Bibliometric review of scholarly work on service quality and customer satisfaction in hotels

Rakesh Ahlawat\textsuperscript{a}\textsuperscript{b} | Mandeep Ghai\textsuperscript{a} | Sanjeev Kumar Garg\textsuperscript{a}

\textsuperscript{a}Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering & Technology, India.
\textsuperscript{b}Desh Bhagat University, India.

Abstract Service quality and customer satisfaction are the most sought-after research topics among marketing scholars. The study performs a bibliometric analysis of service quality and customer satisfaction in hotel research over a decade (2013-2022). The data for the study were extracted from Dimensions.ai using the search string "Service quality" AND "Customer satisfaction" AND "Hotel". A total of 231 articles meeting the criteria were analysed, and it was found that research in this field has grown year on year. Citation analysis revealed that Lujun Su, Scott R. Swanson and Xiaohong Chen are the most influential authors, and Tourism Management is the most influential journal. A keyword analysis was also called of the abstract text.

Keywords: Service quality, Customer satisfaction, Bibliometric analysis, SERVQUAL, hotel

1. Introduction

Service quality and customer satisfaction are topics of great interest among researchers (Yas et al 2020). Researchers have analysed service quality and customer satisfaction from different facets ranging from online shopping (Rita et al 2019) to Islamic banking (Fida et al 2020) to the automotive industry (Balino et al 2021). These topics have also generated similar interest from hospitality and tourism scholars, as evidenced by published work (Nunkoo et al 2020; Ali et al 2021; Cassandra et al 2021; Anabila et al 2022; Nguyen and Malik 2022). The interest may be attributed to the significance of customer satisfaction as a competitive advantage (Alkhurshan and Rjoub 2020) and service quality leading to customer satisfaction (Kusumawardani and Aruan, 2019). The significance of service quality and customer satisfaction necessitates a bibliometric review to understand the current state and trends of research. This study intends to map the scholarly output in this field in the decade of 2013-22 by achieving the following objectives:

i. To map the research output from 2013-2022.
ii. To determine the most productive and influential author.
iii. To determine the top journals publishing on service quality, customer satisfaction and hotels.
iv. To find the most influential documents.

To study the keywords to map the current thematic trends.

2. Background to service quality and customer satisfaction

2.1. Service quality

Services can be defined as deeds, performance and processes (Zeithaml and Bitner 1996) or activities that are essentially intangible and do provide any kind of ownership (Kotler et al 2013). Given their intangible character, services are linked to quality (Upadhyai et al 2019) and are subjected to subjective evaluation by customers (Grönroos, 1984). Service quality can be defined as the gap in the expectations and the actual services delivered (Parasuraman et al 1988, 1991; Liu et al 2020; Lai et al 2022). To measure the service quality, a model consisting of five dimensions (Empathy, tangibility, responsiveness, assurance and reliability) called SERVQUAL was developed (Parasuraman et al 1988).

2.2. Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction meets the prepurchase expectations of customers regarding a product or service (Ratnasari et al 2020). As per marketing, customer satisfaction is the emotional response of the customer to a service transaction (Chang and Lin, 2022). Customer satisfaction is the perception of customers on achieving the needs and wants of customers through a product or service resulting in repurchasing (Aminudin et al 2021). Customer satisfaction has significance in company sustainability and building customer relationships. Satisfied customers tend to make repeat purchases and give product or

3. Materials and Methods

To provide a comprehensive review of scientific contributions, bibliometric analysis is an effective method (Sweileh, 2020). This method has been extensively used by researchers across disciplines, such as mapping research based on the Russia-Ukraine war (Ahlawat et al, 2022), mapping tourism and hospitality research on ICT (Molina-Collado et al, 2022), mapping research on the silver economy (Colurcio et al, 2022) and reviewing trends in electronic service quality (Mahadevan and Joshi, 2021). To answer the research questions, this study also uses the bibliometric review method. The data were extracted from Dimensions.ai using the search string "Service quality" AND "Customer satisfaction" AND "Hotel". The search was restricted to articles published from 2013-2022. To further refine the results, only publications in the tourism category were selected. The results were further refined to meet the criteria for the study, as shown in figure 1.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Research output

In 2013, 9 articles were published in this area, which increased to 12 in 2014. The research output in service quality and customer satisfaction in hotel research grew steadily and resulted in 51 articles in 2022. The growth of research output is presented in figure 2.

As shown in figure 2, there has been only one dip in the research output in 2017; otherwise, it has grown year on year.
4.2. Most productive and influential authors

Productive authors refer to the authors producing the most documents, whereas influential authors refer to authors with the highest citations. Using VOSviewer, the authors on the basis of citations were analysed with no restriction being put on the number of documents by each author, but citations were restricted to 150 to meet the criteria. Cheng Boon Liat has published the most articles (3). Whereas Lujun Su, Scott R. Swanson and Xiaohong Chen have received the highest citations (204).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Citations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cheng Boon Liat</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shaheen Mansori</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Catherine Prentice</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Indranil Bose</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>173</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Xiaohong Chen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Baojun Gao</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nan Hu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>173</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lujun Su</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Scott R. Swanson</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ting Zhang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>173</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Top journals

Top journals were reviewed using VOSviewer based on the number of documents published by each journal. The analysis was restricted to journals publishing a minimum of 4 articles. Eight journals met the criteria, as shown in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Source/Journal</th>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Citations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Culinary Science and Hospitality Research</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>International Journal of Hospitality Management</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Journal of Tourism and Leisure Research</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘Culinary Science and Hospitality Research’ is the most productive source and has published 8 articles, followed by ‘Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism’, which has published 7 articles. ‘Tourism Management’ is the most influential source, as it has received 512 citations.

4.4. Most influential articles

To find the most influential articles, citation analysis was performed using VOSviewer. No restriction on the number of authors was imposed. The top ten most cited articles were analysed. The most cited article has been published by (Su et al 2016) and is the only article to have received more than 200 citations and is published in ‘Tourism Management’ journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Document title</th>
<th>Citations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Su et al 2016)</td>
<td>The effects of perceived service quality on repurchase intentions and subjective well-being of Chinese tourists: The mediating role of relationship quality</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(Nunkoo et al 2020)</td>
<td>Service quality and customer satisfaction: The moderating effects of hotel star rating</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(Prentice et al 2020)</td>
<td>The impact of artificial intelligence and employee service quality on customer satisfaction and loyalty</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>(Keshavarz and Jamshidi, 2018)</td>
<td>Service quality evaluation and the mediating role of perceived value and customer satisfaction in customer loyalty</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>(Wai Lai, 2019)</td>
<td>Hotel image and reputation on building customer loyalty: An empirical study in Macau</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>(Lai and Hitchcock, 2017)</td>
<td>Sources of satisfaction with luxury hotels for new, repeat, and frequent travelers: A PLS impact-asymmetry analysis</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>(Dortyol et al 2014)</td>
<td>How do international tourists perceive hotel quality?: An exploratory study of service quality in Antalya tourism region</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of the most influential articles demonstrates that the journal chosen for publication has an impact on citations, as the top-most influential articles have been published in the most influential journals ‘Tourism Management’ and ‘International Journal of Hospitality Management’.

4.5. Keyword analysis

Using VOSviewer, keywords were analysed from the abstract of the data limited to a minimum of 20 occurrences. A keyword network, as shown in Figure 3, was presented. As shown, two clusters have formed, and cluster 1 presents terms such as customer, customer satisfaction, service quality, star hotels, etc. It may be inferred from this cluster that the majority of the research in the field of service quality and customer satisfaction has focused on star hotels. Cluster 2 presents the terms related to the five dimensions of SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al 1988) except for tangibility. This may imply that the
SERVQUAL model has been widely used in studying service quality and customer satisfaction in hotels. Assurance (5.5222), empathy (4.8353) and responsiveness (4.533) have the highest relevance scores.

![Keyword network visualization](image)

**Figure 3** Keyword network visualization.

Based on the frequency of occurrence of keywords, a word cloud was prepared as presented in Figure 4.

![Word cloud of keywords](image)

**Figure 4** Word cloud of keywords.

5. Final considerations

The study offers thorough insight into scholarly growth in the field of service quality and customer satisfaction in hotels. Service quality and customer satisfaction continue to be the topics of interest among hotel researchers, as demonstrated by the growth of scholarly output. The study also shows that the reputation of a journal has an impact on the citation an article receives. ‘Cheng Boon Liat’ is the most productive author, and ‘Culinary Science and Hospitality Research’ is the most productive journal. Article by Su et al (2016) is the most influential article. The study also demonstrates that the SERVQUAL model is the most widely used model to study service quality.

Future studies should examine service quality and customer satisfaction in the context of nonstar hotels and budget hotels as well. Future studies should also look into the application of modern technology such as artificial intelligence in customer satisfaction and delivering quality service.

**Ethical Considerations**

Not Applicable.

**Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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References


