged in private conversations, direct observation traditionally has been difficult" (p. 545) plus went on to usage of the obtainability of online discussions to analyses responses to novel television shows.

There is no hesitation in the relationship among quality and the accomplishment of a hotel for quality relates with affirmative word-of-mouth (Ell-garahy, 2013).

Chapter 3

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

In this chapter, it has been tried to investigate the consequences of service quality of customers. More specifically in this part conceptual model will be presented and with the proposed theory and literature related to the study construct proposed hypotheses has been developed.

3.1 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model (figure 1) offered in this study mostly focus to make association between service quality, customer satisfaction, tourist loyalty and word of mouth. In this model service quality have a direct effect on customer satisfaction and this concept has an impact on tourist loyalty and word of mouth.
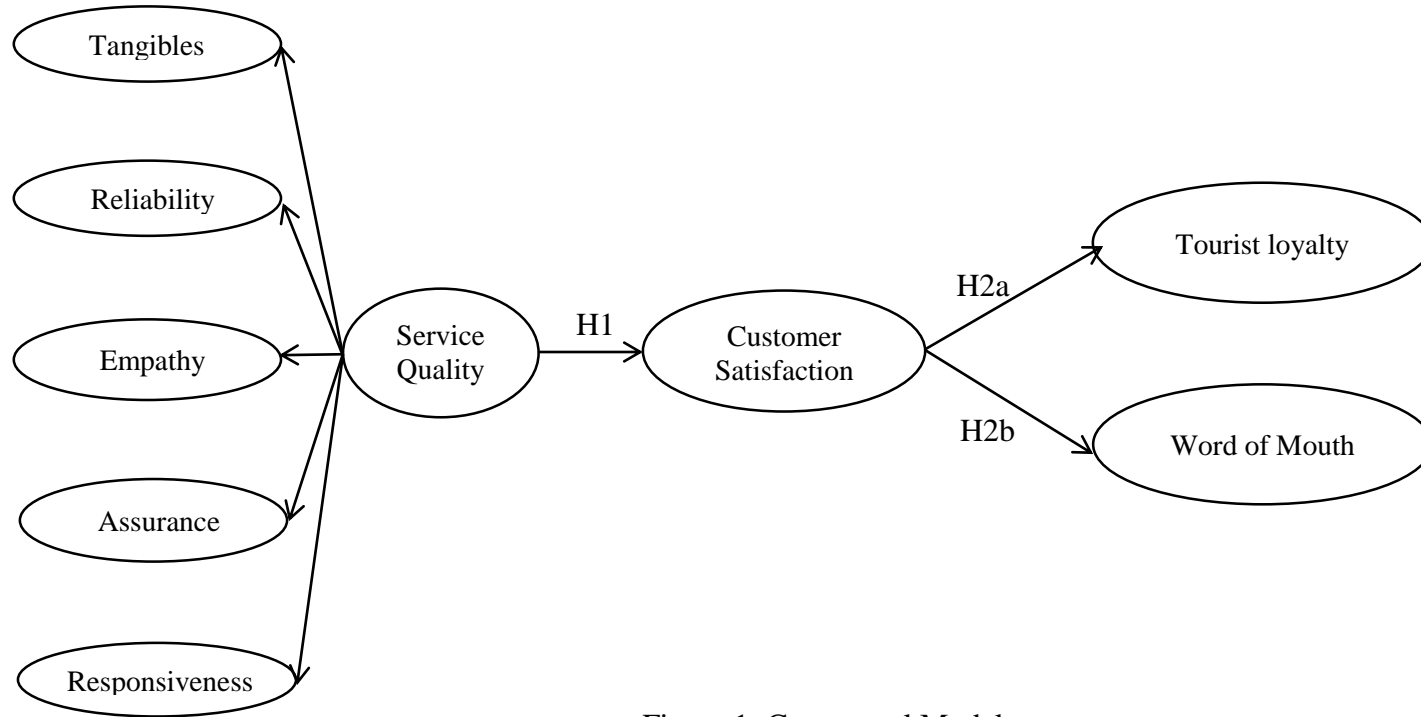
Figure 1: Conceptual Model

3.2 Hypothesis Development

The hypotheses developed of this study are listed as follow:

3.2.1 Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Numerous studies investigate the consequence of service quality on purchaser satisfaction (Cronnin & Taylor, 1992; Minge & Ing, 2005; Jacob & Kaii, 2007; Phillipe et al., 2003; Elgaraihy, 2013) and they inveterated that the level of supposed service quality will touch the level of consumer's consummation. Hane et al. (2008), Gagnoon and Rohe (2008), and Wilkins et al. (2010) specified that greater service excellence increases customer pleasure, enhances profitability, and encourages maintainable competitive benefit. The matter of service quality and consumer satisfaction, as an outcome of the straight connotation with profits, has converted an important apprehension of the hospitality businesses. Gilbert and Veloeutsou (2006) specified that mainstream of corporations have to estimate and augment their service quality in search of attracting more customers.

Grounded on expectancy theory (Vroome, 1964) this connection can strongly be supported. This theory suggest that an individual will choose to behave in a definite way as they are inspired to choose a precise behavior over additional behaviors owing to what they assume the consequence of that designated performance will be which resources that tourist who are seen as customers would be pleased because they experience high quality of facilities. Hotels that offer excellence services for their purchaser stimulate them and therefore these customers would be satisfied because they take services which are touchable, reliable, reasonable, and responsive and declaration. Consequently, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Providing service quality in hotel industry has a significant effect on customer satisfaction.

3.2.2 Customer Satisfaction, Tourists Loyalty and Word of Mouth

The connection between customer satisfaction and visitor loyalty has been considered by many researchers (Luarne & Line, 2003; Kandampuly & Suharrtanto, 2000, 2003; Bowen & Chen, 2001, Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003; Chandrashekaeran et al, 2007, Keininghame et al., 2007; Helier et al., 2003; El-garaeihy, 2013). They recommended that the level of buyer satisfaction will affect their customer devotion. Which means customers who are satisfied can be loyal to the organization.

On the other hand academics examine the association between consumer satisfaction and word of mouth (Fiile & Prince, 1992; Wangeheim & Bayon, 2007; Kime et al., 2009; Van Varenbergh et al., 2012; Jon-Wuk Kwuen et al., 2013; Abubbakar & Mavondoo, 2014; Hammza & Saidalavi, 2014; Alahham & Aljuma, 2014). They verified that customer satisfaction positively result in word of mouth.

Rendering to social exchange theory (Blaue, 1964) the correlation between consumer satisfaction, traveller loyalty and word of mouth can be explained. This theory designates that tourist would assume specific behaviors grounded on the standard of reciprocity to show gratitude to the hotel. Within this condition, visitors behave in a definite way and they arrest the meaning of the actions and they form their behavior. Besides, tourists who are contented with the hotel service can become faithful which is very imperative for this competitive business and they would propose to other visitors who can become new customers. Consequently, the following hypothesis is projected:

H2: Consumer satisfaction has significant effect on (**a**) tourist loyalty and (**b**) word of mouth.

Chapter 4

METHODOLOGY

This section contracts with inquiry philosophy of the experiential survey accompanied with consumer of hotels in Antalya, Turkey. This study applies convenience sampling. The current chapter illuminates the data collection procedure. This is continued by explanation the measuring tools and stating the applicable sources. This will be continued by information allied with data analysis strategy.

4.1 Research Philosophy

This study applied positivist philosophy to clarify the relationship among study construct. Positivism has been generally associated with systematic research, although phenomenology has its origins in the social disciplines (Veal, 2006). In this viewpoint, researchers take the stand of a normal scientist. Researcher relics distanced from the entity of the study, emphasis on facts and articulate hypotheses to assess them against experiential evidence (Altinay & Paraskvase, 2008).

4.2 Research Approach

Deduction is "the human process of going from one thing to another, i.e., of moving from the known to the unknown" (Spangler, 1986, p. 101). By using a deductive method, scholar uses what he or she knows and transfer to what cannot perceive directly. In deductive perceptive, the inference is drawn first and the exploration is all about verifying it to be accurate or incorrect (Altinay & Paraskvas, 2008).

Deductive methodology can be labeled through hypotheses, which could be important from the systems of the theory. In addition, deductions from the concepts are tested by means of a convenience sample of consumer of hotel industry in Antalya. This method is likewise consistent with other works in hospitality sector.

4.3 Research Method

To inspect the mentioned connection in the study, quantitative technique applied. Quantitative inquiry aims to determine in what way a variable touches another in a population, by measuring the relationships among variables. To validate the relationships among these variables, numerical methods are used. Objective, deductive, generalizable and figures are chief elements in this process (Altinay & Paraskvase, 2008).

4.4 Questionnaire Structure and Measures

All the survey questions used in this empirical research were taken from former studies. The items encompassed in the study are entirely 33 items. 22 questions used to quantify service quality, five questions for customer satisfaction, three questions for tourist loyalty and three items for word of mouth. Replies to items in service quality were rated on a five-point frequency rating scale fluctuating from 5 showing strongly agree to 1 stating strongly disagree. In order to measure customer satisfaction, traveler loyalty and word of mouth answers to items were counted on a seven-point frequency score scale ranging from 7 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

The items measuring service quality were taken from study of Parasuramman et al. (1988). Customer satisfaction and word of mouth were used form Cronine et al. (2000) and tourist loyalty from Bakeer and Cronnpton (2000).

Chapter 5

RESULT

5.1 Sample

A convenience sampling was applied to manage the current study. Data were composed from a sample of tourists in Antalya, a city in Turkey. Each tourist was requested to self-administrate the questionnaires and place the questionnaires back to precise box. A pilot study was applied to ensure the understandability of the items in questionnaires. 10 individuals participated in this process. Most of these participants were form Netherland. Entire questionnaires were dispersed in English therefore; there was no need for back translation technique. The entire questionnaires have been distributed directly to the participants. There was a specific box for the process of questionnaires gathering. The participants were asked to put the questionnaires directly to the box.

216 questionnaires were given to tourists and 200 usable questionnaires were received with a response of 92.59% of sample.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents (*n*=200)

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-27	34	17,0
28-37	80	40,0
38-47	59	29,5
48-57	27	13,5
Total	200	100,0
Gender		
Male	104	52,0
Female	96	48,0
Total	200	100,0
Marital Status		
Single or Divorce	111	55,5
Married	89	45,5
Total	200	100,0
Education		
High School	51	25,5
Vocational School	86	43,0
Undergraduate	56	28,0
Graduate	7	3,5
Total	200	100,0
Number of Children		
0	26	13,0
1 or 2 kids	61	35,5
3 or 4 kids	92	46,0
5 or 6 kids	21	10,5
More than 6 kids	0	0
Total	200	100,0

Seventeen percent of participants were between 18 and 27 years old. Forty percent were between 28 and 37. Around thirty percent were among 38 till 47 years old and the rest were between 48 to 57 years old. Fifty-two percent of these individuals were male. Around fifty-five percent were single or got divorced. Twenty five percent of these tourists had high school degree, forty three percent had vocational degree, twenty eight percent had undergraduate degree and the rest were graduated or had their PhD degree.

5.2 Psychometrics Properties of the Measures

As stated in table 2, all items were examined by exploratory factor analysis.

Results exposed that two questions from empathy and one item from word of mouth had cross loadings and creating a distinct different factor; therefore, three items were cut for further analysis. After eliminating the cross-loaded items, the rest were positioned on their own dimension. Factor loadings ranged from 0.51 to 0.97. All eigenvalues stood above one. These items totally explained 78.18 % of the variance. The results demonstrated convergent validity for all.

Table 2: Scale Items, Exploratory Factor Analysis

Scale Items	Standardized Loading	Eigenvalue	% of Variance
Customer Satisfaction		14.83	47.86
It is important that I am pleased with my visit to most hospitality services.	0.84		
The performance of most hospitality services should meet my expectations.	0.84		
Services provided by hospitality service providers should be exactly what I needed.	0.81		
It is important that my visits to hospitality services turn out to be wise decisions.	0.80		
Overall, it is important that I am satisfied with my visit to hospitality services.	0.71		
Reliability		2.04	6.59
The hotel provides its services at the time it promises to do so	0.77		
Employees of the hotel tell you exactly when services will be performed	0.76		
The hotel performs the service right the first time	0.71		
When you have a problem, the hotel shows a sincere interest in solving it	0.70		
When the hotel promises to do something by a certain time, it does so	0.67		
The hotel insists on error-free records	0.65		
Tangibles		1.86	6.00
The hotel's employees are neat-appearing	0.74		
Materials associated with the service are visually appealing at the	0.73		
The hotel's physical facilities are visually appealing	0.69		
The hotel has modern looking equipment	0.63		
Tourist Loyalty		1.59	5.13
I will recommend the hotel to other people.	0.73		
I will revisit the country and participate in the hotel in the future.	0.71		
I will tell good experiences from the hotel to other people.	0.65		
Assurance		1.13	3.65
Employees of the hotel are consistently courteous with you	0.77		
Employees of the hotel have the knowledge to answer your questions	0.73		
The behavior of employees of the hotel instills confidence in customers	0.66		
The hotel has operating hours convenient to all its customers	0.51		

Scale Items	Standardized Loading	Eigenvalue	% of Variance
<u>Responsiveness</u>		1.06	3.42
Employees of the hotel are never too busy to respond to your requests	0.74		
Employees of the hotel are always willing to help you	0.74		
Employees of the hotel give you prompt service	0.72		
<u>Empathy</u>		0.89	2.87
The hotel has employees who give you personal attention	0.68		
Employees of the hotel have the knowledge to answer your questions	0.67		
The hotel has your best interest at heart	0.54		
<u>Word of mouth</u>		0.82	2.65
Would be glad to refer other travelers	0.97		
Would recommend to those who are planning a vacation	0.96		

Note: KMO measure of sampling adequacy is 0.92. Bartlett's test of sphrecity is 5982.08 (p<0.01). The study variables account for 78.18% of the variance.

5.3 Tests of Research Hypothesis

Table 3 shows means, standard deviations, reliability and correlations of study constructs.

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviations, Reliability, and Correlations of Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Age	1													
Gender	-.01	1												
Education	.03	.18*	1											
Marital	.01	-.13	.01	1										
Children	-.04	.05	-.12	.06	1									
TAN	-.11	-.05	-.05	-.04	-.10	1								
REL	-.06	-.02	-.02	.05	.01	.66**	1							
RES	-.09	-.03	-.09	.06	-.03	.59**	.63**	1						
ASS	-.08	.02	-.04	.09	-.02	.54**	.63**	.53**	1					
EMP	-.05	-.01	-.12	.07	.04	.64**	.70**	.61**	.72**	1				
SQ	-.09	-.02	-.08	.05	-.03	.82**	.86**	.82**	.80**	.87**	1			
CS	-.14*	-.05	-.05	.01	-.07	.61**	.55**	.55**	.54**	.63**	.69**	1		
TL	.02	.04	-.14*	.06	.06	.57**	.64**	.61**	.66**	.75**	.77**	.63**	1	
WOM	.11	.05	.04	-.06	-.06	.23**	.18*	.16*	.21**	.20**	.23**	.15*	.26**	1
Mean	0.48	2.4	3.1	1.45	2.54	4.25	4.19	4.17	4.28	4.27	4.23	5.91	5.94	3.46
Standard deviation	0.50	0.92	0.82	0.50	0.85	0.70	0.69	0.78	0.62	0.70	0.58	1.00	1.25	2.26
Cronbach's alpha	-	-	-	-	-	0.87	0.91	0.85	0.84	0.91	-	0.93	0.92	0.75

Note: Composite score was computed for each variable. **p<0.01, *p<0.05(two-tailed test).
TAN: Tangible, REL: Reliability, RES: Responsiveness, ASS: Assurance, EMP: Empathy, SQ: Service Quality, CS: Customer Satisfaction, TL: Tourist loyalty, WOM: Word of mouth

By determining the correlation between study constructs, this study tries to examine the hypotheses.

The results indicate a significant and positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (r = 0.69). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is supported. The results correspondingly show that customer satisfaction has a significant positive relation with tourist loyalty (r = 0.63) and word of mouth (r = 0.15). Grounded on the overhead information hypothesis 2(a) and 1(b) are supported. Although it is not hypothesized, the results demonstrate that service quality has a significant positive relation with tourist loyalty (r = 0.75) and word of mouth (r = 0.20).

As a result showed each and every variable related to service quality (tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) have a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction, tourist loyalty and word of mouth.

The results also reveal that there is a negative relationship between age and customer satisfaction (r = -0.14). This situation shows older people are not strongly satisfied with the services they received and there is a gap between their expectation and experience. Also, based on the statistics more educated individual are less loyal (r = -0.14).

All coefficient alphas were above the cut-off level of 0.70.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION

This study attempted to investigate the impact of service quality for tourists in the case of hotels in Antalya. The results evolving from current research provide some contributions to the hospitality literature.

Firstly, the current research offers additional perceptions about the impact of service quality application on tourist behavior. It seems that as soon as the tourists sense the existence of service quality in hotel industry, they will have satisfaction and consequently they will be motivated to have loyalty, and positive word of mouth. In such situation, they tend to recommend that specific hotel to their connections.

It cannot be ignored that tourists and customers with different background such as nationality, religion and culture define service quality differently, but, in the situation of multicultural industries like hospitality segment in Antalya, existence of service quality concept is very important. Secondly, the results evolving from the current study shows that individual with high level of satisfaction are more loyal and they will provide positive feedback about the organization.

According to the proposed hypotheses and results emerging from this empirical research, individuals who sense the service quality will be pleased of their service they received, and become loyal and as a result of this satisfaction, they will recommend

this brand to others such as colleagues, friends, family and who others they have direct or indirect contact.

6.1 Implication for Practices

Based on the above-mentioned results, useful applied implications for business and supervisors and leaders can be proposed.

As specified earlier, understanding the concept of service quality among individuals fluctuates concerning to their culture. Thus, directors need to be alert of the process and methods applied in the working environment for generating and creating good quality of service among customers.

Moreover, managers needs monitor all kind of activities related to the concept of quality from bottom to top of their organization. Furthermore, leaders need to attend to their customer with admiration and full consideration to understand their expectation and their experience to minimize the conflict between these too, which may enhance the level of satisfaction for customers.

Based on the findings, it can likewise suggest that customers who received the expected services in the industry will be loyal and they will say positive things about the organization. From the practical viewpoint, understanding customer culture is necessary for the service industry. Different customers from different background act differently. Especially in case of service because organization do not have tangible products, all the customer evaluation is based on their expectation and experience.

As mentioned earlier, customer loyalty and positive word of mouth are the critical results in hospitality segment. Accordingly, managers and employees have to pay their

highest attention to upsurge the level of customers' loyalty and positive word of mouth. For doing so, it is important for managers to increase the knowledge of employees about the concept of service quality because it is employee's responsibility to handle customers and they have direct contact with the consumers.

6.2 Limitation and Future Research Direction

The results must be imitated through the limitation of the present observed enquiry. Grounded on the limitations, future research directions can be as followed.

Firstly, customer satisfaction can have other desirable consequence such as revisit intention, repurchase intentions, supportive behavior and so forth. Thus, future research would explore other positive outcome.

Second, the study obtained data form tourist only in Antalya. It is imperative to study the effect of service quality in other tourist destination like Bodrum, Kuşadası, Marmaris and so on.

Most importantly employees understanding about service quality are very important because they are responsible to create customer loyalty. It is beneficial to investigate hotel employees about their understanding about this concept. For future investigating it is suggested to investigate service organization employees to understand about their belief about service quality.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

Referring to social exchange theory and expectancy theory, and gathering data from visitors from a hotel in Antalya, Turkey, this study proved that receiving high quality of service will increase the level of visitors' satisfaction which leads to elevated loyalty and positive word of mouth. Identifying precisely the specific expectations of customers is a must in service organizations.

Based on the finding of this study, it may conclude that minimizing the differences between customer expectation and their experience is a most for hospitality sector because customer evaluates performance based on intangible features receiving form the organization. Because customers do have any tangible product, so their evaluation is based on their expectation and comparing the services that their received. Therefore, creating the sense of confidence for the customers is mandatory for the hospitality sector.

Therefore, the scopes of the service quality will help customers make their quality assessments, and their comparative importance transmits vital importance in quality development efforts.

Having knowledge about these areas would definitely help managers in the challenge of improving the service quality in the hotel industry. Gaining specific information about these extents for the hotel sections that show variances with regard to the

customers they serve, the services they suggest, and the cultural background from which the hotel produces its customers would generate more satisfying results in quality efforts.

This study demonstrated that the construct that most influences customer satisfaction in service sector is the existence of service quality. In other words the presence of tangible equipment, reliability promises, employees' responsiveness, assurance and empathy create customer satisfaction.

It is possible to say that to measure and understand the customer satisfaction is very important because of its influence over the loyalty formation process and positive word of mouth. Moreover, implications proposed in this study would help practitioners and scholars to have better insight of the impact and effect of service quality in the case of hospitality industry.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Measurements

Service Quality

5-point scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Tangible

1. The hotel has modern looking equipment

2. The hotel's physical facilities are visually appealing

3. The hotel's employees are neat-appearing

4. Materials associated with the service are visually appealing at the hotel

Reliability

1. When the hotel promises to do something by a certain time, it does so

2. When you have a problem, the hotel shows a sincere interest in solving it

3. The hotel performs the service right the first time

4. The hotel provides its services at the time it promises to do so

5. Employees of the hotel tell you exactly when services will be performed

6. The hotel insists on error-free records

Responsiveness

1. Employees of the hotel are never too busy to respond to your requests

2. Employees of the hotel give you prompt service

3. Employees of the hotel are always willing to help you

Assurance

1. The behavior of employees of the hotel instills confidence in customers

2. Employees of the hotel are consistently courteous with you

3. Employees of the hotel have the knowledge to answer your questions

4. The hotel has operating hours convenient to all its customers

Empathy

1.   Employees of the hotel have the knowledge to answer your questions

2.   The hotel has employees who give you personal attention

3.   The hotel has your best interest at heart

4.   Employees of the hotel understand your specific needs

5.   The hotel has employees who are competent

Customer Satisfaction

7-point scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

1. It is important that I am pleased with my visit to most hospitality services.

2. The performance of most hospitality services should meet my expectations.

3. It is important that my visits to hospitality services turn out to be wise decisions.

4. Services provided by hospitality service providers should be exactly what I needed.

5. Overall, it is important that I am satisfied with my visit to hospitality services.

Tourist loyalty

7-point scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

1. I will tell good experiences from the hotel to other people.

2. I will recommend the hotel to other people.

3. I will revisit the country and participate in the hotel in the future.

Word of mouth

7-point scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

1. Would positively recommend to other people

2. Would be glad to refer other golf travelers

3. Would recommend to those who are planning a golf vacation