

**The Role of Service Quality in Improving Customer's  
Satisfaction in The Hospitality Industry of Islamabad: Perspectives From  
The Event Management Industry**



By

Yahya Khan

(Registration No: 327869 )

Department of HR and Management

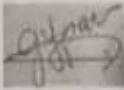
NUST Business School

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

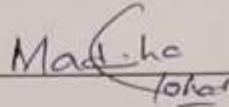
Islamabad, Pakistan (2022)

**THESIS ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE**

It is certified that final copy of MS I&E thesis written by Mr. Yahya Khan Registration No. 00000327869 of 2020 has been vetted by undersigned, found complete in all aspects as per NUST Statutes/Regulations/MS Policy, is free of plagiarism, errors, and mistakes and is accepted as fulfilment for award of MS degree. It is further certified that necessary amendments as pointed out by GEC members and foreign/local evaluators of the scholar have also been incorporated in the said thesis.

Signature of Supervisor with stamp:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Programme Head Signature with stamp:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of HoD with stamp: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DR MADIHA OGHAAR**  
Assistant Professor  
NUST Business School (NBS)  
Sector H-12, Islamabad

**DR. ASFIA OBAID**  
Associate Professor  
HoD Management & HR  
NUST Business School, (NBS)

**Countersign by**

Signature (Dean/Principal):  \_\_\_\_\_ **Principal & Dean**

**Dr. Naukhez Sarwar**  
**NUST Business School**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Certificate of Approval**

This is to certify that the research work presented in this thesis, entitled

**“The Role Of Service Quality In Improving Customer’s Satisfaction In The Hospitality Industry Of Islamabad: Perspectives From The Event Management Industry.”**

was conducted by Mr./Ms...Yahya Khan..... under the supervision of

..... Dr Zynep Gulen Hashmi .....

No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the..... (Nust Business School HRM)..... in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Field of

.....(Yahya Khan).....

Department of .....HRM.....

University of NUST Business School.....

Student Name: Yahya Khan Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Examination Committee:

a) External Examiner 1: Name Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Designation & Office Address)

.....  
.....

b) External Examiner 2: Name Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Designation & Office Address)

.....  
.....

c) External Examiner: Name Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Designation & Office Address)

.....  
.....

Supervisor Name: Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Dean/HOD: Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Author's Declaration**

I Yahya Khan hereby state that my MS thesis titled

**The role of Service Quality in improving customer's satisfaction in the  
Hospitality Industry of Islamabad: Perspectives from the event management  
industry**

---

is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any  
degree from this University

\_\_\_\_\_ (NUST Business School) \_\_\_\_\_

or anywhere else in the country/ world.

At any time if my statement is found to be incorrect even after I graduate, the  
university has the right to withdraw my MS degree.

Name of Student: Yahya Khan

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Plagiarism Undertaking**

I solemnly declare that research work presented in the thesis titled “.....**The role of Service Quality in improving customer’s satisfaction in the Hospitality Industry of Islamabad: Perspectives from the event management industry**.....” is solely my research work with no significant contribution from any other person. Small contribution/ help wherever taken has been duly acknowledged and that complete thesis has been written by me.

I understand the zero tolerance policy of the HEC and University .....(NUST Business School)..... towards plagiarism. Therefore, I as an author of the above titled thesis declare that no portion of my thesis has been plagiarized and any material used as reference is properly referred/cited.

I undertake that if I am found guilty of any formal plagiarism in the above titled thesis even after award of MS degree, the University reserves the rights to withdraw/revoke my MS degree and that HEC and the University has the right to publish my name on the HEC/University website on which names of students are placed who submitted plagiarized thesis.

Student/Author Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Yahya Khan

## **Dedication**

In dedication to my professors who inspired me to pursue this dissertation

## ABSTRACT

“Quality is not an act but a habit” ~ Aristotle.

Hospitality is a growing industry in Pakistan. Islamabad being the capital is a hub for local as well as international events. This study will examine whether service quality assessment can be seen as attitude formation and will be conducted to explore the opportunities and challenges regarding service quality in the hospitality industry in Islamabad. The objective of the study is to evaluate the impact of event management industry performance on customer satisfaction and service quality through qualitative methods like interviews. This research is crucial for the practitioners as well as for the progression of academia in the hospitality industry. It will allow us to understand the perspective of the people of Islamabad towards service quality. This research will focus on Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) related to the hospitality industry of the Capital. This research has used interviews to explore service quality thoroughly and suggest solutions for it. Regarding event management, using the knowledge from the professional field and the developments that plays a significant role. The findings of this study have suggested that there is a gap between the understanding of the owners/managers and the customers regarding service quality. They both perceive it differently with only little similarities. Both of them consider separate aspects to be the most important ones which is one of the main reasons of poor service quality offered by the small and medium enterprises (SME). From this knowledge, as generated by this research paper, one can create and implement the event strategy. This supports and advises the board in realizing the mission and goals of the city of Islamabad. There is a need to conduct this research as there is no research on the service quality of event management companies of Islamabad.

**Keywords:** event management; SERVQUAL; Small and Medium

Enterprises (SME); customer satisfaction; service quality

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
Acknowledgements	7
Abstract	8
Abbreviation's list	11
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1 Problem statement	13
1.1.1 Aim of research	13
1.1.2 Research objectives	13
1.1.3 Research Questions	13
1.1.4 Rationale	14
1.1.5 Significance	14
1.1.6 Structure of this thesis	15
<b>CHAPTER 2: Literature review</b>	
2.1 Hospitality Industry	18
2.2 Hospitality Industry in Pakistan	19
2.3 Event Management	20
2.4 Importance of Service Quality	21
2.5 Debates about Service Quality	22
2.6 Importance of Customer Satisfaction	23
2.7 Importance of improving customer satisfaction.	25
2.8 Role of Service Quality in Improving Customer Satisfaction	26
2.9 Role of Cultural Impact in Improving Customer Satisfaction	27
2.10 Customer Satisfaction Measurement tools	30
2.11 Theories related to Event Management and Customer Satisfaction	35
2.12 Customer Retention	37
<b>Chapter 3: Methodology</b>	<b>40</b>
3.1 Research Philosophy, Design & Approach	41
3.2 Service quality	42
3.3 Participants and Procedure	45
3.4 Sampling Technique	45
3.5. Population Size	
3.6 Sample Size	45
3.7 Measures	46
3.8 Analytical Procedure	46
<b>Chapter 4: Results</b>	<b>47</b>
4.1 Findings	48
4.2 Discussion	
Literature based Analysis	51
4.2.1 Customer satisfaction with event management programs.	52
4.2.2 Basis of guest satisfaction - the service quality	52
4.2.3 Measure guest/customer satisfaction.	53
4.2.4 Guest satisfaction and customer loyalty	54
4.2.5 Personal service and guest satisfaction	54
<b>Chapter 5: Conclusion.</b>	<b>58</b>
5.1 Interview Guide	



**5.2. Bibliography**

61

## **LIST OF SYMBOLS, ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

SME: small management events

SERVQUAL: service quality model

SERVPER: performance component of the Service Quality scale

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Globalization has huge impacts on all the domains of the world especially on the hospitality industry, as stated by Mordor Intelligence (2022). Pakistan has a growing market vis-a-vis Hospitality and Events Management. According to a leading journal “Intelligence”, Pakistan’s Hospitality Industry was valued nearly at USD 20 Billion in 2020, and the market is expected to witness a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 3% by 2026. Overall, 60,070 foreigners have visited tourist attractions in the country during the past six years, especially to the enthralling places located in the northern parts of the country. Following the policies of the current government and measures taken to promote domestic and international tourism, the country expects to see a rise in the number of visitors by nearly 30% until 2030, as stated by Mordor Intelligence (2022).

Globalization has had a positive impact on various industries, including travel and tourism. This industry has seen tremendous growth in terms of revenue and job creation. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the travel and tourism industry contributed €7.9 million to the global economy in 2018 and created 319 million jobs. The hospitality industry is a strong part of the economy and the backbone of the domestic tourism industry. The growth of this industry even exceeded the global gross domestic product. These numbers speak volumes about the importance of the travel and tourism industry to the global economy.

The hospitality industry, as a sub-sector of the tourism industry, is responsible for a significant number of new jobs. The growing opportunities in the hospitality industry have motivated many students to pursue a degree in this field, therefore, it is necessary to understand the needs and demands of this sector, which can be done so by observing customer satisfaction.

Customers also have various potentials that companies use. This includes the potential for sales success, e.g., repetitive employment of services or purchases or so-called cross-buying, i.e., the acquisition of additional services from another business area independent of the original service (Chen et al., 2021). However, the customer can also influence the acquisition of new customers by recommending the products or services, and they can be helpful in the development of new products (Bhati et al., 2020).

However, the great importance of the customers is contrasted by the stagnation of the markets and the resulting increasing cut-throat competition. These developments make it more challenging to acquire new customers - this is one reason why the concept of customer loyalty is becoming increasingly important in the hospitality field. However, the constantly rising costs of acquiring new customers compared to maintaining existing customers also support stronger customer loyalty to the company (Anabila et al., 2022).

It is often assumed that customer loyalty arises from customer satisfaction. Not least because of this, the topic of customer satisfaction is the focus of science and practice. The qualitative scientific studies that deal with customer satisfaction now fill entire libraries – by 1992, more than 15,000 published studies had already been counted (Nobar et al., 2018). In practice, companies expend considerable resources to measure and, if possible, increase customer satisfaction (Homburg & Bucerius, 2006; Rouzies et al., 2019).

However, whether customer satisfaction always leads to customer loyalty is controversial. Some customers switch providers even though they are satisfied with the services; others remain loyal to it even though they are dissatisfied with its performance (Stauss & Neuhaus, 2006). The connection between customer satisfaction and loyalty is examined in more detail below. For this

purpose, the two constructs will first be examined more closely, with the most important theoretical approaches to explaining them being presented and selected measurement approaches.

Customer loyalty can be looked at from different perspectives. Usually, the view from the perspective of the provider is meant. This includes all activities undertaken by the service provider to intensify the customer relationship, such as establishing contact points that make it easier for the customer to address the company directly. But customer retention can also be considered from the customer's perspective. This demand-oriented perspective relates, for example, to customer attitudes toward the business relationship (Diller, 1996). This is the point of view that business psychology usually takes, and that also underlies the following explanations.

However, the service quality of the hospitality industry of the Capital is not at all satisfactory (Malik et al., 2020). The large event management companies are the only one who focuses on the service quality to some extent. (Hasan et al., 2014) However, they are way too expensive for the majority of the people to afford. Small and medium event planning companies have little or no focus on the service quality. They do not understand the significance of service quality for the success of their business in the long run. The local researchers have also not tried to address this issue.

### **1.1 Problem statement**

The service quality of the hospitality industry of the Capital is not at all satisfactory. SMEs usually have little to no idea on what aspects to improve in the service quality until proper research is done to understand those aspects which is not available in the case of Islamabad so it is highly affecting the customer's satisfaction in the hospitality industry in Islamabad. Service quality is perceived differently in every area so global practices can't be applied without understanding the

perception of the locals about the service quality. Therefore, time and attention are needed to replicate the data from internationally recognized SMEs.

#### *1.1.1 Aim of research*

The aim of this research was to explore the service quality of the hospitality industry in Islamabad vis-à-vis event management. This research has been conducted to help the current/upcoming SMEs and future researchers understand the desired service quality by the customers and owners/managers of the event industry of Islamabad for better experience and satisfaction. The objective of the study was to evaluate the impact of event management industry performance on customer satisfaction and service quality through qualitative methods like interviews.

#### *1.1.2 Research objectives*

This research aims to:

- understand perception of the main stakeholders (owners/managers & customers) of the event management industry in Islamabad about service quality.
- Identify the factors which influence customer's satisfaction based on service quality indicators
- Identify areas for improvement of the existing service quality of small and medium event-management companies in Islamabad.

#### *1.1.3 Research Questions*

- What is the perception of the main stakeholders (owners/managers & customers) of the event management industry in Islamabad about service quality?
- What are the factors which influence customer's satisfaction based on service quality indicators?

- Which areas should be improved in the existing service quality of small and medium event-management companies in Islamabad?

#### *1.1.4 Rationale*

This research is very crucial for the practitioners as well as for the progression of academia in the hospitality industry because the practitioners would not be able to improve unless they know what to improve and the academia would be strengthened with the knowledge regarding the existing service quality and the perceptions of the shareholders. The previous researches in the hospitality industry have not addressed the issue of unsatisfactory service quality in Islamabad. The growing hospitality industry of the Capital is highly ignored (Satti et al., 2020) The previous researches have not understood the perception of the people regarding service quality in Pakistan.

This research will fulfill most of the gaps in the previous studies. It is a study on the issues of service quality regarding the customers' experience and satisfaction vis-a-vis the event management industry in the Capital. The research will help understand the perceptions of the customers and stakeholders of the Capital vis-a-vis service quality and how do they perceive it. It has also focus on the factors of service quality which are the most important ones for their experience and satisfaction and also give recommendations for the existing as well as future hospitality businesses as it would also help other industries to understand service quality in a more detailed manner aiming to improve their knowledge and skills as the previous researches have not targeted the Capital. New researchers will get a better idea about the industry and the market.

#### *1.1.5 Significance*

This research has identified areas for improvement in the service quality for better customers' satisfaction and provide recommendations to the practitioners and researchers based on the exact problems faced by the customers of Islamabad. It will also help the businesses other than the

hospitality industry to help understand the needs of the market for a better customers' experience and satisfaction.

#### *1.1.5. Structure of the thesis*

This study has several parts which are interrelated to each other. The introduction chapter tells us about the basics of the study. It tells us about what the study really is or why is it being conducted. It also provides the details regarding the significance and scope of the study. Then comes our literature review. In this part, we have analyzed the past researches and other material sources on our topic. This allowed us to have a better understanding of the topic as well as help us identify the gaps in the study. The methodology part gives us a clear picture about how the research has been conducted. What type of designs and methods were used to conduct this research. It also tells us about how we have analyzed the interviews.



## **Chapter 2: Literature review**

### ***Hospitality Industry***

The hospitality industry spans various sectors: from hotels and restaurants to casinos and airlines. Hospitality degree programs provide students with the skills they need to work in a variety of hospitality businesses. The hospitality industry includes various management concepts, such as leadership management, operations management, project management and business strategy. It also includes entrepreneurship in the fields of tourism, hospitality, event management and practical implementation of business theories and strategies.

The hospitality industry is growing rapidly on a global level (Nair, 2018). The level of attention it requires vis-a-vis research is unsatisfactory. The mid scale hospitality companies have largely been ignored hence their service quality declined (Nale et al, 2018). This gap must be filled in order to satisfy the needs of the market as well as academia. This gap has affected all the scales of the hospitality industry.

Hospitality service providers can create, enhance, and maintain satisfaction and commitment through customer experience so as to sustain competitive advantage. The dimensions of customer experience influences customer satisfaction and customer satisfaction in turn, influences commitment (Sharma, 2015). Customer experience is regarded as a holistic interactive process, facilitated through cognitive and emotional clues, moderated by customer and contextual characteristics, resulting into unique and pleasurable/un-pleasurable memories.

### ***Hospitality Industry in Pakistan***

The hospitality industry has become a multifaceted enterprise and a trillion dollar sector worldwide. But in Pakistan, despite the great potential of hospitality industry, the situation in law and order and terrorism are unsettling (Al Khattab and Aldehayyat, 2011), which very obviously impacts

the hospitality industry. In the review of international travel and tourist council data Pakistan ran 47 out of 200 countries (Hu, Kandampully and Juwaheer, 2009).

Recent research shows that just 98 studies among 114,000 respondents have identified just two published studies examining the quality of services, happiness of customers and business success (Al-Khattab and Aldehayyat, 2011). In Pakistan the growth of the hospitality industry has declined, and therefore customers cannot attract from existing and emergent segments in the hospitality industry and are not satisfied, due to inappropriate business performance of hospitality industries and the prevailing quality of service, legal and order situation.

### ***Event Management***

A rise in leisure time and disposable wealth, among other factors, contributed to the growth of events held all over the world in the second half of the 20th century (Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonald, 2011). Governments all across the world first realised the potential for events to have positive effects in the 1980s, specifically. Since events continue to not only show a capacity to generate positive impacts but also to play a significant role in the development of culture, the arts, urban regeneration, education, and tourism, there has been unmatched interest in and participation in them over the first decade of the twenty-first century and in every corner of the world (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2011). Thus, the prominence and significance accorded to events and the event industry around the world is influenced by an event's capacity to not only draw tourists to a host place but also to afterwards contribute to that country's economic and social well-being (Jago & Shaw, 1998).

The event phenomenon grew in popularity in the second half of the 20th century, and this was accompanied by an increase in academic interest in events. As a result, more study on a variety of topics related to events and the event business was conducted (Getz, 2009). The potential social value of different types of events (such as sports, cultural, and business events, among others) has

been studied from a variety of disciplines (such as anthropology, tourism and leisure studies, regional planning, etc.), demonstrating in each case that events are occasions for (re)affirming or contesting the social order (Handelman, 1990; Holland & Skinner, 1995), building group and place-based relationships, and promoting individual and collective identity.

### ***Importance of Service Quality***

Service quality is a comparison between perceived expectations of a service and perceived performance (Booms et al, 2017). For decades, service quality has played an important role in the hotel industry (El Saghier, 2020). Many researchers, as afore mentioned in the paper, have tried to explain service quality through different models and theories. The model often used is the SERVQUAL model of Parasuraman (Zeitaml & Berry, 1988). Researchers usually use this model to conduct a survey in their respective area to understand the significance of service quality for the people of their area. Researchers have not used qualitative method very often, which ignores a wider view of service quality. Customers are more aware of their needs and want greater service standards. Their opinions and expectations are always shifting and the service providers find it challenging to efficiently monitor and manage services. The goal is to carefully enhance the service and to focus as a part of customer service management on more crucial service characteristics/dimensions. The sensitivity of consumers to different service characteristics and dimension is essential. There are several schools of thoughts regarding the measurements of the service quality but still, many measurements have been developed to assess the service quality of the hospitality industry such as HOLSERV, DINESERV, CASERV and LODGSERV (Al-Ababneh, 2016).

### ***Debates on Service quality***

Debates on the issue of service quality can be heard now and then. The key aspects essential for customer's satisfaction are still under debate. Some say that through digital innovation, service quality could be highly improved in the current industry (Büyüközkan, 2015). Some divide them into

functional quality and technical quality (Al-Ababneh, 2016). A few say that price is the main deciding factor of the level of service quality (Satti, 2020). Others say that all of the five aspects of the Parasuraman model should be catered i.e. Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy (Zeitaml & Berry's, 1988) for measuring the service quality in hospitality industry.

### ***Importance of Customer Satisfaction***

Several other studies also demonstrated a positive connection between customer satisfaction and aspects of customer loyalty (Homburg & Bucerius, 2006). For example, Bitner (1990) determined in a study on the rating of services by air passengers that customer satisfaction has a positive effect on the perception of service quality, which in turn has a positive effect on customer loyalty. Kaur & Soch (2018), surveyed mobile operators' customers and found a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention. Finally, a connection between customer satisfaction and the intention to buy or use the service again was demonstrated in a meta-analysis of 50 studies on customer satisfaction (Szymanski & Henard, 2001). However, there are also indications that customers break off the business relationship despite being satisfied. The qualitative customer satisfaction model by Stauss and Neuhaus (1997) explains this phenomenon. The model is based on the idea that the quality of the feeling of satisfaction, which differs depending on the personality, determines the relationship between the two variables. In the qualitative customer satisfaction model, five types of satisfaction are distinguished (Stauss & Neuhaus, 1997):

- Demanding Satisfied people approach the provider with positive feelings such as optimism and confidence. Based on their previous experience, they expect that the provider will also be able to satisfy increasing demands in the future. They would like to maintain the business relationship, but performance increases are prerequisites.

- Stable Satisfied people also have positive feelings of confirmation and trust in the provider. Compared to the demanding satisfied, however, they are passive as far as the requirements and

demands towards the provider are concerned. They wait for everything to stay the same. They would like to keep the business relationship unchanged.

- Resigned Satisfied people feel indifference towards the provider. They value the relationship so that they cannot expect more than what they have already received. Nevertheless, they want to maintain the relationship because they don't expect more from other providers either.

- Stable Dissatisfied people are disappointed by the provider and feel helpless. Despite the dissatisfaction, they behave passively. They expect more but don't know what they can do about it.

Consumers

of this type are willing to switch, but because of their passivity, they will remain in the business relationship until a special nudge is given.

- Demanding Dissatisfied people are very active about their demands and tend to protest against the provider. They expect the current

range of services to improve significantly and actively demand this. They will maintain the business relationship if their demands are met, otherwise, they will switch providers.

Stauss and Neuhaus (1997) also proved this typology empirically. The qualitative customer satisfaction model can, therefore – without claiming to be exhaustive. It– also be convincingly illustrated empirically that customer satisfaction does not automatically lead to customer loyalty (Kaiser, 2005).

Several studies presented in the paper, so far establish a positive connection between customer satisfaction and loyalty, assuming a linear progression. The second category of investigations is dedicated to the question of the forms of functional relationships.

Some studies, as afore mentioned, showed a progressive correlation, which states that when satisfaction is high, even a slight deterioration in the level of satisfaction will cause the intention to buy again to fall sharply. If, on the other hand, a provider can make its already satisfied customers a

little more satisfied, this has a significant impact on customer loyalty. There is also empirical evidence for this. In a study by Mmutle (2017), customers from the hospitality industry were asked whether they would revisit the location. Between satisfied customers showed a clear difference in the intention to visit again.

### ***Importance of improving customer satisfaction***

Service is an intangible item which the customer can't buy but experience, so they want that experience to be the best, whereas staff considers that the service they are already providing is more than enough (Sanasam, 2016). The best way to understand service quality is through the eyes of the customers.

Customer satisfaction is the key factor for success and depends highly on the behaviors of frontline service providers. Customers should be managed as assets, and that customers vary in their needs, preferences, and buying behavior. Customer Satisfaction has more contribution for customer loyalty in comparison of Customer Retention. Customer Satisfaction is based on Product Quality and Perceived Values. Perceived quality had the greatest influence on the customer satisfaction for satisfied and dissatisfied customers. In addition, in terms of customer loyalty, the customer satisfaction is more important than image for satisfied and dissatisfied customers (Lee, 2016).

### ***Role of service quality in improving customer satisfaction***

Training of the staff plays a pivotal role in the improvement of the service quality in the hospitality industry especially in Asia (Dhar, 2015). Different people are undoubtedly tested differently in terms of service quality, both for event management companies and for other hospitality industries (Naraya et al., 2009).

### ***Role of Cultural impact in improving customer satisfaction***

Previous research has indicated that safety has to be adapted to cope with Asian service (Mittila, 1999), and more attention should be paid to it by its service provider. In addition, Western

culture customers have proven that they are more often dependent than their Asian equivalent on concrete indications from the physical surroundings. Mittila (1999) assessed the quality of the service between Western and Asian clients in relation to communication and distance of power concluded that culture led to an inclination on how people assessed their objectives for buying a service. Singapore's tourism turnover during the previous few years has risen to 23 billion dollars in Singapore and has declined to 21 billion dollars in Singapore in the last few years (reports till 2019 as post Covid pandemic, the impact has been bigger). Critical events in the encounter between employee and customer were studied by Bitner et al., (1990), who surveyed customers of airlines, hotels and restaurants using the critical events method. The customer was asked: Think of an encounter with an airline employee, hotels/restaurants that made you particularly satisfied (dissatisfied).

#### ***Customer Satisfaction Measurement tools***

The factors identified using the critical events method can be viewed as the basis for concrete recommendations for action by customer-oriented corporate management. One can, e.g., be the starting point for developing company-specific customer satisfaction measurements or provide critical information for the training of employees. However, the application of this method proves to be very time-consuming, and the reliability and validity of the data are disputed. Another problem is that the researcher often has to subjectively evaluate data that cannot be interpreted, e.g., assigning events to categories. It is also questionable whether the events mentioned by the customer influenced their satisfaction. In this way, recent events or events that fit the mood are better remembered, while other events that may be more significant for the feeling of satisfaction are not remembered.

The critical events method only records extreme events; processes are usually not considered. This point of criticism is taken into account in the sequential event method (Stauss & Weinlich, 1996). The procedure, which was specially developed for use in the service sector, considers all

points of contact between the provider and the customer. In this way, positive and negative events concerning the service quality perceived by the customer are determined over time.

So this is the reason that this understanding the perception about service quality directly from the customers is crucial for the companies in order to improve rapidly and give better performance.

The development of customer satisfaction can be explained in different ways. In science, the 7th disconfirmation paradigm has largely prevailed (also known as the C/D paradigm = confirmation/denoted disconfirmation paradigm; Homburg & Stock-Homburg, 2006; Rouzies et al., 2019). According to this, customer satisfaction arises when they compare their current experiences using the product (actual performance) with their expectations (target performance). If the actual performance corresponds to the target performance, i.e. if the expectations are confirmed (confirmation), this leads to satisfaction. Exceeds act expected performance (positive disconfirmation). This results in an exceptionally high level of satisfaction. On the other hand, dissatisfaction results when the actual performance does not meet expectations (negative disconfirmation).

According to this approach, satisfaction should arise with confirmation and positive disconfirmation. In contrast, other authors assume that when performance is confirmed, only indifference arises, meaning that satisfaction only develops with positive disconfirmation (Hill, 1986) (Xie & Sun, 2021). Furthermore, it is assumed that the boundary between satisfaction and dissatisfaction is not marked by a point value but is a tolerance zone. If the comparative value of actual and target performance is within this range, the performance is classified as satisfactory. The customers are enthusiastic if there is a robust positive disconfirmation (Stauss, 1999).

Actual performance is the level of performance perceived by the customer. An objectively similar service can be perceived differently by different customers. This subjectively perceived actual performance is compared with the customers' expectations as a standard of comparison; they represent the level of performance that a customer demands. Essential sources of expectations are the



customer's personal needs, his previous experiences, verbal recommendations from acquaintances, and promises.

#### *Customer satisfaction as an attitude*

According to the C/D paradigm, customer satisfaction results from a cognitive comparison of perceived actual and target performance. However, satisfaction can also be viewed as a feeling; accordingly, the importance of emotions has been demonstrated in research on customer satisfaction (Wirtz & Bateson, 1999; Lin et al., 2019).

Customer satisfaction can thus be defined as an attitude towards an object that includes the following aspects (Bayon et al., 2002):

- the cognitive component, i.e. forming an opinion about an object, e.g. about a product or service,
- the emotional component, i.e. the feelings that arise when evaluating the respective objects.

The relative influence of the cognitive and emotional components in creating customer satisfaction density can change over time. In a study by Homburg, Koschate and Hoyer (2006), the influence of the cognitive component increased over time, while the influence of the emotional component decreased. Hosany et al., (2021) suggest that customer satisfaction should therefore be viewed as a dynamic construct. If one proceeds from the three-component theory of attitude (Hosany et al., 2021), then when defining customer satisfaction as an attitude, a willingness to behave would also have to be considered. To represent the intention of a customer to buy or recommend a product or service again. However, the measurement of customer satisfaction focuses on the cognitive and emotional components, so behavioural intention is not seen here as part of the definition of customer satisfaction but is discussed in connection with customer loyalty.

So, this paradigm suggests that the performance could be measured by the satisfaction of the customer. The satisfaction can be cognitive as well as emotional. So, in order to improve the service

quality, it is essential to understand the perception of the customer. The owners/managers can't solely decide how to satisfy the customers. So both the parties need to come on a single page in order to improve the service quality and this is exactly what this research has aimed to achieve.

### *Service quality as attitude*

Various researchers approach perceived service quality as an attitude

(Parasuraman, Zeithaml, Berry, 1988; Bitner, 1990; Gronroos, 1990). The quality of service is a summary evaluation of an object. This is indicated in property characteristics such as goods - harmful, desirable - undesirable, pleasant - annoying (Ajzen, Fishbein, 2000).

If service quality is a kind of attitude, then the service quality measure should be based on an attitude measurement instrument. It is plausible that factors that play a role will also play a role in assessing service quality in attitude formation.

One instrument that fits well with the assumption that service quality is a kind of attitude is the adequacy-importance model, designed by Mazis, Ahtola and Klippel (1975). In this model, someone's attitude is determined by assigning a factor of importance to different dimensions of the performance of a particular service. Mazis et al. (1975) later assume that the performance dimension alone can best explain behaviour.

Follow-up research by these three researchers did indeed find support for the implementation approach (performance-only) in determining service quality. At this moment, the expectations leave behind. In addition Mazis, Ahtola and Klippel (1975), and Woodruff, Cadotte and Jankins (1983) also shows that only the service quality performed, better explains the service quality than the model with the expectations. This also excludes the best approach to service quality assessment as attitude building.

### *Customer Retention*

Customer loyalty includes both the previous behaviour and the behavioural intentions of a customer towards a provider or its services. Previous behaviour includes the shown repurchase and recommendation behaviour, the behavioural intention is mainly characterized by repeat purchase, additional purchase (cross-selling) and recommendation intention (Manowicz, 2019).

From the demand-oriented perspective, customer loyalty can have various causes (Manowicz, 2019): psychological factors (e.g. a customer's satisfaction with a brand's products), situational factors (e.g. whether a product is convenient for consumers to purchase), legal factors (e.g. a contract with a fitness studio for a specific minimum term), economic factors (e.g. whether the costs of a particular product are significantly lower than comparable competing products), technological factors (e.g. when a company uses software that meets the needs of the customer). Customer loyalty – a psychological construct

There is disagreement about customer loyalty. In the definition, Thompson (2005), considers customer retention as a psychic construct of connectedness or obligation of one person to another person or company. Customer loyalty can also be a state of bondage is with this condition always associated with mental satisfaction. The second definition is more suitable as mental satisfaction results in customer loyalty.

### *Measurement of Customer Retention*

The development of methods for measuring customer loyalty has been criminally neglected, which is why only a few measuring options are mentioned in the following. The starting point is the definition of customer loyalty, which aims at the consumer's past and future behaviour. Therefore, when measuring the construct, a distinction must be made between the ex- post measurement of the behavior shown. The disadvantage here, however, is the lack of differentiation between first-time buyers and repeat buyers as well as the effect of situational influences (e.g. the economic situation).

In addition, variables such as the customer churn rate and the average duration of a customer relationship are also conceivable as a measurement approach. Due to the ex-post consideration, however, these variables can only be used to a limited extent for the active company management (Bruhn, 2015).

The ex-ante measurement is mainly a matter of measuring psychological constructs that are supposed to be related to customer loyalty, e.g. the, satisfaction with complaints, the intention to buy again (Bruhn, 2015) or the attitude-related commitment. These psychological constructs are described in the literature, e.g. seen as an indicator of future behaviour. The connection between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty is discussed in the following section.

### ***Theories related to satisfaction in event management***

#### *Attribution theory*

The attribution theory describes how people explain events in their environment by attributing them to causes. Related to Attribution theory can explain the emergence of customer satisfaction, why different degrees of satisfaction can occur with the same confirmation level. Causes for explaining events can be differentiated according to their place of origin, controllability and stability over time (Folkes, 1984).

Regarding the place of causation there are two possibilities, which are referred to as internal or external attribution (Heider, 1958):

- Internal attribution: In this case, events are explained by factors in the person acting. Observed, e.g. For example, if a staff in an event treats another customer impolitely like a manager, the behaviour shown could be due to a characteristic of the person – e.g. the character of the event management staff.
- External attribution: In this form, the event is

attributed to environmental factors. Suppose the customer explains the cashier's behaviour, for example, by high stress due to many customers

. In that case, the inappropriate behaviour is attributed to a cause found in the environment.

The location of causation has a significant impact on satisfaction. If expectations are not met, greater dissatisfaction arises if the customer attributes internally, i.e. sees the cause

of the poor performance on the provider's part and does not blame environmental characteristics. Controllability refers to whether an actor could influence the cause. Suppose a consumer believes that the provider could control the cause of an event that does not meet his expectations. In that case, this leads to greater dissatisfaction than in the case of perceived uncontrollability. e.g., if a customer is dissatisfied with the product range in the supermarket and believes that it is within the staff's power to ensure the product range, they will be dissatisfied. On the other hand, does he believe that the supply of products depends heavily on factors that cannot be influenced?

Stability is the third dimension by which attributions can be distinguished. Causes can be stable or variable over time. If e.g. For example, a customer's expectation is not met and he sees this non-fulfillment as stable over time, dissatisfaction will be greater than in the opposite case (Folkes, 1984).

Understanding how the customers perceive events and interpret them is essential to an enterprise for improving its service quality. This theory will provide an indepth view to the companies about how their service quality is seen by their customers.

*Event-oriented procedures: method of critical events.*

Many methods for measuring customer satisfaction can be systematized according to various criteria. A distinction is often made between the type of measurement – whether objective or

subjective – and the orientation of the content of the measurement (Mahmoud et al., 2018). This results in the following systematization:

- Type of measurement: Objective measurement methods record customer satisfaction using observable variables that do not depend on the consumer's subjective perception, e.g., sales and market share. Subjective processes are based on customer perception. Orientation of measurement content: Event-oriented Methods look at satisfaction with a particular contact event.
- Feature-oriented methods relate to product, service, or interaction features that the customer evaluates. Problem-oriented procedures try to identify the difficulties relevant to satisfaction, such as the evaluation of complaints (Mahmoud et al., 2018).

The critical events method goes back to Flanagan (1954), who originally developed it for the analysis of work. This method collects information about positive or negative events for professional success. An event is observable human behaviour that is shown in certain situations and allows conclusions or predictions to be made about the person's future behaviour. An event is critical if this behaviour impacts the goal of the activity under investigation. The aim is to identify effective or ineffective behaviour as comprehensively as possible and to collect concrete examples. Flanagan (1954) does not provide fixed rules according to which the method is to be carried out, but flexible ones.

Guidelines must be adapted to each situation. However, minimum methodological requirements must be observed:

- The critical events described by the respondents must relate to the behaviour they have experienced.
- The person interviewed must be directly involved in the event.
- The essential determinants of the critical events must be included in the description of the experience process.

- The critical events must be justified, it must be clear why an event is considered critical.

Bitner, Booms and Tetreault (1990) applied the procedure to the area of customer satisfaction.

### *Two Factor Theory*

The two-factor theory, developed in job satisfaction research (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959), explains the emergence of different levels. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are each triggered by different factors. The so-called hygiene factors are responsible for dissatisfaction; employees are dissatisfied if they are not met. If these factors are met, satisfaction does not arise, but only a neutral state, referred to as non-dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors affect the work environment, such as the physical working conditions or the relationship with colleagues. Satisfaction arises from the motivators; aspects of work such as praise, advancement and work content are referred to in working life. If the expectations of motivators are not met, the employees experience a neutral state of dissatisfaction.

The Kano model, named after its developer of customer satisfaction, is based on the two-factor theory and attempts to determine the factors influencing satisfaction in the consumer area. These factors are classified according to their impact on customer satisfaction. The model distinguishes between 3 types of factors that – similar to the hygiene factors and motivators cause different levels of satisfaction (Bailom, Hinterhuber, Matzler & Sauerwein, 1996). 4 primary factors: Customers take these factors for granted, so that failure creates dissatisfaction and compliance creates a neutral state of non-dissatisfaction. Essential factors correspond to the hygiene factors in the Herzberg model. (Mannan et al., 2019)

- performance factors: Customers expect these factors.

There is a linear relationship between the level of confirmation and satisfaction.

- Excitement Factors: Customers don't take these factors for

granted. If the disconfirmation is positive, a high level of satisfaction can be achieved, or if the disconfirmation is not achieved, only a state of dissatisfaction. Enthusiasm factors correspond to the motivators in the job satisfaction model. The Kano model has become particularly important for measuring customer satisfaction and is taken up again there.

#### *Measurement of trait effects- Kano customer satisfaction model*

The Kano customer satisfaction model is divided between fundamental, performance and spirit factors. How can these factors be determined? A specific procedure was developed for this purpose based on the explorative survey of customer-specific product requirements. The goal is an in-depth analysis of »real« customer problems and needs (as opposed to merely registering the wishes expressed by the customer).

The product requirements identified in this way are then classified according to the strength of their influence on customer satisfaction, i.e. according to whether they are essential, performance or enthusiasm factors. This is done using an interview in which two questions are asked per product requirement, one functional and one dysfunctional question. The functional question records the reaction of the customer when the respective feature is available.

The dysfunctional question relates to the customer's reaction when the feature is not present (Bailom et al., 1996). In addition to the functional and dysfunctional questions, the assessment of the current product concerning this feature and the subjective importance for the customer is usually asked for each product feature.

The answers are first entered in the Kano evaluation table when evaluating the data. This way, the respective performance feature can be identified as an actual performance or enthusiasm feature. In addition to the three factors mentioned, a distinction is also made between factors to which the customer is indifferent, i.e. it doesn't matter to him whether the respective property exists. He would not be willing to spend money on these factors. A feature falls into the Q field if a result is classified



as questionable, e.g., "I would be thrilled" for both the functional and dysfunctional questions. The customer does not want product properties classified in the R field.

The results are then summarized according to frequency, giving an overview of how often the individual product properties were classified in the respective factor category. The Kano method enables statements to be made as to whether the fulfilment of a product requirement can increase customer satisfaction or whether this only prevents dissatisfaction. Depending on the survey's aim, the depth of the evaluation required varies (Bailom et al., 1996).

Although initial investigations proved the procedure's reliability and validity, the high level of survey effort is particularly problematic since there are at least three questions to ask. The interview is, therefore, very long, and the survey is expensive. In addition, dysfunctional questions, e.g. Partly incomprehensible, since customers are usually not optimistic about the lack of the desired property.

This theory will allow the owners/managers to understand how they can improve their service quality by managing their own staff efficiently. The facilities and the motivation factors provided to the staff have huge impact on the service quality.

#### *Service Quality: SERVQUAL*

The Service Quality Questionnaire – abbreviated: SERV QUAL – by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) was developed to measure service quality. The researchers regard service quality as a subjective quantity, i.e. what customers experience as quality is quality. Like customer satisfaction, service quality is based on a comparison of expectations and performance; the resulting expectation-perception gap defines the quality experienced.

In this procedure, the proximity of the service quality to the construct of customer satisfaction becomes apparent. (Stauss, 1999), Therefore, service or service quality measurement can be regarded as a particular case of satisfaction measurement. The theoretical basis of the SERVQUAL measurement approach is the service quality gap model. (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1992).

This model was developed based on an exploratory study in which companies from 4 service sectors took part, in which representatives of the companies and their customers were interviewed.

The providers were asked various questions about service quality, e.g. to understand service quality from the customer perspective, to improve service quality and problems in delivering high service quality. Customers were asked about their expectations of the services. Comparing the statements made it possible to identify gaps, i.e. areas of conflict that can arise from different ideas about service quality between customers and service providers. The following gaps can influence the service quality perceived by the customer (Zeithaml et al., 1992):

- Gap 1: Management's misperceptions of customer expectations
- Gap 2: Lack of standards to meet customer needs (it is not enough to know the expectations, there must also be performance standards for the employees)
- Gap 3: If the performance does not meet the standards that speak
- Gap 4: If the service does not deliver what the company promises (exaggerated advertising promises cause this gap)
- Gap 5: Expected and experienced service from the customer differ. This gap includes all previous gaps;

to close gap 5, gaps 1–4 must be closed

With the SERVQUAL model, based on gap 5, the discrepancy between expected and perceived performance from the customer's point of view is recorded. To operationalize the model, 22 items were developed that measure five dimensions of service quality (7 overviews, that is).

For each item, the expectation and the perception of the actual performance are asked; the difference in the statements determines the degree of satisfaction. The five quality dimensions and examples of the items with the target and actual questions are shown in the 7 overviews. The

questions relate to companies from the service industry or a specific company. The questions are assigned numbers from 1 to 7, where one stands for “wrong” and 7 for “absolutely correct” (Parasuraman et al., 1985). The SERVQUAL dimensions and sample questions for the target/actual measurement comprises 3 dimensions: Dimension 1: Material; Dimension 2: Reliability; and Dimension 3: Accommodating

Although the target/actual comparison that was carried out can help analyze weak points, the systematic approach was also heavily criticized. It has not proven sensible to examine all services with a universal questionnaire; instead, the specific features of a concrete service must be taken into account. It is also problematic that the defined dimensions and items could only be partially replicated in further studies. Apart from that, there is hardly any empirical evidence for the relevance of a separate measurement of perception and expectation. Instead, measuring the current service characteristics without separately recording expectations best reflects the perception of service quality from the customer's point of view. Cronin and Taylor (1992) took up this criticism and developed a interview for measuring service quality – the so-called SERVPERF (for service performance) – which only records the actual performance appraisal. However, this interview practices SERVQUAL, which is still one of the most frequently used measuring instruments for recording customer satisfaction (Coulthard, 2004).

#### *Problem-oriented methods: Complaint and praise analysis*

In the case of complaints, the customer expresses his dissatisfaction or, in the case of praise, his particular satisfaction with incidents that emphasize or question the appropriateness and quality of the service experienced. Because this communication is customer-driven, there is no specific method for raising complaints and praise. However, it is advisable to take entrepreneurial measures that make communication easier for customers, e.g. Free complaint hotlines (Stauss, 1999). When evaluating the data, various analysis phases must be run through, such as selecting suitable, i.e.

meaningful customer reports, forming problem categories, assigning complaints or acknowledgements to these categories, and determining frequencies and reporting.

Since the customer initiates complaints and praise, the information obtained is highly relevant and up-to-date. Complaint and praise analysis is also a cost-effective method. However, the information only reflects excerpts of reality: the customers who complain or praise are not representative of the other customers (Stauss & Hentschel, 1990). Empirically, for example, a high proportion of »unvoiced complaints« can be proven, i.e. although the customers had a reason, they did not complain, among other things, because the complaint effort was estimated to be too high (Matzler, 2000).

#### *Relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty*

The great effort involved in measuring customer satisfaction is not least driven by the expectation that it will be possible to predict customer loyalty to the company. This requires a connection between the constructs – an assumption that is not undisputed and will be considered in more detail in the end.

Usually, customer retention is viewed as a potential impact on customer satisfaction. Not least because of this, many empirical studies were carried out on the connection between the two constructs. However, in these works, customer retention is usually measured by behavioural intent rather than actual behaviour. The studies can essentially be divided into three categories (King et al., 2020):

1. Studies that look at the connection between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty
2. Studies on the functional progression of the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty
3. Studies to analyze moderator variables of the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

All of the above measures are important for improvement of the service quality of the SMEs vis-à-vis event management.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This research is qualitative in nature which was conducted to understand service quality regarding the SMEs of Event Management Industry from the perspective of the customers of Islamabad and give recommendations accordingly.

#### **Research Philosophy, Design & Approach**

This research is qualitative in nature because an indepth view of the perception and experience would be required to understand service quality properly. Through qualitative research, we were be able to understand the quality of the experience by emphasizing on the customer satisfaction as it gives indepth knowledge about the experience of the customer. It was also easier to conduct qualitative research in limited resources. Interviews were conducted to gather the data because they are the most feasible tool for the participants to express their perceptions. Open ended interviews were taken. It was conducted to understand how the customers as well as the attendees of events of Islamabad perceive service quality in the hospitality industry.

Categories of questions in a customer interview for service quality assessment, it is desirable to distinguish three categories of questions. Standard assessment questions about service aspects important for an entire sector (for example, hotels, event management sector). Those standard questions can also be used for benchmarking, which we will discuss later. These standardized questions for the hospitality industry include general satisfaction price/quality ratio, willingness to recommend satisfaction with specific aspects (e.g. atmosphere, cleanliness), and Optional assessment questions related to service aspects specific to a particular event management organization. An interview only becomes a quality management tool if it contains sufficiently detailed information relevant to the improvement actions of a specific company. That is why we propose to add a limited number of questions specific to a company that relate to specific service aspects after the standardized questions. These specific questions can be temporary and replaced by other new

temporary ones, for example, once the score for the relevant service aspect is positive. Specific questions can relate to, for example, the room service or the sauna, if these are essential aspects of an event management organization.

Another example of a specific aspect that various hotels and restaurants on the coast consider important is child-friendliness. For catering companies, which pay specific attention to families with children, a customer interview is only relevant if child-friendliness is also assessed. If this shows a problem, then a more in-depth investigation can be considered. This is also the case for other aspects. These specific questions are essential for a company because they relate to what a company considers vital to distinguish itself from others. In addition, an interview with these specific questions is also experienced as a interview tailored to the company concerned. These specific questions are essential for a company because they relate to what a company considers vital to distinguish itself from others.

In addition, an interview with these specific questions is also experienced as an interview tailored to the company concerned. An open question for an explanation of the assessments or suggestions for improvement. An open question in a written interview allows the customer to concretize or specify his assessment. An example of an open question is: What can we do to provide you with better service in the future? Our experience shows that the answer to this question provides information about causes of dissatisfaction or valuable suggestions for improvement.

### *Participants and Procedure*

The customers and the owners/managers of SMEs (Event management companies) of Islamabad were the participants. They were interviewed about the topic. These customers belonged to the Middle and the Upper-middle class of the society as these class usually opt for SMEs. The customers of SMEs in the event management industry were approached by the end of each event and

through contacting the clients of these companies who recently had their events. Managerial level of staff served as participants.

Companies interviewed:

1. Spectrum

Total employees: 8

Interviewed: Manager

Operating since: 2016

Cliental: Very Strong Corporate Cliental

2. Arfeen sound and projector solutions

Total employees: 4

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 2005

Cliental: Strong Corporate and private Cliental

3. Afghan decorators

Total employees: 10

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 1998

Cliental: Very Strong Corporate and Private Cliental

4. Madini Lights

Total employees: 5

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 2014

Cliental: Normal Private Cliental

5. Awan caterers



Total employees: 13

Interviewed: Manager

Operating since: 2010

Cliental: Strong Private Cliental

6. Fiaz Floral decorators

Total employees: 2

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 2019

Cliental: Strong Private Cliental

7. Rana decorators

Total employees: 6

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 2008

Cliental: Strong Private Cliental

8. Badar Munir events

Total employees: 5

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 2003

Cliental: Strong Private Cliental

9. Umer lighting solutions

Total employees: 12

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 2012

Cliental: Strong Private Cliental

#### 10. Capital Caterers

Total employees: 14

Interviewed: Manager

Operating since: 2001

Cliental: Strong Private Cliental

#### 11. Hussain events

Total employees: 7

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 2017

Cliental: Normal Private Cliental

#### 12. Jimmy Sound Systems

Total employees: 4

Interviewed: Owner

Operating since: 1998

Cliental: Strong Private Cliental

### *Sampling Technique*

The purposive sampling technique was chosen for the interviews. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a type of non-probability sampling in which researchers pick individuals from the public to take part in their surveys based on their own judgement.

Benefits of purposeful sampling:

- Efficiency in Time and Money: Purposive sampling takes far less time, money, and

effort to conduct because the pool of candidates is smaller. You only pay for the engagement you require because it is a perfect-fit method.

- **You Can Get A Lot for Not Much:** By generally removing response bias, purposeful sampling tends to provide higher-quality information that is tailored to your needs.
- **Extremely Versatile:** Purposive sampling is applicable in a wide range of situations. Even more useful information is produced when a variety of sorts are combined at home.
- **Quality Responses:** Purposive sampling increases your chances of obtaining high-quality responses. This is due to the fact that you may gather a lot of information from a smaller group of enthusiastic participants who are each, in their own unique manner, subject-matter experts
- **Reduce the Error Margin:** Due to the higher caliber of responses, the data collected will be entirely pertinent to the study and more properly represent the audience.

### Cons of Specifically Sampling

There are downsides to every sample or market research technique. Understanding the challenges enabled us to anticipate issues and understand how to address them.

- **Subgroup Exclusion:** By accident or design, purposeful sampling may leave out significant subgroups from the study.
- **Not Useful on a Large Scale:** Even complete population sampling has its bounds before the results become too varied, dispersed, and specialised to be helpful.

Purposive sampling is best employed for smaller groups and niches; if the scope of the research is extremely broad, it could be necessary to postpone purposive sampling.

- **Risks of data invalidation:** The results' validity is in doubt due to their specificity. Here, subgroup exclusion as well as individual researcher judgement play a role.

This was the best technique to understand the aspects important to the customers of Islamabad, as it allowed us to take the most relevant companies for this research. 12 different companies were chosen for the interview. They were chosen because they were the ones who manage events on daily basis for middle and upper-middle class. These companies do not have the capacity to organize mega events and come under the true definition of small and medium enterprises. The customers were their direct clients who were recently had their events managed from these companies. One customer was chosen from each company.

#### *Population Size*

There are almost 50 SMEs event management companies in Islamabad according to the data of Association of Event Management Companies in Islamabad (AEMI).

#### *Sample Size*

Sample Size consisted of 24 people, 12 from each group. This sample size contained the customers and owner/managers of event management companies of Islamabad.

#### *Measures*

Physical interviews were conducted from the customers and owners/managers of the SMEs in the hospitality industry (event management companies) of Islamabad.

#### *Analytical Procedure*

The collected data was analysed and different themes and patterns were identified using ATLAS. In this way, we were able to get our findings about the perception of the service quality of the customers and owners/managers of the SMEs in the hospitality industry (event management companies) of Islamabad.

## Chapter 4: Results

### *Findings*

#### **Low Service Quality**

The service quality in the event management industry of Islamabad is very low considering the small and medium sized companies. The customers of these companies were asked about their perception about the service quality and they were seriously dissatisfied by the low standards offered by the small and mid-sized enterprises. When questioned about the service quality of the Hospitality industry vis-à-vis event management of Islamabad, there were several patterns identified by the customers. The non-deliverance of promised service quality by SMEs is one of the major issues highlighted by majority of customers. Interviewee no 14 expressed his opinion in the words below.

“When we visit these companies for booking, they assure us that everything is perfect. However, at the time of the event things turn out to be different and the event planners are standing there with tons of excuses. Their inventory is incomplete and they say that these items broke on the way etc. They never keep their promises and use substandard material.”

Another interviewee no 9 was of the same opinion.

“I recently had my event done and the floral guy was decorating the stage even after the arrival of the guests. The photographer was so unprofessional that he brought the wrong lenses to the event. When I complained, it was not taken seriously.”

Customers are not just dissatisfied by the false promises or substandard materials used by the event management companies but also the limited options which they offer. There is not much variety

which is offered by the SMEs of event management. Interviewee no 6 identified this shortcoming in these words.

“I chose the turquoise theme for my event but not mid-scale level event planning coming was offering table décor in turquoise. Only a few big names had that option which were way out of my budget so I had no choice but to change the theme color to blue.”

Large corporations offer comparatively more options and better service quality but they are too expensive for the majority to afford.

The blame does not solely lie on the event planners as their suppliers are not very well trained and use low quality material for cost cutting. The SMEs of event management agree that their quality is not the best but they would not be able to cover their cost if they aim for the highest service quality.

As narrated by one of the company owners

“I would love to offer the quality of Serina Hotel but my target market will not pay for it. The base of my stage is made from wood by a carpenter in Raja Bazar, Rawalpindi. Whereas, Serina Hotel imports aluminum base from China whose height is also adjustable. This is because Serina’s customer pay PKR 50,000 rental for that base and my customer pays no more than PKR 10,000 rental for a stage base so we have no other choice than to go for cost cutting.”

The main reason for low service quality lies in the prices for the services. Customers are not willing to pay more and the companies are flexible enough to lower their profits so low quality of the service is the outcome. The majority of the customers are willing to pay a little more for better service quality so if the SMEs also try to lower their profits a little and also use the extra finances paid by the customers to improve their quality, they can surely make a significant difference.

## **Different priorities of Customers and staff**

There is an evident difference between the choices of the customers and owners/staff vis-à-vis important aspects of service quality. Customers' needs and preferences are not fully understood by the owners/staff members. They both are on different pages. Customers prefer tangibles, responsiveness and reliability being of utmost importance. As one of the customers explained

“I want the event planners to be responsive. This is very important to me as I have no idea about events so if any issue arises, they must be ready and deal with it responsibly. It is their job so they know better so they must be responsive at all costs.”

Interviewee no 5 expressed his opinion in the following words

“Reliability is the most important aspect for me. Recently, I had my sister's wedding and there were plenty of things about which I had no idea. I relied on the event planners for everything so if they screwed up at any point, I would have to face the consequences. Afterall, my reputation was on stake so I couldn't take a chance. Tangibles should also be up to the mark.”

Whereas, the owners and staff members have a completely different idea about what the customer wants. Their entire focus is on the tangibles. They don't measure their services on reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy but only tangibles. One of the owners said

“We are being paid for the tangible items so we provide them. We offer good quality equipment to the clients and this is what they want. No client asks us for more.”

The owners/staff members of SMEs of event management are providing only what is asked from them. They are acting more like rental companies instead of event management companies. Another staff member said:

“Customer always keeps us accountable for the tangibles so that is the most important. We go on the venue, install the tangible items and leave. This is what our job is. All of the other things are secondary and honestly no one cares about them. Customers are too busy in their preparation that they don't even have time to interact with us properly so we deliver that tangibles and consider our job done. Frankly speaking, they should thank God that they are even getting the tangibles for the amount they are paying us.”

### **Improving the wrong path**

The customers are not very satisfied with the level of service quality of the SME's of event management in Islamabad so they want improvements. They are of the view that this industry needs to improve itself and some certain changes are essential in order to achieve that goal. However, the customers and owner/staff members are even not on the same page regarding the improvements needed in the industry. They don't think alike and have different perspectives in this regard. Customers are of the view that standardization and functional quality must be improved in order to uplift the level of the industry. As one of the customers stated:

“The standards of the industry are very low. The level of quality which is up to mark according to the event planners is below satisfactory according to me. I recently had the annual event of my company and the event planner brought broken décor items with a spray paint bottle and when I asked him about it so he replied that I will spray paint it and no one will notice the cracks. These are the standard which they are following.”

Another customer said:

“These small companies have no idea how to manage an event. They just bring some substandard items and place them at odd places which is according to them an event managed. They need to work



on their functional quality. They need to come out of the “Jugaar” mentality. They can’t keep finding shortcuts for everything. Their needs to be a separate expert for everything in an event. These companies send one person who is claiming to have all the expertise and at the end he ruins everything. Experienced operators of equipment are required. Let’s just start doing things in the right manner.”

On the other hand, the event planners are focusing on entirely different improvements. They are not focusing on what the customers want or taking their feedback on this. Instead, they are thinking that how can they grab more walk-in clients or make more money. They are not focusing on the very idea that if they retain their previous customers, they would be able to generate more business as positive word of mouth would bring them more business. The majority of the owners and staff members are more focused on improving their location.

Interviewee no 6 said:

“We feel that the location is the most important factor which a business should improve. Our location is not very appealing as our office is in G/15 so we have very limited walking client. If we shift our office to F7 Markaz, we will get more walking client and the customers will even pay us more so our first priority is to improve the location of our business.”

One of the owners stated:

“Businesses depend upon their location as it is the most important aspect in increasing their revenue so the most important improvement in the industry should be the location. The big giants have their offices in the main sectors and all the SMEs reside in the suburbs like Tarlai, Bani etc. In order to compete with the big firms, all the SMEs of the event management should have their presence in the

main sectors otherwise they will stay small. I am also planning to shift my office to Bluearea, Islamabad.”

### **Pay more to have more**

The amount paid to the SMEs of event management for their services is too low. They barely afford their regular expenses with that money so it is very difficult for them to improve the quality in the given finances. The staff members were asked if they would improve the service quality in case they service charges are increased. Majority of them agreed that they can offer better service quality if the returns are higher. One of them said:

“No one likes to be scolded by the customers. When I started my business, I bought brand new equipment and hired experienced people for the job but my earnings were too low to afford those employees or to buy new equipment when the existing ones stopped working so I just keep repairing the equipment and hire low wages employees to get the job done as I have a family to feed so I can only offer my services keeping myself restricted to the budget given by the client.”

One of them disagreed and said:

“Money is not the ultimate solution. We are already doing our best. If the roads are blocked by the government or due to protests and we reach the venue late, so it is not our fault. We can't fix this issue with more money.”

This kind of company needs to do better preplanning and have backups for such situation but they keep on going for the blame games. They can only improve themselves when the rest of the industry improves so they get lesser business and then start improving their own processes.

Customers are also willing to pay a little more but not too much. They can increase the prices if they are satisfied that whatever they are being offered is value for money for them.

Interviewee no 2 said:

“I can pay more but they need to offer me a lot more for that. I am getting their services because I can't afford the big corporations so if the smaller ones are also going to charge me the same, then why shouldn't I go to the big companies. They should show me the results and I will be willing to pay more.”

One thing is evident here that the customers and the staff members perceive service quality differently. They both have different standards and choices. The staff is more into those aspects which could be seen and measured easily like location, tangibles etc. However, the customers prefer standardization, reliability etc. Both of them think on different lines. The staff members need to think out of the box and start focusing on things which are intangible but have a great impact on the customers.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Customers</b>	<b>Owners/Managers</b>
<i>Perception about Service Quality of SMEs of Event Management?</i>	Unsatisfactory	According to the price paid
<i>Important Aspects?</i>	Tangibles, Responsiveness and Reliability	Tangibles
<i>Room for improvement?</i>	Standardization and Functional Quality	Location
<i>Increase prices for better service quality?</i>	Increase slightly	Increase significantly

## **Discussion**

Customers are not only upset by the event management businesses' misleading claims or poor quality materials, but also by the few options they provide. The event management SMEs don't offer a wide range of services. In comparison, large firms provide more options and better service, but they are too pricey for most people to afford.

The event organisers are not completely at blame because their vendors are untrained and use low-quality materials in an effort to save money. The SMEs in event management acknowledge that their quality isn't the best, but they also acknowledge that if they aimed for the highest service quality, they wouldn't be able to cover their costs.

The cost of the services is the primary cause of the poor service quality. Low service quality results from customers' unwillingness to pay more and businesses' flexibility in lowering their revenues. The majority of customers are willing to pay a little bit more for higher service quality, thus SMEs can undoubtedly make a big difference if they try to reduce their earnings a little bit and use the additional funds provided by the customers to raise their quality.

Customers and owners/staff clearly have different preferences when it comes to crucial components of service quality. The proprietors and personnel do not properly comprehend the needs and preferences of the customers. Each of them is on a different page. Customers want tangibles, and response and dependability are crucial.

Customers seek improvements since they are not happy with the SME event management companies in Islamabad's level of service quality. According to them, this industry has to advance, and making some specific modifications is necessary to do that. Customers, owners, and employees, however, do not all agree on the necessary adjustments for the sector. They don't have the same perspectives and

don't think in the same way. Customers believe that functional quality and standards need to be improved.

The compensation given to SMEs in event management for their services is insufficient. With that little money, they can hardly pay their regular bills, making it incredibly challenging for them to raise the standard with the resources they have. When asked if they would raise the service standards in the event that service fees rose, the staff members responded in the affirmative. The majority of them concurred that bigger profits would enable them to provide services of higher quality.

One thing is clear from this: customers and employees have distinct perceptions of service excellence. Both of them have distinctive standards and preferences. The staff is more interested in tangibles, location, and other easily measurable characteristics. Customers, however, want consistency, dependability, etc. They both have different ways of thinking. The team needs to think creatively and begin concentrating on issues that seem immaterial yet have a significant impact on the clients.

### *Literature Based Analysis*

Customer satisfaction with event management programs

Many benefits can be achieved through service quality, e.g., customer satisfaction, contributing to business image, customer loyalty and providing a competitive advantage to a company. Quality of Service performance may vary for different people. For example, employees may have higher perceptions of service quality than those perceived by customers, and therefore managers and their employees never want to identify service quality deficiencies.

*Basis of guest satisfaction - the service quality.*

In some previous studies, quality of service can be defined as the extent to which the service meets customers' needs or expectations or conceptualized as customers' overall impression of the weakness or excellence of the service. However, quality of service is defined as "what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for" rather than "what the event management organization brings in". Therefore, service quality can be viewed as the gap between expected service and actual perceived service.

*Measure guest/customer satisfaction*

There are various tools to measure guest satisfaction. Based on the results, measures can be taken to increase service quality. Appropriate complaint management also helps to increase guest satisfaction. There can also be a saddle-shaped connection between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty exist. Only when customer satisfaction is above a certain level does this substantially impact customer loyalty. Customers only have a particular emotional connection to a provider when a certain level of indifference is exceeded. Such a connection has also been proven empirically (Hennig- Thureau & Klee, 1997).

Mmutle, 2017, also found a degressive relationship. They found that under certain circumstances, a slight increase in customer satisfaction can significantly impact their intention to visit again. However, if the level of customer satisfaction is already relatively high, and a slight deterioration has relatively little impact on satisfaction.

A fourth form of the available course is the S-shaped connection. Bloemer & De Ruyter, 1998, examined the relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand and dealer loyalty in the automotive sector. An S-shaped relationship was shown between consumer satisfaction and brand

loyalty. Customers with a high level of satisfaction react less sensitively to a drop in satisfaction than customers whose satisfaction level is below a particular value.

#### *Guest satisfaction and customer loyalty*

According to studies, acquiring a new customer is six to seven times more expensive than keeping an existing one. A 5% increase in customer retention can increase profits by 25% to 95%. (Lemy et al., 2019) Therefore, the value should be placed on guest satisfaction because satisfied guests usually become returning customers.

#### *Personal service and guest satisfaction*

According to a survey, 60 per cent of all guests confirmed that personal contact with the service staff is significant to them. This also includes the sympathy of the service team. (Freitas et al., 2020)

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

The long-term loyalty of customers is one crucial success factor for companies and represents an essential condition of customer loyalty that creates customer satisfaction. However, customer satisfaction does not automatically lead to customer loyalty. The connection between these two constructs is much more complex than previously assumed. Empirical Studies show different forms of context, i.e., changes in customer satisfaction can have different effects on customer loyalty. To strengthen customer loyalty, other factors must also be taken into account.

The quality of service and thus guest satisfaction in the hospitality associated industry is becoming one of the most critical factors for a sustainable competitive advantage and customer confidence in the highly competitive market. Therefore, the service quality of the event management organization can offer an excellent opportunity to achieve competitive differentiation for companies. It is therefore considered a vital core concept and a critical success factor in the hospitality associated industry. A successful organization provides excellent service to its customers, and quality of service is seen as the organization's life.

### Theoretical Implications

The international researchers have not included the Event Management company owners' and managers' view point on service quality (who are the international researchers and what their focus remained in the hospitality industry?). The local researchers have totally ignored Islamabad and there is no relevant research available on this topic (given link in the above section is one of the examples studying the hospitality sector of Islamabad). So, it will fill the academic gap and provide beneficial information to not only local but also international researchers. Only quantitative research is done on the service quality of some areas of Pakistan so this qualitative research will provide new ideas to the academia.



### *Practical Implications*

It will allow the practitioners to understand the service quality from the customers' point of view. The service providers' view point will also allow the practitioners to identify the difference between the both and make improvements accordingly. Other industries could also have a better understanding about service quality through this research.

### *Policy Implications*

It will allow the government to understand the perception of the customers about service quality and make policies accordingly. They would also understand the service providers' perception and make entrepreneur friendly policies.

### *Scope and limitations of the study*

This research has cover the event management sector of the hospitality industry. The geographic location is limited to Islamabad. The research involves the small and medium Event Management companies of the Capital City as the target group. These are the areas which are catered in this research.

Traveling and other parts of the Hospitality Industry are excluded from this research. The mega sized Event Management companies are not part of this research, due to lack of availability. However, this research provides useful insights for all the excluded sectors as well. This is the main scope of this research.

## Interview Guide

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Status: Customer OR Staff

Q1: What do you think about the service quality of the Hospitality industry of Islamabad?

Q2: Which aspect of the service quality is the most important one in the hospitality industry for customers' satisfaction?

Q3: What can be improved in the service quality of the existing hospitality industry (SME Event Management Companies)?

Question for customers:

Q1: Would you pay more for a better service quality?

Question for staff:

Q1: If you are paid better, would you be able to provide better service quality?

## Chapter 10: Bibliography

- [1] Al-Ababneh, M. (2016). Employees' perspectives of service quality in hotels.
- [2] Ammar, W. (2015). Attaining Customer Loyalty! The Role of Customer Satisfaction and Customer Retention (Mobile Handset Industry-University of Gujrat, Pakistan).
- [3] Brown, Alnawas, J. (2016). Service quality and brand loyalty: The mediation effect of brand passion, brand affection and self-brand connection.
- [4] Büyüközkan, G. (2015). Intuitionistic Fuzzy AHP Based Strategic Analysis of Service Quality in Digital Hospitality Industry.
- [5] Cobanoglu et al, F. (2015). An Integrated Model of Service Experience, Emotions, Satisfaction, and Price Acceptance: An Empirical Analysis in the Chinese Hospitality Industry.
- [6] Daunoravičiūtė, L. (2015). Factors Influencing the Success of Business Model in the Hospitality Service Industry.
- [7] Dedeoğlu, Demirer, B. (2017). Differences in service quality perceptions of stakeholders in the hotel industry.
- [8] Dhar, R. (2015). Service quality and the training of employees: The mediating role of organizational commitment.
- [9] El Saghier, N. (2020). Managing Service Quality: Dimensions of service quality: a study in Egypt.
- [10] Intelligence, M. (2021). Tourism and hotel industry in Pakistan - growth, trends, COVID-19 impact and forecasts (2021 - 2026).
- [11] IvyPanda. (2019). Different quality services between Asia and Europe Hotels.

- [12] Jeon, Jeong, M. (2017). Customers' perceived website service quality and its effects on e-loyalty. Kasiria, Teoh, Chengb, Sambasivanc, L. (2017). Integration of standardization and customization: Impact on service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty.
- [13] Lee, Y.-C. (2016). An empirical research on customer satisfaction study: a consideration of different levels of performance.
- [14] Lewis, R.C. and Booms, B.H. (2017). The marketing aspects of service quality. Emerging perspectives on services marketing.
- [15] Mukhles M Al-Ababneh\*. (2015). Service Quality in the Hospitality Industry.
- [16] Nair, G. (2018). Impact of Service Quality on Business Performance in Hospitality Industries: An empirical study.
- [17] Oh, Kim, H. (2015). Customer satisfaction, service quality, and customer value: years 2000- 2015.
- [18] Pomegbe, K. (2019). Individual's Cultural Orientation and Perceived Service Quality in the Hospitality Industry.
- [19] Radojevica, Stanisicb, Stanicc, T. (2015). Ensuring positive feedback: Factors that influence customer satisfaction in the contemporary hospitality industry.
- [20] Rajnish Jain, J. A. (May, 2017). Customer experience – a review and research agenda.
- [21] Ratnayaka, R. (2019). Impact of Organizational Citizenship Behavior on Perceived Service Quality in Hotel Industry.
- [22] Rauch ,Collins , Nale,, D. (2018). Measuring service quality in mid-scale hotels.
- [23] Sanasam, L. (2016). Service quality in hospitality industry: a systematic review of models.
- [24] Satti, Z. W. (2020). Innovations for potential entrepreneurs in service quality and customer loyalty in the hospitality industry.

- [25] Shah, S. N. (2018). Role of Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in Firm's Performance: Evidence from Pakistan Hotel Industry .
- [26] Sharma, J. (January 2015). Understanding the Customer Experience: An Exploratory Study of A Category Hotels.
- [27] Soeg. (2021). All About the Hospitality Industry in Singapore.
- [28] Verma, H. V. (2004). Relative importance of service quality dimensions: A multisectoral study. Zeithaml, & Berry's. (1988). The Quality model of Parasuraman.
- [29] Zeithaml, V. A., Jaworski, B. J., Kohli, A. K., Tuli, K. R., Ulaga, W., & Zaltman, G. (2020). A theories-in-use approach to building marketing theory. *Journal of Marketing*, 84(1), 32-51.
- [30] Kim, Y., Wang, Q., & Roh, T. (2021). Do information and service quality affect perceived privacy protection, satisfaction, and loyalty? Evidence from a Chinese O2O-based mobile shopping application. *Telematics and Informatics*, 56, 101483.
- [31] Ganapathi, P., & Abu-Shanab, E. A. (2020). Customer satisfaction with online food ordering portals in Qatar. *International Journal of E-Services and Mobile Applications (IJESMA)*, 12(1), 57-79.
- [32] Landrum, H., Prybutok, V. R., Zhang, X., & Peak, D. A. (2009). Measuring IS system service quality with SERVQUAL: Users' perceptions of relative importance of the five SERVPERF dimensions. *Informing science*, 12, 17.
- [33] Van Dyke, T. P., Kappelman, L. A., & Prybutok, V. R. (1997). Measuring information systems service quality: concerns on the use of the SERVQUAL questionnaire. *MIS quarterly*, 195-208.

- [34] Tontini, G., & Bento, G. D. S. (2020). Integration of customers spontaneous comments with overall assessment of hospitality services. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 23(24), 3025-3033.
- [35] Tiago, F., Borges-Tiago, T., & Couto, J. (2020). Human resources role in hospitality service quality. In *Strategic innovative marketing and tourism* (pp. 81-89). Springer, Cham.
- [36] Ali, B. J., Gardi, B., Jabbar Othman, B., Ali Ahmed, S., Burhan Ismael, N., Abdalla Hamza, P., ... & Anwar, G. (2021). Hotel service quality: The impact of service quality on customer satisfaction in hospitality. *International Journal of Engineering, Business and Management*, 5(3), 14-28.
- [37] Cronin Jr, J. J., & Taylor, S. A. (1992). Measuring service quality: a reexamination and extension. *Journal of marketing*, 56(3), 55-68.
- [38] Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. 1988, 64(1), 12-40.
- [39] Bitner, M. J. (1990). Evaluating service encounters: the effects of physical surroundings and employee responses. *Journal of marketing*, 54(2), 69-82.
- [40] Gronroos, C. (1990). Service management: a management focus for service competition. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 1(1), 0-0.
- [41] Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (2000). Attitudes and the attitude-behavior relation: Reasoned and automatic processes. *European review of social psychology*, 11(1), 1-33.
- [42] Mazis, M. B., Ahtola, O. T., & Klippel, R. E. (1975). A comparison of four multi-attribute models in the prediction of consumer attitudes. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2(1), 38-52.

- [43] Woodruff, R. B., Cadotte, E. R., & Jenkins, R. L. (1983). Modeling consumer satisfaction processes using experience-based norms. *Journal of marketing research*, 20(3), 296-304.
- [44] Snijkers, G. J. M. E. (2002). *Cognitive Laboratory Experiences: On Pre-testing Computerised Questionnaires*. Utrecht University.
- [45] Cook, J., & Wall, T. (1980). New work attitude measures of trust, organizational commitment and personal need non- fulfilment. *Journal of occupational psychology*, 53(1), 39-52.
- [46] Tussyadiah, I. P., & Park, S. (2018). When guests trust hosts for their words: Host description and trust in sharing economy. *Tourism Management*, 67, 261-272.
- [47] Freitas, A. L. P., & de Lima, J. D. C. (2020). WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT MOST AFFECT SERVICE QUALITY IN FAST-FOOD RESTAURANTS?. *Proceedings on Engineering*, 2(4), 419-430.
- [48] Lemy, D., Goh, E., & Ferry, J. (2019). Moving out of the silo: How service quality innovations can develop customer loyalty in Indonesia's hotels. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 25(4), 462- 479.
- [49] Chen, Y., Mandler, T., & Meyer-Waarden, L. (2021). Three decades of research on loyalty programs: A literature review and future research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 124, 179-197.
- [50] Bhati, R., & Verma, H. V. (2020). Antecedents of customer brand advocacy: a meta-analysis of the empirical evidence. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 14(2), 153-172.
- [51] Anabila, P., Ameyibor, L. E. K., Allan, M. M., & Alomenu, C. (2022). Service Quality and Customer Loyalty in Ghana's Hotel Industry: The Mediation Effects of

- Satisfaction and Delight. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 23(3), 748-770.
- [52] Nobar, H. B. K., & Rostamzadeh, R. (2018). The impact of customer satisfaction, customer experience and customer loyalty on brand power: empirical evidence from hotel industry. *Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 19(2), 417-430.
- [53] Rouzies, A., Colman, H. L., & Angwin, D. (2019). Recasting the dynamics of post-acquisition integration: An embeddedness perspective. *Long Range Planning*, 52(2), 271-282.
- [54] Hill, D. J. (1986). Satisfaction and consumer services. *ACR North American Advances*.
- [55] Xie, C., & Sun, Z. (2021). Influence of perceived quality on customer satisfaction in different stages of services. *Nankai Business Review International*.
- [56] Stauss, B., & Mang, P. (1999). "Culture shocks" in inter-cultural service encounters?. *Journal of Services marketing*.
- [57] Wirtz, J., & Bateson, J. E. (1999). Consumer satisfaction with services: integrating the environment perspective in services marketing into the traditional disconfirmation paradigm. *Journal of Business research*, 44(1), 55-66.
- [58] Lin, H., Zhang, M., Gursoy, D., & Fu, X. (2019). Impact of tourist-to-tourist interaction on tourism experience: The mediating role of cohesion and intimacy. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 76, 153-167.
- [59] Bayon, T., Gutsche, J., & Bauer, H. (2002). Customer Equity Marketing:: Touching the Intangible. *European Management Journal*, 20(3), 213-222.
- [60] Homburg, C., Koschate, N., & Hoyer, W. D. (2006). The role of cognition and affect in the formation of customer satisfaction: a dynamic perspective. *Journal of marketing*, 70(3), 21-31.



- [61] Hosany, S., Martin, D., & Woodside, A. G. (2021). Emotions in tourism: Theoretical designs, measurements, analytics, and interpretations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 60(7), 1391-1407.
- [62] Srivastava, M. (2015). Influencers of Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty Relationship A Conceptual Research Model. *Journal of Faculty of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University*, 7(1), 54-65.
- [63] Manowicz, A. A. (2019). Customer value of connected remote services and their impact on car servicing loyalty.
- [64] Thompson, B. (2005). The loyalty connection: Secrets to customer retention and increased profits. *RightNow Technologies & CRMguru*, 18.
- [65] Hovland, C. I., Harvey, O. J., & Sherif, M. (1957). Assimilation and contrast effects in reactions to communication and attitude change. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 55(2), 244.
- [66] Vanichchinchai, A. (2021). Relationships among lean, service quality expectation and performance in hospitals. *International Journal of Lean Six Sigma*.
- [67] Sherif, M., & Hovland, C. I. (1961). Social judgment: Assimilation and contrast effects in communication and attitude change.
- [68] Ji, C., & Prentice, C. (2021). Linking transaction-specific satisfaction and customer loyalty—the case of casino resorts. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 58, 102319.
- [69] Folkes, V. S. (1984). Consumer reactions to product failure: An attributional approach. *Journal of consumer research*, 10(4), 398-409.
- [70] Herzberg, F. M., & Mausner, B. (1959). B. & snyderman, b.(1959). The motivation to work, 2, 49-58.

- [71] Sauerwein, E., Bailom, F., Matzler, K., & Hinterhuber, H. H. (1996, February). The Kano model: How to delight your customers. In *International working seminar on production economics* (Vol. 1, No. 4, pp. 313-327).
- [72] Mannan, M., Chowdhury, N., Sarker, P., & Amir, R. (2019). Modeling customer satisfaction and revisit intention in Bangladeshi dining restaurants. *Journal of Modelling in Management*. Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance* (Vol. 2). Stanford university press.
- [73] Belanche, D., Casaló, L. V., Flavián, M., & Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2021). Understanding influencer marketing: The role of congruence between influencers, products and consumers. *Journal of Business Research*, 132, 186-195.
- [74] Anderson, R. E. (1973). Consumer dissatisfaction: The effect of disconfirmed expectancy on perceived product performance. *Journal of marketing research*, 10(1), 38-44.
- [75] Churchill Jr, G. A., & Surprenant, C. (1982). An investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction. *Journal of marketing research*, 19(4), 491-504.
- [76] Fida, B. A., Ahmed, U., Al-Balushi, Y., & Singh, D. (2020). Impact of service quality on customer loyalty and customer satisfaction in islamic banks in the Sultanate of Oman. *Sage Open*, 10(2), 2158244020919517.
- [77] Mahmoud, M. A., Hinson, R. E., & Adika, M. K. (2018). The effect of trust, commitment, and conflict handling on customer retention: the mediating role of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 17(4), 257-276.
- [78] Judge Jr, W. Q., & Zeithaml, C. P. (1992). Institutional and strategic choice perspectives on board involvement in the strategic decision process. *Academy of management Journal*, 35(4), 766-794.

- [79] Coulthard, L. J. M. (2004). A review and critique of research using SERVQUAL. *International Journal of Market Research*, 46(4), 479-497.
- [80] Matzler, K. (2000). Customer value management. 289-308.
- [81] Bruhn, M. (2015). *Relationship Marketing*
- [82] King, D. R., Bauer, F., Weng, Q., Schriber, S., & Tarba, S. (2020). What, when, and who: Manager involvement in predicting employee resistance to acquisition integration. *Human Resource Management*, 59(1), 63-81.
- [83] Kaur, H., & Soch, H. (2018). Satisfaction, trust and loyalty: investigating the mediating effects of commitment, switching costs and corporate image. *Journal of Asia Business Studies*. Szymanski, D. M., & Henard, D. H. (2001). Customer satisfaction: A meta-analysis of the empirical evidence. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 29(1), 16-35.
- [84] Stauss, B., & Neuhaus, P. (1997). The qualitative satisfaction model. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*.
- [85] Mmutle, T., & Shonhe, L. (2017). Customers' perception of service quality and its impact on reputation in the hospitality industry.
- [86] Hennig- Thurau, T., & Klee, A. (1997). The impact of customer satisfaction and relationship quality on customer retention: A critical reassessment and model development. *Psychology & marketing*, 14(8), 737-764.
- [87] Bloemer, J., & De Ruyter, K. (1998). On the relationship between store image, store satisfaction and store loyalty. *European Journal of marketing*.
- [88] Intelligence, M. *Tourism and Hotel Industry in Pakistan-Growth, Trends, COVID 19 Impact and Forecasts (2022–2027)*.

- [89] Seiders, K., Voss, G. B., Grewal, D., & Godfrey, A. L. (2005). Do satisfied customers buy more? Examining moderating influences in a retailing context. *Journal of marketing*, 69(4), 26-43.
- [90] Malik, S. A., Akhtar, F., Raziq, M. M., & Ahmad, M. (2020). Measuring service quality perceptions of customers in the hotel industry of Pakistan. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 31(3-4), 263-278.
- [91] Satti, Z. W., Babar, S. F., Parveen, S., Abrar, K., & Shabbir, A. (2020). Innovations for potential entrepreneurs in service quality and customer loyalty in the hospitality industry. *Asia pacific journal of innovation and entrepreneurship*.
- [92] Hassan, S. T., Azhar, T., & Farooq, A. (2014). Impact of service recovery on customer satisfaction in hospitality industry of Pakistan. *European Journal of International Management*, 6(23), 198-203.



