

**A Study of Customer Engagement as a Business Strategy with Reference
to Five Star Hotels in Pune City**

A Thesis Submitted to

Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune

**For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management
Under the Board of Management Studies**



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Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune

Undertaking

I, Mrs. ManasiVivekSadhale, am the Ph.D. Scholar of the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth in Management subject. Thesis entitled 'A Study of Customer Engagement as a Business Strategy with Reference to Five Star Hotels in Pune City', under the supervision of Dr. SuvarnaSathe, solemnly affirm that the thesis submitted by me is my own work. I have not copied it from any source. I have gone through extensive review of literature of the related published / unpublished research works and the use of such references made has been acknowledged in my thesis. The title and the content of research is original. I understand that, in case of any complaint especially plagiarism, regarding my Ph.D. research from any party, I have to go through the enquiry procedure as decided by the Vidyapeeth at any point of time. I understand that, if my Ph.D. thesis (or part of it) is found duplicate at any point of time, my research degree will be withdrawn and, in such circumstances, I will be solely responsible and liable for any consequences arises thereby. I will not hold the TMV, Pune responsible and liable in any case.

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Annexure IV
Certificate of the Supervisor

It is certified that work entitled, 'A Study of Customer Engagement as a Business Strategy with Reference to Five Star Hotels in Pune City', is an original research work done by Mrs. ManasiVivekSadhale under my supervision for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Management to be awarded by Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune. To best of my knowledge this thesis:

- Embodies the work of candidate herself.
- Has duly been completed.
- Fulfills the requirement of the ordinance related to Ph.D. degree of the TMV.
- Up to the standard in respect of both content and language for being referred to the examiner.

Signature of the Supervisor

Acknowledgement

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Mrs. Manasi V. Sadhale

Abstract

Purpose of study

In the competitive business environment of today, five star hotels need to retain the customer for business as this is directly linked to earning revenue and increased occupancy. Every five star hotel needs to strategize to engage a customer and try to get repeat business. Room revenue contributes the most to the hotel's business and must be sold with dedicated effort. This is particularly true as the room is a highly perishable product; every day lost, results in loss of business forever. When a customer is engaged well in the guest cycle stages, it may lead to customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers recall a particular hotel in a fond manner which may in turn influence consumer purchase intention. With the advent of new hotels entering to the market space, the existing five star hotels have to retain their customer. This study will highlight such efforts, their importance and impact on customer satisfaction and influence on customer purchasing intention of the hotel's product.

Background of the study

The dynamic and competitive business environment is ever changing which is a result of globalization. This has prompted many hotels to bring new focus on how customer engagement practices should be organized and managed. A customer needs to be engaged and ultimately satisfied with the overall experience of the product and services a five star hotel has to offer. To gain the competitive edge, hotel companies are in touch with their customer's needs and wants. In a five star hotel, the sales and marketing department and front office department have the ultimate responsibility to sell the hotel's most contributing product which is the hotel room. The hotel room is a highly perishable product and all hotels have to depend upon the customer to buy their product and use it.

The early 1990s the hospitality industry experienced and visualized the emergence and increase in use of the term customer engagement. The late 1990s and early 2000s witnessed a noticeable confluence between customer engagement marketing and business strategy, however in the 21st century, this confluence has become very obvious. The hotel puts an emphasis on practices of customer engagement which may contribute to factors like customer satisfaction, robust hotel sales in general,

positive financial performance, focused customer relationship management and competitive edge over other hotels. Central to the concept of customer engagement is the customer who interacts with the hotel at regular intervals. It is imperative to understand the importance of this communication and interaction.

Most hotels strive to give the customers ‘a memorable experience’. Fully engaged customers tend to be emotionally and psychologically attached to the hotel. Satisfied customers give the hotel business, more time and are virtually brand ambassadors referring the same hotel to prospective customers.

Customer engagement refers to the business communication between a customer who is the external stakeholder and a five star hotel. It is an investment where repeated interactions strengthen the emotional, experiential and psychological attachment a customer has with the brand. This engagement also has financial implications. There has to be constant analysis and measurement to understand the factors that contribute to higher engagement. Customer engagement encourages a five star hotel’s guests to interact and share experiences that the hotel creates for them as a business or a brand. This engagement also highlights important aspects such as quality of product to be sold to customers, dedicated commitment towards customers, positive reinforced performance and co-creation value in a hotel.

When these aspects benefit the hotel as well as the customer it results in a win-win situation, leading to customer satisfaction. This, in turn may influence consumer purchase intention. Brand growth, customer loyalty, customer retention and value creation are at the core of any customer engagement and not limited to sales pitching as the only motive. A customer appreciates a hotel which interacts with him /her and solves queries and problems on a real time basis.

Looking at the role of customer engagement, in the hotel’s accomplishment, the present study tries to focus and test the customer engagement practices and their impact on customer satisfaction and purchase intention in five star hotels in Pune city.

Customer interaction and engagement has become more focused in a variety of ways in five star hotels due to the following reasons:

- 1) Rise in brand competition.
- 2) Rise in room inventory in the same city.
- 3) Cost of acquiring a new customer much more expensive than retaining a customer who is already engaged with the hotel.

- 4) It is a consumer driven market.
- 5) Customer has many options to choose from and is fully informed of market scenario.
- 6) Technological Advancement.
- 7) Customer profile has changed considerably.
- 8) Rate cutting and heavy discounting offered by competitor hotels.
- 9) Customer satisfaction concepts have changed.
- 10) Customer segmentation is diverse.
- 11) The hotel room which is sold as a product along with services is highly perishable.

Objectives of the study:

1. To study the customer engagement strategies in all stages of the guest cycle in five star hotels in Pune city.
2. To analyze the impact of customer engagement strategies on customer satisfaction in five star hotels in Pune city.
3. To analyze the impact of customer engagement strategies on consumer purchase intention in five star hotels in Pune city.
4. To study to relation between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

Hypotheses of the study:

H₁: Guests of five star hotels in Pune city perceive the procedures followed in all the stages of the guest cycle as customer engagement strategies.

H₂: Customer engagement strategies followed in five hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

The above hypothesis is divided and tested into 5-sub-hypotheses.

H_{2.1}: Customer engagement strategies followed at pre-arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H_{2.2}: Customer engagement strategies followed at arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H_{2.3}: Customer engagement strategies followed at stay stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H_{2.4}: Customer engagement strategies followed at departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H_{2.5}: Customer engagement strategies followed at post departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H₃: Customer engagement strategies followed in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

The above hypothesis is divided and tested into 5-sub-hypotheses.

H_{3.1}: Customer engagement strategies followed at pre-arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H_{3.2}: Customer engagement strategies followed at arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H_{3.3}: Customer engagement strategies followed during stay stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H_{3.4}: Customer engagement strategies followed at departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H_{3.5}: Customer engagement strategies followed at post departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H₄: There exists a relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

Data collection:

In the present study, primary and secondary data were used in the research. The primary data was collected from 419 guests of five star hotels in Pune city. Additionally, expert interviews were conducted with the Director/ Managers of sales and marketing department of ten five star hotels in Pune city. Thus, the primary data was a combination of quantitative and qualitative data which formed a balance mix of the supervisory as well as managerial perspectives in order to attain the objectives of the research. Further, the secondary data was collected at various stages to understand, describe and enhance the study.

A structured questionnaire was used as an instrument to collect the information. The questions were combination of both objective and numeric scale to measure the attitude and opinion of respondents pertaining to the topic of study. The questionnaire of the guests comprised of demographic details in the

beginning, leading to more specific opinions about experience of guest cycle stages, followed by questions related to customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

The questionnaire for the hoteliers comprised of 28 questions which were asked by the researcher in the form of an interview.

Broadly, following aspects are covered in the analysis of both questionnaires:

1. Pre-arrival customer engagement strategies,
2. Customer engagement strategies at arrival stage,
3. Customer engagement strategies during stay,
4. Customer engagement strategies at departure stage,
5. Customer engagement strategies post departure stage,
6. Customer satisfaction,
7. Consumer purchase intention,
8. Factors influencing customer other than customer engagement strategies.

The pilot study was carried out in order to test the questionnaire by using Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test. To check the reliability of all items in the questionnaire, the researcher has applied Cronbach's Alpha reliability method. The reliability coefficient value was highly significant i.e., 0.952 and depicts high reliability of the questionnaire.

Data analysis and hypothesis testing:

Statistical software was employed for the data analysis of the present study. The instrument used to collect primary data was a close ended questionnaire form. An open-ended questionnaire was used to collect the responses of the hoteliers. For the present study, all statistical assessments were measured/computed in Social Sciences Program (SPSS) version 17.0 Statistical package. Incorrect data entries, normality, outliers and missing values in the data were screened and examined.

In the present study, for the testing of the hypothesis inferential statistics like One Sample t-Test, Regression Analysis and Co-relation analysis was done. These succeeded the descriptive statistics.

Conclusions and Suggestions:

Following are the main conclusions and suggestions for five star hotels given below for the present study:

Conclusion 1

Customer engagement has garnered attention both from hotels and guests alike. The focal point is the guest who patronizes a hotel for stay or using the food and beverage facilities. Hotel Industry, in the wake of the globalization has become very competitive. Hotels are vying for guest attention. Customer acquisition and retention are goals of each hotel. One-time, satisfactory experience is not enough to ensure customer lifetime value.

1. A hotel concentrates on building an experience for the guest which has emotional value and an association get cemented with the hotel because of this particular experience.
2. The hotel studies need of guests and uses that information to strategize its marketing and operational plans.
3. The guest cycle, presents the hotel a chance, to test these customer engagement strategies in each of its stages. Each stage has a unique set of opportunities which must be used to win a customer.
4. Guests know this and also expect it at every stage. Guests like to be given importance and be recognized.
5. Every stage of the guest cycle provides the hotel touch points to interact with the guest. The interaction with guests ideally should be done to develop a sense of engagement.
6. Each stage of the guest cycle is full of complex interactions which have to be handled delicately by the employees with utmost care.
7. As found in this study, customer engagement strategies at post departure stage have not been perceived as engaging by guests.
8. Indifference may set in from guest's side after check out. They may not respond to emails or offers as they may not need them in near future. Guests may not appreciate consistent hammering of information from the hotel's side.

Thus, it is conclusive to say that guests of five star hotels in Pune city do perceive the procedures followed in the first four stages of the guest cycle as customer engagement strategies and not in the last stage of the guest cycle which is the post departure stage.

Suggestions:

In view of the procedures followed in post departure stage not being perceived as engagement strategies following suggestions are given below for the five star hotels.

Re-Strategize communication methods with different audiences analyzing content and particularly concentrating on post departure stage.

Keep in touch with customers through various ways like wishing on celebrations, festivals, special days, updating them about new offers and new products.

Reach out to with passive or quiet customers with an incentivize stay / discounted stay. Offer them food and beverage in the hotel if they do not wish to stay.

To reach out to the quiet customer, hotels need to create, track and have a list of customers who have influencer value and knowledge value about the offerings of the hotel and must share this with prospective customers on social media.

Give opportunities to guests to indulge in two-way conversations in the form of contests, online opinions, share insider trends and insights.

Build together hotel brand community with customers who are loyal. This can be done with the help of the marketing department of the hotel.

Conclusion 2

Any strategy that is planned by a hotel stands on real time data collected, past experience and trends which dominate the market. The guest cycle has all the opportunities a hotel gets to touch base with the guest. These are unique and serve a purpose after which the next stage follows. The guests see every experience as continuous process where they are exposed to various situations. This serves them an opportunity to judge the hotel's position on service quality. Every guest, who stays as a resident guest, goes through the process of the guest cycle and all stages. The guest cycle has all the opportunities a hotel gets to touch base with the guest. Opportunities can be used to create experiences for the guest. The guests see every experience as continuous process where they are exposed to various situations. This serves them an opportunity to judge the hotel's position on service quality.

1. Communication plays a significant role in letting the guest know how special they are to the hotel. Attention given to guests makes them feel wanted.

2. Once the guest establishes a sense of comfort with the hotel brand, the involvement happens. It should be noted that the emotional state of a guest needs special attention during the service delivery process.
3. While choosing a hotel to stay, the guest forms a level of perceived satisfaction about the hotel brand. That includes the brand value with its advantages, exciting offers, competitive pricing, world class level of hospitality provided and whether the hotel matches the expectations in terms of product and services offered.
4. If the guest gets to experience his / her level of perceived satisfaction through the stages of the guest cycle which the hotel carefully crafts to happen, it is conclusive to say that the customer engagement strategies make customer satisfaction a definite outcome.
5. It is up-to the hotel to create experiences for every stage in the guest's mind which are positive. The guest must have a lasting and memorable experience with the hotel, yearning to come back one more time to the same hotel.
6. Hospitality business is different due to its characteristics from other industries. It is a mix of tangible and intangible factors which have to be of a premium quality to satisfy a customer.
7. A service has to be experienced first to be noticed. Superior service quality is the key word for hotels, where the focus is not to just satisfy but to delight a guest. If this delight is achieved from matching the experience throughout the guest cycle with the pre conceived expectations of the guest from the hotel, customer satisfaction is achieved.
8. Emotional connection is built and concretized with guests who want to stay with a particular brand and demonstrate more loyalty towards the said brand.

Thus, if a guest gets to experience his / her level of perceived satisfaction through the stages of the guest cycle which the hotel carefully crafts to happen, it is conclusive to say that the customer engagement strategies make customer satisfaction a definite outcome.

Suggestions:

Giving a customer, an incentive may induce delight as it is an unexpected gesture from the hotel's side. An instant upgrade may turn out to be an unforgettable

experience for a guest. Guests always carry such associations back home as great memories which help in building of satisfaction.

Giving spot instant incentives rather than brand loyalty program points work well as it is instant gratification from guest point of view. Like quick upgrade discounts, vouchers etc., pleasantly surprising guests this way which can create affinity and customer to repurchase.

Conclusion 3

Five star hotels specifically design customer engagement strategies according to the type of guests and their needs and wants. There is careful deliberation on the segmentation of guests and their expectations from the hotel.

1. Every hotel follows a set of standard operating procedures for each of the stages of the guest cycle. To offer a more personalized experience, each guest is handled with appropriate care making certain all expectations are fulfilled. There is an emphasis given on the customer experience that is created in all the stages.
2. The requirements of a new customer slightly differ from a repeat customer. For the hotel, the ultimate goal is to retain this new customer and efforts to make that happen are devised. The hotel gets to make that positive first impression right from the pre-arrival stage to the departure stage.
3. In case of a repeat customer, who has already patronized a hotel before, the emotional connection has already been established after the first stay. When a guest shows trust and loyalty towards the hotel, it is imperative to give that leverage to the guest.
4. With the advent of social media, the customer can be participant in the marketing activities of the hotel by either by positively commenting, or sharing their experience. It is observed that repeat customers go through the stages of consumption, contribute through feedback and participate to create content.

Thus, the customer engagement strategies are to be introduced at the all the stages of the guest cycle to create a positive and beneficial picture to the guest irrespective of whether he / she is a prospective or repeat guest. If the overall experience is positive it influences the guests to make a decision where the intention to purchase is favorable for the hotel.

Suggestions:

The packages must be planned as per the requirement of the guest as customization of the product will aid customer satisfaction. This will help the customer in decision making. Communication regarding customization of packages must be delivered through various channels by the sales and marketing department round the clock. Social media should be used in keeping the guests engaged.

Conclusion 4

In a highly competitive hospitality landscape, it is critical to understand that before engaging with the services and products of a hotel brand, a prospective customer tries to base the decision of purchase on various perceived values associated with the utility, pleasure and money.

1. The customer builds the expectations on these aspects as he is yet to experience the actual offerings. The hotel from its perspective hopes to satisfy these expectations. Naturally, the guest is pleased as he has received as per his expectations.
2. Hotels consciously curate these offerings in form of packages to make them attractive to guests. This is true in case of a new customer.
3. When a guest comes to the hotel again, he / she is termed as a repeat customer. Repeat guests come back to the hotel because of many reasons. When the previous experience with the hotel is satisfactory guests tend to evaluate the hotel on the basis of this aspect.
4. Excellent service recovery and empathetic attitude of staff are definite pull factors which bring guests back to a hotel.
5. Technological advancement has led to faster processing of this curation as there is a minimal human interference to get these packages ready.
6. Staff of the hotel also contributes to the aspect of customer satisfaction. The hotels recruit and keep best employees to interact with guests. The frontline employees are in touch with guests needs and facilitation is much faster in the delivery of service.
7. These employees are trained to understand the guest expectations and are empowered to take quick decisions in case of service recovery situations. In

case of complaint handling, guests must get justice and feeling of fairness which leads to satisfaction from within. This aspect is intrinsic and motivates the guest to engage with the hotel wholeheartedly.

8. Once a guest sees the brand as an extension of self, it is safe to say brand loyalty is developed. Extrinsic motivations in form of brand loyalty programs, incentives and benefits are important part of the customer engagement process.
9. Segregation of guests according to their profile is a practice followed by hotels to make products available to the right target audience. Once this equation is matched, guests patronize the hotel as they feel comfortable to make a purchase decision in favor of the hotel by using their cognitive, emotional and behavioral capacity.

Thus, all these efforts that a hotel takes to satisfy the customer definitely impact the guest's intention to purchase and repurchase positively benefitting the hotel.

Suggestions:

Hotels must have or commit to an employee suggestions program and a customer suggestions program where the involvement of internal and external customers is important to find out pulse of both to improve performance.

Hotels must have a premium set of guests who are brand advocates due to the association with the hotel on a regular basis and they can co-create to launch offering product or services.

In digital marketing, strategies the hotel could have Live chat option or chat bots and make full use of conversational marketing and Artificial intelligence. Provision of entertainment value through gaming or something where the guest contributes or co-creates must be planned to foster engagement.

Introduction of Artificial intelligence, in the hotel for assisting self-check-ins, chat bots for instant communication and guest queries should be encouraged. Hotels should post eighty percent of local area happenings and activities and twenty percent promotion while talking about what value do they give customer on website.

Influence marketing must be used and have travel bloggers speaking videos on your social media handle. Consideration must be given last minute walk-ins with some benefits. This would increase footfall in guest bookings.

Other Learning from the study

1. The respondents or the guests who patronize the services of five- star hotels in Pune city are predominantly from the 40 to 50 age group. They belong to the well educated group and travel to Pune on business. Majority of the respondents are Indian who are salaried people travelling for business. The respondents considered for this study always prefer to stay in a five star hotel.

The hotel's sales and marketing efforts to promote engagement during the stages of the guest cycle should be particularly at guests of this profile who would be willing to respond to the hotels marketing efforts. This should be done to increase the frequency of their visits to the hotels and offer packages to suit their purpose. These guests can be given upgrades and spot incentives when they check-in for the next time.

2. It can be concluded from data collected from the respondents suggest these guests book their stay through the website of the hotel or through the central reservation system of the hotel.

Websites are the means for hotels to make their offerings popular and attractive. Websites which are accessible with good content is what every hotel should invest in. Social media is a boon in today's marketing world. It should be used to the maximum capacity for engagement of customers. Information and communication must be constantly updated about the hotel's offers, promotions, brand loyalty benefits, events, happenings, any initiatives undertaken. Local guests who frequent the food and beverage outlets in the hotel must be engaged throughout about the same as they can earn similar benefits.

3. The guests said that they preferred using the credit card to settle their bill. Check-outs during departure stage have to be quick and efficient especially for the profile of the customers in this study. Most hotels take pre authorization of credit cards and guests can then use the option of an express checkout saving time. These details must be checked by the front desk during check-in and followed up during check -out. Bill settlement process must be used as a time to have a conversation with the guest to find out the overall experience of the stay. The guest must be given a farewell by the guest relations supervisory adding a

personal touch. Solicitations for future bookings can be done at this time.

4. When guests were asked about the factors which contribute to their level of satisfaction even before they chose to stay with a particular brand they emphasized on points like the social, commercial and psychological value of a brand and guest recognition at the hotel also was important to them. Guests are also attracted to the generosity of offers, efficient handling of complaints, brand loyalty benefits and the fact that they identify with the brand personally. Corporate guests also appreciate the hotel's alignment to IOT which helps them save time and effort in a hotel. A hotel which matches its promises is the one guests want to stay at. They derive a sense of honesty about the brand and would like to patronize it. A good pricing of the rooms and facilities too leads to a guest expecting to be satisfied.

Hotels advertise and make their information available through all types of media. Accurate selection of the medium must be done. A guest who is gets this information must get a positive and satisfying impression of the hotel brand prompting him/her to make a reservation. Every hotel gets reviewed by guests on the social media or the hotel website. If most of the guests put out good satisfactory reviews it would be mostly likely to attract new guests. Thus, reviews need to be treated as instant feedback and service recovery should be a priority.

5. Guests were asked about factors that influenced them along with personalized customer engagement to make a reservation at a hotel. The guests said that they would give importance to word-of-mouth, reputation of the hotel, brand resonance, brand communication of the hotel, corporate social responsibility that the hotel undertakes.

The hotel needs to create a positive image in all the above aspects along with dedicated customer engagement marketing and use that image created to generate footfall of guests for room sale as well as the food and beverage sales. The hotel needs to have a dedicated team to handle the hotel's social media handles, tackle complaints and study reviews of guests on a regular basis. Promptness in customer handling is very crucial in the hospitality business. Guests take serious cognizance of this aspect which ultimately leads to their satisfaction and customer purchase intention towards the hotel.

Scope for Future Research

1. This present study is primarily on Indian context. This study is considering customer of Indian origin study can be carried out on other nationalities / geographies.
2. Demographics collected from the present study can be used for future study with respect to age, profession, gender and customer engagement strategies.
3. Customer engagement strategies can be studied with brand resonance, brand equity, brand communication and brand involvement.
4. Inter personal engagement could be studied between customer and employee group in hotel context.
5. Role of employee in customer engagement strategy in hotels can be studied in detail.
6. A study related to hotel's personality on the customer engagement process can be a topic for further study.

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Chapter 1

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1.1. The Tourism Industry

Tourism is a phenomenon and an industry that caters to the very basic need of man to travel and is one of the main economy contributors to the nation. The *World Tourism Organization* defines tourism more generally in the definition which is slightly different from idea of travel as holiday activity to “*People travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure and not less than 24 hours for business or other purposes*”. This activity results in millions of people travelling domestically as well as internationally. The travel industry is the world’s largest industry and most global in nature. Tourism includes the business of accommodation, attractions, activities, amenities, entertainment, transportation and ancillary services. The tourism industry is a part of the service industry (Tassiopoulos, D 2008) and has become an important source of income for certain regions and the countries that rely on it for their survival. Tourism has a strong multiplier effect and contributes significantly to a nation’s economy. Through the local consumption of both tourism and non-tourism related products, Tourism contributes to the development of small businesses. Tourism is mainly divided into mass tourism or special interest tourism depending upon the need of the traveler creating employment opportunities for the local people. Mass tourism developed in the second half of the 19th century and was pioneered by Thomas Cook. Cook seized this opportunity and saw the potential of Europe’s expanding rail network and established a company who took care of this need. The company included short excursions for masses as well as longer vacations to destinations far away to Continental Europe, India and Asia for people with more disposable income. Travel rapidly developed during the early 20th century and saw a huge leap with the development and advent of automobiles and later airplanes. This accelerated and improved travel to a very large extent. People could travel to places faster and use their leisure time constructively. Countries started developing seaside resorts which became the era of modern tourism spreading over continental Europe, then East coast of United States of America and eventually by mid of the 20th century the Mediterranean Coast became a mass tourism destination. (Roday, S 2009) Special tourism is aimed when people are traveling to a destination with a specific purpose, interest or motivation. This type of tourism is also called as Niche tourism. Many of these terms have come into common use related to the tourism industry. Eco-tourism,

Wildlife tourism, Medicinetourism, Roots tourism, Dark tourism and Adventure tourism to name a few. In this type of tourism, the location or destination is of utmost importance.

There has been an upswing in tourism over the last few decades, especially in Europe where international travel is easily accessible and common. Short breaks are mostly popular and tourists having a wide range of options according to their budgets and tastes. The accommodation industry is tuned to these developments and caters to these preferences accurately. With the advances in the air transport, infrastructure where there are jumbo jets, low-cost carriers and access to airports, tourism saw exponential growth and affordability to make it possible for more people to travel. Changes in lifestyles of people, technology and digitalization, more disposable income, intense marketing and promotion led to its further growth.

1.2. The History of Tourism

The tourism related history and the history of human civilization development has most been almost simultaneous. (Roday,S 2009) In the ancient era, when human colonies were not existent, people used to go from one place to another in search of food and to find means of living. But with the advancement of human development, the colonies began to establish and man's needs changed from those related to mere sustenance. In the beginning, motives to travel were religious, for trading and for acquiring education. The need to travel was limited with sparse facilities available at the time. There was no immediate idea of commercialization of travel or even an inkling of what an industry as we see it, today. With the emergence of technology, the requirements and momentum to travel saw increase which also resulted in the upward surge in motives of people to travel.

1.3. The History of Travel

The past of travel is linked with chronicles of progress in human civilization. (Andrews,S 2007), Innumerable components have contributed to the development of travel in society. In the 18th century, travelling was a highly difficult task. There was no knowledge related to the aspects required to develop tourism. People would travel for trade, religious purposes or for occasions socially required to be present like festival celebrations, death in family, marriage or visiting friends and relatives(VFR). To take

up a travel, was risky as roads and means of transport were limited. Covering short distances would take longer time and safety in travel was not guaranteed. Travelling with children and advanced age people was not convenient. Amenities besides roads were equal to not existent. A regular person would take up a travel only in emergencies. Business men and pilgrims were the most common type of people who travelled frequently. People exchanged goods for their wants and these wants were fulfilled in the markets close to their settlements so the need to travel for work did not arise.

Migration, only happened in advent of natural calamities or when wars conquered new territories. Technological advancement brought invention and innovation in all walks of human life. Impetus of tourism actually happened through the development of the transport mechanisms. Tourism flourished through the gradual development of the waterways, roadways railways and airways. Each of these modes of transport have expanded considerably from their origin. All these are the very basis of tourism, that happens throughout the world. The Industrial Revolution of 1840 was the starting point of travel with the subsequent advancement in all the modes of travel.

1.4. Evolution of Indian Tourism

(Sathe S& Sadhale M, 2019) Tourism industry is one of the major contributors to the economy of a nation. It becomes a success, if tourism is developed properly and sustainability is achieved. Tourism as a concept can be quite complex owing to the fact that it is comprised of various components. India being an expansive country was difficult to travel in earlier times. Travelling domestically was difficult, as people gave priority to religion and social pressures which did not permit travelling easily. Society in those times was intolerant and looked down people who travelled. People of the Hindu religion condemned overseas travel and such travelers were treated with contempt. Domestic travel was limited to visiting friends and relatives, pilgrimage and only to known destinations. Touring was only limited to rich people who had their own means of transport. Public transport was unheard of, at that time. People walked to their destinations and journeys were long and tiring. People would go with merchants to travel. Returning from a journey was not certain as these would be marred with difficulties. People set out on pilgrimages which would be the last few years left after they had completed all their duties towards family, which was

Vanaprasthashram. In Hindu religion, such elders used to say their goodbyes and leave on Yatras (journeys) like the Kashi yatra.

The revered scripture of the Hindus is the Vedas. Hindus treat their guests as an incarnation of God. It is true to this day. In olden times, villages set aside space for travelers who were in transit. These travelers were welcomed to stay at home or take shelter at temples. This movement was practiced by monasteries taken care by Buddhist monks. Concept of lodging and boarding to travelers started then. Inns were established slowly by King Chandragupta Maurya. The concept of hostels began when schools and universities accepted students which were called Chaityas. As travel increased during the medieval period, boarding along with lodging was introduced in a big way.

The 15th century, saw Pathan ruler called Sher Khan building these places of shelter called the Sarais all the way from the now State of Punjab to the State of West Bengal. This construction happened before the Mughals entered India. He had these structures built as the travel was tedious and took many days. Exhausted travelers rested and continued the journey ahead. This structure provided free food, water and fodder for the animals. The construction and the location of these units was done cleverly as later in the day these served as trading markets. As markets formed, housing and human settlements quickly surrounded them. Then, came the Mughals, who reestablished the same idea and built the resting houses for their army and merchants. Emperor Akbar initiated the idea, from North to the Middle of the India covering the area where Mughal rule spread. All these units functioned successfully from 1605 to 1707 the year of Aurangzeb's death. Post his death, these shut down due to lack of funding and maintenance. The British had started entering India and establishing themselves in the courts of the Mughals from 1608. With the eventful rise of the regional kingdoms and subsequent fall of the Mughal Empire, the British edged out the other European powers. To rule India, considering its length and breadth was a gigantic task as faster and means of communication had to be developed. The East India Company undertook the development of the roads and railways in India. India posed to be the next big market for English goods and raw material was sourced all the way from England. As trade had to multiply and prosper, the British recruited Indians to join the trading companies as manpower was required. In the wake of this development, the British lay to waste the cultural expertise of the artisans and killed the economic independence that the local people enjoyed till then. They

introduced the railway system, postal system, use of machines in new product manufacturing and the use of the printing press. India had to pay a heavy price of suppression. Many of the British officers stayed back in India and found the tropical summers unbearable. This led to the development of hill stations and villas. Hill stations were developed with all amenities. The rich Indian community like the Parsis and Marwadis who were in trading business started vacationing in local hill stations and these destinations prospered.

This was the time when the seeds of discontent were slowly being sown in the Indian mind. Great thinkers and freedom fighters started to think about the freedom from slavery of the British. During the Raj, the great leader and thinker who propagated the freedom movement was Lokmanya BalGangadhar Tilak undertook a travel to Sri Lanka. He had the power of speech and was an excellent orator. He wrote about his travelogues which extensively explaining about the traditions, culture, socio-political scenario covering areas he travelled. As he travelled, he gained knowledge about the people from different areas. He observed and was of the opinion that it is important to see the larger picture to progress in life. As he travelled, he came across benevolent communities who donated food and water free of cost. The travelers were served food in 'Annachatras' operated by the Chetty's of Kerala in Southern India. Charity is one of the strong doctrines of the Hindu religion. The famous Vari (journey by foot) is one such example where the devotees of Lord Pandurang, a famous deity of Pandharpur walk to the famous temple. People along the way offer food and items to these devotees for their personal use as they walk. This amounts to charity which is followed till this very day.

Ancient Hindu traditional temples had an almshouse or attached kitchen called Dharmshalas. These also served as resting places for weary travelers who used to travel and made it a point to pass through a route that had these almshouses to satisfy their need. There was a special provision made in the form of "Prasadalaya" a place, which fed and distributed food to Hindu devotees at shrines of Kashi, Varanasi as carrying food at such altitudes was difficult for travelers. Sikh religion also is another example where food is cooked by devotees as a service to praise the lord. This cooked meal is distributed as Prasad at a "Langar" which is the kitchen in Gurudwaras (Sikh temples). Food is distributed to all irrespective of gender, caste, religion and economic-status. The feeling is inclusive for all and that is what Sikh religion professes.

India was a land of great saints who made great impressions on the minds of the people. Saint Ramdas, a famous Saint from Maharashtra has travelled all over India in the 15th century. He was responsible for erecting 400 temples dedicated to the monkey god Hanuman established in the length and breadth of our country. He realized early on that religion brings people together and made several journeys to understand the needs of people. These temples are a distinct example of unity in diversity which is how India is still known for.

Tourism industry as we know it as today, finds its roots in many religious journeys taken by devotees to their choice of religious destination. The Muslims consider the Mecca and the Medina as their holy places of worship and it is said that every practicing Muslim must visit these holy sites at least once in his/her life time. Around about the 15th century, the government of Venice had made two boats available to transport devotees across the Mediterranean Sea to Palestine. Europe had many places of worship for instance the city of Santiago which has the famous worship site of Compostela. Another site, the healing wells of Ireland are said to have miracle cures and found its roots in Christianity. The concept of a Spa (Sanus Per Aquam) is named after the Belgian town of Spa where curative minerals were sought from hot springs. Roman soldiers treated their wounds, aches and pains through this therapy after the battles they fought. Lourdes is another place famous for cures to medical conditions which is considered as miracles by the Catholic Church and pilgrims alike. People of the Christian faith visit to take a dip in the spring water from the grotto which helps them to get cured from the ailments. When so many people started visiting these places and they had to stay there till the treatment got over. These spas started putting together accommodation and entertainment for people staying there. In India, people went to their version of the convalescence centers and used to travel to these places to find doctors who practiced ancient medicine called Ayurveda. These doctors were the last hope for people with fatal conditions and were referred to as "Vaidyas". Due to the social taboos and mores of the society, people who went to these doctors would have to follow strict regimen. This was not regarded as a place for entertainment and indulgence. With the advancement in transportation methods in British rule, slowly people chose to travel as it was not risky as before.

Unrest towards the British rule, started to take place in the Indian mind which was a result of the changing political scenario. This unrest was spear-headed by the Congress party. It held meetings and conferences in different parts of the country.

People would travel to attend these as charismatic leaders like Lokmanya Tilak, would enlighten them about philosophical topics about life. Travel was seen as an activity which broadened personal outlook and how we should respect people and appreciate the differences. When their leaders showed the merits of travel, it did not remain a taboo and people got encouraged to see the world. People from India travelled to see the world and realized how advanced the world had become. The travel brought considerable change in the way people thought and acceptance of many situations was easier. India was seen as a mystical and enchanting country which still was not advanced. The rudimentary image that India carried was a curiosity for foreigners who thought it was a place of snake charmers, elephants and tigers and a land of fantasy and magic. The travel scenario was limited in post- independence era as domestic travel required basic travel infrastructure which was underdeveloped.

1.5. Scope and Importance of Tourism

(Andrews, S 2007) Tourism is an industry made up by multiple services provided by specialists. It constitutes of the hospitality and allied industries related to service domain. It provides economic stability and employment generation for a nation. If tourism grows as an industry, it promotes these aspects. If these grow, it results in acceleration in the national as well as state earnings, business income and employment. This growth benefits the economy when in turn results in tourism being promoted as top priority. When governments realize this fact, they invest in tourism infrastructure. When tourism expands it is helpful for other industries too. It strengthens ancillary industries namely transport, agriculture, handicrafts, etc. This industry in India, particularly stems from national unity. It takes care to preserve nature and culture of India. India is blessed with unique states having different topography, culture, cuisine, traditions. The Department of Tourism and State Tourism boards are aware of this and are in need of trained professionals who are in need of jobs creating employment. The activity of tourism impacts locals as well as the tourists favorably. Locals benefit from the multiplier effect. Tourists learn about the culture and traditions of the locals and there is a sense of presenting some parts of one's life in a way to each other. Tourism also helps to restore, protect, conserve and maintain traditions, arts, cuisine, architecture, buildings of heritage, rural and ancient arts.

Thus, Tourism plays a pivotal role in:

1. Generation of Jobs
2. Planning, growth and progress of infrastructure.
3. Conservation
4. Widening one's view of the world.
5. Creating a feeling of inclusiveness in tourists and locals.
6. Social and cultural exchange between host and guest.
7. Destination development, progress and promotion.
8. Demand in ancillary industries related to tourism.

The Government of India has dedicated itself to recognize Tourism as an industry. The planning happens at macro as well as micro level where the states and the Centre having to take decisions for the benefit of the nation. The Ministry of Tourism spent Rs.1986.04 crores during the year 2018-2019 respectively under its planned schemes for the sector. There is a provision of 2075.12 crores for the financial year of 2019-2020. (Department of Tourism Website 2019-2020). Development and promotion of the tourist places is the responsibility of the State governments and the Union territories. Ministry of Tourism promotes India as a holistic destination and covers all the destinations and products in the country.

The Ministry has taken several initiatives to make sure that the tourist arrivals in the country are boosting tourism.

Few such initiatives include:

1. Central financial assistance to the states /union territories under the schemes of Swadesh Darshan, National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive(PRASHAD)and assistance to central agencies for the development of tourism infrastructure in the country.
2. Extension of E-visa facility to citizens of 167 countries.
3. Launch of Incredible India 2.0 campaign with market specific promotional plans and content creation for the same.
4. Regeneration of the website for Incredible India to provide more information on India as a destination for tourists.
5. Launch of 24X7 toll free multi-lingual tourist helpline in 12 International languages including Hindi and English.

6. The Annual Global Tourism Mart for India is held in other countries to provide a common ground for all the stakeholders to meet, interact and create business opportunities in tourism and hospitality sectors.
7. Organization of international travel marts to promote the North eastern states of India.
8. Organizing of the International Buddhist conclave biennially.
9. Overseeing activities to promote India in overseas markets through the Indian Tourism offices in foreign countries by organizing travel fairs, road shows and parades.
10. Indian Tourism offices organizing “Know India” seminars.
11. Revamping of the existing schemes like Hunar se Rozgar Tak under skill development.
12. Development of a mobile application for tourists called Swachh Paryatan which will discuss issues related to hygiene across various tourist destinations in the country.
13. Adarsh Smarak India has identified 100 existing monuments to be developed as Model Monuments. These monument sites will be provided with all the tourist facilities, WI-FI, security, safety, signage encroachment free area, interpretation centers and showing short films about the monument.
14. Tourism development corporations are in charge of the tourism activity at the state level. These are responsible for promotion, marketing, upkeep and development of all the tourist destinations in the state.

1.6. Infrastructure Essential for Tourism:

Infrastructure refers to all the requirements related to structures, buildings, all types of connectivity, ancillary sectors and access planned for the progress of a particular industry. Infrastructure in tourism is complex (Roday, S 2007)

Infrastructure required for tourism is made up of the following constituents:

- 1. All modes and means of transport:** Railways, roads that include national highways, expressways, interconnecting state roads, buses, private travel operators, public transport, local transport are all part of the transport mechanism.
- 2. Lodging and boarding facilities:** These include all categories of star rated hotels, resorts, roadside motels, dak bungalows, Yatri niwas, caravans, travelers’ lodges,

boarding houses, time share condominiums, home accommodation and Bed & breakfast options. These offer something for everyone. Without accommodation, overnight stay and long-haul tourism is not possible.

- 3. Services for telecommunications:** The smart phone is one of the most useful modes of communication. It has brought us closer to our world through the internet. The web offers us to stay connected, share and communicate. It helps us in mapping, selling, making money and transferring of money. The internet has hit been very beneficial for the tourism and hotel industries. All is possible at a click of a button right from collecting information about a destination, booking tickets, booking travel arrangements through online banking. All these services are very handy and make travel much easier than before.
- 4. Food & Beverages:** After lodging, food & beverages are a basic necessity for tourists. These comprise of fine dining restaurants, cafes, multi cuisine eateries, bars, lounges, specialty restaurants, multi cuisine restaurants and quick service restaurants. A tourist can savor the local specialties through participating in food fairs or food trails or exclusive home dinners. Food now, is easily available and can be delivered at home from all these dining options. Smaller food and beverage businesses include street food kiosks, juice bars, bakeries, snack kiosks, food stalls. A tourist would like to experience the destination through its cuisine and taste the authenticity with the original ingredients and cooking methods.
- 5. Ancillary services:** These are essential for the traveler and also used by the local population of the destination. Provision of these services is very important and must be provided in correct ratio to the carrying capacity of a destination. If these services are inadequate, it puts a pressure on the smooth functioning of the touristic activities. These include clean water available, proper sewage treatment, gardens and green cover throughout the destination, local means of entertainment, electricity, safety, security, money exchange facilities, local transport and proper law and order mechanism to name a few. The responsibility of providing these lies under the destination specific authorities and must be enough for tourists as well as the locals to avoid conflict.
- 6. Places of interest in and around the destination:** Every tourist visits a destination definitely has a list of attractions he/she would like to visit. Many destinations are famous due to local attractions. These are broadly categorized as natural and man-made attractions. Nature based attractions include water bodies,

mountain ranges, forests are all available in nature. Manmade attractions include special events created around nature like adventure sports. Culture of a place is shared with tourists through fairs, festivals, music, cuisine, dance and traditions. History of a place can be understood through buildings, monuments and architecture serve as manmade attractions. Sustainable practices have to be the central focus of all the destinations to preserve both these types of attractions. The decision making depends on personal, psychological and demographic factors of an individual which play a major role along with a tourist's motives to undertake travel. The 5A's of tourism related to a destination are Accessibility to the destination, Amenities, Attractions, Activities and Accommodation at the destination. After viewing all these factors tourists can decide what kind of holiday destination to choose.

1.7. The Hospitality Industry:

According to (Camilleri,M.A,2018), The Hospitality Industry, is an ever-expanding industry which provides a home away from home and all facilities that make that stay comfortable to people who travel all around the world. The hospitality industry has under its umbrella, businesses that include lodging, boarding, event management, theme parks, tourist transportation, luxury cruise ships. It is closely linked to the tourism industry. In the beginning of time, man started to travel in search of food, work, better prospects and later leisure. This required for a place to stay overnight. Inns and taverns were built on the trade and caravan routes which provided basic accommodation to tired travelers. Local community let out their homes to strangers and travelers to provide hospitality and earn revenue. The demand for shelter increased with the development of the highways, better modes of transport and technology gave way to hotels. Since this sector has only grown and expanded internationally. The Hospitality Industry caters to millions of travelers who are generally categorized as business travelers or leisure travelers. Every traveler has different needs and expectations. This industry is so diverse that it caters to each individual. The word "Hospitality" plainly means the welcoming quality or a friendly reception of strangers done in a warm and generous manner. The word "Hospitality" is derived from the Latin word "Hospes" which means visitor or stranger or host, which later developed into 'Hospice', a place of shelter for the sick.

In today's world, the products and services that are offered to the modern traveler by hotels include every possible comfort that guests demand. These businesses are a part of a mammoth service industry which encompasses all types of tourism, stay facilities, food and beverage options, rejuvenation and relaxation. This industry also engages a considerably amount of people to function successfully generating employment and economic growth of nations. It is an industry by the people who work for the people. Hospitality industry is ever growing as the demands of guests for new services and products are ever increasing and endless.

1.7.1 The Objectives of the Hospitality Industry

- 1. Customer relationship:** This is the very foundation on which most hospitality businesses depend for their success. It is important to understand the customer wants and fulfill those wants. This can be achieved by being available for guests and providing help for any problems. A positive atmosphere is required for the guest to feel welcome. The employees of an organization are crucial to develop this relationship. Serving the guest well and with care must take priority in hospitality business.
- 2. Hospitable premises:** Creating a hospitable premise for the first step to achieving success. A guest expects clean and hygienic facilities, professional attitude and assistance at the hotel he/she stays. Proper procedures in service must be implemented to give a guest a wholesome experience. There should be a mechanism to check all is in order before the guest approaches the hotel for reservation and thereafter when he comes to stay at the hotel. It is imperative to fulfill promises made by the hotel resulting in brand trust and brand loyalty.
- 3. Adherence to set budget and fulfillment of service objectives:** Managers have the responsibility of earning revenue for the hotel as well as create goodwill and trust for the brand in the minds of the customers. The management of the hotel strives to earn profits by adhering to the set budget. Compliance to set budgets not only keeps the operation successful but keeps the managers alert in providing all services and products as per standard in a hotel.
- 4. Conformance to quality and consistency:** Customers are attracted to good service but it is vital for the hospitality business to provide quality products to satisfy them. Often the customers associate, the value of money with consistency and quality of the products/ services received. Hospitality business depends upon

repeat customers and maintaining quality is crucial for this to happen. Sustained quality results in brand resonance and trust.

In the hospitality business, the provider of the service is part of the product. The expectation of customers is to be treated with empathy, care and dignity. It is important to provide these to guests at a hotel to create a feeling of being at home away from home. Food delivery aggregators now even deliver food at home. This industry is truly global as it represents all the formal as well as informal sectors related to services. The industry comprises of private as well as the public sectors which makes it more diversified. People belonging to every class, background, age, status and ethnicity are either givers or recipients of the service. This industry has spread almost to every country in the world to create jobs, locations for leisure, recreation, provide transportation and economic support for the country.

There are four main components of the hospitality industry namely lodging, boarding, recreation, tourism. The estimated number of people in hospitality business in 2021 will be approximately 25 million people.

Lodging is to provide a place to sleep or rest for a fixed period of time usually overnight. The lodging industry is divided into two sectors namely formal sector and informal sector. The formal sector includes star category hotels, licensed units and branded independent hotels. The informal sector includes youth hostels, camping ground, motels, home stays to name a few.

Recreation includes all the activities which people perform with the focus on rest, relaxation, leisure, entertainment and enjoyment. The intention of recreation is to rejuvenate a person's mind and body. Any business that participates in the creation of rest, relaxation, wellness, leisure and enjoyment is categorized under the recreation business. Recreation businesses can be multiple in nature as the idea of recreation can be varied from person to person. To make the idea of recreation more lucid for understanding it is categorized under four general types of recreation namely attractions, sports events, wellness and entertainment.

The travel industry is responsible for the movement and transportation of the people from one location to another whereas the tourism industry provides those people with services that promote travel and vacations. Transport includes roadways, railways, airways and waterways which are all part of the travel the tourism industry includes all the agencies that help in all services and products related to the travel industry. At every step, the traveler needs assistance provided

by tour operators, travel agencies, cruise corporations, event management companies and visitors offices are all part of the tourism industry.

1.7.2. Characteristics of the Hospitality Industry

The physical products of hospitality include the food, beverages and the hotel room which the guest stays in. In the hotel particularly, the product includes the service which is sold at a price. These are seen as the tactile aspects of hospitality.

As the hospitality industry is by the people for the people it is important to understand that the service provided by the employees of a hotel is more crucial as this would translate into a guest feeling satisfied or unsatisfied. Thus, it is important to acknowledge these to maximize on these aspects which are listed below.

The aspects of hospitality are:

- Inseparability of Production and Consumption;
- The rooms that are sold are perishable product;
- There are no fixed hours of work.
- Hospitality business is an omnipresent and operates on a 24 -hour basis all around the year.

The hospitality industry especially the hotel industry is dependent on employees to deliver the service to guests. For this to happen there should be a healthy guest employee ratio to be maintained. Unfortunately, there is a problem of employee turnover to a large extent and this affects the service continuity. Employees form an important link between the hotel and the guest. They must be appreciated and motivated as the internal customers of the hotel. Managers in hospitality must lead from the front and create a team of employees. The team must understand the importance of providing wholesome service to strangers to convert them into regular customers.

1.7.3 The Hotel Industry and Tourism Linkage

The Tourism industry is ever growing and made up of varied businesses and ancillary sectors. Many linkages are formed through tourism to the industries that deal with lodging, wellness, transport and food. (Roday, S 2009) When people travel, they need a place to rest and stay. Tourists decide on accommodation according to their needs and affordability. They choose from a wide variety of formal to informal accommodation

options. The lodging properties in the formal sector are a symbol of elegance and offer unparalleled living experience to guests. Staying in a star hotel is a sign of elevated position in society for many. There are other travelers who would like to have an experiential holiday, sans the frills of a big hotel. They may seek accommodation options at home stays or less expensive hotels. Apart from the residence that the guests need in a hotel, they need various other services along with the stay. Banqueting, conferencing, events, expositions all need the venue and the services along with the venues. This need has given rise to establishment of convention centers. The need of entertainment along with hotel stay and facilities has given to the growth of casino hotels.

A hotel is an establishment which earns revenue by letting out accommodation and provides boarding for a few days to a traveler or tourist. The concept of a hotel has evolved from the frugal supply of basic lodging facility with boarding to extremely well-thought-out rooms with all possible facilities and amenities. These include in-situ bathroom in the room, special cuisine serving restaurants, laundry services, in-room dining, valet services, travel services, bars, lounges, conferences rooms and banqueting spaces. A five star hotel would be designed with extreme care to look luxurious, be functional and expressive for the guests. These tangible aspects have to be demonstrated so that guests enjoy the whole experience which is very different from home. The intangibles include customized service which is extended to each guest to make the experience more personalized. Branded hotels are mostly are classified, carry a star rating, have facilities and image that suggest luxury and quality. As a country, India serves all types of tourists and is famous for all types of tourism destinations. The tourism department promotes tourism aggressively and is gearing up to meet the demand of the bookings. There are plentiful options for domestic as well as international tourists. India is a diverse country and caters to all types of tourism enthusiasts. There is a market for vacation, business, leisure, medical, special-interest, niche, MICE (Meetings, Incentive, Conference/Convention, Exposition/Exhibition) and adventure tourism to cite a few. Ancillary industries can benefit with this progression and India can be touted as a one-in-all destination. There is a lot of emphasis given to well-being and wellness, leading to expansion of the service sector. Few reasons to cite this, are increased disposable income, sense of self, qualitative thinking about investing time in relaxation and rejuvenation. This thought process is observed not only in metropolitan cities but also smaller towns. As guest

demands and choices define the supply, the hotel chains provide a product which it is important for them to build and present a product which fulfils this very demand of guests.

Many cities have seen a growth in the number of five and fourstar hotels entering the year, with international leading brands like Marriot, Hilton, Radisson and HYATT making foray in the Indian market. Leading Indian brands IHCL, ITC and EIH have been very successful in the global markets.

1.8 The History of Hotel Industry

The want of the hotels was required and recognized as the travel concept emerged as people travelled for a variety of reasons. (Tewari, J 2009) Initially, there were rest stops which were required by travelers and these were not very equipped. People used animals as the main mode of transport and a night halt would be required. The other reason was the constraints of distance. Travelers could not carry the food and water required for these journeys. The concept of the inns and stay houses came into existence in 3000 BC. Inns were owned privately and provided stables to park animals and carriages. Services were miniscule, food was not available. Hygiene and cleanliness were absent. The early history of the lodging can be traced to the Greeks who believed in the concept called Xenia which is the act of welcoming strangers and offering them place to stay. As journeys were exhausting, the Greeks offered baths for relaxation and recuperation to travelers.

The progress came with the Romans. The Roman Empire contributed to the accommodation scenario. As their rule and empire grew, want to travel for business related to the army increased. The expanse meant more work for the officials and the administrative staff. These people had to stay and refined accommodation was provided. Jesus Christ was crucified and the church opened its doors to pilgrims. In the Middle-Ages, temples and monasteries also provided place to stay as religious travel increased. The invention of the wheel and development of roads led to evolvement of large towns. Locals started inns as they earned high revenue. Dormitories were available for merchants who travelled as a safe option during their several trips. Merchants wanted more privacy and luxury which led to the development of individual rooms as one knows them now.

Slowly, there was a change in the way; construction of such buildings was done. One-level establishments started being turned into vertical complexes. There was a common place planned where people waited after they entered. This served as the old version of the Lobby as it is known now. Food and beverages were offered at this level. The rooms were situated on the floors above. The introduction of the stagecoaches made it easier for the travelers to reach their destinations faster.

With the introduction of railways and waterways, people took these modes to travel and road travel reduced. Hotels started coming up at railway stations. The Industrial Revolution led to the expansion of hotels. Switzerland is said to be the origin of the structured hotel business. The inns started keeping registers to maintain guest information and accounts. English noblemen and ladies frequented Switzerland to experience hospitality. French and Italian Riviera developed exquisite resorts which were patronized by the rich and the famous of that time. Thomas Cook organized the famous tour from Leicester to Loughborough by rail. He emerged as a travel agent between patrons and the railways and shipping companies. In America, the lodging facilities were based on English style taverns. The first Inn was in Boston started by Samuel Cole. American businessmen changed the face of the hotels with their marketing aptitude and original concepts. Hotels started mushrooming in America and went on to flourish till the Great Depression period in the 1930s. Hotels were sold to survive. The bounce back happened in the 1950s after the World War II. Motel concept was introduced and continued to keep the owners and the traveler happy. The 1970s saw business hotels come to the fore. Development in the 1980s and 1990s was prolific and offered services to all kinds of guests at the hotel. The Gulf War impacted the hotels. The idea of having a regular guest was understood and marketing efforts were improved to have schemes like frequent flier points or loyalty points were introduced.

The hotel industry, in Asia was developing since the Middle Ages. There was much trade happening in Asia. First Inns came up in Japan. The construction of the Suez Canal bridged Europe and Asia. Travel accelerated due to the steam ships. All hotels were for the convenience of the British officers. In the 1970s, the big boom of the petroleum industries increased the need to travel to the middle-eastern countries. These countries have created beautiful manmade destinations and are famous tourism destinations to date. Many occurrences such as the Gulf war affected the hotel industry but innovative marketing programs like the frequent flier points gave it some

help to thrive. By this time, hotels were classified to a large extent for example business hotels, heritage hotels, apartment hotels, casino hotels and convention hotels to name a few. Hotels also became great attractions for the destinations they were built in. Set-backs in the form of the Great depression, recession, acts of terrorism, wars and most recently the pandemic has affected the hotel industry. The World War II, though helped the hotel business and saw emerging of hotel chains. Ever since the hotel industry has experienced instability but it has sustained due to its adaptive nature and linkages. Many countries pride themselves as tourism destinations and it contributes to their economy with large numbers. The hotel industry is responsible for job generation and also the image building of a destination.

1.9. The Hotel Industry in India:

As a country, India has the advantage of its diversity, natural beauty, illustrious past and culture making it a popular tourist destination. The growth of the hospitality industry is estimated to rise by 15% per year, Indian hotels are expected to gain from this growth. The hotel industry not only creates revenue for the country but also is a creator of employment.

The contribution of the entire travel and tourism sector in India to Gross Domestic Product is expected to rise to 9.0 % (USD 330.1 billion) by 2020, with a growth rate of 8.2% annually. The travel and tourism industry will account for 58,141,000 jobs i.e. 10.4% of the total employment by 2020. (World Travel and Tourism Council 2009)

India has seen the rise in demand for rooms in star hotels due to the exponential growth in industries related to technology, manufacturing, retail, telecom and property businesses. Tourism not only brings significance to the nation and also earns foreign exchange. When the tourism industry flourishes, it has a positive ripple effect on all the industries related to it. This helps the hotel industry in sale of room nights, increase occupancy percentage and the average room rates are stable. The formal hotel industry in India consists of indigenous chains of hotels, independent hotels and multinational chains. Alternative accommodation is available in abundance in India. Indigenous chains that have dominance in the hospitality industry are ITC (Indian Tobacco Company), The Taj Group of Hotels (formally known as IHCL/Indian hotel company limited), The Oberoi Group of Hotels (formally known as

EIH /East India Hotels are under private sector and ITDC(Indian Tourism Development Corporation) and HCI (Hotel Corporation of India) are under the purview of the Indian government under the public sector-With the advent of international chains in India in the early 2000 India has quickly risen as a big market for hospitality industry.All the private sector hotel chains have established themselves in foreign markets with great success.Foreign chains have made a foray into the Indian hotel scenario by creating joint ventures with Indian counterparts, signing management contracts or follow a franchisor franchisee model. International chains like Accor, HYATT,Starwood, Shangri-La Group entered into Indian market and have seen much success and are also viewing expansion.The pool also consists of Indian bred brands with successful presence domestically and who the markets well. These brands choose to concentrate on expansion domestically and create niche markets. Independent hotels are carving a place for themselves by creating and sustaining a strong brand image even with a single property.

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, under the star system categorizes hotels into one to five star deluxe range which includes palatial heritage hotels. The reclassification of these hotels is done every three years to ensure that they maintain the level of standards laid down by the Ministry of Tourism.The Hotels and Restaurants Approval and Classification Committee (HRACC) has been set up for the purpose and having representation from the central government, state governments, hotel and travel industry.

The hotel industry is inherently complex for various reasons. Firstly, the formal hotel industry has intense categorization having further sub categorization. These categories are types of hotels depending upon the quality of the hotels which includes luxury, first class, mid-range and economy. Each of these categories has to fulfill the requirements according their type. This categorization is then divided upon characteristics like the size of the hotel i.e., according to number of rooms, location of the hotel, on the type of guests the hotel receives, on the duration of stay of the guest, on the basis of level of service, type of ownership also plays a vital role in making the hotel industry intricate.

Important Industry Associations

The major hotel industry associations are:

- The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI);
- The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI);
- The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI);
- The Southern India Hotel & Restaurant Association (SIHRA);
- The Hotel & Restaurant Association (Western India) (HRAWI); and
- Hotels Association of India (HAI);
- Pune Restaurants and Hoteliers Association (PRHA)

The future of the hospitality sector shows a lot of promise. With the growth of the economy, companies are willing to spend on travel; demand for the industry is flourishing every day. With rise in income, emergence of idea of leisure travel and people wanting to spend more on experience helps the hospitality industry to grow. Further, the number of foreign tourists coming to India is expected to reach USD 11.1 m by 2021. The demand-supply gap in India is very sharp especially regarding standardized hotels leading to need of more hotels in the formal sector. The shortage also extends to the budget and mid-range hotels where safe, clean accommodation is the need of tourists without the frills of a big hotel.

The rise in commercial and business activities leads to the growth of the hospitality industry worldwide. Technological advancements, more disposable income, increased leisure travel need and want, fast and efficient transport options have led to great progress for the hospitality industry.

It would be safe to conclude that the hotel industry in India is poised for tremendous growth, in the recent future. This is possible with the enormous effort being put in by the Government and the private players in equal tandem.

1.9.1 Classification and Star Rating of Hotels in India:

The subject of the classification of lodging properties was felt to be addressed with the advent of mass tourism. The hotels or inns in the past only provided necessary shelter and food. Cleanliness was often unheard of. The hotels of today not only provide the basics but also are symbols of luxury, comfort and beauty. (Tewari 2009,

pgs. 31-52) Hotels have transformed themselves into unique establishments known for the excellent service and leisure with recreational facilities. When a tourist decides to book a hotel for stay, he/she has to be aware about the standards it carries along with a seal of proof of authenticity. The need for this certification gained particular significance after prominent travel associations and certified bodies in tourism industry expressed the need to standardize the categories of hotels. This classification not only lends legitimacy to the hotels but sets uniformity, acts as a bench mark and keeps control on the hotels regarding the quality of services and facilities offered in that category.

Considering the wide variety of lodging establishment which offer boarding it is difficult to categorize and must be done in lieu of some criteria laid down for the same purpose. These would include size of the hotel, location of the hotel, guests who frequent the hotel, duration of stay of the guest, level of services, type of ownership etc.

1.9.2 The Star Rating of Hotel Properties in India:

This method of the star rating has been followed as a standard classification of rating throughout the world. Hotels are rated by the government or rating agencies or sometimes by the hotel chains.

The Indian hotel industry also endorses this system which is dependent upon the total number and quality of facilities available in a hotel. This scrutiny is done through an inspection by a special committee called the Hotel Restaurant Approval and Classification Committee (HRACC) which inspects and an assessment report is made. This committee physically verifies the facilities and amenities in the hotel audit and evaluates the hotel before awarding the star rating. There is an expansive list of mandatory and desired facilities regarding each of the categories given below which have to be fulfilled to comply with the requirements to get the desired rating.

1.9.2.1 One Star Hotels:

These properties are usually independent, single units and mostly family owned. People on holidays or leisure travel would opt for these hotels as they provide clean rooms and acceptable level of hygiene. These may have meal services which are basic but fulfilling. One- star hotels are functional and budget oriented.

1.9.2.2 Two Star Hotels:

These hotels are small to medium properties in their size. These are hotels are professional in their approach and make clean rooms available for overnight stay. Two- star hotels are equipped with basic facilities and friendly for the pocket. These also have a functional lobby space and food & beverage available on premise.

1.9.2.3 Three Star Hotels:

Three- star hotels usually have higher level of services and facilities compared to lower rating hotels. The public areas, rooms and exteriors are designed to look modern and there is focus on functionality. The guestrooms have to be clean, hygienic and provide comfort. These hotels provide basic facilities of food and beverages and would be business travelerfriendly. These are popular as they are affordable.

1.9.2.4 Four Star Hotels:

A four- star hotel is tastefully designed and offers luxury to its guests through the décor and interiors. Space in the guest rooms is well thought for,with the bathroom included. Provision of high-quality food and beverage options are available. The hotel must provide in -room dining, laundry service, valet service, travel desk, health club, salon etc. Emphasis on inclusivity and comfort is vital in a four- star property.

1.9.2.5 Five Star Hotels:

These are opulent, unique, iconic buildings that define the destinations due to their mere presence. Formality and luxury are the main aspects of these hotels which is seen in the services they provide to their guests. A five star hotel provides a guest with 24 hours operational facilities, concierge services, world class amenities, well designed guest rooms include luxurious bathrooms, 3-4 food and beverage outlets, butler service,in- room dining,conferencing facilities and latest technologies available for the business guest. Attention to detail, excellent quality of products and services, comfortable interiors, all is put in place to get the desired effect on the guest's mind. There must be provisions for specially-abled guests in the rooms as well as the public areas. The whole effort taken by the hotel and its staff is to turn the guest's stay into an unforgettable experience. Exceptional service is the main goal and for that the

hotel hires staff with certain attributes. Efficiency at work, focus on customer satisfaction, courtesy and attentiveness to guest wants are a must.

1.9.2.6 Heritage Hotels:

India has a rich past and heritage which is seen all across the country. Aristocratic and royal families have leased out their old mansions, forts and palaces to hotel chains. These chains, in turn have restored these properties to their lost glory, making India's rich culture and past grandeur ready to be witnessed by the world. The emphasis of a heritage hotel is on preserving the history and sharing it with guests curious about the traditions, cuisine and past folklore. Rooms have a specific theme and all the design and décor revolve around that theme. Traditional food is cooked as per authentic recipes which are curated to suit the palates of today. Entertainment provided by local artisans adds to an unforgettable experiential holiday. Fine examples of heritage hotels in India are found in the state of Rajasthan.

1.10. Indian Hotels Chains

A hotel chain is a group or series of hotels across different locations that are partially or wholly owned by one company. The management, administration, promotion, and marketing of the hotels in the chain are conducted by the same company. Some hotels exist as hotel chains in different parts of the world and become an iconic part of the hospitality industry.

All the information sourced below has been taken from the official websites of all the following hotels.

1.10.1 The Oberoi Group/East India Hotels Limited (EIHL):

Founded in the year by Rai Bahadur Mohan Singh Oberoi in 1934. The group operates 32 hotels, Nile Cruisers and a Motor Vessel in the backwaters of Kerala. The Group is visible in seven countries under the luxury 'Oberoi' and five star 'Trident' brand. The Group has diversified in project management, travel services, tour services, aviation food service, transit restaurants and chartered planes. The group also understands the importance of quality training in hospitality management. The Oberoi Group established OCLD or The Oberoi Centre for Learning and Development in New Delhi in 1966. Today, this institution is considered amongst the best in Asia with approximately 100 students graduating each year.

1.10.2 The Taj Group of Hotels / Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL):

This iconic chain of hotels was founded by Jamshedji Tata in 1868. The Tata group is a worldwide enterprise, comprising over 100 independently operating companies. The group operates in more than six continents with strong concern towards the local community and involvement in social responsibility. With loyal customer and stakeholder value based on 'Leadership with Trust', the Tata brand IHCL is an excellent and timeless initiative.

IHCL is reconstructing itself by using its commercial value to increase financial assets while launching new businesses alongside to increase their investor community and multi-faceting their business profile with existing as well as new customers. The Tata group turned 150 in 2018 and IHCL, is poised to be a part of its legacy since 1899 as the group participates in its 'One IHCL One Tata'.

One Tata is a Tata group- is an initiative to jointly escalate the scale of the entire group. This interaction and cooperation benefited all Tata companies. This initiative has bound the group even more with the feelings of oneness and family among their partners and employees.

Pune has two properties which come under the IHCL group

1. Blue Diamond, Pune –IHCL SeleQtions - Luxury Boutique Hotel.
2. Vivanta, Hinjewadi, Pune

1.10.3 ITC- HOTELS / Indian Tobacco Company:

ITC is one of India's largest hotel chains, and has made a mark in 70 destinations with over 100 hotels across the country. It is distinctly known by its 'Namaste' logo. ITC hotels are known for the fine tradition of hospitality with globally benchmarked services. ITC Hotels was one of the first chains to introduce the concepts of branded accommodation, branded cuisine, environment and guest safety.

All ITC Hotels exude warmth and showcases the correct picture of culture and true essence of each destination. ITC Hotels is an admirable example in sustainable hospitality with all its premium hotels being LEED® Platinum certified. ITC has won many awards and accolades for its role related to social and environmental contributions which are aligned to its economic benefits and its role in environment and health, safety philosophy. ITC Hotels operates its hotels under four distinct

brands; 'ITC Hotels' at the luxury end, 'WelcomHotel' in the upper upscale segment, 'Fortune' in the mid-market segment and 'WelcomHeritage' in the heritage leisure segment.

Pune has Fortune Inn Exotica, Hinjewadi Member of ITC Hotel group.

1.10.4 Sarovar Hotels & Resorts:

This Hotel chain is led by Mr. Anil Madhok who is the executive chairman setup the Sarovar Hotels in 1994. The group has a total of 80 hotels in India. The group includes brands namely SarovarPremierewhichincludes upscale five star properties.SarovarPortico includes full-service three and four star hotels.Hometel brand redefines the concept of an economy hotel. This group has presence in the economy sector in Pune city in the form of NooryaHometel, Pune.

1.10.5 Mahindra Holidays & Resorts India Ltd. (MHRIL):

Mahindra Holidays and Resorts India Ltd. (MHRIL), a part of Leisure and Hospitality sector of the Mahindra Group, offers quality family holidays primarily through vacation ownership memberships and brings to the industry values such as reliability, trust and customer satisfaction. Started in 1996, the company's flagship brand 'Club Mahindra Holidays', today has a fast-growing customer base of over 250,000 members and 100+ resorts at some of the most exotic locations in India and abroad headquartered at Chennai.

1.10.6 The Leela Group:

Founded by the Late Capt. CP Krishnan Nair who at the age of 65 years he started to build TheLeela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts which today form one of the biggest and most celebrated indigenous group of hotels in India. He had a thriving handloom and garment business which took him worldwide giving him exposure to some iconic hotels. During his sojourns, he decided to go ahead with the true calling of his life that was hospitality. He built an empire of luxury hotels with global standards with Indian hospitality at its core. He opened the iconic hotel The Leela, Mumbai in 1986. This group has 9 properties across India.

1.10.7 Lemon Tree Hotels Limited:

Lemon Tree Hotels Limited is the largest hotel chain in the mid-priced hotel sector in India. The group also have their presence in the upscale segment and economy segments. The first hotel opened with 49 rooms in May 2004 and now boasts 8,000 rooms across 80 hotels in 48 cities in India.

The group has various brands like Aurika Hotels and Resorts in the upscale segment, Lemon Tree Premier in the upper midscale segment, Lemon Tree Hotels in the midscale segment, Red Fox Hotels in the economy segment, Key Prima in the upper midscale segment, Keys Select in the midscale segment and Keys Lite in the economy segment. This group also has expanded its operations in Dubai in December 2019 and opened its gates in Bhutan in February 2020. This group was founded by Mr. Patanjali Govind Keswani.

The group has 5 hotels in Pune namely

1. Lemon Tree Premier, City Centre, Pune
2. Lemon Tree Hotel, Hinjewadi, Pune
3. Keys Prima Hotel ParcEstique, Pune
4. Keys Select Hotel Pimpri, Pune
5. Lemon Tree Hotel, Vimanagar, Pune

1.10.8 The Park Group:

The Park Group is a pioneer in the concept of luxury Boutique hotels in India. This Group is managed by the Apeejay Surendra Group. The group has completed a century in steel related businesses and was founded in 1910. This group is involved in Hospitality, Retail, Shipping and Real estate businesses. The Park opened its doors in Kolkata in the year 1967. The group has expanded in all major cities in India like Vishakhapatnam, Delhi, Bangalore and Chennai to name a few. Their brands include The Park, The Park Collection and Zone by the Park.

1.10.9 The Lalit

This group is one of the leading privately-owned domestic hotel brands in India. The group operates 12 luxury hotels, palaces and resorts under The LaLiT brand and two mid-market segment hotels under The LaLiT Traveller brand across India's key business and leisure travel destinations, offering 2,261 rooms. The group has

the full rights to operate and provide management and consultancy services to a 70-room hotel in London, The LaLiT London. The group's luxury hotel portfolio includes city hotels, palace hotels and resort hotels. The brands include Kitty Su, Baluchi, OKO, The Lalit Food Truck Company and TheLalitSuri Hospitality School.

1.10.10 ITDC/ India Tourism Development Corporation:

ITDC came into existence in October 1966 and are a Government of India Undertaking. This concern works for the progression, development, promotion and expansion of the tourism in India. The corporation is managing hotels and restaurants besides providing transport facilities. The corporation has diversified into innovative services like Full-fledged Money Changer, engineering consultancy and also imparts hospitality education and training through The Ashok Institute of Hospitality and Tourism Management of the Corporation. Presently, ITDC has a network of 4 Ashok Group of Hotels, one joint venture hotel, duty free shops at free ports and catering services at Vigyan Bhawan, Hyderabad House.

1.11. International Hotel Chains

1.11.1. HYATT

HYATT was founded by Jay Pritzker in 1957. Jay Pritzker and his brother, Donald Pritzker, along with their existing family business, transformed the company providing management and ownership to hotel, which became a public company in 1962. In 1968, HYATT International was formed. HYATT Corporation and HYATT International Corporation were taken private by the Pritzker family business interests in 1979 and 1982, respectively. In 2004, all of the hospitality assets owned by Pritzker family business interests, including HYATT Corporation and HYATT International Corporation, were consolidated under a single entity, now HYATT Hotels Corporation. HYATT has presence in India in the form of 29 hotels. The group entered into India in 1983 and managed the HYATT Regency since then to date.

HYATT has 3 hotels in city of Pune namely

1. HYATT, Pune
2. HYATT Regency Pune & Residences

3. HYATTPlace,Hinjewadi Pune

1.11.2. Accor Hotels

The company currently has 51 hotels across nine brands with around 9,500 rooms in India. Accor S.A. is a French multinational company. The group has ownership, management contracts and gives out franchisees to hotels and resorts. This is the largest hospitality company in Europe and ranks 6th in world ranking. Accor is slated to bring its brands like Banyan Tree, SO, Delano, Mondrian and Mama Shelter in India over the next 3-5years.This group currently operates 10 hotel brands including Fairmont, Swissotel, Grand Mercure, Novotel and Ibis in India

Pune hasthree hotels which are a part of the Accor group

1. Novotel,Pune Nagar Road.
2. Ibis Pune,Hinjewadi
3. Ibis Pune,Vimanagar

1.11.3. Marriott International

Founded in 1927 by John Willard Marriott as Marriott Corporation, Marriott International is the world's third-largest chain of hotels with 5,974 hotels in more than 110 countries. The multinational diversified hospitality company with over 199,929 employees is currently headed by Bill Marriott, a son to John Marriott. The company's headquarters are based in the Washington DC suburb of Bethesda, Maryland. Marriott International was incorporated following the division of Marriott Corporation into two companies, the Host Marriott Corporation, and Marriott International. Aside from luxury and hospitality, Marriott International also involves itself in social issues such as poverty eradication, community development, childcare, environment, and global diversity.Marriott International currently has 84 hotels in India across 15 brands, including The Ritz-Carlton, St. Regis, The Luxury Collection, W Hotels, JW Marriott, Renaissance Hotels, Marriott Hotels, Le Meridienand Westin. The group opened its first hotel in India in Goa in 1997.

The group has significant presence in Pune city.

1. JW Marriot Hotel
2. Marriot suites
3. Courtyard by Marriott Pune,Hinjewadi
4. Fairfield by Marriot Pune, Kharadi
5. The Ritz –Carlton, Pune

6. SheratonGrand,Pune
7. The Westin Pune, Koregaon Park
8. Four Points by Sheraton Hotel and Serviced Apartments, Pune.

BONVOY is the name of Marriott's newly combined loyalty program, which brought together Marriott Rewards, Ritz-Carlton Rewards, and Starwood Preferred Guest rewards. BONVOY has 120 million members, arguably the largest loyalty program for a single hotel company.

1.11.4. Wyndham Worldwide:

Wyndham Worldwide is the biggest hotel chain in the world by the number of hotels, having 8,092 hotels in 66 different countries found on six continents. Wyndham was founded in 1981 by Trammell Crow in Dallas, Texas, as Wyndham Hotel Corporation but was later redeveloped as Wyndham Worldwide in 2006. The headquarters for Wyndham Worldwide is based in Parsippany-Troy Hills in New Jersey, United States. Wyndham Worldwide have a total 15 brands. They have presence through midscale properties in India with Ramada Group.

1.11.5. IHG/ Intercontinental Hotels Group:

InterContinental Hotels Group, informally InterContinental Hotels or IHG, is a British, multinational hospitality company having its headquarters at England. IHG owns the following brands, which include Intercontinental, Regent Hotels, Six Senses hotels, Kimpton hotels and Resorts, Hualuxe, Crown Plaza, Voco Hotels, Hotel Indigo, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Holiday Inn Club Vacations, Avi, Even Hotels, and Staybridge Suites. It has 36 hotels operating across four brands in India, including InterContinental Hotels, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express, and a strong pipeline of 41 hotels due to open in the next 2-3 years in India.

1.11.6. Hilton Worldwide:

Hilton Worldwide founded in 1919 in Cisco Texas by Conrad Hilton is an American multinational hospitality company. Hilton Worldwide is the fifth largest hotel chains in the world with 4,727 hotels in 104 countries and territories. With 18 brands across different market sectors, Forbes ranked Hilton Worldwide number 36 among the United States largest privately held companies before their IPO in December of 2013.

The company's headquarters are situated in Beverly Hills, California. In India, they opened their first Hotel in Chennai in 2011. The group opened their first Conrad, in Pune in 2016. They also have one hotel the brand Double Tree by Hilton. The group also operates Hilton Shillim Estate Retreat & Spa.

1.11.7. Best Western Hotels:

Best Western International is the 7th largest hotel chains in the world with 4,196 hotels and motels worldwide, half of which are located in North America. The group was founded in 1946 by M. K. Guertin. Best Western International is considered one of the fastest-growing hotel chains in Asia and the Middle East with a revenue of \$6 billion in 2012. The company also changed its branding system in 2011 to a new system with three tiers which include Best Western, Best Western Plus, and Best Western Premier. The company's headquarters are based in Phoenix, Arizona, in the United States. In India, there are 16 hotels of this chain.

1.11.8. Four Seasons and Resorts:

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, was founded by Mr. Isadore Sharp in 1961. He was an architect working with his father who was a contractor. This chain is headquartered in Ontario, Canada. It is famous, internationally reputed Canadian chain which only specializes in management contracts for properties. This chain gave the world iconic Hotels such as The Claridges and The Connaught in Britain. They have significant presence in China. India has a luxurious Four Seasons Hotel in the upscale area of Worli in Mumbai that opened in 2008. Bill Gates and Prince Al-Wahhed have been major owners of this company.

1.11.9. Radisson Group of Hotels:

Radisson Hotel Group was founded in 1909, and is headquartered in United States is one of the world's largest and most dynamic hotel groups with seven distinctive hotel brands with more than 1,100 hotels in destinations around the world. The Group's brands include: Radisson Blu, Radisson collection, Park Plaza, Country Inn and Suites by Radisson, Park Inn by Radisson and RadissonRED. The first hotel, The Royal Copenhagen, opened in 1960 in Denmark. The Carlson entered the Americas through a fifty percent interest in Radisson Downtown in Minneapolis. In 1986, The Carlson

group brought the Radisson group with local partners SAS to Europe. In 2009 the Radisson SAS brand name was updated to Radisson Blu.

This group has a presence in Pune city namely

1. Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi
2. Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Hinjewadi

1.11.10. Shangri-La Group:

This Hotel Group has its headquarters in Hong Kong and has seen exceptional growth from a single hotel to a global presence in quality real estate, maritime, wellness and lifestyle businesses. This Group is a part of the Kuok Group and was founded in 1971 by Robert Kouk Hock Nien, a Malaysian tycoon. The first hotel opened in Singapore in 1971. With 5 decades of vast hospitality experience this group owns, operates and manages over 100 luxury hotels in the world. The main 5 brands are Shangri-La Hotels, Shangri-La Resorts, Kerry Hotels, Hotel JEN, and TradersHotels.

This group has presence in India namely

1. Shangri-La's –Eros Hotel, New Delhi
2. Shangri-La Hotel, Bengaluru

1.12. PuneCity: An Overview:

Pune has metamorphosed from a town for pensioners to a true satellite city of Mumbai. Yet, it has retained its charm and it is the second largest city in Maharashtra. It is prominently known as the cultural capital of the state of Maharashtra. It has the great history for itself and was at the center of the Maratha empire in the past. The spread of Pune has grown exponentially from its original size to surrounding townships of Hadapsar, Baner, Hinjewadi, Wagholi and Chikali to name a few. The city center known as the Peth area which are named according to the days of the week. The Peth area has all types of retail and wholesale markets. This area has old residential buildings called Wadas. Pune predominately has people of the Marathi community as its residents and the overall population is a mixed one with people of all faiths finding their home in Pune.

Pune is endowed with historical monuments like Shaniwar Wada, forts like Sinhagad, museums like Raja Dinkar Kelkarmuseum, heritage sites, temples which can interest a

traveler looking for history and culture. It is famous for its music and dance festivals held throughout the year like Sawai Gandharva.

The industrial movement in Pune started way back in 1954, when the Government of Maharashtra made efforts to set up the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation close to twin cities in the form of Pimpri-Chinchwad which are home to multinational automotive giants and manufacturing industries.

In the late nineties, Pune experienced a revolution in the Information Technology industry with the Indian Economic Liberalization policy of 1991. The policy was introduced to give rise to industrialization, expand the role foreign and private investment in the country. IT parks were established in Pune namely Hinjewadi, Wagholi and Kharadi. This gave rise to job opportunities in Pune and migration of several non-Maharashtrian people to Pune. The city expanded and increased its infrastructure to meet this demand of housing. This new age transformation gave rise to the growth of the hotel industry in Pune.

Pune has always been the home to great freedom fighters and visionaries like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, to name a few who not only led the people to freedom, helped eradication of the caste system, fought for the right to education of women. Most of all they taught the way of individualistic thinking and were extremely progressive. Pune is also known by the famous moniker "Oxford of the East". The city is known for its educational institutions which offer world class education to Indian and International students. It is home to the prestigious Savitribai Phule Pune University established in 1949 (earlier known as the University of Poona later Pune). Pune has a number of well-known deemed universities like Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth which was established in 1921 in the memory of Lokmanya Tilak on the directives of Gandhiji, Dr. D.Y. Patil Deemed University, Bharati Vidyapeeth, MIT World Peace University, Symbiosis International University which promote diversified professional education to overseas as well as domestic students. Studies pertaining foreign languages is legendary in Pune which include German, French, Japanese and also Spanish. The iconic Fergusson College was instituted in 1885 which is one of the oldest in the city. The city offers primary, secondary and higher school education through schools run by the Pune Municipal Corporation and Private institutions.

Pune is also having acclaimed institutions like the National Defense Academy which was established in 1955 and Defense Research and Development Organization which

was established in 1958 which creates products, systems and the technology to assist the armed forces.

As Pune has seen this exponential growth in all the sectors like manufacturing, IT, education, the travel to and fro also increased and so did the hospitality scenario. Today, there are 10 five star hotels having a room inventory of about 10000 rooms by the year 2020. Employment in these hotels is a major boost to create job opportunities for the locals.

Pune has an eclectic mix of Indian bred hotel chains like IHCL, Sarovar, Lemontree, Orchid group and multinational brands like Marriott, HYATT, Starwood, Accor etc. with each of the hotels having a brand in luxury, budget and mid-range hotels. Each of the brands has a minimum of two hotels each in Pune. Pune upped the luxury quotient in hotel brands by the introduction of the Hilton group who's Conrad came earlier and the latest addition being the Ritz Carlton. It should be noted, that there are standalone properties like the O Hotel or Sayaji who not only cater to the room business but also to the food and beverage business with a niche image. It may be observed that Pune has grown out into self-sufficient suburbs, in all directions and hotels are available in each area to fulfill the needs of the traveler.

Pune has been famous for local cuisine and eateries, has now indulged into opening of various outlets of food and beverage which offer fast food, special cuisine, bars over the last few years. This trend is seen from the rise of the well-travelled guests whose tastes are changing with the times. Famous restaurants include Pan Asian, European and fine dining launching themselves in Pune indicates the experimentative palette of the locals as well as guests who come to Pune. Quick service restaurants have gained mass appeal with the younger generation in Pune and provide a less expensive but filling option of food.

The growth of the hospitality industry in Pune has been accelerated especially in Hinjewadi and Eastern part of Pune. Development of hotels in Hinjewadi is fairly recent and that can be attributed to the fact that the area is on route to the Pune Mumbai Expressway. The eastern part of Pune has been enjoying good attention from the buyers due to its commercial spaces and cosmopolitan lifestyle. The boom of Information and Technology / software companies in that belt has given rise in the demand for these locations. Areas like Koregoan Park, Kalyani Nagar and Mundhwa have grown in the number of residential projects due to the closeness to the

commercial hubs nearby. Hotels whose location is close to the airport benefit from its location.

Pune is also famous for its weather which is why people started settling in this city to lead a pensioner's life. It is not idyllic as it used to be, nevertheless people enjoy living here due to its opportunities it creates for them in their professional, educational and social lives. Pune's image has slowly grown from a traditional to a more cosmopolitan one in recent years.

1.13. The Management of a Five Star Hotel: An Overview:

Managing is an important part of our lives. One has to manage work, daily tasks, finances and also businesses. For some jobs, there is a large amount of people who work together in a group. They all strive to achieve goals which otherwise are not possible in individual capacity. The individuals, working together in groups need to be used efficiently, in a team, to achieve selected goals by the management.

The term Management refers to the series of functions in administration of tasks to achieve the desired goal. The functions or processes include Planning, Decision making, Organizing, Staffing, Directing and Controlling. These activities lead to proper use of manpower and available resources.

Thus, Management is an integral part of the Hotel Industry. (Tewari, J 2009) It is such an important part of the hotel industry that can either help in the business or choose to be a detriment in its success.

Through proper management, every formal organization is able to effectively bind the activities that take place between people, materials, money and equipment. Management is a vital factor which is required to govern the activities. Any successful organization is dependent on its management. The management is responsible to apply procedures and processes that fulfill its desired goals. There is a requirement also to manage the efforts and productivity of the people who work in the organization. Management contributes structure to the various factors and functions of a firm. Objectives set by a firm have to be fulfilled to justify its existence. Management is the set of senior executives in a company who provide vision, guide the operations and steer the company towards new thoughts and ideas. The chief activity of a hotel is to provide lodging, boarding and other services to guests who pay for it and are in a fit condition to be received. For smooth functioning of a hotel, an

organization structure is well defined. This hierarchical structure has a list of positions and the relationship that exists among them. This way the exact picture of how the hotel wants the flow of information, authority and responsibility is established. The operations of a hotel are the core where most of the guest interaction takes place.

The head position of this formal structure is the General Manager who is the serves as the Chief Operational Manager or the Head Executive in a commercial hotel. The heads of different departments like the front office manager, sales and marketing manager, executive housekeeper, head of finance etc.report directly to him/her. Depending upon the type of hotel, ownership, size and functions the hotel may, have a regional corporate office which takes care of the overall management of the hotel. The General Manager is responsible for the entire team. He directs the top and the middle management to assist in the smooth functioning of a hotel. Every hotel is made up of revenue generating and non-revenue generating departments which have to work together to give service to the same guest who checks into a hotel. The co-ordination and delivery of quality goods and services ensures that guests return to the same hotel for the next time. Having a proper planned structure is beneficial to hotels and has the following merits namely:

1. Managers can exercise their authority to earn more revenue by strategizing and planning well in advance.
2. To create motivation and create sense of job satisfaction in employees helping them do shine in their workplace.
3. The staff hierarchy makes sure right flow of authority, responsibility and accountability in the hotel.
4. The resources are used optimally and wastage is controlled.
5. Creativity has to be developed to ascertain the interest of the guests remain for a long time in the hotel brand.
6. To use methods which do not clash with any department to achieve goals.

1.13.1. Lodging:

(Camilleri, M. A. 2018), The lodging industry comprises of various forms of units with facilities which can be considered under the service businesses umbrella. These include boarding services. When accommodation with a catering service is made available to guests, it would be in the form of hotels, inns, motels, conference/convention centers. Alternative accommodation would include camping

grounds, youth hostels, rental guesthouses/villa, B&B options to name a few which would resort to self-catering system.

Hotels belong to the formal sector and are responsible to provide this lodging with boarding in the form of meal plans to be chosen by guest as he /she require it. Lodging facilities at hotels offering overnight housing for all kinds of travelers. Holiday packages are put together with this aspect in mind.

From the past, since travel started, accommodation centers came up near transport routes particularly at junctions. Hotels not only got created near transport hub hotels were developed close to railways and airports. The accommodation which is situated close to major transport routes was designed to serve the travelers in transit or for those who indulge in business travel. Next, there is a very important segment of tourists who travel for leisure. Vacationing tourists would like to have their accommodation facility near the center of the touristic activities. Location, in case of tourists who have more disposable income, is a major decision factor and they are willing to pay a surcharge for the same.

Though, most times, tourists may make a choice of accommodation through the constraints of a budget. Price can be the determining factor. The hospitality product is also judged by its sheer size. Traveler perception and personality would also have a contributing factor to decide what the guests may want in their hotel. Need for facilities, amenities and guaranteed service may act as a pull for others.

“A hotel is a place that provides accommodation to people to stay when they are in a fit condition to be received and are able to pay for the same.(Tewari,2009).

Lodging is the one the main concerns of people who travel at regular intervals. They need a place to stay when they travel to a destination away from their homes. Lodging represents one of the important components under the hospitality industry. Lodging and boarding have been two sides of the same coin and have emerged as the main two aspects which a guest avails and pays for when he uses these services at a hotel. Lodging refers to the use of the room and facilities in the room where as boarding would include the consumption of food as well as beverages.

Mass tourism has given birth to the concept of large hotel chains and companies, which are the major constituent of the accommodation industry. These are seen in the form of owners, companies undertaking management contracts, following franchisee-franchisor model who pay a fee for the contract and have the privilege to use the parent brand. Such hotel corporations have tied up with tourism organizations to

facilitate their own expansion. Hotel chains extensively market, advertise their products on their websites and offer guests the facilities /amenities they desire. They have made it possible for guests to book their own rooms via a global distribution system providing an extensive distribution worldwide. Often, hotel companies diversify their brands on the basis of price and image to be popular with all possible markets. Global hotel chains have a strong position in the international accommodation scenario. They follow a particular model to form a consistent image to make their product available throughout the world. A recent trend among hotel chains has been the development of budget-price properties.

To cite an instance, in India, the IHCL group has found out this dearth in the budget category and formed the Ginger brand for travelers who seek a clean bed and bathroom without the extra frills. These hotels are basic in their facilities and automated their services. Room sizes are small. The model is such that, all the services like housekeeping services are charged extra and public areas are almost nonexistent. This brand sells only online and there is no scope for offers and discounts extended to third parties.

Many independent hotels have to bear the brunt of the extensive distribution strategies of large chains and suffer in business. Such hotels group together to form a common platform and get the benefits like business through a common website which helps all in getting business. They also tie up with leading third parties like Online Travel Agents (OTA) to get maximum footfall.

Globally, many such big players include Intercontinental group and Best western group working together towards a common goal. Smaller groups work unitedly on a domestic level. Some hotels have a united front as far as their type are concerned who in order to market themselves, tie up with each other. This turns out to be an ideal strategy while developing a market of their own.

The word "Hotel" was used by the fifth Duke of Devonshire to name an accommodation unit in London in AD 1760. The word originates from the French word which was a type of a town house. A town house is believed to be a lodging property belonging to a rich man situated in a big city or capital.

The British law defines a "Hotel" or "Inn" as a place where a bona-fide traveler can receive food and shelter, provided that she or he is in a position to pay for it and is in a fit condition to be received."

The hotel provides accommodation, boarding and other services to travelers. The hotel charges the travelers an amount of money for the deliverance of the said products along with the service. This transactional proposition is known to both the parties who offer and use the same. It may be noted that the duration of the stay is decided by the traveler and communicated to the hotel. Though the above is true, the hotel reserves complete right to refuse or not let or sell the hotel rooms and services to a guest. This discretion rests solely with the hotel if the said guest is unable to pay for the products and services or is in an unfit condition to be received in when he arrives at the hotel.

A Hotel may also be defined as “an establishment whose primary business is to provide lodging facilities to a genuine traveler along with food, beverage and sometimes recreational facilities that on a chargeable basis”.

A hotel is a complex entity in business and is made up of many departments. These departments are required for providing service to the guests. The scope of these departments may be elaborate or concise depending upon the hotel type and size. All departments are further divided into revenue generating and non-revenue generating departments or supporting departments. Each department has a specific set of tasks and responsibilities to fulfill the overall objectives of the entire hotel. Revenue earning departments include the front office, food and beverage, wellness and the shopping arcade in the hotel lobby. Support departments provide back-end help to the revenue centers. These include human resources, housekeeping, security, maintenance, finance and purchase to name a few.

1.13.2. The Front Office Department in a FiveStar Hotel:

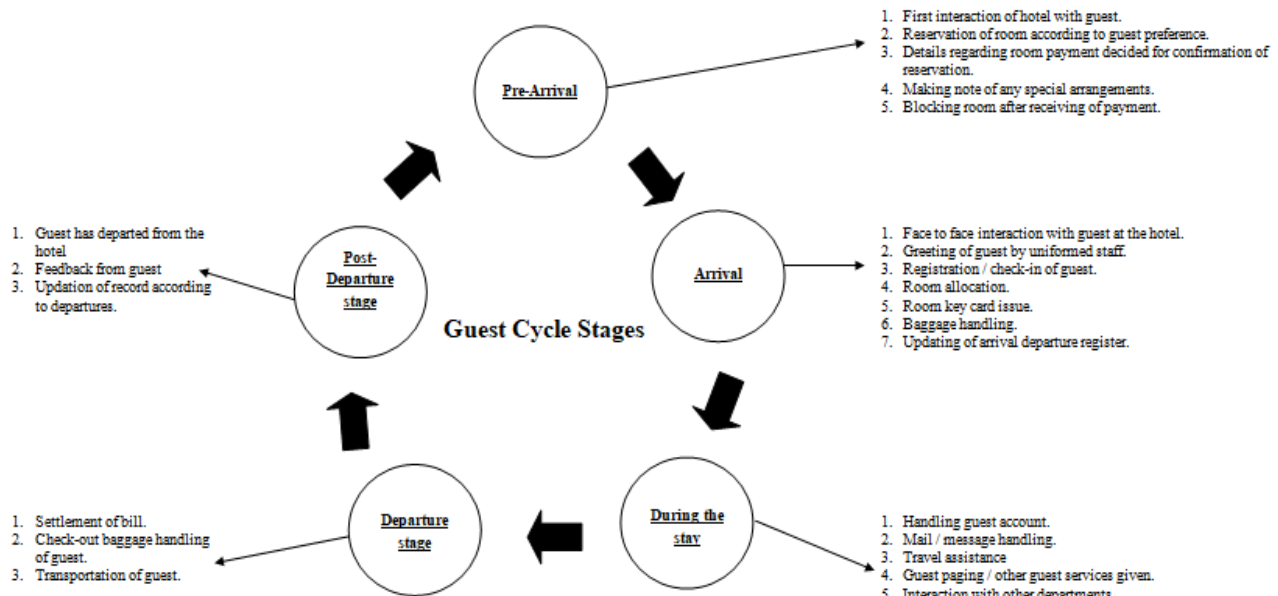
Guests are routed through a specific method when they wish to approach the hotel for accommodation purpose. (Andrews, S 2017) The front office department is responsible as a facilitator between the guest and other departments of the hotel. To ensure accommodation is available to the guest, hotels encourage reservations beforehand through a central reservations system available twenty-four hours, three sixty-five days round the year. This happens when a guest expresses his wish to book a stay, the hotel responds with the formalities and after completion of these formalities, a reservation is made. Every guest whether free individual traveler(FIT), business,leisure or long staying must go through a series of transactions and interactions. These interactions take place at different stages of the guest cycle (Sue

B, et al Principles of Hotel front office operations) and also referred to as the Guest cycle.

1.13.3. The Guest Cycle in a Five Star Hotel:

According to (Tewari, 2009) the hotel business arranges lodging and boarding facilities to people who travel to destinations away from their place of residence. It is the responsibility of the hotels to make sure that the guests have an interface called as the guest cycle in hotel parlance. All guests irrespective of their type (business, leisure, MICE to name a few) have to follow the same process from reserving a room to getting themselves the selected room type. Then follows the stay, in the hotel which ends by bill payment and departure when the guests leave the hotel. The hotel continues to keep in touch with the guests in post departure stage too. There are various activities that take place in all the stages of the guest cycle.

Figure No. 1.1 Stages of a guest cycle in a five star hotel



Source: Batheja, 2019

The guest cycle is broken down in 5 distinct stages namely:

1. Pre-Arrival Stage
2. Arrival Stage
3. Stay Stage

4. Departure Stage
5. Post Departure Stage

1.13.3.1. Pre-Arrival Stage:

The connection or interface the guest has with the hotel before he/she actually comes to the hotel in person happens in this stage. This stage contributes or defines the feeling the guest would have about the hotel from there on. The most important activity that takes place in this stage is the reservation of the selected type of room by the guest. The guest first selects the hotel of his/her choice for stay. This choice is defined by a variety of reasons like positive previous experience with the hotel, positive recommendation or word of mouth from family or peers, brand reputation or goodwill, brand resonance, price fairness, brand communication with the target market, location, satisfaction gained in the earlier stay, brand loyalty program benefits and the relationship the guest has with the brand. Once the decision is made by the guest to stay at a particular hotel, he/she contacts or designates someone on his /her behalf to go through the process of the reserving the room for the period of the proposed stay at the destination. This reservation request is handled by the employees responsible for this task in the reservations department. These employees need to be competent and guide the guest through the decision which would create a positive and professional image of the hotel. The guest then has to ascertain the modes of payment pay an advance if required and confirm the reservation. It is important for the hotel to communicate required details about its property through effective advertising like have an attractive website, have easy options for the guests to book, post social media notification and promotions for the hotel and addressing guest queries have to be immediately. This gives a guest feeling of assurance that he/she is wanted by the hotel. After the reservation is done the guest must be sent written communication about the booking well in advance which includes the details of the arrival and departure, pricing of the room selected with any add-ons or discounts, relevant information of the facilities and amenities available and customization details of room. Reminders about value added services and upgrades also must be communicated in advance. Guests greatly appreciate the effort a hotel takes to produce content particularly targeted towards them. In this stage, the hotel collects the necessary details or data from the guest to store it for further use. The reservation staff processes the reservation request of the guest, blocks a room, makes note of the special

arrangements to be made, create a folio in case of advance is received. This stage sets the tone of the different processes and procedures; the guest goes through in a logical sequence from booking to post departure. At pre-arrival, guests have to be handled efficiently and it is considered the first step to gain customer trust and satisfaction.

1.13.3.2 Arrival Stage:

This is the stage when the guests are coming to the hotel to check-in and interact face to face with the hotel employees. This stage is very crucial from the guest perception point of view. The guest judges the standard along with the quality of the services and the professionalism of the employees of the hotel. During this stage, the guest may request for a vehicle for pick-up from the airport or railway station which is organized by the hotel. With an efficient check-in procedure, guests are welcomed warmly by the reception employees and the registration process follows. Registration refers to the method of signing a contract between the guest and the hotel. There is an interaction where the guest is asked to verify his /her details printed on the registration card. These details are the same ones the guest has provided during the pre-arrival stage. While verifying the details with the guests, the front desk employee exchanges pleasantries and initiate small talk about the journey the guest has just undergone before coming to the hotel. Front office employees are chosen to have special attributes and represent the face of the organization. They are particularly trained to welcome guests, keep guest preferences in mind, solve problems and create a positive impression. Here is when the guest is assigned the key /card is handed over to the guest. The luggage is then taken to the room by the bell boys. Once the guest is made comfortable, the room familiarization is done by the bell boy. The guest must also be allotted a room as per the specification as confirmed earlier during the pre-arrival stage. If things go as planned the guest is satisfied and looks forward to the next stage which is the actual stay at the hotel.

1.13.3.3 Stay Stage:

In this stage, the guest gets to experience the facilities and services which are available at the hotel. He/she get to use the facilities which play an important role in the total experience which is pivotal in context of satisfaction and purchase intention of the guest. The guest once satisfied spreads a positive word of mouth to his/her contacts who further come as referrals. The front office plays a climacteric role in this

stage as the guest would turn to them for various reasons ranging from simple queries, asking directions; know more about the city, need of transportation in the city, sightseeing etc. Within the hotel, the front desk will assist the guest with their keys, mail and message co-ordination. Handling guest accounts are created and updated in the period of stay. Daily audit at night is done so that all the bills have been posted to the respective guestroom accounts to avoid any missed-out bills and loss of revenue. Complaint handling and service recovery is a crucial part during stay. Guests become angry due to the slip in standards which can be categorized as mechanical, service related, attitudinal and unusual complaints. A robust complaint handling procedure must be in place to minimize the complaints in future. Front office is responsible about the induction of guests into the hotel's brand loyalty program which has equal benefits to guest as well as the hotel. Promotions are crucial for the hotels product and services to be sold. Another department that is plays an important role during the stay stage is the House-keeping department. The housekeeping employees are responsible to maintain the upkeep, cleanliness and hygiene of the guest room. The guests spend most of the time in the hotel either in the guest room or the various public areas. He/she expect that the hotel must replenish guest room supplies and amenities when requested. All departments are in coordination with each other over the same guest and his needs. Another key area is the safety and security of the guest which is a serious responsibility. The quality of food and beverage is another important aspect which people frequent the bars or restaurants of a particular hotel. Hotels are also known to go out of their way to create experiences along with the stay. These gestures are the precise encounters, the guest remembers, it as a hotel who made their stay special and unforgettable. The person carries back fond memories which help the hotel to increase its loyalty base. This creates goodwill, expedites the possibility of satisfaction and the intention to purchase in future.

1.13.3.4. Departure Stage:

This stage is like the moment of truth and culmination of stay of the guest at the hotel. The front office staff comes face to face with the guest during check-out. Any problems that have occurred in the stay must be apologized for with a promise that the same situations will not repeat in the next stay. During this stage, the guest settles his bills according to the payment mode discussed during reservation for the various services he/she received during the stay. All unpaid bills must be presented to and

paid by the guest. The bill has to be given in an efficient and timely manner as the guest may be in a hurry to leave. Guests are also informed of an express check-out procedure so that the billing is faster than usual provided he /she informs the front desk in advance. Sometimes the guests would leave their luggage for a short time in the custody of the hotel after check-out. This facility is given by the hotel in a bid to graciousness where the hotel does not charge the guest for a few hours to retain the luggage even after departure. After check-out the guest has to be asked if he/she wishes to return in the near future and whether he/she would like the hotel to reserve the room for any probable dates. This is the hotel's way to suggest promotional upcoming offers. It gives the guest an opportunity to make a booking in the same hotel or its counterparts in other cities to get maximum benefits and points through the brand loyalty program. The most important part of this stage is the feedback where the hotel reaches out to guests for their opinions and suggestions. This step is crucial in giving the hotel the clear picture of where it lacks and is due for improvement. The feedback is an important tool to get the problem areas identified. Once this process is complete the guest must be given luggage assistance, bid goodbye genuinely assuring him/her that the hotel employees will wait to meet and serve him/her in the near future.

1.13.3.5. Post Departure Stage:

In the services business-like hospitality, the popular saying "Out of sight, out of mind", does not hold true at all. Hotels must reach out to guests through their sales and marketing department. Along with the front desk department, the team sends promotional letters or e-mails citing special discounts, gift vouchers, loyalty benefits and latest updates through the brand loyalty programs. The guests are informed about introductory; referral or season offers to maximize the sale. Hotel websites are constantly updated with newer content to engage customers even when they are not physically there at the hotel. Through this online communication and offline too (through sales visits, telephone calls etc.) the hotel keeps its presence alive in the minds of the guests.

1.14 The Sales and Marketing Department of a Five Star Hotel:

The Sales and Marketing department is headed by the Director of Sales and Marketing in a five star hotel. (Tewari, 2009). A large hotel may have a big team who works on the directives of this position. The department works to sell the products along with the services. It handles the relationship with corporate customers, generating accounts with newer companies, strategizing of the advertising/marketing to make sure the guests are aware of the hotel's offers. This department has the responsibility to set targets, make business strategies and earn revenue for the hotel along with all the operational departments of the hotel. The employees have to keep in touch with their counterparts in the corporate world to get business. There is fierce competition amongst the hotels who vie for the guest's attention to give business. The generation of the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Expositions) business is too taken care of by the sales team.

The hotel appoints a dedicated sales executive, who is between the link between the hotel and the company. The executive is responsible to engage with the customers on a very regular basis. The goal of the department collectively is to reach the prospective clients to garner business. The team must study the marketing concept and analyze which one will work best for their hotel. The team must understand the various demand levels that constantly vary and apply the best marketing strategy possible. A marketing strategy must be made according to the mission of the hotel. This department carries out survey and uses special technological metrics to map customer satisfaction. This is required to find out the lacunae and re-strategize the plans. Forecasting for future demand is an important function which has to be made based on past and future trends. To run a hotel, effectively and efficiently marketing a product is necessary.

Marketing is simply not a business function but a philosophy, a way of thinking and structuring one's business. The task of marketing should never fool a customer and endanger the business's future. Marketing essentially deals with customers or guests. The aim to create customer value and customer satisfaction is at the core of hospitality marketing. There are many factors that make a business successful however all top line hotels are highly customer centric at all levels and committed to marketing

themselves on an ongoing basis. Hotels know that if they take care of their guests, the market share and profit share will follow.

Marketing management is defined as the planning, organizing leading and controlling of marketing activities. (Renaghan 1981),has attempted to modify the way in which the marketing mix is viewed to suit the hotel business.

Marketing Management includes: -

1. The tangibles (product) and intangibles (services) form the product services mix.
2. All the activities that a firm uses to increase the tangibility of the product and services as how the guests perceive it at the right time and place constitutes the presentation mix.
3. Communications Mix includesthe wholesome communications between the firm and its targeted customers.

Lewis and Chambers (1981) added the Distribution Mix to the three sub-mixes which they defineas “*All the channels available between the firm and the target market that increase the probability of getting the customer to the product*”.

The definition of distribution in hospitality is different than the definition for tangible products.

For most hospitality products, concern is how to get customers to the hotel or a restaurant so that they can consume the services. The marketing department takes care of this function. The job of this department is crucial and tough as in a hotel, the production and the consumption of product takes place simultaneously.

Intangibility factor of the product creates unique problems. Therefore, before using the marketing mix, a proper market research and selection of the target market is necessary. Hotel Communication Mix or Promotion consists of all the activities that a hotel uses to the reach its target audience.

Hotel Pricing Mix depends on the demand, as the room rate for a similar kind of room at different locationsvaries, competition may be indirect with various accommodation options available to the guest or direct where there are hotels of the similar standard. Cost is the third most important aspect which includes fixed and variable costs.

The market positioning of a hotel is dependent on perceived customer perception. The marketing department of a hotel has to ascertain which channel to use to market its offerings. This department brings in the business and helps the hotel to retain it.

Outstanding marketing is going to great lengths to understand the customer's needs, wants and demands.

As the hotel industry is an industry for the people serviced by people, relationship marketing has special focus in the hotel industry.

Marketing department works to create and build relationships with valued customers, distributors, dealers and suppliers. The hotel has to maintain strong economic relations with its shareholders by promising and delivering quality products, excellent service and competitive prices.

Marketing is shifting from trying to only make profit to consciously building mutually beneficial relationships with consumers in the hope to make a profit due to the investment in these relationships.

Relationship marketing is most appropriate for hotels as they deal with guests who affect the hotel's future. In a hotel, each guest account is monitored closely, problems are identified and goal is to find solutions promptly ensuring good value and service from customer point of view. Marketing associates need to be in touch with their customers and engage with them on a very regular basis and take feedback. Most guests see this engagement to be fulfilling. Most hotel companies invest in customer engagement marketing and keep up with the expectations of the guests.

Societal marketing is the newest marketing concept being followed. The focus here is to determine needs, wants and interests of your target market and try to deliver to the expectation efficiently and effectively than the competitors.

Societal marketing advocates the thought that a firm must be conscious about environmental problems, shortage in resources, population growth, global inflation and social issues. Societal marketing urges a firm to engage in marketing which will benefit the firm, consumers and society in general. Many hotels have these practices in place like use of eco-products, conservation of energy, water and power, inclusion of local population as employees.

The focus point of a business is ever changing and dynamic. A great strategy of yesterday may be the firm's undoing later, as time brings along rapid changes. An organization which runs a business must have strategies chalked beforehand and must evolve as the circumstances change.

1.15 Strategic Planning: An Overview:

Successful businesses plan for the future and hotels are no exception to this fact. “A strategy is nothing more than a business’s method of competing. (Aldag & Stearns 1987). Business strategies are plans devised to win in earning profits in a market for a firm’s products or services. The word strategy is derived from the Greek word “Strategos” which literally means military general. (David, 2013).

A major difference between military conflict and business competition is that while the objective of war is to defeat the enemy, rivalry in business is not that aggressive or physical in nature and is essentially to gain a competitive advantage instead of total destruction (Grant & Jordan 2012). It should be further noted that in military or business, success is the end result of continuous attention given to changes in internal as well as external conditions, the optimum use of efforts, capabilities and resources. Vital Information, is an asset and the word competitive intelligence find its roots from the military. (Fahey, 2007).

“Strategic planning can be defined as the set of decisions and actions resulting in formulation and implementation of strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the organization” (Pearce & Robinson 1988).

(Aldag & Stearns 1988), Strategic planning deals with important questions a firm needs to ask itself

- a. Find out the reason the firm is in business
- b. Question the goals of the firm.
- c. Decide on a strategy to manage the activities in a way that fulfils the objective of the firm

All decisions are not strategic and therefore it is important to identify which issues need strategic planning. (Pearce & Robinson 1988).

These can be listed as:

1. Decisions required to be made by the top management in the interest of the whole business.
2. Decisions which require to be made to allocate resources.
3. Decisions regarding issues that will have a long- term effect on the business and its success.

4. Decisions about the expectations from the business in the future.
5. Decisions which deal with certain issues and their consequences need to be coordinated as they may affect the business as a whole.
6. Decisions that are dependent upon the external environment and those affect the performance of the business.

These strategic decisions have to be made at different levels within the hierarchy of the hotel or firm. This would depend if the hotel is a single identity, is part of a group or chain. The Board of Directors or CEO would take business related strategic decisions. Below, the CEO, are the functional heads who are responsible for the functioning of the organizations and the diversity in their portfolios would decide the level of the strategic planning.

Strategic planning takes place at every level within a modern business these are as follows:

- 1. Corporate level strategic planning:** It is required when corporations are involved in many businesses.
- 2. Business level strategic planning:** These decisions take place in individual business units. Strategy at this level deals with decisions to compete at the particular market or segment. Here, the whole idea is to capture and defend the significant market share of a particular segment.
- 3. Functional level strategic planning:** It is concentrated at individual properties and for the operational level. These deal with annual objectives and are relatively short term.

In the hotel industry, the goal is to attract customer loyalty by offering an unforgettable experience. This requires constant innovation and use of strategies to ensure top class customer service to varied guests.

Thus, strategies are required for hotels to combat competitiveness, maintain and increase efficiency, customer satisfaction resulting in sustained sales growth and profits which are indications of a hotel's performance (Nyheim et al;2004). The strategies essential for the hotel include quality customer service, staff training and engagement, range of products/ services offered, uniqueness of product /service, proper marketing the product/ service, technology and safety and security.(Ng'ang'a,2013). A business strategy should be clearly defined to support the brand image, draw customer attention to the brand, help stabilize absorption towards the brand, increase customer participation and interaction with the brand. A

sustainable differential strategy is apt in the context of hotels as it requires the hotel to connect emotionally with its customers and focus on long lasting relationships.(Colgate, 1998).

1.16 Customer Engagement: An Overview

The guest is in touch with the hotel employees in all these stages of the guest cycle. These transactions give rise to knowing guests and understanding their needs, wants and demands in a systematic manner. From a service and relationship marketing point of view, the construct of customer engagement is termed as a consumer's psychological involvement with a specific service provider or a brand. (Hapsari et al, 2007; Molner, Moneferrer& Estrada,2018; Vivek, Beatty &Morgan 2012,) Researchers put forth that a psychological connection with the service provider/ brand resulting in loyalty from the customer's side.

Customers who are engaged may contribute to organizational innovation processes, create value, suggest the brand to others and give you inputs as a customer who has equal say in the value, he derives from the experience he gets from using the product/service. (Brodie,Ilic, Juric &Hollebeek,2013).

In today's competitive business environment,service providers need a strategic imperative for superior performance,sales growth, excellent corporate performance and profitability which can be created by customer engagement. (Brodie et al.,2011) (Marketing Science Institute,2016) Customer engagement has been predicted to be among the top priorities of service marketing companies.

There have to be conscious efforts and follow strategies that support customer engagement beyond these transactions and interactions to nurture and sustain a loyal customer base. With the constant growth of the travel globally, the hotel industry has to face challenges than ever before. The intense competition and emergence of new technologies like social platforms or online booking,increased options of products and services and change in customers propose that a hotel try to build long lasting relationships with customers. Hotels are a part of the service industry and services have distinctive characteristics of intangibility,perish ability, variability and inseparability.Hotels must take this into consideration and steer their marketing efforts and strategies towards strengthening customer relationships. Priority must be given to maintaining and building psychological and emotional attachment with the

customers. (Adamson et al.,2003; Moliner et al.,2018; Vivek et al.,2012). If a firm or a concern can keep its customers highly engaged from their end,it will result in profitability accruing from increase of customer base. To retain customers is more cost effective than repeatedly looking and gaining new customers(Anderson & Mittal 2000;Liat et al,2017).

It is thus, beneficial to give importance, cultivate and assess customer engagement.Customer relationship marketing theory suggests (Gronoos,1996) is used to strengthen customer company or brand relations which in turn increase the profitability. In the hospitality industry, the relationship marketing plays an important in developing long term valuedrelations. Customer engagement happens when customers go through the co-creation process with the firms or hotels. In this context, the social exchange theory (Thibaut&Kelley1959; George Homans 1961) is relevant which puts forth the idea that individuals assess the intangibles and tangibles and costs they incur versus the benefits they gain from engagement.Thibaut&Kelley1959; Guo,Gruen&Tang 2017) Therefore, it is imperative to treat customer engagement as a process than an outcome which leads to more measurable outcomes like customer satisfaction and loyalty towards a particular brand,company or firm. There is enough evidence and empirical results that indicate that the Indian hospitality industry needs to foster customer engagement to retain the loyal customers and manage competitiveness. The need is, to turn engagement efforts into a business strategy for its obvious benefits to the hospitality and tourism. The purpose of the hotel industry is to create and retain customers. The hotel enterprise has two distinct functions of marketing and innovation. The strategies which are prepared are especially for the market, they wish to target and constantly upgrade and innovate to survive. Hotels take great efforts to create brand loyalty within guests which encourages repeat business,positive word of mouth and publicity.

(So et al, 2020) stress on the concept saying, management of customer has been improving and evolving in recent years. Earlier the focus of this management was centered on transactions mostly concerning monetary value. The transformation to relationship marketing started in late 2000's. The central objective for marketing since then has been developing and maintaining customer relations through delivery of products and services. The end result is to achieve customer satisfaction leading to customer purchase intention for the next time.

Environment of customer is prone to changes due to shift in market trends. The firms suffer in the competitive scenario if they follow metrics only. Now-a-days customers seek differentiation in products and service where loyalty and satisfaction are related to gain sustainability.

It is important to note that merely building relationship is not enough and the firm must engage its customers sufficiently. Immersion of customers must be extended over transactions and encounters.

In the context of business (Kahn, 1990) introduced the idea of employee engagement. Later scholars went on to describe it from organizational behavior and psychological point of view.

The term “engagement received importance in marketing context in the fall of 2009 September. A conference was held in Montabaur, Germany on leadership related to management of customers. The special issue of Journal of Service Research in 2010 was dedicated to customer engagement concept which offered new angles especially the marketing context. The interest generated in customer engagement gave new viewpoint to managers to build and manage customer engagement.

Marketing Science Institute epitomized customer engagement called for its research in 2010. The importance of the concept was such that it found place in research priority in every prestigious journal from 2010 to 2018.

Early research dedicated to this concept held behavior of the customer as focus. The ideas of customer motivation to voluntarily contribute to a brand or firm gained importance which is beyond the transactional relationship. As the topic progressed, researchers called customer engagement a multi-dimensional concept which includes cognitive emotional and behavioral facets.

(Brodie et al 2011), Customer engagement is defined a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative. Customer experiences with a focal object / agent (a brand / firm) in focal service relationships. It occurs under in differing levels of customer engagement and exists as a dynamic and iterative process within service relationships that co-create value. Customer engagement plays a central role in a nomological network governing service relationship in which other relational concepts (involvement, loyalty) are antecedents and or consequences in creative customer engagement processes. It is a multi-dimensional concept subject to a context and/ or stakeholder specific expression of relevant cognitive and or behavioral dimension.

(So et al 2014, 2016)

Customer engagement is the customer's personal connection to a brand manifested in cognitive affective and behavioral responses outside of the purchase situation.

Customer engagement has been conceptualized in various ways, the mono dimensional angle concentrates most on the behavioral aspect of customer behavior includes positive and negative WOM, willingness to participate, feedback etc.

The multi-dimensional angle includes cognitive relational / affective (emotional / psychological) as well as behavioral aspects of customer behaviors where the customer goes through stages and levels of engagement. Researchers have used terms to explain engagement where the customer sees these engaging behaviors as enjoyment or usefulness. Engagement can also happen through a customer experience. Customer purchase, social media interaction, giving references and knowledge to co customers is a part of engagement. Customer engagement can be judged through metrics like review volume and helpfulness or ranking for popularity.

1.16.1. The Components of Customer Engagement:

To understand the evidence of the customer engagement it is necessary to understand the players who make it happen. Service-dominant logic was first introduced in early 2000's (Vargo and Lusch,2004) which tries to give a service -oriented angle to the goods model of economic exchange. Different from the goods exchange logic, where the product is tangible and exchange is evident, service exchange logic (Vargo and Lusch,2008) is based on interactions between the customers and the providers who co create (Echeverri and Skalen, 2011). The customers are equally involved in this process as active players (Prahalad et al,2000)which is a prerequisite for customer engagement. Customers get more value when they are more involved with the firm. The firm too has several opportunities to do the same with customers to create experiences which can be made positive. (Vargo and Lusch,2011), further state that not only the firm and the customer but other players are equally important for customer engagement to happen. The best example of this shift of this focus is the employee-customer relationship in hotels. Employees represent a firm and thus the interactions with customers are crucial from the firm's perspective. (Ng et al 2020), state that the following form the crux of the customer engagement components:

1. Primary subject / Customer / Guest.
2. Primary object / Firm/ company / Hotel.

When the former engages with the latter, the focus is on the primary subject who is the customer. Focus till date has been on paying customers though, it needs to be understood that prospective customers too are important (Groeger et al, 2016). Such customers who try to use free benefits later can be beneficial for the firm in future when they purchase, have influence, give feedback and co create experiences. Firms must consider such non- paying though important customers.

When the firm engages with the customer it is termed as customer engagement marketing. The primary subject interacts with other customers, firms and has experiences with the primary object. Most common single primary objects are Brands, Social media platform, service providers. There is interaction among all the players in customer engagement. (Dessart et al, 2016) where the brand, brand community and individuals are all interacting amongst each other and affecting each other. Engagement is not only limited to human interaction any more. Technology has made possible for human-machine interactions to provide digital interfaces, internet of things and robots (Storbacka et al, 2016).

1.16.2. The Principles of Customer Engagement:

In the service business, customer engagement has become a key word and firm must acknowledge its importance for the success of their business. Customer engagement practices are crucial to establish an ongoing conversation with customers. It is important for a business to create a culture which supports these practices to give a fulfilling service experience. The hotel industry is a prime example where this commitment should be towards the guest. The hotel business must create employees who serve the guest with warmth, professionalism and genuinely. For this to happen, it is important to set aside certain processes leading to customer engagement. The senior management of a firm should foster this engagement where the focus is a deeper level of service which turns customers to loyal advocates of the firm's products or services.

(Dr. Bryan Williams, 2010) suggests that any business must create a formal committee which composes of cross section of employees from all parts of the organization. This committee should have the management support and strive to create progress towards engagement. A special budget could be set aside and

awareness is a must to communicate the purpose of engagement. Managers must clearly spell out the expectations of an engaging service from employees. To align everyone efforts towards customer engagement must be the goal of all the organization.

It is important to also study the psychological drivers around customer engagement from customer point of view as customer are likely to make buying decisions emotionally than rationally.

The following principles hold true in hotel business context.

1. **Eagerness to serve:** It is important to be prompt and always available for the customer. Whether it is service provided offline or online the customer must feel there are employees who will attend to their queries. If customers have to wait, they must be apologized to. Acknowledgement is another gesture staff could use to tell a guest they are at his/her service. Actions must suggest that staff is attentive.
2. **Warm welcome:** True service never begins without a warm welcome or greeting. Customer must feel they made a right choice instead of choosing the competition. Customer should be recognized with their names which personalizes the service. Genuinity must also follow during service interactions.
3. **Feeling of inclusiveness:** A relationship only survives if it's a two-way dynamic experience. It is imperative to include the customer in the service they are receiving. Knowing customer preferences, sharing and using them to build customer engagement must be done consistently.
4. **Total experience:** From the first time a customer touches base with the brand, journey of experiencing the service commences. It should be noted that the entire service deliverance must be a flawless one. Firms need to be personalized and catch service failure immediately to recover the service issue. This promptness ensures repeat business. This is the beginning of the journey of customer to advocates of the brand.

When customers trust the brand / firm they tend to become repeat customers. When they start recommending the product / service they start to edge towards advocacy. This is a slow and a gradual process where a customer has series of positive experiences where the trust and loyalty come in naturally.

5. **Customer recall:** It is important to remember customer's worth after a purchase or use of service. It is the post purchase that clearly defines the affinity a brand

has for its customers. Customers need to be given a reason to return or remember the brand.

- 6. Nurture confidence in the brand:** Customer are comfortable with brands who do not break their confidence about the reliability of products / services promised. This results directly into repeat revenue from the guest's positive consumer intention.

1.16.3. The Components of Customer Engagement Strategy:

(Curtis Bingham, 2014) "Components of a customer engagement strategy" states that when customer engagement is followed in a firm a proper evaluation of its components is a must. A strategy has to be devised which includes well defined through process on part of the firm, goals defined, the broad reach of this strategy must be found. Association of accountability, measures and a plan how to float this strategy to employees and customers is essential. A successful customer engagement strategy must include the following:

- 1. A definite intent:** It is important to clarify what the firm expects out of the customer. The firm needs to give the strategy a focus.
- 2. A reason to engage:** The firms must list the collaborative activities to co-create with customer. A feasibility audit on the engagement activities, priority and importance has to be ascertained along with support of resources.
- 3. Identification participation and incentive:** The firm must involve engaged customers who are willing to participate in an activity which leads to achieving goals. The firm must put careful thought into this inclusion and incentivization of customers.
- 4. Accurate measurement of engagement and impact on business performance:** It is important to measure customer engagement and its impact on the business before making an investment for the same. Otherwise, it will not be a sustainable proposition.
- 5. Customer co-creation, organizational alignment and support:** When a firm involves customers the feedback must be taken into account. If the firm plays rigid and doesn't put ideas if feasible into practice the customers lose interest.
- 6. Engagement through employees of the firm:** A firm needs to identify employees who help the firm to fulfill the business goals. Employees have to be trained to do

these functions well. A well throughout plan must be in place to offer intrinsic / extrinsic rewards system to motivate employees.

1.16.4. The Process of Customer Engagement:

In the process of the customer engagement (Jana Bowden,2009)the author attempts to understand the customer engagement via the process a customer goes through when engagement happens. Every brand wants its customers to be satisfied and build a long-term relationship to facilitate business goals. The process of customer engagement shows there is a development of loyalty which is temporal and is related through the stages of calculative commitment, involvement, affective commitment and trust. This journey is mapped from a new customer to being a repeat customer of the same brand. This process is psychological and moves in a sequence where the customer becomes loyal to a particular brand. This process differs for new and repeat customers.

- 1. New customer/first time customer:** These customers make prudent decision based on information they receive about the brand,its products or services. At this stage, they make the decision cognitively and see what benefits are attached to this commitment withthe brand. These customers are inexperienced about the brand,depend heavily upon tangible and extrinsic examples to evaluate a new service brand experience. This happens as they have no specificset of expectations from the service they will receive. They rely mostly on information at the superficial level. Customer engagement for new customer is based on what benefit they would receive and whether the brand experience meets their needs from utilitarian angle. New customers form rational bonds with the brand based on their experience.
- 2. Repeat customer/regular customer:**The process of engagement, is largely dependent upon the brand experience, the repeat customer has already due to prior consumption of the product / service. These customers are in know, of the stable set of experience already and interact with the brand with less cognition if the encounters have been more positive. Due to the suitable knowledge about the brand, being already available, there is also a sense of involvement and trust from the customer's side. When customer is involved, it is likely that the response to marketing process is positive. With repeat customer, the firm tends to give customized offers. Highly involved customers are more likely to ignore negativity

or conflict with regards to the brand. This plays a larger role when a customer has an intention to purchase. Trust also is another important aspect of customers relating to a brand. This trust results in affective commitment in the brand. It is affected by an emotional orientation which is closely connected to feelings of affiliation, identification and attachment. Repeat customers believe that a particular brand has maintained an accepted level of quality and they have an affective trust that the brand will put the customer needs first. The commitment would make a customer come closer to the brand, spread positive WOM, and remain with the brand. Any mistake will be open to scrutiny otherwise, which may curtail the experience for other guests.

(Andonova, 2016) states that the customer engagement process is made up of four steps where the engagement is related to behaviour of the customers. The process begins with consumption by customers which is generally a passive form where they read content by reviewing posts about the brand and keep information about the brand. The second step is where they curate by rating the experience or like the content or perhaps comment on the content online. The next step would be to collaborate with the brand to write a review or reply to a post by others. Next is co-creation where customers participate in the firm's activities by blog writing, design development interactivity which is the central concept of engagement. The third and the fourth steps denote the active stages of the engagement process by the customer.

1.16.5. The Antecedents of Customer Engagement:

Customer engagement comes with two types of antecedents which are customer related and firm related (Vivek et al 2012). It is necessary to understand that when engagement happens when the customer is a willing participant. There are few precursors/pre conditions that need to be prevalent for this two-way engagement to happen. Customers need to possess knowledge and skills regarding engaging with a brand, the better they know engagement is enhanced (Ng et al, 2016). With this knowledge, the customers are able to respond cognitively, behaviorally and emotionally to a brand in the best capacity. The co-creation happens between a firm and a customer is a result of this knowledge. Customers also engage due to the concepts of service convenience and service fairness that they perceive. (Berry et al, 2002). The customers expect the firm to satisfy their needs and price them with

fairness. (Schneider and Bowen,1999). Once this is achieved the customer. The firm initiates the same and the customer should have the following set of behavioral traits like involvement, trust, calculative commitment or affective commitment (Bowden,2009; Vivek,2012) which are based on transactional (Pansari et al,2017) interaction like loyalty or repurchase intention where the customer has already interacted with the brand. According to customer engagement intellectuals, the customer has the feeling of the satisfaction (Brodie et al,2013) and also a positive experience (Hollebeek,2011; Vivek,2014) with the brand also act as precursors.

If the customer is a prospective one, he /she gets influenced by word- of mouth/reviews (Pansari et al 2017) or may have intrinsic motivation to interact with the firm which fructifies into completion of a personal goal through this engagement. Extrinsic motivation comes due to the outside stimuli from benefits, rewards or loyalty points get accumulated when a customer is rewarded to co-create. Even thoughts and feelings which are positive about a brand can be treated as antecedents (Ng et al,2016). Self-Identification with a brand is another important reason customers reach out the brand. They feel a sense of satisfaction (Johnson and Fornell,1991) when they share the same ideology with the brand. Satisfaction, trust and commitment are factors which may be considered as precursors or even as outcomes depending whether the customer is repeat or new.

The firm also has initiatives which it plans for customer engagement marketing to happen. These are carried out on purpose to activate engagement, give power to customer and quantify this engagement. (Harmeling et al,2017) suggest that these initiatives often help the firm beyond its economic benefits. The firm's CE initiatives are of two types categorized as task based and the ones on social media/context. Customers participate to win from benefits, rewards or loyalty points which are an outcome when a customer is rewarded to refer a customer or give routine business. The experiential part includes the emotional and psychological involvement in the brand. These initiatives are directly linked to the marketing aspect linked to the firm's performance. With the importance of social media, social relationship management has become a priority for businesses. A firm can communicate with many customers at a time and create content according to their segment and target (Greenberg,2010). It is a two-way communication, interactive, asking customers to co-create in marketing and products. (Choudhary et al 2014). Employees can be made to take center stage in

activities related to engagement and be an advocate for the firm. (Malthouse et al,2013)

1.16.6. The Outcomes of Customer Engagement:

The consequences of customer engagement have several marketing benefits for the firm which also benefits the customer in varied ways. The main outcomes are satisfaction and loyalty (Fehrer et al,2018), word of mouth (Islam et al 2016), and trust (So et al,2016). It should be noted that the outcomes of satisfaction and trust may be also taken as antecedents depending old versus new customer with respect to previous experience. Decision to make a purchase and word of mouth are outcomes that can be linked to marketing outcomes for both kinds of customers.(Bowden, 2009).The firm benefits from customer outcomes such retention and customer acquisition which helps the firm to improve in its performance.(Kumar et al, 2010),Customers also can be valued and evaluated by firms based on their relationship. This means if a customer purchases regularly with a firm it is termed as lifetime value of a customer. The firms have incentives to offer for new customers strengthening the referral value of customer. When the old customers spread positive word-of-mouth they enhance the influencer value on other customers. Feedback and suggestions from the customer are translated into the knowledge value of the customer. The firm must acknowledge that customer engagement creates an enduring brand relationship and provide customization of products and services as per customer feedback. Innovation also is dependent on co creation by customers.

1.16.7. Engagement Metrics to Measure Customer Engagement:

Measuring customer engagement efforts taken is vital for all irrespective of the industry. When firms invest substantially in the customer engagement marketing, the results need to be assessed for the confirmation of expectations of this activity. The firm has to have measures in place to ascertain the intensity and calculation of the customer engagement from customer side. If customer engagement is not happening as per the planning, the results of the metrics can give an accurate picture for the changes in strategy to happen going forward. Engagement takes place offline as well as online. Both these mediums must be measurable to maximize the benefits.

(Les Melnichenko, 2020,)states the most essential metrics to measure customer engagement, online metrics. The measurement of this construct is imperative to firms. Making sure that customer keep adding to the brand's client base is what the firms focus. These metrics help the firm to measure how the target customers are interacting with the marketing. Engagement is to encourage loyalty increase customer satisfaction and awareness. To get a bird's eye view a firm must invest and also show a firm online success.

- 1. Net promoter score:**The information is collected through in app survey or email campaigns and it determines whether clients are likely to spread a good word about the firm. A numerical sliding scale is used or the customer is asked to rate their service experience. For example: Survey monkey, Mopinion user voice.
- 2. SAT:** This tracks the pleasure of customers after using a product or service similar to NPS. One or more questions are featured at the end of a feedback measuring satisfaction.
- 3. Customer lifetime value (CLV):** This measures the amount of revenue a firm / business expects from a customer over the whole time they one in a business relationship. The longer a customer purchases from a firm higher is the CLV. The chances of buying by a repeat customer are as high as 60-70 percent versus a new customer who has a 5-20 percent chance to buy.
- 4. User activity:** is mapped through daily or monthly active users where the firm can mark unique customers who are using the firms product / service during a specific time interval. Compiling daily and monthly active users would give the firm a clear picture.
- 5. User engagement in the first week:** Measuring user activity in week number one says a lot about customer interest. To keep customer interest the internal process must be strong providing intuitive customer on boarding, great user experience and overall excitement of the user must be kept high.
- 6. Visit frequency:** This gives the firm insights into patterns of customer behavior after every visit. The relevant pattern of the product a service must be identified. This is the basic value they get out of engaging with the firm.
- 7. Feature usage:** This is a metric that can be used by the firm to inform customers about a new feature. This enhances customer relations.

- 8. Churn rate:** The metric is used to find out the number of clients who cut ties during a given period. The lower the churn rate the more customers are retained. It is important to have a customer engagement strategy not focus a quantitative all the time but also consider quantitative data. When it's done digitally the metrics can get customer sentiment analysis at the click of a button.
- 9. Customer effort score:** This is a measurement of how much effort the firm's customers have to put into resolving their issue. If they have to exert more the firm it not good for the engagement.
- 10. Social media engagement:** Social media builds engagement and is important for customer relationship.
- a) **Session time:** The time the customer spends on the firm's website or app once they are logged in.
 - b) **Bounce rate:** This measures the total of customer to a firm's web site who leave immediately without engaging in any content or
 - c) **Page view:** Is the amount of traffic on the pages of the firm's website which reports every initial load, reload or revisit by the same visitor in the same sessions.

Value is created by customer in many ways for a company or firm. A firm cannot judge the value of customers merely upon their transactions they hold with the firm.

Measurement for the customer engagement can be proposed by the following three components of CE value apart from customer lifetime value mentioned above.

1. Customer referral value
2. Customer influence value
3. Customer knowledge value

Customer is at the center of all business activity and understanding his value can lead to forming of strategies which expect or promote more customer involvement. Two-way relationship development personally with customers is a must for increasing interactions and participation. To initiate CE, the customer first needs to purchase. CE required for future growth flow to measure the CE. Other than purchase, customers create value by positive thoughts when they share this news with other customers and have the reason to affect the listener's and speaker's behavior. Customer interaction definitely affects customer responses.

Creating value has more intricate / complex techniques which are not limited to purchase. There are positive and negative indications / expressions along with the

purchase. It is the potency or power which is created by customer engagement regarding the firms' product/services.

It has four components CLV related to purchasing behavior which are repeat or incidental. Customer referral behavior is where new customers are acquired through a firm led formal referral program creates the customer referral value. When existing customers, vouch for a product / service it spreads WOM to acquire new customers as well as prospects.

This reduces the buyer regret, also increases / encourages the spending of existing customers who are motivated from within to purchase or patronize the firm's offerings resulting in customer influences value.

When customer provide feedback, suggestions or ideas for innovation and improvements it contributes to the knowledge value of customer. Total value arises from the assemblage of all these components which is turn influence each other to be successful leading to the firm growth. In order to create and practice efficient marketing strategies and allocate resources, it is crucial that firm understands of these measurement components well.

1.16.8 Theories used for Customer Engagement:

Customer engagement process happens when the focal subject (customer) interacts with the primary object (brand/firm /company) voluntarily. Most theories to explain customer engagement speak about the relational and behavioral aspects about human nature. These explain the aspects that motivate a customer to interact with the brands for engagement to happen. The theoretical foundation of these theories is used by customer engagement scholars to explain the customer behavior which is based on cognitive, emotional or psychological thought process of the individual where he/she gains when engagement happens. When the foundation of Customer engagement research is discussed following theories have much relevance.

1.16.8.1. Relationship marketing theory:

(Palmatier et al, 2005), Relationship marketing has seen exponential growth and is defined as *“All marketing activities directed towards establishing, developing and maintaining successful relational exchanges”*. Relationship marketing efforts by firms lead to create stronger customer relationships that increase the performance sales growth and profits of a firm. Each firm must have a specific relationship

marketing strategy must concentrate on outcomes of trust, relationship satisfaction, commitment and quality of relationship. By nature, a relationship is two way and both parties involved should share the benefits of the association. When customer receive benefits like time saving processes, convenience and companionship from a brand there is a start of a possible relationship. When a brand invests to build stronger relationship, both the parties have well- coordinated actions to achieve mutual goals.

Relationships are more important in services as they are less tangible, more perishable and less consistent. Customer and sellers are both involved equally in the consumption. A good working relationship with an employee of a hotel would result in an organization as well as a customer to benefit.

Relationship marketing strategies include hiring of good employees who are well trained in expertise and communication with customers. Customer must receive benefits from relationship with the brand / firm as it directly influences performance. Relationship recovery must happen as an ongoing process by resolving of any conflicts. Word of mouth and co-operation are critical for success. All the above strategies have a linkage with customer engagement practices which are planned to benefit both the parties involved. Relationship marketing is the foundation of customer engagement where generation of expectations helps customers to reciprocate. Seller competence is an important part of relationship marketing as customers receive greater value when they interact with an expert. They tend to strengthen and maintain relationship better. Exchange in the relationship must be both ways. The amount of communication, its quality and frequency must be meaningful. It not only helps to resolve issues, conflicts but co-creates new product or services. Similarities between two parties also contribute to engagement within them. Relationship duration is important to know the behavioral information about each partner. This allows predicting each party's confidence in the other's behavior. Conflicts must be resolved as it could mean severance of the customer's trust or commitment towards the brand.

Loyalty and repeat purchase intention are the expected consequences of relationship marketing from customer side. The vital consequence for the firm is its performance enhancements like profit, share of wallet and sales. Co-operation of customer is achieved also through customer engagement. (Jaakkola et al, 2018), Relationship marketing research also reconfirms that focus on customer engagement can enhance the firm's marketing considerably.

1.16.8.2. Social exchange theory:

(Ma et al, 2010), states that social exchange theory is primarily used to study the social behavior between individuals or groups. The focus of this theory is that people make decisions by consciously or unconsciously keeping in mind the cost versus rewards in a relationship or action mainly to get most of the benefit in the situation. It is a theory-based explanation that there is a relational building between the head of an organization and the employees and organization citizenship behavior (OCB) is an outcome of the same. Employees face several challenges like in the hotel industry the core product is the intangible service. High service quality is required for customer being satisfied. If they are satisfied they spread positive WOM, repurchase and turn loyal. Excellent customer service is like walking on a tight-rope and if employee goes over and above what's expected they are organizational citizens. These employees bring success to their leader, the operations, within their coworkers and ultimately the customers.

OCB is the behavior where an employee contributes to the workplace something more than the usual requirements. This behavior if incorporated by employees is a big plus for the organization / firm. The employees must have qualities of selflessness; keep welfare of other in mind. Must have commitment and the conscience required to complete work with high quality. They must possess the quality not to complain or act negatively. In courteous employee is the one who takes care to solve a problem without getting rude. The employee must abide by the rules and procedures of the role and the organization both. The theory of social exchange further explain that good social behavior is often rewarded by the party receiving the behavior and gets pressured to behave in the same way to give back.

Different from economic exchange here the parties concerned perceive to maintain a balance in the relationship, expect a better experience and know the type of relationship they deserve.

In an employer – employee relationship, employees use the social exchange to seek a long-term association and show concern for employees. Employees acknowledge this concern and if treated with respect are likely to engage in OCB. In a hotel scenario, frontline employees are having social exchanges with three groups of people

- 1) Supervisor
- 2) Co-worker
- 3) Customers.

If there is good team work or social exchange between coworkers there is high quality of service generated. Serving customers is the most important task of employees. Customers are active participants of this service deliverance. It is further suggested that the social exchange between employees and customers must be an emotional and satisfactory one. Managers must encourage this exchange and foster it among the teams they supervise. This helping atmosphere will trickle down to customers. Ensuring customer satisfaction and high quality of service will not be difficult on an ongoing basis.

1.16.8.3. Service-dominant logic theory:

This theory was first conceptualized by (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) offering an alternate view of the goods dominant logic of economic exchange where the value is seen in the tangibility, use and its transaction. Service dominant logic theory suggests that the service is the basis of exchange where the suppliers and the customers co-create the value. This perspective, reasons that customers have to be active players which are an observation pertinent to customer engagement. The theory states that the customers in order to co-create use their resources and engage with the brand. It was noted that firms must handle these interactions with care and make the customer experience positive. In further studies, the experts say that the relationship which is primarily dyadic must extend to all the shareholders in the service process. The service dominant logic is relevant to engagement because of its observability. The service supply and receipt can be experienced by both parties through the service delivery and consumption process. Value co-creation is a concept under the service dominant logic which states that value is generated through a joint process where the service giving process and the consumption process merges into one process of interactions.

1.16.8.4. Uses and gratification theory:

(Thomas Ruggiero, 2000) states that this theory originated in communication and mass media context. It was brought to fore by McQuail in 1987. It was a way to understand the reason people are motivated towards using specific media type. The theory proposes that consumers are engaged with the brand due to perceived benefits

and the content they get from interaction. This theory suggests that a customer gains power over the media they use media to gratify their needs and wants. In modern age, the Uses and gratification theory is a tool to understand why people engage with the internet, the mobile phone or gaming. The theory suggests that humans use media in five ways to fulfill their affective and emotional needs, cognitive needs social integrative need, personal integrative needs and tension free needs. The firm can use these needs to engage with customer according to segmentation supply communication according to the groups, leverage the advantage by issuing appropriate content. This theory suggests that there is customer engagement on behavioral, emotional and psychological levels when there is interaction, seeking of information, relaxation, expression of opinion, information sharing. This theory studies the customer behavior towards the media content they consume.

1.16.8.5. DART Theory:

(Solakis et al, 2017); (Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004) state that customers are the main focus of marketing decisions made by firms. They are also responsible for collaborations. This study takes a deep look at this interaction from four dimensions of the DART model (Dialogue, Access, Risk Assessment and Transparency) from the guest's perspective. This theory is paramount to understand the engagement of customer as value co-creation is based on a platform of communication between equal partnerships. Value co-creation is the dynamic engagement of customer which involves integration of resources to create novel/ beneficial value. This requires both parties willing to interact with each other. This relationship gives rise to dialogue as it is important for the firm to give information about products and services. In hospitality context, service is designed to be experienced by guests. Customized experiences are at the core. This experience is of value includes not only present but past and future experiences. Hotels must provide variety opportunities and channels for dialogue to happen. Access is the second element where the ownership of hotel location facilities, amenities is accessible to guest for an experience. Informing guests about benefits and risks to take informed decision increase the trust. Transparency is important for a genuine relationship. The hotels frankness and each of secrecy facilitates a trusted customer experience.

Technological advancement in Information communication technology given a chance for hotels to engage, co-create and interact anywhere and anytime.

1.16.9. Levels of Customer Engagement:

Customers are the very reason for a firm existence. In this social age, customer relationship assumes different dimension states (Roberts et al, 2014) Firms face a lot of ordeals to make customer engagement more important than before. The firm has to have an approach which aligns in thought, action and deed. This includes the branding to consumers, internal marketing, service delivery and customer experience which are equally important. The integration would result in customer believing in the firm in the long run.

Customer interaction must be grasped too and used as an ongoing opportunity to engage customers. Customers who display engagement behavior work together with the firm to co-create. This translates into a journey of loyalty and recommendation by customers. Marketing department is responsible for creating awareness, interest or preference at purchase. Once the decision / intention to purchase is final where the operational departments must follow up with required attention during and after sales. Great customer experience is at the center of these activities. It is a combination of emotional and physical delivery is good customer picks the firm over competition. The success of a firm is when it has a highly engaged level of customers. It earns long term growth and profit as customer recommendation is key to a business.

There are distinct five level of customer engagement where each level builds after the earlier level is achieved satisfactorily. After the pre-purchase awareness, interest of the customer is sparked, the customer moves on to the level one which is when he / she actually by the product or service.

- 1. Level 1:**The start of the process to move potential customers from being ignorant to believing in the product / service. This is done by investing in advertising, investment in sales force and publicity.
- 2. Level 2:**This is the stage when the customer is won over and the firm tries to educate in what the firm specializes. Depending upon the industry, information comes in form of brand storytelling. All information about the firm is shared to the last detail.
- 3. Level 3:** Here the customer is a regular with the firm and choose the firm / brand frequently. This stage the customer recommends the brand to friends and family.

4. **Level 4:** In this stage the customer takes pride in the connection with the brand and get involved in the brand. The brand can involve the customer to be more expressive about the brand with the intention of making it better.
5. **Level 5:** Customer who advance / proceed to this stage are the brands most ardent followers. These customers must be involved in the behind the scene of the firm's processes. Such customers can be consulted in development of newer offerings.

To engage customer the firm must develop a strong value proposition based on customer insight. The firm must convey the proposition through proper advertising. Engagement strategy must be well designed and employees must be trained to play a very crucial role of promise delivery. The foundation of the firm must ensure that promises made are delivered well where customer needs to see firms deliver above their expectations.

1.17 Customer Satisfaction: An Overview

In the modern, global and highly competitive arena of hospitality industry, every hotel has to strive to be customer-oriented to sustain and survive. The hotels need to survive and offer products along with services of a very good quality that attract guests who are very satisfied and loyal. (Fevicova, 2004).

Customer satisfaction is an ongoing goal for businesses/ firms since it affects customer purchase behaviour/intention, customer retention and also the market share in a competitive scenario. (Hansemark et al, 2004).

An important aspect of the hotel business industry survival is dependent upon customer retention. Customer satisfaction is the means to retain and encourage repeat guests. When guests receive excellent quality of service, they are motivated to patronize the brand across hotels. Competition makes it difficult for hotel brand to retain the guest. If he/she is not satisfied, guests would shift their business to another hotel. Customer satisfaction also is the benchmark to determine quality that is ultimately got by the customer for survival (Vavra, 1997). To keep the satisfaction high, firms need to have knowledge of customer expectations, maintain high levels of service, and constantly work at improving service and product. A satisfied customer tends to repurchase and give recommendation through word of mouth. (Berkman and Gilson, 1986).

It also is the cheapest form of promotion for a firm. (Knutson, 1988)

(Naumann, 1995), states that a Customer Relationship Management(CRM) program must be incorporated in the culture of a firm or business. Customer oriented firms always anticipate the pit falls in their product / service journey and make amends before complaints arise.

Customer must be included in this process of CRM (Vavra, 1997) through taking constant feedback. The major problem is when a company knows the feedback, but does not act on it. It is seen that apparently customers may be satisfied with a firm but still purchase elsewhere. It must be noted that a strong relationship must be developed with customers. Quality and product innovation have now become prerequisites. These are expected by customers. Internal structure and processes have been given importance to markets and customers. (Butz and Goostein 1996).

(WTO, 1985) states the customer satisfaction is a psychological concept that involves a concept of well- being and pleasure obtained after the realization of the fact that the product / service is what was hoped or expected.

(Oliver,1980) put forth the widely used approach of the expectancy disconfirmation theory which proposes that customers purchase goods and services with pre - expectations and anticipate good performance. After the product is purchased and used, the results are compared with expectations. If the result matches the expectations, confirmation takes place. When there is a gap between what was expected and what was received, disconfirmation occurs causing dissatisfaction.

In hospitality, the satisfaction is not universal. Not everyone gets satisfied out of the same experience. Therefore, it is important to know the needs, wants leading to different kinds of satisfaction. The (WHO, 1985) states that the problem may be solved to an extent by segmentation of market.

(Reuland et al 1985), suggest that satisfaction in hospitality services is a combination of three elements namely the product along with service, the attitude and behavior of the servers and the environment building, design and décor.

(Davis and Stone, 1985), state that service encounter is made up of two elements, direct and indirect service like those in case of a hotel. Direct services include the actual check- in and indirect service would include provision of facilities and amenities.

In service context, the assessment of this quality happens during the actual delivery of service through the service employee to the guest.

The SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al 1985, 1988, 1991) identifies the facets of service quality in order to achieve customer satisfaction.

1. **Tangibles:** The actual existence and appearance of building, structure, personnel and facilities.
2. **Empathy:** Employees who extend customized attention to customer.
3. **Assurance:** Employee having knowledge and courtesy to treat customer with respect, create faith and confidence the customer.
4. **Responsiveness:** Employees must be participative, solve problems and give prompt service.
5. **Reliability:** Employees must provide service dependably and deliver what's being promised.

Thus, in a five- star hotel context, customer satisfaction is one of the major reasons a guest comes back to a hotel. To make that crucial decision, the guest needs to be satisfied with the overall experiences. The degree of this satisfaction is dependent upon the service encounters, products used, services received, employee interactions, availability of facilities and amenities as per needs and wants.

All hotels strategize to have such positive encounters with their guests and invest in CRM and CSM processes to ensure repeat business, create brand resonance and reputation.

1.18. Consumer Purchase Intention: An Overview:

The detailed study of consumer behavior (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007) helps marketers to find out, understand and enable them to predict what their customers want. It not only includes what the consumers want to buy but also when do they buy, where to the buy, how do they buy, and how often do they make a purchase? In order to achieve this, firstly one must know who is the consumer? Detailed research must be conducted to study the behavior of that consumer at every phase of the buying and consumption which is in three phases before the purchase, during and after the purchase.

Consumer purchase behavior finds its foundation in the marketing concept which is an orientation of business that has seen exponential evolution from the 1950's. (BhattR, 2010 pgs. 1-8)

Many approaches like the concept of production, concept of product and the concept of selling came into being. It is also important for firms to know how to sell and use tools such as consumer segmentation, target consumer and positioning of their product or service to meet required audience.

Any firm or organization must keep the consumer at the center of all these activities. The firm must also ensure that the organizational culture must be such that the employees strive to create a customer relationship and not just transact with a customer.

To sell one's product or service, marketing efforts are an important area of focus of the firm. A balanced marketing mix consists of information about the firm /company products or services needs to be chalked out well in advance. This would include the pricing, the promotion and distribution methods employed, which need to be well thought-out to make this exchange, a fruitful one.

To make this exchange a win - win situation and a successful relationship to develop, between both the parties, it is important to give special attention to the value received and the satisfaction, the customer gets at the exchange. The firm needs to build a robust structure that supports customer retention.

In today's world of digitalization and advanced technology has gained prominence. Customization and personalization of products, services, and messages is easily possible. These technologies help marketers to adapt well to the elements of the marketing and assess the needs and wants of consumers. This leads to establishment of a quick and efficient system to keep in touch with customers on a greater scale.

Consumer behavior finds its place in most disciplines like economics, sociology, psychology, and cultural anthropology. Many scientists have developed theories and concepts around the consumer making it important for firms and consider it in their strategic business planning. A revised marketing concept in recent times talks about the inclusion of ethics and responsibility on the part of the firm to fulfill the needs of their target markets in a way that benefits the society as a whole.

A thorough research needs to be conducted by firms to realize and predict how consumers react in the market place. This research would be beneficial as it tells the firm how consumers make decisions to make a purchase. Consumer research has to be done by managers to improve sales and marketing decisions. It has to be quantitative, empirical and find out the cause-and-effect relationships when consumers buy. This type of research must be supported by qualitative research. Qualitative research is

concerned with the going beneath the superficial level to probe into the psyche of a consumer. It tries to understand the feelings, motivations and the emotions that consumers have while making an intention to purchase.

In qualitative research, one comes across a perspective where the focus is more on understanding the act of consuming rather than just the act of buying.

When both these perspectives and research methods are used in conjunction provide an in-depth and more insightful understanding of consumer purchase behavior.

Earlier mass marketing(offering the same product to everyone) was the marketing strategy used. A firm has to be ascertained that the needs of its consumers are met and market segmentation followed to make sure that the consumer needs are met.

(Schiffman&Kanuk 2007), state that “*Segmentation can be defined as the process of dividing a potential market into distinct subsets of consumers with a common need or characteristic and selecting one or more segments to target with a specially designed marketing mix*”.

Once the firm does segmentation studies, it is more effective to design newer products, redesign and reposition existing products, help in creating promotional material and aid in the selecting of the right advertising media.

An important criterion to segment the market is done to map identification, sufficiency, stability, and accessibility of the market. Once the firm has identified its market, it must decide whether it will target varied segments or just one segment according to its offerings. This aids in communicating to customers the offerings of the firm. Once the customer knows then the choices/alternatives are explored leading to a cognitive process of the customer who feels he should benefit from the decision of purchase. The process of intention to purchase depends upon the internal and external motivations of the customer. A good experience with a company will prompt a customer be a repeat customer. In case of the hotels, repeat customer is always preferred. Hotels engage their guests by strategizing to make the customer experience unforgettable which prompts a repeat purchase. If a hotel carefully plans, operationalizes this experience and provides satisfaction the guest will recommend the hotel to prospective clients. Brand loyalty is an outcome of such satisfied guests who get emotionally involved with the hotel and interact with the brand. Such guests whose behavior is positive towards the brand do not choose the competitor or anyone else.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Customer engagement
- 2.3 Business Strategy
- 2.4 Customer satisfaction
- 2.5 Consumer purchase intention
- 2.6 Research Gaps

2.1 Introduction

The literature review is an important part of the research process. The primary task is to read through and understand the existing body of knowledge in the research area undertaken by the researcher (Ranjit Kumar, 2014). This review provides a theoretical background to the study; establish common grounds between what is being studied currently to earlier research done. Reviewing literature brings focus and clarity to the current research problem and improves the methodology process. It also helps to broaden knowledge about the said research area and helps the researcher to make value addition through own findings to the existing body of knowledge. The process also helps the researcher to find and organize any gaps identified in the earlier studies which can be related to the current topic under purview. It is pertinent for the researcher to study the various researchers have found in regards to similar questions. This also helps the researcher to understand how the findings of the current study fit into the existing knowledge available.

This chapter includes literature from past twenty-one years (2000 to 2021). The research papers have been published in national and international journals, dissertations at Master's and doctoral level, blogs, textbooks and reports. The collective literature is from fifteen countries of the world, which are opinions of experts/ authors about the concept of customer engagement.

The subject /concept/topic of customer engagement rose to prominence in the early 2000. In the last two decades the studies primarily were seen earlier in the field of psychology, sociology education, political science and organizational behavior.

In 2005, there were nine articles which used the words customer engagement or consumer engagement or brand engagement which steadily rose to a substantial number to six hundred and ten in 2010 where the Journal of Service research, Special issue was dedicated to customer engagement for advanced engagement research in marketing. This chapter includes literature close to the research topic.

There is inclusion of literature on business strategy, customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention in this chapter establishing relevancy to the objectives of the study. Sections for each of these variables have been made to continue the flow of the said chapter.

2.2 Customer Engagement (CE):

This part of the chapter lays focuses of customer engagement in totality. To date the customer engagement has been studied from four broad perspectives namely its behavioral aspect (Van Doorn et al,2010), as a psychological state of a customer (Brodie et al 2011), as a disposition to act (Storbacka et al,2016) and as a process which includes the steps in customer decision making process. (Maslowska et al, 2016). Customer Engagement has been examined predominantly as a behavioral and these manifestations are called as customer engagement behavior of customers. When conceptualized as psychological it is reflected as a multi-dimensional concept which includes behavioral, emotional as well as cognitive engagement. A willingness to act is necessary in the customer engagement from customer's side with the firm initiatives. Many researchers, consider it in many stages of decision making where it can happen not in a particular stage but it includes experiences and interactions with a brand or firm.

In the paper titled, "Executing or a customer engagement strategy" by (Venkatesan, 2017), the author states the customer engagement happens through different states which are acquisition, growth, retention and return back of the customers. Customers are engaged with the firms in all states through social network. This interaction leads to collection of experiences leading to progression in the relationship. This customer journey and experiences create value for customer to advocate for a firm so as to create better products needs to be tapped. Firms must create a robust structure to accomplish on a customer engagement strategy, the combination of relationship and state of journey (pre-purchase to post purchase) to identify types of customers. Each time firm must manage new and repeat customers by four key criteria namely customer lifetime value, influence value, referral value and influence and knowledge value. During acquisition the firm must look at potential customers who may have influence value (social on media). The firm must also look for customers who can give knowledge to other customers. Crossing selling are another area where customer experience can be harnessed well to understand shopping patterns.

The lifetime value and influence value of a customer gets increased when products and services are propositioned well. Customer expertise and suggest product ideas. Firms could ask customers to speak about the experience by including them in post purchase encounter. Repeat customers are valuable to the firm for the customer

lifetime value to be kept alive. The firms must recognize the customer identity, nationalities to reach out and get a deeper engagement value. The firm could appoint dedicated team to study all customers in the groups according to four metrics. Firms need to collect and make customer information available to these teams. The entire engagement experience is based on the coordination with customers.

In the chapter titled “Personality-based consumer engagement styles-conceptualization, research propositions and implications”,by(Hollebeek et al, 2019) the customer engagement (CE) concept is well discussed, through in this chapter where the authors establish a link between different personality attributes of a customer and how those affect the customer brand relationship. This research work identifies big five traits and explores how these personalities, interact with the brands in a particular manner specific to the personality type. The authors highlight the fact that there are differences in customer engagement patterns due to the personalities the customers display. There are extra version personalities who are extroverts, outgoing and their engagement with a brand is more of display done publicly. These personalities make greater investment cognitively with a brand. Introversion personalities are shy and introverted people display more withdrawn behavior and show more cognitive type of CEand privately when they interact with a brand.

Extroverted consumers who are more social, interactive in nature have a high emotional connect and they are more likely to share their brand interactions with other people. They exhibit their likes and dislikes openly. They are equally to spend more energy, effort and time to invest in a brand versus introverted personalities.

Socially extroverted personalities have the ability to reach out to individuals or groups through brand interactions. The authors theorize the following attributes to both types of personalities their agreeableness, openness to experience, conscientiousness, emotional stability studying these with respect to cognitive, emotional, behavior and social CE related to interaction with the brand. This study of personalities of consumers helps to segment consumers on their styles and offerings or customization of product and service can be done accordingly after knowing the personality traits.

According to Energex report,“Energex connecting with your customer engagement (CE) strategy 2015-20”,a company who handles the electricity and network solutions in South East Queensland. Their success lies in their reach and engagement with their

customers. Their corporate strategy is to deliver energy services through achieving balanced customer satisfaction. The company has five guiding principles which are a part of their organizational culture of being transparent and open, committed, timely, meaningful, accountable and reasonable services. The company sees the customer and their inputs as the integral part of the CE process. There is a Research and Engagement approach which defines a CE strategy, CE framework and CE implementation plan.

Feedback was welcomed from 6,700 customers in a survey conducted from May to November 2013. Questions were asked about touch points, service preferences of residential customers, large customers, retailers and small business owners. A research report insight for the company was valuable and resulted in number of good initiatives around the business. The company realized the needs and wants of all types of customers. The company came up with themes and collected information. The focus of the company was to be aware, understand the customers, listen to customers' needs and respond to expectations. The customer data and analytics were used to make decisions which enhanced customer experience. Co-creation and customer feedback was the basic backbone of this survey on CE.

The white paper of the Magento platform (2018), offering e-commerce solutions for brands with respect to their online stores explain the rules of successful engagement of customers, creating customized experiences when people shop. The article looks at the transition of the customer engagement (CE) from what it was earlier to now. In today's times, CE is all about value, creating emotional connections that would result in WOM, repeat business and sales in the future. Technology has been empowering customers who engage more to transact business. When engaged customer spends more on each purchase, buys more frequently it results in customer lifetime commitment and the firm spends less on acquisition of customer. Such customers give feedback, give unasked advice to improve quality and also complain less publicly. They resolve complaints with the company. They become the company unofficial brand ambassadors. Trust and confidence are promoted by such customers. Social media is responsible for this focus on CE in a very distinct way. The smart phone revolution has given firms likes, feedback and consumers being more connected than ever before. The communication is not controlled by firms but two-way contact to customers through blogs, reviews of product or service, community forums and firms

need to understand the reach has to be across devices and channel to move from the purchase stage.

Before one lends to engage as a firm it is important to know about new technologies and a more detailed planning according to customer type the company wishes to engage. A strategy must be definitely planned. It is essential to be clear about what are the firm needs to achieve CE strategies must be planned to target conversions revenue and building brand awareness.

It is important to solicit feedback and provide excellent service. These are the stepping stones of customer loyalty. If a firm is able to understand customers, their beliefs, their life style, it becomes easier to send them the correct communication one of the ways is to create, customer with typical characteristic and build the engagement around this profile. These personalities created is very relatable to people. The firms can create visually attractive advertising around a festival and target ethnic groups to give a message of inclusivity. Customers are fickle and get distracted by competition so it is important to create a positive customer experience in the first time. The interaction presents a powerful opportunity to meet the customer. Positive outcomes are seen when the firm's service team reach out to customers for responding to queries, complaints and resolving them is crucial. Firms can use data to what the customer browses according to searches or history and make recommendations to the customer.

Customer engagement must be pursued with the goal to convert customers. Once a customer experiences the product / service and has a positive experience the CE journey starts. Follow up after a purchase reinforces the message that the firm appreciates the relationship created and wishes to continue it in the future. Post-purchase engagement is crucial to ensure repeat business. Product reviews are a big indication of how customer sees the brand. Feedback ratings should be encouraged. Reward programs, newsletters, wish lists, special offers, private sales are tools on can strike engagement with customers want to be marketed as individuals not part of a group being recognized as an individual creates good value from the firm's side personalizing message is a great way to connect on a one-on-one level. Asking preferences about the communication thatthe firm sends is another way to show respect towards customers.

Data analytics can tell a firm about purchase history or customer demographic. But it is important to understand the customer behaviors, understand the emotional angle

and send promotional material. When buying a product / service the firm should strive to keep the fun element at the center. Customers cherish the purchase journey that was pleasant and enjoyable. Using social media in an erudite manner is about including customer in conversation. Inclusion of fresh content daily is the key. It must appeal, be relevant and provide insights on subjects which are of customer's interest. Promotion must be subtle and reinforce personalization. Firms can utilize the mobile commerce making the most of mobile analytics and applications. Location based marketing can be used by hotels to track guest movement. Virtual and live interactions prove valuable to build loyal brand customer communities. Engagement done correctly with the basic and fundamental changes will create the most impact. Integration of all strategies and technologies is a must. CE should be like a continuous conversation a firm has with customers. Engagement must be genuine. More interactions can cultivate relationship with customers which are investments in the long run.

The paper "Customer engagement (CE) in a big data world" by (Kunz et al, 2017) proposes the belief that CE is a concept which has been emphasized enough on the benefits for the firm but customer angle has been ignored. The authors suggest a framework which gets the customers and firm on the same page to create value-based CE. The researchers include firms, resources, data processes, timeline and goals from firm perspective. The customer's motivation, factors that make an impact and styles of engagement are discussed. Findings suggest that data driven engagement requires a process that is frequentative. Value generation is experienced when customer recognizes value of engagement behaviors and firm catches data giving back value to customers to make CE a win-win for both. Big data has its own complexities and company may not always have access as the data from a variety of channels due to ethical or legal constraints. The challenges though many, the analysis creates a world of insights that can benefit a firm. This real time information can be got in real time and can generate substantial value for the firm.

Data can lead to innovation and more in depth understanding of the customer. This interaction between customer and firm which is a result of digital boom and technology creates new opportunities to engage and understand behavioral aspects of the customers. The authors emphasize the importance of co-creation in the CE process. Value is created together when customers are active players where they

share, discuss and forward their reviews. This is widely done through social media networks. They say a company benefits on three levels. At firm level they gather valuable insight through solving complaints, problems etc. At the market level, the customers become brand advocates and the brand appreciates this relationship. Thirdly, at the customer level, where the customer enhances their connection and trust with the brand.

The authors also bring forth certain attachment styles of customers which are created due to emotions, behavior and expectations towards a brand. These styles explain why every customer has different motivations to engage with a particular brand. An ideal customer is one who has secure attachment style who builds and engages well with the brand. If the firm segments customers according to their attachment styles it can have focused, well-rounded engagement only with interested customers. The most crucial aspect is when the customer expectations and efforts of CE by the company are in tandem. It is to be noted that customers are ready to engage in activity, obtain higher value from CE and re-engage activity. The value is created in the company and customer context jointly. When this value is felt by customer results in referrals, positive WOM and feedback all creating value for the company. Companies can present opportunities to customers by integrating them in social online communities empowering customers to create.

The white paper “Guest life cycle service and property management system” (PMS) (2019) explains the importance of cultivating / developing relationship after the end of the guest cycle. It is important to overcome challenges during the end which is critical to all hotels as they follow the guest cycle. Each stage of the guest cycle has set of opportunities where engagement with the guest can be optimized. Identification of challenges like inaccurate billing during departure or missing on updating a guest’s profile have to be overcome.

Hotels must keep consistent, customized communication with present and potential customers throughout the guest cycle. Departure is the crucial stage to convert any service gaps when the guest is still at the hotel. Guest should be prompted to book for the next time and encouraged to use the benefits of the brand loyalty program. A property management system is a must to track reviews, manage social media and give the management. This gives a correct picture to help drive profits and efficiency. Hotels must collect guest data through use of proper technology. Express checkouts

can be an efficient way to settle a bill as the credit cards are authorized earlier and no fuss is created. Though, this may result in hotels losing out in interacting for the final time to concretize a positive perception and gather useful information about guests to personalize future offers. If the hotel collects this crucial information and creates guest profiles in earlier stage it becomes easier. PMS keeps the data at a centralized point and will provide all guests likes and dislikes, booking history on request. After a guest checks out, keeping in touch with them is top priority for a hotel. Hotels must send communication to reinforce a positive stay experience where guests feel the need to book again with them only. A real time texting integration can collect feedback during and after stay stage to catch service problems. The hotel can follow up messages and allows hotels to see the satisfaction in real time. This information helps to recover service failures, provide future offers and handle complaints. Many hotels use Revinate, Medallia, Guest folio for this purpose. In-depth analysis and post departure communication can be energized through these. A carefully made survey for post stay best practices can be developed. Customer satisfaction survey with a built-in incentive can engage guests for feedback response. It is also important to integrate customer inputs where the hotel can connect with customers in real time on social media and travel sites to answer any questions for hotel promotion. Customers who are not technology savvy must be given a face-to-face opportunity during check-in and check-out both. An assurance of paying the bill in person is crucial to trust a hotel by a guest. It is good idea to remind guests of benefits / loyalty points, the guest earns during stay. This practice encourages repeat business and refreshing of loyalty. It is important for hotels to build travel advocates through each and every guest. A brand loyalty program contributes to adding tangible value by enhancing the customer experience ever more.

Hotels encourage guests to book directly through their website. The website must be attractive, appealing and navigation must be easy. Analytics help a hotel here to personalize offers directly to their needs and interests. Interfaces with companies who collect data on guest information to help hotels customize offering and reward customers correctly. Customer loyalty can be induced through rewarding guest customized package. It is also clever to merge with third party information to boost revenue. Now a days, an innovative property management system helps hotels to segment guests according to information stored, in one main guest profile and the hotel can strategically target specific groups of customers for offers so the guest feels

looked after. Using an offer engine to check browsing activity of a guest, the hotel can offer flash deals and discounts as customization to guests. When a hotel takes care of individual needs of a guest, a positive emotion gets built towards the brand. Immediate rewards work well instead of accumulated points over a number of stays. Seasonality in hotel business is a critical factor and hotels need to forecast trends in order to plan and strategize correctly. Volume of guests not only affects revenue but also operational decisions. Hotels must invest in appropriate technology to predict guest behavior which will be required to make sound planning and strategies that are effective. A property management is an essential tool which informs hotels about booking patterns, generates reports on ADR and tells hotel's position in revenue earning accurately to avoid speculating.

In the research article titled "Customer expectations and loyalty of the hotel industry in Lagos State" (Sholarin et al, 2013), the authors conclude that services have unique features of perishability, intangibility, inseparability thus making it important to give special focus to measurement of customer expectations and its effect on loyalty. Relationship marketing practices also need to take center stage to give customers satisfaction to build loyalty. Customers tend to patronize goods or services that have a close mental and emotional affinity to their own convictions, interpretations, intentions and expectations. Expectations of customers enlarge, decrease, change direction, shift constantly and easily.

Loyalty will only survive if customer believes that better value is offered. It is often noticed the firm tend to pursue higher effort on sales versus building customer relationship. This focus should be doubled after the sale is made. Hotels must provide and deliver customer caring value to build loyalty and satisfaction.

Customer expectations are what customers wish to receive from the services and these are uncontrollable. These include previous experience, influences, learning from targeted communication and WOM. These differ from customer to customer depending upon their pre purchase needs, wants, experiences and beliefs. Each customer has different expectations as per the knowledge he / she has about the product or service.

Loyalty is a deep commitment to reorder, repurchase or patronize a product or service consistently in the future. It has both behavioral and attitudinal angles. Customer loyalty is to exhibit repurchase behavior and having a favorable attitude forwards the

product / service. True loyalty arises when customers become advocates and do not expect any incentives in return from the firm. To foster this loyalty and keep up with the customer expectations, hotels need to focus on assisting the customer through all stages of a sale, keep communication two ways and complaints must be seen as opportunities to improve.

The research paper titled “Competitive advantage through engagement” by (Kumar and Pansari, 2016) puts forth a structure, firms can use to measure employee and customer engagement. The study provides logical explanation that high engagement benefits the firm’s performance. This effect is supported by the argument that engagement should be continuous. Relevance is necessary to plan branding activities and have continuous employee training to sustain this engagement. This study also considers the fact that engagement is effective in difficult times like recession. Restraints on budget during this period can affect marketing plans and their use. Firms must use their most important asset their employees to promote the products / services. This would include interaction and a complete customer experience. A positive experience leads to positive WOM, purchases, referrals. Every firm can plan its strategy through understanding what to do customer and what employees think of the firm. It is necessary to reboot the earlier thought process and not only include customers but employees too regarding the engagement. A new type of orientation with engagement at the core must be implemented by the firm.

The author of this paper “The landscape of customer engagement in hospitality and tourism-A systematic review” (Hao, 2020) puts together a detailed presentation of all the research work on customer engagement dated between 2007 to 2020.

It gives a bird’s eye view of the customer engagement categorically slotting engagement under four divisions namely customer online engagement, customer behavior related to engagement, engagement related to tourists and brand engagement. Each of these divisions were studied for their dimensionality and inclusions. The article also studies in detail the concept, measurement, evolution and presents an in-depth analysis of customer engagement. The author reveals that it is a topic in emergence in developing countries, must be explored in cultured context and within less discussed groups. More work can be pursued in lodging industry with reference to categories of hotels. Social media reach must be explored by hotels to

engage in real time with customers. The author suggests to conduct long term studies over a period of few years to understand performance of customer engagement.

Practical methods which give instant results to check the possibility of customer engagement happening through facial and eye tracking is the future. Active customer engagement would happen through co-creation and marketing strategies should be planned after assessing needs of each segment of customers. New focus must be given particularly to interpersonal engagement for example: Customer to customer, customer to employee or tourists to local engagement context. Opportunities must be given to employees to train themselves to solve problems, be professional and handle people. In tourism, locals and visitors can both engage to each other which would be culturally benefitting.

The dissertation titled “Customer engagement: Perceived benefits and effect of individual and brand personality on engagement behavior” (Andonova,2016) is a study of customer engagement (CE) behavior and the benefits which arise from the motivating drive to engage on social media as the context. This study also sheds light on the effects of brand and individual personalities on CE. Further the study, explores whether sincere efforts by the firm to engage produces brand attachment. The angle of brand familiarity is studied in relation to the type of personality and style of attachment. The study uses the uses and gratification theory in context to the engagement behavior and participation of customer in online communities, via blogs. Benefits listed are cognitive, hedonic, personal / social integrative, and economic. The study develops the following ideas of engagement which are more successful when there is brand familiarity, brand characteristics are known by customer and firms also can benefit from knowing customer behavior to plan strategies.

The study applies the uses and gratification theory to explain from benefits resulting from this engagement. When customers find useful information / knowledge cognitive benefits are seen. Once the customer visits the webpage of the firm, he/she has access to interaction with other customers which give social integrative benefit. With this participation with the brand a customer experiences personal benefits which escalate the confidence and self-esteem of the individual. This customer may be looked up-to by others to guide or write reviews or answer questions. Pleasurable experiences satisfy hedonic needs. Qualitative analysis showed that the respondents gained rewards for interaction with social media in forms of special offers. The study

concludes by making an important point that marketers must increase brand awareness for engagement to increase. Creative marketing could ignite engagement through sincere and honest appeals to make customers seek personal integrative benefits.

This paper “A decade of customer engagement research in hospitality and tourism: A systematic review and research agenda” by (So et al,2020) studies incorporate and reviews customer engagement studies from the year 2009 to 2019 from four large stand famous online databases. The review was done in a systematic manner with proper key work and abstract identification from 7 top journals: The researchers identified and refined the research context, industry and the methodology. From this they understood the industries and spotted the ones which were developing successfully. The most extensively studied at 37.5 percent was the hotel / lodging industry. Most studies 86.5 percent were empirical in nature and other 13.5 percent as conceptual review. Customer engagement research is found to be rather quantitative at 62.5 percent compared to 9.4 percent was quantitative 28 percent was mixed method. Survey method was the most used one for data collection.

The antecedents of customer engagement were extracted and categorized in six categories motivational, organizational, situational and customers are engaged in certain subjects close to their interests, relational and also related to barriers of the organization.

The paper elucidates the outcomes of customer engagement as economic, intentional, cognitive evaluation and affective evaluative. The study points out the role of variables which are either mediators or moderators explaining the relationship between dependent and independent variables which are customer engagement antecedents, customer engagement outcomes and customer engagement.

The articles brought to attention four mediators namely perceived intimacy, cohesion, quality of relationship and emotional experience at destination. In the reviewed studies, moderators were not studied as mediators as moderation explanations are difficult to conceptualize. The literature cites the varied conceptualization of customer engagement and the authors observe the different views and suggest a requirement for a uniform assessment for building of customer engagement theory and progress of customer engagement.

The second observation suggests an un-clarity about antecedents and outcomes of customer engagement. The customer engagement research largely is customer dependent till now and needs to consider strategies of the firm to avoid the firm's perspective being neglected. If the performance is the end objective of customer engagement then new research should bridge the initiatives between strategy and firm's performance measures. The focus also must be given to other players within systems or framework. The data collection methods have not moved ahead from one time survey methods, research in this area lacks longitudinal studies, experimental studies, advanced studies of qualitative dimension or data collection approaches are scarce.

Customer engagement has been receiving much attention in technological and media context with the help of data analytics. The authors note that most research in this field is concentrating on one-to-one relationship between customer, brand, firms, platforms and must include a larger group of players to get new perspective.

Lastly, they suggest that newer contexts within the hospitality and tourism regarding customer engagement must be touched. Focus should shift to business-to-business context instead of customer-firm context. It should be noted that all types of developments in culture and economy influence customer engagement. The use of technology should be discovered more to promote interactive and participative customer engagement for co-creation and recognizing true customer value. Customer behavior is at the center of customer engagement. It is crucial to understand if it maps the productivity of marketing strategies and revenue earning performance of a firm.

According to the article "How to engage with a modern traveler" (2019), Travel, Tourism and hospitality have consumers who purchase experiences and not products. Customer service is at the center and customer satisfaction as the expected outcome. This white paper discusses a set of best practices companies follow to engage online with customers and maintain a competitive position in the multi-channel space.

Now-a-days, customer needs online support 24x7. Customers pursue the whole process through their smart phones on the go. Online channels become easier to plan trips. Booking online is most preferred and companies must reach customers across all engagement channels. Each experience must be seamless and personal even before the purchase happens.

The best practices to improve conversion rates reduce cancellation and increase revenue from the crux of this paper. Engaging a customer in his moment of truth when help is required and when he/she have to do the most crucial task is appreciated by customers. Chat functions help a customer to be guided step by step and abandonment is reduced. Assistance is a must as it improves satisfaction and loyalty. It is important to map the crucial points when customers need help. Never shock a customer as he will withdraw. Every step could prove to be a challenge and hand holding is the key. Like location is key in determining a place's value, an excellent website provides the value and this easy access to interaction is preferred even through smart phones. By engaging customers on time, half the job is achieved. By observing user behavior, tracking of visitors can be done where help can be provided where they struggle with processes. A chat agent should be a solution giver. Call centers must be available 24x7, Gallup survey suggests that 46 percent more is spent by engaged customers than those who are not. Branding is equally important so it is better to integrate user experience supported by Omni /multi channel software in the online strategy. A consistent experience across all the brand's touch points is the key to brand trust.

In travel and hospitality business, service is constantly required by customers, a persistent chat window helps in answering queries. A mobile application is another good way to keep communication alive. Earning customer trust is of paramount importance. Transparency, emotional connection and consistency are key to build trust. Engagement strategies must be relooked at as travel tourism business changes regularly. Modification of online content must be updated constantly. Use of real time analytics is required to increase the relevance. Now-a-days it is possible to track activity of a customer talking to a competition. Omni channel engagement strategy must be able to engage a customer at all touch points and show him /her care the firm has for them.

In the White paper of Verintcompany, (2019) titled "A strategic approach to Customer Engagement (CE) optimization". The company ranks customer service is one of the key factors that distinguish a company among its competitors. Even as the number of communication channels increase, it is a challenge to give consistent personalized service through them. This paper studies those challenges and elaborates how organization can get a CE optimization solution in place. If such solutions are

used it saves a lot of operating costs. Customer engagement is the level of interaction seen with a company over a period of time along the customer's journey. These include touch points before, during and after the service encounters. They include a feedback, criticisms on social media or comments. CE has to be proactive and company should reach out to customers to make purchases happen or to establish connect. When an ongoing dialogue is established, it creates familiarity, emotional attachment with brand service or product. Forrester Research says the customer relationships are crucial as customers can be very helpful as they participate and spend more money and serve as its advocates. The obvious challenges include customers expecting personalized and flawless experience on all the channels they choose. It becomes difficult for organizations to provide cohesion on multiple channels. Customer data is not centralized to access and share internally. Customer service employees are stressed, preoccupied by the system and interaction with guests are unsure on unfavorable if they are not sure what options or suggestions to give. Organization also cannot analyze large amounts of data to understand. Customer sentiments, trends advancement would help them in this decision-making. To save costs, many firms replace employee personalized service by interactive voices responses. This disengages 80 percent of the customers. It would be interest of firms to invest in technology that can track all the operations, its efficiency in-turn meet goals, improve quality of processing in all online channels to stores and back office ensuring over-all satisfaction. In service context though, human element is a necessity. All the teams in an organization benefit from this intelligent information in various ways and optimize to make the customer experience rich.

The authors of the paper "True or false customer engagement behavior (CEB): What can we learn from customer touch-point histories?" by (Haurum et al,2014) state that study of CEB is of great value to the company. This study is centered on the customer's perspective and how they view their service relationship encounters with a firm.

The authors find out the key factors which explain the engagement behaviors. From the customer's point of view every transaction they make is of prime importance. Many firms see this behavior as misleading, inconsistent and divergent. Customers even if satisfied would keep it to themselves or not express it as much on a larger platform like social media. True engagement is when customer exhibits behavior

which is consistent according to the service episode. A good service is rewarded in the relevant context would help the company's image and equity. If a customer has an unpleasant experience, he should take it up with the company. False engagement behavior is when irrespective to the service episode, the behavior that the customer exhibits is inconsistent. This study considers touch points as the total sum of the customer journey with the company. A company must consider these as a clean picture or histories which include transactions. The authors point that even everyday services and products need most attention sometimes customer may crib and still be a loyal customer. This is a private space of every customer. It doesn't really affect the relationship with the company and this misleading behavior may result in discrepancy between attitudinal and behavioral loyalty when customers recommend a product or service or want to react against a negative comment on behalf of the company, they exhibit true engagement behavior which definitely improves the quality of the service relationship. Sometimes freebies given by the company may induce false engagement and not commitment. It can be seen as a compensation for earlier service failures or a reward for their loyalty.

In the paper "If you build it right, they will engage-A study of antecedent conditions of Customer Engagement" by (Vivek et al, 2018) the authors focus on the activities, offers and initiatives which an organization does with the goal to connect with existing and prospective customers. These activities are referred to as Customer engagement (CE) strategies. In the pre social media era, offline brand engagement was very successful. Many online attempts to create CE have failed. The authors try to shed light on what's the best combination to make such strategies work. They propose four strategic elements as a must to make a highly engaged program for marketing. They also identify four factors that influence individual's level of engagement. Two studies were conducted, one from customer angle and the other from the organizational perspective. Findings suggested that certain elements were vital to engagement being to generate dialogue, show the business in good light, provide a genuine connection and offer relevant information to customers. The elements may be more effective when planned according to industry, number of touch points and type of organization. Dialogue facilitates interactivity, involves all parties, with willingness and feeling of equality. Co-creation is when a customer creates value for the company from interactions which are mutually satisfying exchange of

information and importance given to customer. Fluid interaction is required for customers who open up and give ideas. If a marketing program gives opportunity to customer to shine, they get engaged. If a customer is allowed to tell a firm what to facilitate as a company through a conversation initiated on social media, the marketing program reach can be limitless. Customization of products too, engages customers better. Customer support is again an essential to back up the marketing plan to engage. Customers show interest in companies who care for and empower their customers. Marketing programs have to be genuine and companies must not try too hard to please. Consumer intuition and empathy go a long way from the company's side. It is important for a company to give what the customer needs and not just sell. Promotion of any type should never be judged as negative by customers.

In the research paper titled "Consequences of Customer engagement in Service marketing - An empirical exploration" by (Rather et al,2019) the researchers state that companies are continuously seeking Customer Engagement (CE) when they sell to customers. The current study proposes to find out the inter relationship between trust, satisfaction, commitment and loyalty with regards to the hospitality industry. The base of this study is social exchange theory and relationship marketing theory. The hospitality industry has been giving priority to maintaining and building sustainable relationship. Maintaining a brand based psychological and emotional connect is essential for a guest to be a repeat customer. With increasing competition and even changing needs, relationship has become critical for hotels. Practical applications of CE in hotel industry are scarce in the author's opinion. There is relevant literature in the western world and its perspective on CE though study has been conducted in India. This study suggests that there should be managerial intervention and orientation towards build loyalty. The study develops a model and validates the inter relationships among CE. The study investigates / direct relationship between the selected constructs. This study also stresses on the CE construct in an offline context which is seen as an extra contribution. The findings in this study indicate that consumers who are involved in a hospitality brand having more cognitive and affective involvement are likely to continue to engage with the brand. This research provides hospitality marketing managers to develop effective marketing strategies. The connection of loyalty with a specific brand shows favorable repurchase behavior

in customers. The Indian hospitality has to foster CE to retain customers and combat competition.

The CE leads to patronizing and recommendation by guests to other customers. When customers show passion and excitement towards a brand, the prestige of the brand increases sustainably. In turn, the social recognition of the customer inflates. Luxury hotels have a positive brand image that is formed over a period of time. The author adds that there should be good amount of absorption and attention given to a brand by customers. To capture these, the management of the hotel must put out positive information publicity and be accessible to customers.

Participation in CSR programs can show the human and philanthropic side of the brand which engage customers who see it as self-identification with the brand.

Prompt social media handling, user - friendly website will be attractive to customers who see it as an excellent service quality. Hotels must build brand communities to keep 24x7 interaction with customers. Incentives rewards, recognition of guests give hotels to increase their social interaction with the customers. Identification is another important aspect of CE. Solid brand identification must be made to target customer groups and create brand resonance. Over time, many customers associate themselves quite deeply with their hotel brand and see it as an extension of who they are. These customers endorse, recommend and re-patronize the hotel.

CE also influence customer commitment and highly engagement customers show trust in a brand and stay with the brand.

When hotel brands show that they are reliable and prioritize the customer above all, it translates in loyalty.

“Strategic Drivers, Anticipated and Unanticipated Outcomes of Customer Engagement.” by (L D Hollebeek et al,2016) is a research paper in which the authors elaborate on trends seen in engagement research area. They provide an in-depth overview of the specific issues pertaining customer engagement in the journal of marketing management. The paper aims to address the central aspects relating to strategic motivators and expected and unexpected consequences of Customer engagement (CE). The first paper revied explains the theoretical and operational aspects of CE and differentiates the engagement between brand and community. A twenty-two-point scale is created to understand engagement with a number of engagement areas. Important suggestions have grown out of this study.

The second paper addresses the premise of social media buyer brand engagement. Customer participation and co-creation is the highlight of this paper. Co creation has to be rewarded for sustained CE in form of benefits or incentives. The third review, an insurance firm's Face book is the brand is in focus. The regulatory fit theory is studied here as a motivator CE. The paper suggests that this motivator has effects on the psychological makeup of a consumer and firms must promote and prevent effects that exhibit regulatory non-fit type too. It also has been noted that customers display positive, proactive CE behavior which comes out of eagerness and vigilance. The next paper, describes a CE ecosystem, which takes a long look at actions taken by the brand, participative customers and their shopping behaviors. The customers experience follows after brand consumption. At the end, the effect of all the above on brand-dialogue is discussed which is extremely crucial even if it is non transactional in nature. Consumers get affected by brand dialogue to a large extent in online context.

The next paper creates a framework related to online CE with social media brand community. The paper explores personality types of customers who are most likely to engage along with customer perceived value engagement that happens online is explored.

The three types of brand social engagement which make an impact on search engine use and advertising namely affiliation, conversation and response are studied in the next paper where the inferences show that all the above magnify, strengthen the usage and conversion rate when people surf search engines. The effectiveness of the brand increases due to social media engagement and it would be good to have a multi marketing effort.

The last paper puts forth the main motivators and consequences of brand engagement. The conclusion is that if the customer is involved, and participative in a brand that is self-expressive it would have great impact on the CE. The feelings of affection, activation and loyalty are aroused in a customer through the engagement initiative.

According to Curtis N. Bingham, chief customer officer and creator of CCO Roadmap (2019) titled "The six components of a customer engagement strategy" makes a pertinent point that Customer engagement (CE) is to be seen as a well thought strategy in the marketing program of a company. The company must take onus of this

responsibility, be accountable, set goals, have good customer reach and excellent communication mechanism with all its customers, employees and stakeholders.

It is important to devise and efficient strategy and purpose: To do this task, it is important to decide what would be the outcome of customer's role in this strategy. The role of the customer should be defined to co creation, give ideas for innovation, improve to audit system or resolve problems. Every strategy needs a focus. It is also important to find out the collaborative activities you can have with customers.

It is vital to select which activities to prioritize and the firm has the resources to supports them. It is important the firm identifies the most contributive or engaged customers. The customers also act as influencers in C-C context. It is important to have consideration of the fact that customer may expect incentives or mutual benefits which help them invest their time in the brand. The measurement mechanism of CE is crucial and its correct impact on business has to be known. Without that the strategy is not going to last for too long. It should be noted that firms have to be receptive and deliver improvements as per feedback from collaboration with customers. If that is not done CE is limited and short-sighted. Customers will not invest their time and energy after that. As customer engagement is necessary so is employee engagement. Selection of employees is crucial as they drive the engagement efforts with the customers. Offering benefits to employees will keep employees happy and when the internal customer is happy, it is most likely that the external one will be happy too.

In the white paper titled "The impact of a PMS in the guest life cycle" of a hotel company (2018), states the importance of the engagement with guests through the property management tool. A hotel is not only assuring good operations, but also works hard to ace the guest experience on a daily basis. This not only builds revenue but also translates into brand loyalty. The paper focuses on the importance of the Property Management System (PMS) role in the guest cycle crucial stages of pre arrival, arrival and stay of a guest. A PMS not only gets revenue but also minimizes that loss of business. It is critical to manage a guest experience which starts from travel and ends in a hotel for accommodation. Through carefully planned touch points much more revenue is earned besides the room rent.

In the guest cycle, a hotel has the potential to engage guests in opportunities which earn the hotel more room business in near and distant future.

To optimize a PMS and make a purchase decision regarding it, the hotel needs to assess the issues that keep it from earning money. Each property is unique, has demerits which need to be dealt with. A hotel needs to be updated about guest information to capture his/her likes and dislikes serving him/her better. Personalization and customization happen only if a firm knows what customers wish and need. You could depend upon the profile of the customer; add something on in the package to get the customer delighted. When a guest enters a hotel, a new relationship chapter begins. If employees at the reception miss on the request the guest made during check-in it leads to a catastrophe. Non-compliance due to information not taken makes the guest feels unheard. The feeling defeats the importance of loyalty and earning revenues. Communication is critical and can negatively affect the hotel if it is not taken seriously. Use of technology has its own merits and demerits. Guest data breached puts guests in a vulnerable position leading to a financial loss. Inconsistent interdepartmental coordination, poor rating by guests, lack of safety and security protocol is also adds to the dissatisfaction. Resolving the matter and prompt service recovery must be done when the guest is still at the hotel.

In the study titled “The Concept of Engagement - A systematic analysis of the ongoing marketing debate” by (Gambetti et al ,2010) the authors stress that brands constantly need inputs from strategies and mechanisms to evoke / obtain positive responses from customers and regain the customer trust and conviction. Three types of factors play a central / private role in Customer engagement (CE) to build customer brand relationship. Customer related factors deal with current trends, consumption and its importance in value creation. Customers, satisfy their needs, obtain fun and pleasure / satisfaction, appeal to their cognitive and emotional state. They need to self-identify with the brand. Customers want to play an active role in consumption.

The research paper points out the gap between academic and professional marketing communities. The study discusses two basic issues - managerial and the other methodical related to concepts and approaches of CE in academic and professional literature from the managerial aspect CE is discussed in 5 dimensions. Customer - Brand engagement is the most significant one the CE must be oriented through a will throughout brand strategy.

New age consumers need to be connected in a multitasking type of society. They need to be activated through E-related dimensions like co-creation, social sharing, collaborative participation aspects.

Marketers must develop their brand that encourage the use of traditional and innovative media and tools that connect with consumers at all touch points and provide positive experience with the brand.

The academic focus in on the emotional relational dimensions of CE and not focused on the practical applications and managerial CE related issues like return on investment, budget related allocation, related to employees or marketing communication.

The gap between the business and academic must be bridged from general theories to context specific content.

In the research paper titled “The process of Customer Engagement - A conceptual framework” by (Bowden J.L.H, 2009) the author makes a pertinent observation that customer satisfaction alone cannot measure the depth of customer responses to measure. Apart from satisfaction, this study tries to understand role of commitment, involvement and trust to create loyal customers.

The researchers put forth a model that emphasizes customer – brand relationship which is ever-evolving and advocates that the evaluation of service experience must be done with detailing of responses including the affective measures. The model also proposes a means by which the understanding of the customer goals and expectations, also their affective and emotional responses towards the brand or service. When customers are more committed, there is a need for a relation-based approach to manage their journey from initial calculative commitment in the beginning which turns into affective commitment and full / complete engagement. This means the management must have well defined policies and programs which aim to create relational ties of affection between the brand and customer.

The model also draws attention to the fact the pre-consumption states of new and repeat customers are different.

New customers are likely to focus on service experiences. Customer delight happens when a customer gets unanticipated / unexpected levels of service or unexpected extras and this creates affect. This can be used as a medium to develop / create affective commitment among new customers.

For loyalty to be created to a brand, customer has to be managed well through personalized, customized service experience which includes staff rapport / and recognition.

The management must take care of both the segments of customers by creating segment specific marketing strategic to help customers up the ladder of loyalty. Only satisfaction may not be enough to correctly map the idea of engagement and the focus must be to create emotional bonds between brands and customers.

In the paper titled “Management decision the transpiring journey of customer engagement research marketing” by (Islam.J et al, 2016) the researchers put in place a systematic review consists of the original systematic review of Customer Engagement (CE) that looks at understanding of current status of CE conceptualization. CE is a complex multifaceted concept with many dimensions which lie in relationship marketing. The research comes mostly from developed countries. The study also puts forth the favorable outcomes or consequences of CE. Marketers see CE as their brand strategy and an important process to make decision from customer point of view. It is also a measure of firm’s progress and value.

This research identifying the need to explore being the following areas in detail these shows the possibility of the indication to CE differ in different products or services. Exploring the role of employees in who represent the organization. There are many theories around CE but a valid measure of CE is to be found. Longitudinal studies of would be a great source of CE over the years for a firm to get the pulse of their customers in different contexts offline / online CE is seen as a very positive concept through too much of it may result in a customer feeling chased and harassed firms also can segment their customer to find out the predispose to engage and manage different forms of CE. Firm also need to work towards formation of policies and systems to counter the efforts of competitions.

In the study titled “Personality - Based consumer engagement styles conceptualization research propositions and implications” by (HollebeekL,D et al 2019) The authors / researchers establish the concept of Customer Engagement (CE) is a well-known and studies, the study on consumer and their personality traits who engage with brands is unknown. The authors pick 5 main personality qualities and how they engage with brand. This tells us the way consumers with a certain personality would think, feel

which engaging with a brand. The authors study the personality qualities which include introvert / extrovert personality being agreeable, personality who is open to new experiences, a conscientious and emotional stable personality type.

When customers personality styles are known firms can have unique marketing approaches to reach them. The study first establishes personality styles and further how consumers express cognition emotion certain behaviors and how do they react social within a certain personality type affecting the CE with a brand.

Extroverts are likely to establish an emotional customer engagement with a brand than introverts such consumers will have speak more the brand thus WOM.

When consumers are likely to be more agreeable, they would show more positively during their interactions with the brand. Due to this such customers are more likely to exhibit significant value to the co creation activity with brands.

These customers who are willing or open to go for an experience related to a brand it results in better cognition in brand interaction and try newer products / services with positivity.

Conscientious consumers would do a lot of research rationalize and then purchase lower the urge of impulsive purchases. These personality types would find time energy and effort to keep the connection alive with the brand. These customers also look for the utility related information versus a hedonic need to get information. Emotionally stable consumers are positive and less likely to be threatened during brand interactions and less prone to shift from positive to negative CE. Positive individual types have the tendency to interact with well-known brands whereas emotionally weak consumers will help their social brand interaction to only they personally known or identify.

The review titled “A decade of Customer Engagement (CE) research in hospitality and Tourism. A systematic reviews and agenda” by (So et al,2020) is based on secondary data CE research carried out over a span of 10 years. It analyses CE different sectors, conceptualization of CE, antecedents, outcomes, main intermediaries and moderators from 2009 – 2019.

The authors conclude that there are several definitions and conceptualizations of the concept. The discussion is intense about the fact with it is a behavioral or psychological concept or both. Hotel and Tourism researchers used 18 dimensions and 6 approaches to operationalize. Multi-dimensional CE was identified. Most

studies agree that CE goes beyond purchase and CE is used to add customer participation and contribution. Ambiguity is seen considering what constitutes CE. The trend is seen that CE studying have moved beyond customers but the focus also should be shifted to the firm's company perspective and concentrate on the supply side. There is more focus required to bridge CE with strategic decision making and the firm's performance. The research concentrates the CE in hospitality and tourism stems from behavioral motivators. Uniqueness must be adopted when it comes to cultivating CE. Most studies are based on theories and methods to study CE like SEM. There is scope for longitudinal research, or experimental is which is not attempted or is rare in hospitality context.

Research is seen is more prevalent in hotel, restaurant context must be in diverse service areas B2B context must be explored. Study of more culture also can be considered as an influence on CE to find out CE behavior across countries and different environments.

Technological advancement is very important to build CE online to promote co creation of value. Negative side of CE must also be an area to be explored.

In this study "Barriers affecting organizational adoption of high order customer engagement (CE) in tourism service interactions" by (Chathoth, P. K et al 2014) The researchers present the inherent barriers which act as deterrent to the CE process. This paper identifies important barriers under four categories namely consumers, technology, strategy and management culture and structure of the firm. From the data collected it could be deduced that consumers might not give feedback as expected. Private data of consumer and breach of trust leads customers not to give data. Lack of communication between the firm and manager about this perception issue is a roadblock. A consumer may not have adequate about brand or firm standards beforehand and willing to engage only if they knew what was the firm going to provide to them. Guests have different expectations from the brand situated in different geographical contexts. It difficult for hotels to map expectations as the same guest may have different requirement based on geographical location. It is difficult to manage the guest data on account of this fact. In case of this study, there was absence of customer interface which only happened if the guest wanted as per the SOPs. Online feedbacks also are not preferred. These hotels said that the interaction with customers have a structure or a system driven approach. Guest recognition is what

guest wants and these hotels give what is required. Off-line feedback is taken traditionally and not through various technologies available. Absence of consumer interaction platforms can pose as a barrier to CE.

Technological barriers include the lack of innovation. It is difficult to know where, how when and why guests are engaging as it is related to human beings. The rigidity of the hotels posed a threat to the process of engagement. Technology is important but regardless of its presence, human touch matters. Lack of awareness of available technology is another barrier. Lack of technology used in systems and integration in service is not followed in these hotels so an approach is missing from hotels side.

Strategy related barrier amount to managers not using post purchase data to what are the needs and wants which are likely to change defies the use of IT intervention and this would be possible if the initiative of feedback sharing was defined by customer and not the firm.

Brand standardization irrespective of what guest wants or needs also is a problem. Important customers are given preference and are engaged whereas all are not. Control over brand was traditional and the culture in these hotels suggested that it was traditional at its core philosophy. Lack of pro-activeness and consumer orientation was noticed as the hotels only change their system / procedures if they received excessive complaints.

Traditional approach using methods to get guest data through geographic and demographics give the hotels guest data. No scope of individual data and processing guest requests was possible. Sales and Management department was only the way to initiate contact with guests. Profit making only the core motive was of the firm. Ownership led hotels do not want to go beyond the baseline and they decide the level of service, innovation and flexibility of their venture which is autocratic in most ways. Top-down management seemed not helpful for running operation and management of the three hotels seen as a barrier to co creation.

In the paper titled “Customer engagement for evaluating customer relationships in hotel industry by (Rather, R., et al,2017) the authors cover and study the context of evaluating customer relationship towards a brand through customer engagement. This paper studies CE dimensions and customer loyalty in the hotel industry across four / five-star hotels. The CE dimensions reveal the psychological, emotional and behavioral aspects of customers. Customer loyalty is an important indicator of hotel

marketing efforts going in the correct direction. Concentration on these dimensions by hoteliers will promote CE. If the marketing department builds their activities around these dimensions, the customer will play an active part of engagement. This study focuses on generation of new customers and retaining the loyal ones.

In the research paper titled “Factors Influencing Customer Engagement in Social Commerce Websites” (Busalim et al, 2019) the authors encapsulate the factors that influence customer engagement (CE) where the growth of social commerce (SC) which has changed both, businesses and customers alike. Understanding customer engagement behavior in the s-commerce context has become a key competitive advantage for companies that aim to build a customer-centric business. The purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth review of customer engagement studies in the context of S-commerce. The factors that have a great influence on CE are the social, technological and motivational. The researchers present an approach to demonstrate the factors that have the greatest influence on CE behavior. Companies can use the social media better to facilitate customer interaction and user contribution to improve the buyer purchase experience on a mutually beneficial online platform. CE has two perspectives namely psychological and behavioral which result in transactional or non-transactional behavior. Companies must dedicate themselves to relationship marketing. Social presence is the boundary in which customers interact with other customers in S-commerce environment. Social benefits to customers are many, like getting a self- esteem boost, to create an identity forming a group, to interact with each other and also solve problems together. Technical factors include 24x7 interactivity from company like focus on oneself presentation, responsibility of content generation along with service quality that is superior results in customer satisfaction. Focus is a must on the system quality too as the customer must feel like using it regularly. Motivational factors that influence CE behavior include pleasure inducing and utility giving to customer. Hedonic aspects which help the customer to enjoy the shopping, experience satisfaction, and feel the experience. This motivation also has positive impact on repurchase behavior. Companies benefit from customer loyalty, higher online sales and co creation of ideas. The customers get e-word of mouth, participation in the CE process which leads to intention to purchase again.

This paper uses qualitative methods with executives and customers at the center, to find out the scope and nature of customer engagement. The authors present CE as a

vital aspect of relationship marketing. CE is the strength which one exerts to participate in organizations activities or benefaction which are either initiated by the customer or the organization. The researchers put forth that CE is made up of emotional, cognitive, behavioral and social factors which they conducted through a survey with firm executives from a wide range of businesses. The emotional and cognitive factors include feelings and experiences a customer with the brand irrespective of a purchase. The behavioral and social factors include the participation with the brand activities. They also introduce a model of CE, where they regard involvement and participation of existing customers as antecedents of CE and consider trust, value, affective commitment, WOM, loyalty and brand community involvement as the latter's possible outcomes. Relationship marketing contains offensive as well as defensive strategies which are focused more on by firms. Many firms run engagement programs that are to establish engagement which may not result in purchase but to create goodwill, increase brand recall value and positive reinforcement of the brand. When customers meet amongst the brand community there is a strong influence on their purchase decisions. Engagement strategies need to be designed so that customer needs are met and for that the communication with the customer has to be very strong. There are very good outcomes of engagement which are positive WOM, brand loyalty, cross-selling, receiving value for the firm as well as for the customer.

The study titled "An examination of the relationship between customer relationship management quality, service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty – The case of five star hotels" by (Mokhtar et al 2019) centers around that customer's relationship management maintained as a priority provides an impactful positive situation between hotel and their guests. The quality of customer relationship management adds value and hotel sustenance. This continuance of solid customer relationship management practices increases customer satisfaction leading to customer loyalty. The parameters to measure satisfaction are quality service, excellent facilities, quick response to customers, secure environment, professional staff and to deliver what has been promised. The hotel must understand that loyalty will be possible if there is an emotional connection with customers. The trust amongst both parties has to be mutual. Customer satisfaction prompts guests to come back to the hotel as repeat guests and also recommend it to other prospective customers.

Customer engagement Dissertation titled “A scale of consumer engagement” by (Shiri. D. Vivek, 2009.), highlights the different activities or opportunities extended to engage consumers. This research contributes to understand the construct of customer engagement in relationship marketing which studies the intensity of the consumer’s participative and connective role towards the firm offering the activities. This study primarily focuses on B-C context. The research puts forth a conceptual framework of customer engagement. There is a detailed discussion in the paper about the critical elements / points to be included as a part of Engagement from the facilitator of engagement. These can be listed as content, equal participation, dialogue between the company and the consumers. The facilitative role of this firm is of equal importance as the consumer must feel empowered to participate in the engagement process as per his / her will. This affects the consumer experience in a better way. To make an engagement program authentic and effective, consumer empathy and intuitiveness needs to be studied by the company for any engagement process to reach its purpose. The firm also has to take into consideration individual pre-conditions. Customers seek experience from any interaction. The activity to engage must be meaningful for consumers as it is dependent on perception. The employees who deal with customers must have knowledge and atmosphere should be relaxed when dealing with them. Consumers also seek psychological safety of not being judged for their views and opinions. Most consumers are weary of forced purchases and being hounded by communication. Consumers deal / engage better where there is less interpersonal risk involved.

Motivation to engage comes from the fact that, the goal is to get a problem solved or develop of a skill which the customers need hand holding.

Consumers also seek intrinsic and extrinsic values when participating in the engagement process. Intrinsic value includes fun, play, search for aesthetics, ethics, philanthropy, excitement and seeking of variety. Extrinsic value includes excellence which is interdependent with the intrinsic value. This value can influence other outcomes later like goodwill, WOM, connection with the firm / brand.

The paper confirms the fact the firm and customer relationship thrive on experience and not always on exchange. Firms must give managerial approval and attention to customer engagement and not only focus on product center strategies of improving of quality or resorting to low prices. Managers should use a blend of online as well as offline engagement strategies to engage customer at high levels.

“The meaning of Employee Engagement” by (Macey, W.H. et al 2008) is a research article where the authors study the construct of Employee Engagement (EE) and how the meaning of EE is used at different contexts referring to psychological states, qualities and behaviors of employees. The antecedents and outcomes also have been discussed. The authors see the engagement through the lens of satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement, psychological empowerment, positive affect state. Engagement also refers to the individual’s investment in the job and the importance one gives the job. The authors also study the engagement with context to behavior an employee exhibits while at work which includes the efforts, extra time, use of his intellectual abilities and energy at the workplace.

Engagement behavior includes employees taking initiative, having innovative ideas, proactive involvement to contribute and going an extra mile to what is prescribed or accepted. It includes actions which normally includes tasks which go beyond what expected from an employee. Role expansion, proactive behavior and personal initiative are also studied as engagement by the employee in organizational context.

Trait engagement deals with certain traits like conscientiousness, pro-activeness and employees who are internally driven to do tasks.

In the wake of global nature of work and aging workforce, having engaged employees is a key advantage for firm.

If companies get to understand the state and behavioral engagement of employees correctly, they can produce a service for customers which will not be possible for competitors to ignore.

In the research paper named “Hedonic and Utilitarian Drivers of Customer Engagement” by(Zyminkowska.K.,2018) the researcher studies the impact of customer value which falls in two categories - hedonic value which bring the consumer joy / thrill and fun whereas the utilitarian value consists of effective, helpful and functional of the product / service used by the consumer.

The author states these values in conjunction to Customer engagement (CE) through three aspects of customer communication, collaboration and complaints.

The research explains the favorable ends which include customer goals and purposes as a result of CE that ends in behavioral aspects other than purchase. Customer collaboration through customer communication with a brand is stronger in a firm with regards to product innovation than for customer complaints. Hedonic value more

positive impact than utilitarian which is also positively impact by CE. A firm needs to offer hedonistic incentives to encourage consumer participation in the marketing function. Companies need to tweak or adjust to the proper proportion of both indulgent and useful incentives for different markets depending upon the purpose of the product / service.

Hedonic dimension in this context, comprises of emotional and experiential value a customer gets while using the product. Whereas the utilitarian dimension is the economic and functional value associated with product / service in use.

In this article “The key qualities of a strong customer engagement in Customer - Brand Relationship Context.” by (Zainol,Zet al 2016) the researchers’ study is pertaining to assessing the key / important qualities required for a strong CE. The qualities considered here were cognitive, behavioral and emotional leading to overall engagement. The behavioral qualities drivers led customers to be more engaged with the brand followed by emotional and cognitive driven. To attain additional value than overall engagement, customer’s behavioral and emotional responses are key drivers. The authors reveal that firms / companies have to constantly battle brand commoditization and every changing customer expectation. They have to work to build a strong customer brand relationship not depending on getting customers due to price, quality and satisfaction alone. It is important for brands to persuade / convince customer to be engrossed, focused, absorbed and connected with the brand. The study was centered around mobile phone brands which are a highly competitive product due to every changing technology.

Brands have to deal with constant competition and brand switching which is seen in mobile phone brands.

To enhance the connection with the brand the company needs to create sustainable differentiation in offering which customer wants. Uniqueness and inspirational quality of a brand would attract and engage customers which would make them want a better life and feel good about them. Company to keep the customer interest alive in them must provide information that is relevant, interest, worthy and which would generate curiosity in the brand.

In the paper titled “Value get value give – The relationship among perceived value, relationship quality and value consciousness” (Itani et al ,2019) the authors highlight

the imminent role of Customer Engagement (CE) as a vital tool to drive sales and marketing performance especially the hospitality industry.

Many restaurant chains introduce promotional items and encourage customer through their reward programs. These tactics are used to super charge their CE. It is imperative for hospitality firms to operate in the new era where the customer not only participates, co-creates but also engages in business's success.

Social influence is a non- transactional driver of CE. This form of CE is related to marketing strategy to persuade and observing in a social content. Customers differ on their experience and use recommendation, social media, blog writing, rating review etc. to advocate restaurant offerings / products. Restaurants need customer feedback, insight to increase the overall experience. The advancement in customer relationship technology, online /offline communities makes feedback and knowledge sharing better. Feedback is valuable asset to gain advantage over competition to understand specific needs and wants of the customers and customize those needs.

The authors propose a framework where the customer gives back certain benefits of value to the company with knowledge sharing and referrals. The relationship can be nurtured through reciprocity and built on satisfaction; trust and commitment which can be explain the relationship quality.

Value means different to different people and has to be maximized to provide a superior offering to provide a satisfying experience. Customer perceived value dictates the decision making from pre purchase, repurchase and post purchase.

Relationship Quality is very crucial between restaurants and their customers. The relational management (RM) is based on the assumption that the outcomes are positive factor the firm from sustainable point in relationships.

The customer is interested in benefitting from offerings which have a higher customer perceived value. This happens when customers engage more in social influence, sharing of their knowledge and referral behavior. Value consciousness is a hindrance sometimes where firms spend more to woo customers who are likely to demand more resources from restaurants. Restaurants can segment their patrons and then decide how CE is carried out.

The paper "One – Voice Strategy for Customer engagement" by (Singh et al ,2020) adds to the body of knowledge by understanding how service organization can use rich complex interactions with customers through new age machine assisted to

continue CE further. Digital and AI technology has given impetus to strong interaction and engagement with customer. The author put forth the concept of service interaction space where the firm engages with the customers through multichannel modes to keep in touch with them.

“Strategic customer engagement marketing - A decision making framework” by (Alvarez-Milan et al,2018) is a research paper where the authors introduce CE as an initiative made by big companies and used for strategic marketing gains. The premise of this assumption is based on the social exchange theory which is a concept based on the belief / view that relationship between two people is created through a process of where involvement and its economics is measured. The researchers propose a CE marketing skeleton where the discussion revolves around conceptualization, domain and experiential routes. There is a differentiation between absorption and appropriation which is in the control of the hands of the firm and customer respectively / in that order. Engagement value has been covered under two perspectives as interaction and its important as they will ultimately influence purchase decision of end-users and other customers. Realm of CE propagates the firms to provide / give online and offline engagement experiences.

This should depend upon the type of business the firm runs. While considering the CE routes the firm / businesses must consider absorption results for increased efficiency and lower cost whereas appropriation may result in loss of control as customer handles that process of value determination of CE largely depends on intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Customer interactional value with customer directly may be advised for companies who are averse of losing control.

The paper titled “A Meta Analysis of Customer Engagement Behavior” by (Barari, M et al, 2021), goes on to explain that customer engagement behavior has progressed as a made a powerful notion in the marketing landscape. This study reveals that there are two distinct roads / pathways namely organic which highlights the perceived quality and relationship value. The other one being is promoted channel which is functional or experiential led by the firm. Influence value of both these depends on the context, industry type and product type also the cultural context.

The researchers put forth a model that would help marketing managers to devise customer engagement (CE) strategies. They focus on two main types which are

organic and promoted strategies. The organic strategy professes that the firm's long-term relationship with customer forms attitudinal and behavioral engagement. Organic strategy would be responsible to impart quality in the value perceived with customer satisfaction. Social media can be used to enhance the customer perceived value and firm's proposition regarding value. Both, these would be incomplete without enhancing relationship with the customer. Commitment has a direct relation to CE and a detailed plan has to be chalked out to form engagement.

In the promoted strategy, a manager must apply experiential and functional resourcefulness to create attitudinal engagement.

Both these strategies must be combined for an impact. Attitudinal engagement behavior is easier to develop than behavioral engagement. Managers should prompt organic and promoted engagement online and offline both to create emotional bonds.

In service industry, organic strategies are more effective than promoted which is the opposite in tangible / manufacturing industry. Engagement strategy development depends on the culture of the country and what type of industry the engagement is being planned for.

In the paper titled "Engagement Consequences Customer for Firms" by (Żyminkowska, K et al, 2019) the researchers study the effectiveness of Customer Engagement (CE) management tries to understand the potential effects, grasp the prospective / future benefits and threats of CE. The researchers explore the negative or risks associated with CE along with the positives for firms. The paper provides a pragmatic / sensible view on the consequences of CE to provide perception / awareness / understanding how firms / companies could manage CE by being aware of the negative side of CE which arise from consumer in the procedures of participation the firm. Firms have to deal with customer trying to co create a voluntary contribution / suggestion to a firm marketing function which goes beyond financial gain. But the downside, being that customer knowledge may be inadequate or there would be extra information overload. Information could be lost to competition or firm may incur costs to use ideas of customer into practice. In this study it was found that benefits of CE definitely outweigh the risks to firms. Engagement was gauged through customer interactions / communication around the brand. Firms also should be more responsive when it comes to customer complaints. Most frequent activity of firms must include customer collaboration seen in offers of

personalization or organized voting activity, organizing event / public relation practices etc.

In the paper titled “Customer Engagement: Exploring Customer Relationships” by (Shiri D. Vivek et al,2012), The authors use qualitative methods with executives and customers at the center, to find out the scope and nature of customer engagement (CE). The authors present CE as a vital aspect of relationship marketing. CE is the strength which one exerts to participate in organizations activities or benefaction which are either initiated by the customer or the organization. The researchers put forth that CE is made up of emotional,cognitive, behavioral and social factors which they conducted through a survey with firm executives from a wide range of businesses. The emotional and cognitive factors include feelings and experience a customer with a brand, irrespective of a purchase and the behavioral and social factors include the participation with the brand activities. They also introduce a model of CE, where they regard involvement and participation of existing customers as antecedents of CE and consider trust, value,affective commitment,WOM, loyalty and Brand community involvement as the latter’s possible outcomes. Relationship marketing contains offensive as well as defensive strategies which are focused more on by firms. Many firms run engagement programs that are to establish engagement which may not result in purchase but to create goodwill, increase brand recall value and positive reinforcement of the brand. When customers meet amongst the brand community there is a strong influence on their purchase decisions. Engagement strategies need to be designed so that customer needs are met and for that the communication with the customer has to be very strong. There are very good outcomes of engagement which are positiveWOM, brandloyalty, cross-selling, receiving value for the firm as well as for the customer. This study is done to understand the concept of engagement through different groups as focus being the existingcustomers more than potential ones.

“Good, better, engaged? The effect of company-initiated customerengagement behavior (CEB) on shareholder value by (Sander F. et al 2018)The paper talks about the consequences related to firm- initiated CE behavior. It is seen that customers may sometimes shy away from such initiatives which may decrease the market value of the firm. Customer engagement behaviors are very crucial in today’s world. Initiatives

which energize Word-of-mouth(WOM) are viewed better than customer feedback or initiatives on social media.

The authors attempt to study the premise that companies which are small, who do not advertise and work with competitors can create value by stimulating CE and can benefit better than companies who have a strong reputation. CE has changed how firms interact with customers. Firms must be pro-active to initiate and understand CEB first. This paper also studies the financial consequences of firm-initiated CE and its impact. Customer engagement may be prone to negative effects as the findings of this study suggest that market value of a medium size firm decreased considerably. This is due to customers feel they are at risk of these initiatives back-firing. This paper also talks about strategies may and may not work for firm-initiated CE. Positively CE initiatives will help a firm to create value and better customer relationships. Reversely, it may hinder the firm and get negative returns. WOM is important to gain new customers and retain the existing ones. The scope of social media is more in it reach and beneficial monetarily. CE works better where advertising budgets are limited. These increase efficiency and effectiveness and aim for better customer relationships. Managers must be careful to launch CE initiatives and make sure they are sustainable ones as they may back fire if not supported by the operational aspects of the business. According to this study, there are better chances of CE working in B2B context than in B2C and must be designed to counter negative backlash. This study rests on a set assumptions and studies one particular group as stakeholders. The authors suggest research could be done of CE initiatives on the finding out its effect on performance related areas such as Customer Satisfaction, sales and actual shareholder returns. CEI may have a different impact on CEB which may be different than natural CEB making such this behavior staged.'

“Antecedents and an Outcome of Customer Engagement with Hotel Brand Community on Facebook” by (Touni et al 2020) lays central focus of this study to take a detailed look at involvement and brand experience of a customer considering both these as the antecedents that support of customer engagement (CE). This paper investigates quality of brand relationship as an outcome of CE with the Facebook brand community of a hotel. It is crucial for marketing departments of hotels to understand how to engage customers online. This study also helps the readers to understand the antecedents of engaging activities and the benefits or positive

outcomes can be gained from CE. Data was collected from a total of three forty-seven Facebook users who were hotel guests. The causal relationship and results of the research confirm the noteworthy effect of the two antecedents on CE. Reaching out through Facebook has a constructive effect towards strengthening brand experience of a customer and overall positive quality of the brand relationship.

Brand communities (BCs) have become essential and effective marketing strategies which all types of business are using to get in touch with their customers. Facebook, is a major force which has led to the forming of these communities attracting millions. Information about hotel brand communities on social media and the importance of a hotel's brand community relationship and its marketing potential is still largely unexplored. The researchers examine the theoretical model with five constructs of Customer engagement (CE), customer involvement (CI), brand experience (BX), brand reputation (BRP) and brand relationship quality (BRQ). The BX, BRP and BRQ have been studied taking the hotel brand as the focus and the CI and CE have been studied through the BC on Facebook.

The inferences of this study give the readers an important piece of information on how to use the social marketing strategy to develop a hotel brand that is strong. A positive effect of customer involvement and customer brand experience is seen on CE through the brand communities on Facebook. This means, if guests involved with a specific social media channel they will be interested to engage positively with the BCs. The results also showed that when guest participation is high the social media-based BCs can be used to the hotels benefit when customers feel strongly and they attach positive emotions to their stays at the hotel brand.

Another aspect is that if the guests get real experiences during the stay, they engage with the hotel's BC willingly. Brand reputation has a positive influence on the brand relationship quality than just the brand. It would be wise for hotels to build a brand community on social media to create a more comprehensive customer engagement when the customers can be tapped 24x7. These findings reinforce the important role of social media-based BCs as an intermediary between customers' experiences with a hotel brand and their strong relationship with the brand. In sum, the empirical results of the current article support all the propositions of the conceptual model and confirm the drivers and the primary outcomes of CE with hotel brand Facebook communities. This study also highlights the need for introducing the guests to the brand experience and let them share positive comments with potential guests. BC can be important

channels of communication to reach the existing and potential guests. Once the customer brand experience is good, it helps customers to create a bond with the brand. This leads to customers sharing their first-hand experiences on the hotel's social media community and create brand history. This paper assesses the CE with social media BC through three angles namely emotions, cognition and behavior. It also brings forth the observation that offline positive brand experiences lead to more involvement by guests on BC. Brand experience is more powerful in its impact on CE as the experience is what the guests remember most. Hotel traditional marketing strategies have moved on the social media. Adoption of social media will not only help the hotels to build stable customer brand relationships. Hotels have executives to track customer interactions and offers discounts and gifts to guests who have a high level of engagement who can be their ultimate brand ambassadors. Hotels establish excellent CE through posting attractive posts and ensure a bilateral interaction that not only helps to advertise but get real time data about the customer needs. Highly engaged customers are asked for suggestions to feel a part of the brands. The hotel brand benefits in totality starting with its product, service procedures as well as its operations which can be improved with guest feedback. Customers also can meet each other on such a platform along with the brand which creates a strategy to achieve profound CE. Hotel marketers must respond to online queries, initiate dialogue, post content regularly. A superior, unique and memorable experience at the hotel is most crucial to continue CE with a guest. If an experience is emotional as well as rational it creates a competitive edge for a hotel brand. Hotels must develop a brand personality and deliver it to their guests. This personality should have relatable human characteristics. Loyalty programs are another way to build brand relationship with guests. Long term engagement and building a strong brand relationship is what every hotel must aspire.

In the study titled "Consumers Engagement Behavior in Social Media. Do different Brand Categories Matter?" by (Zailskaite-Jakste et al, 2018) the authors that customer engagement behavior can be different and dependent on the brand related content on social media. The paper studies the impact of the CEB on business. The authors explore the impact of the communication of the customer on social media related to brands. This study discusses the customer engagement effect on the brand quality with behavior perspective from customer side.

Engagement behaviors are of two types namely positive and negative seen in customers. Positive level engagement happens when the customer consumes, helps to create and contributes with the brand. Negative level of engagement includes detachment, negative value and unfavorable brand related behavior. The authors suggest that a positive engagement episode has a positive impact on experience with a brand.

In the paper “The Customer Engagement Ecosystem by (Maslowka et al, 2016) the authors propose a conceptual model that includes brand actions. This paper focuses on Customer brand experience, Shopping Behavior, brand consumption and brand dialogue behavior. Interactions between these elements, cause a reaction not only to the customer but all the players and reflects the inter-connective character of today marketing environment. This paper also highlights non purchase behavior of consumers.

Digitalization has outdated the earlier old marketing commerce. Consumers are observers and brand initiated controlled marketing is fading. They are not uninterested or casual while interacting with other consumers and media. This new customer behavior inspires brands to create with customer and family and friends. In huge data and digitalized world, CE is a relevant concept. Disparities and different views of different authors on CE prompt the following to introduce three ideas. Current environment of brands operates dynamically; there is real time talk about relationship between C-B-C-C contexts. There is an observation by the authors that there is lack of knowledge to identify customer engagement behavior in different brand categories.

Brand Action is required from company from initial product development stage to final selling. Through this action the consumers can be influence by adding current needs and create new ones. Brands utilize their own media channel or paid media or earned media. WOM and Public relations influence / motivate behavior. Organizing contest, ask online reviews are where customer's opinion is asked. In earlier days, brands did not start a conversation, only persuaded to buy and created awareness. Now, customers initiate the messages to the firm, media and other consumers. Experiences include the thoughts, feelings an individual has for a brand. Then a person feels right the emotional motivation increases towards the brand. The shopping activity is based on how brands direct their actions towards the customers. Shopping is seen as an enjoyable experience which may not result in purchase. Bargaining,

window shopping, finding a product online and going to a store is also an engagement activity on the part of the consumers towards brands. Firms must initiate a brand dialogue with the customers which can happen online and offline both. Online tends to be more effective as it happens in a highly networked space, targets all involved and strengthens engagement. Two types of effects of consumption and loyalty get created. Some customers read and some participate leading to engagement.

In the study “Customer Engagement in the process of service provision by (Fonferik K M et al,2019), the authors focus on CE in process of service provision (SP). Feature of service that it can be provided if guest participates in the process of service providers. It is better customers are involved in the service as it will quality be better. Service providers can propagate the customer to engage in SP so that there will be positive relational outcomes. When customers participate in the SP including cognitive, emotional and physical behavior they not only experience service but also get an opportunity to perform CE in the process of service provision.

This paper addresses the antecedents of CE in the participation of the SP and that affects relational outcomes namely Customer satisfaction and WOM. The researchers consider Customer engagement Quality as the antecedent of CE from the side of the supplier and study the effects of CE with CS and WOM. From customer’s point of view, it can be said that if the positive the CEQ is the CE is high when a customer experiences many episodes of CEQ in providing of the service. Customers are likely to have higher CE in the most current episode. The researchers bring forth the concept of value in use (VIU) which is an important promoter outcome. The most current episodewith service providersshould be given attention to the relational outcomes which would give information about a customer’s engagement.The firm then knowstype of customerand how he/she has to be influenced. Constant positive CEQ leads to CEwhere service providers must concentrate more on positively on perceived service expenses. Training frontline employees to provide better CEQ must be imparted and they must be involved in this process of engagement consciously.

In the paper titled “Customer Engagement: Conceptual Domain, Fundamental Propositions, and Implications for Research” by (Brodie et al,2011) the authors give importance to the topic of customer engagement. The paper studies the theory surrounding this concept of Customer Engagement (CE) in conjunction to relationship

management and service dominant (S-D) logic. The authors put forth five fundamentals to explain or refine the concept of CE. CE is based on interaction and co-creation of value which is an important aspect for firms marketing their business and servicemanagement. The paper encapsulates engagement content in several fields like sociology, psychology, education and CE in marketing content has been elaborated discussed.

The authors put forth 5 themes which led to a definition of CE. CE reflects customer experience with the brand. The CE takes place when there is a frequent process of relational exchange to create value. CE exists in the network of exchange between supplier /companies / firms and the customer. CE is a multi-dimensional concept. CE outcomes are tied with specific situations leading to varied and complex CE levels. The authors discuss words like participation and involvement of the customer to suggest that interactivity and co-creation are essentially a part is CE process. The customer has to go through stage of absorption where he/she concentrates cognitively with a thought about self-gain while interacting with a brand or firm. Then after the initial step, the customer finds a sense of oneness with the firm displaying his /her dedication which slowly amounts to the emotional stage. After the customer is happy with the services or products of the firm, the stage of interest with energy follows. This translates into interaction between the firm and customer giving it the behavioral aspect. The authors conclude that the scrutiny of most literature before this paper led them to the realization that all discussion about engagement was in the service marketing context. They point out words like co-creation, solution finding, utilization was expressed to show interaction between business to customer context. They further elaborate on the customer engagement is closely linked with the customer experience which includes collaboration, emotion and creativity from the customer's side towards the firm.

In the paper titled, "Customer Engagement-Buyer Seller Relationship and Social Media" by (CM Sashi et al,2012) the author explains the arrival of the interaction online has led to several firms being interested is pursuing CE. The social media has presented thousands of opportunities for firms to practice the art of engagement and their customers. The paper puts forth strategies for CE. The paper helps to alleviate the understanding of CE by gathering views from business. It further finds the link of CE with the marketing concept and finds out a strategic focus on customer needs to

improve products. The authors also present the customer engagement cycle, development and structure for CE. They define the stages of this cycle. This structure explores the degree of relational exchange and emotional bonds consumers have with the sellers and relationships that get created due to transaction making them delighted and loyal followers they progress in the stages of CE cycle. A right mix of digital offline methods can be employed to facilitate the concept and provides the foundation for strategy to satisfy customers.

The study titled “Customer Engagement - The Need of the Hour” (Bansal,R.,2019) where the author examines the concept of CE principles and process of online strategies and trends of CE. The review talks about engagement practices which must be strong enough to drive business result. Social media and IT will play an efficient role to drive engagement. Focus should be on interaction and adapting new ways to think about the relationship of data and performance of the firm.

(JanaBowden, 2009) in the study titled “Customer E - A frame work for Assessing Customer Brand Relationship - The case of the Restaurant Industry Australia” discusses the observation the customer - brand relationship develops through multiple service experiences. The authors observe there is limited differentiation is made to between new and old customers about the service evaluation.

Historically, customer satisfaction is the main standard to evaluate / assess / judge / estimate service experiences and forgoes the other equally important aspects like involvement trust affective and calculative commitment. The premise of this study is to understand the brand customer relationship to engagement with the brand and how loyalty is the outcome to the brand with the restaurant industry as the focus. Dining experience of customers bring about inference that reveal that the part mediating factors play differ among new and repeat guests. The management can identify how the relationship between the brand and customer can be managed well. This paper also suggests suitable strategies to improve the service provision and experience. New customers base their initial evaluations on their perception of benefits and rely on a calculative process for evaluating method of service performance about a brand based on the relational benefits like rapport, empathy, affiliation and thus satisfaction alone cannot be a requirement to induce ongoing loyalty.

In the paper titled “Effects of customer engagement behavior” by (Zyminkowska, Ket al 2017)The authors focus on Customer engagement behavior (CEB) which has developed in the marketing context. In spite of this advancement, it is still under studied to get in-depth explanation into specific outcomes of CEB. The authors attempt to study the CEB outcomes at the firm or organization level.

They propose a model on firm level performance effects of CEB for effective management. In this paper they identify the effects in detail of CEB for a firm. The researchers also touch on the use of CEB and its effects in marketing management process. The firms have to be proactive to manage CEB and assess effects using a mechanism which would be integrated with other marketing metrics to help in decision making about the customer database/ in hand.

The firm must also develop certain capabilities and resources to manage CEB like effective information systems to spread customer knowledge or create platforms to invite and stimulate engagement behaviors.

Firms must have incentives passed to develop CEB and motivate customers to engage in non-transactional behavior like greater information about the brand or reputation created to be associated with brand social benefits. Economic benefits firms should have instant service recovery and attention given to negative CEB by empowering frontline employees.

The firm should modify the marketing management functions to sense, resource, realize and learn in order to maximize the CEB effects. Proper evaluation of the CEB effects is crucial at each stage, CEB belief refers to customers as active participants in value co-creation and customer involvement in product development and innovation. CEB must be studied as an integral part of marketing management and the CE concept cannot be kept elusive from the effective management issues.

“Engaging Customer for Loyalty in the Restaurant Industry: The Role of Satisfaction, Trust and Delight” by (Bowden et al, 2013) in the paper, the authors emphasize the importance of establishing durable relationships between the customers and service provider. Customer loyalty is earned through trust, customer delight, and involvement in context of the service provider / within the service relationship. The service experience also contributes to the effects of these determinants on loyalty. This paper brings to the fore that prominence of these determinants towards the loyalty is significantly on the basis of the customer’s relationship or experience alone.

The paper helps to understand strategic implications for restaurant owners who mostly depend upon satisfaction alone as the metrics to measure loyalty.

The paper emphasizes the belief that in addition to satisfaction other traditional relational determinants like trust, commitment and involvement customer delight also is related to customer loyalty. This paper addresses the gap in the high-end restaurant industry about the consumption stage moderates the relationship of the above constructs to loyalty customer satisfaction is pivotal in buyer-seller / customer - seller / customer - service. It is the outcome of pleasure when an episode of consumption leads to fulfillment. It also is an outcome of positive past service encounters. The results proved that satisfaction with all these constructs was stronger than the direct relationship between satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer delight emerges having significant effects on loyalty involvement leads to positive influence perception of trust in the service provider. A customer has to be ready to psychological commit to purchase decision to take him / her towards the loyalty.

In a high-end restaurant scenario which is the premise of this paper, compellingly finds that the consumption stage doesn't influence the loyalty whether customers are new or repeat ones. Trust can be established as a strategy for the very first-time consumption happens in customer service context / area.

In study titled "Enhancing Customer Engagement through Consciousness" (Itani, S et al 2019) the authors acknowledge the significance of creating an engaged customer base for a firm. The authors suggest that this awareness should be used as a foundation and belief / ideology to create a meaningful / consequential customer experience. The firm / service given / provider which have such beliefs, have higher purpose and value throughout the organization and can heighten the benefits to its employees, investors, customers suppliers the environment and the community. Firms can achieve deeper connection with regards to CE and create emotional connections and find an identity with customer based on a definite goal and values. Firms can enhance / elevate their customer experience by three engagement level in hierarchy of customer experience, emotional connection and an identity which is shared by both firm and customers in the opinion of the authors they propose pillars of this foundation of the building of CE are purpose, values, leadership and corporate culture

and involving all stakeholders. This approach will get companies to enhance their CE but also service providers / retailers to devise define their business strategies.

Consistent reconfirmation of values and purpose through retailer actions show conscious retailer represents greater than profit / revenue. The highest level of engagement is whencustomer share personal values, understanding acknowledge the emotional connection with the brand. This type of engagement induces the customer to share ideals and vision of the retailer though loyalty and customer become champions for the firm.

A customer may provide himself as his social identify, get recognized with his association with a brand which stands for something unique in their purpose and values. Enhanced consciousness also leads to employees to play a major role in CE and conscious retailers must devote time and resources to train employees to create a fun filled work environment where employees see long term career opportunities reduction in turnover rates. Cross training also enhances the skills of employees as will be beneficial to the firm. Conscious retailers are vocal for local; they source consciously and involve communities which in turn result in elevated emotional connection with customer.

The study “Enhancing Employee Innovation three CE, The role of Customer Interactivity Employee Effect and Motivations” by (Grewal, D et al 2017)where the authors focus their attention on the investigation of the procedures underlying the relationship between employee and customer related to the interactivity particularly. This study involves hotel employees their innovative behavior which is a result of this interactive give and take with guests.

The authors concentrate on the hotel industry, studying the positive affect role of interactivity along with employee motivation to exhibit innovation behavior.

The Stimulus – Organism Response framework believes the external environment has contains material or stimuli to affect a person’s internal state. This assumption leads to behavioral responses in hospitality context. This framework has been considered to find out the relationship between service provision and service delivery. Interactivity can result in reciprocal communication, customer’s role in service development, problem solving with the service provider. Web interactivity also acts as a social stimulus which influences interaction to purchase. This interactivity leads to customization of services when frontline staff interacts with customers to tend to problems or complaints. This interaction promotes information and knowledge

sharing, better understanding of needs and preference of guests creating innovation solutions. Employee Interactive Behavior (EIB) is the Response of the S-O-R model. Customer interactivity also induces a feeling of positive affect which is a state where a person feels enthusiastic and attentive. This positive affect (PA) is considered as a more transient or present state feeling where people have positive and moods which helps to solve problems, be flexible to ideas and help performance. This positive affect would help employees to gain professional recognition, help their careers also encourage feelings of happiness and having a positive psychological effect on employees.

The study elaborates the customer interactivity (CI) influences EIB through psychological mechanism of PA, intrinsic motivation (IM) and extrinsic motivation (EM). Hotels should maximize these two-way interactions / communications throughout the service process. (Before during and after stay) and identify critical touch points for CI. Hotels must have definite service protocols in place to ensure two-way interaction liketimely handling of feedback of customers, take continuous efforts for improvement of staff if required. Incentives and rewards recognition must be given to employees as a part of motivation. Employees have to be empowered allowed / to take decisions for joint solving of problems.

Focusing on skill development, communication of employees must happen judiciously / continuously. Better engagement strategies must be a consideration for employees. Hotels should foster to have an environment which satisfies the IM and EM of employees. EM is more powerful as financial incentive come due to performance, a good rewards and benefits system must be in place. Hotels must have a culture of accepting employee feedback to their personalities or qualities to add to building a work team which is positive in all respects. PA plays an important role in CI and EIB. Hotels must encourage teamwork and keep employee morale / satisfaction high. Hotels must recruit employees who have positive and out-going attitude.

2.3 Business Strategy:

The paper “Marketing analysis and strategies of High-Quality hotels” by (Y Wang, 2019), highlights the need for hotels to recognize that guests prefer new latest brand offerings and are interested in personality base products and services which escalate a guest self-worth and experience. The premise of this paper is about boutique hotels in Chinese market and how they are popular with business customers

and high-income groups. The author propagates the need for hotels to have a long-term strategic relationship with customers. The service environment must be made strong by offering good value for money. Staff of the hotel also carry the hotel's image forward and make sure there are no delivery failures. A dot marketing approach should be followed to look at each guest needs and offer personalized products and services. Marketing strategies must vary according to segment of guests.

In the research paper titled "Strategic business practices and performance of hotels in Eritrea" by (Gituma et al, 2019), the authors state the hotel sector is a vital element of the tourism industry. It is the supplier of other tourism services and its performance is crucial. To meet this expectation, hotels employ the use of business strategies to gain the competitions edge. The paper emphasizes the fact that there has to be a deliberate approach to integrate business, marketing and strategic plans.

A hotel's performance is also linked to external as well as internal factors elaborated in this research. Such strategies, when in place lead to efficiency and effectiveness in day-to-day operations. These practices fulfill the organizational goals. The focus area of this paper, are small hotels in a small African developing country. Strategic business practices include giving guest in a hotel an experience he cannot forget. While assessing the performance of the hotels, the findings suggest that competitive pricing; product differentiation and employee training have a significant effect on performance. A hotel must train staff to match the changing habits of guests. The hotel must have continuous innovation and marketing research going on. Hotels also need to assess their core areas / competencies. Corporate branding is an area which must be identified to establish a brand identity. The authors put forth that if strategic business practices are competitive, pricing, product specification, corporate branding, product differentiation and employee training are a must to sales growth and profits.

In the research paper titled "Formulation of business strategy and implication on marketing strategy in JanjiResort,Manado"by(Luviana Y, 2020) the author of this paper, determines the variables in a SWOT analysis to find out the firm's position in the market. The author states that strategies get redundant must be reviewed and tested to the continuously changing business environment. The internal and external factors have an influence on the strategies and must be examined carefully. The author uses matrix for the evaluation of both above factors. It is suggested that every

hotel must review their SWOT at regular intervals to keep revenues high and sustainable. Regular audit can give accurate results and strategies of business and marketing can be upgraded around the findings.

The external environmental analysis can report the list of opportunities where the company will benefit and threats where the company needs to be careful. External factors include economic trends, power of political, social, cultural demographic environment, customer attitudes, customer's involvement in the firm, value of the employee or customer influence on strategy, use of latest technology. This information can help a firm to improve products. Lastly competition has to be understood perfectly and profitability of the firm depends upon this survival. Combating the competition is a crucial part of strategy formulation.

Internal factors include the strengths and weakness in the functional / operational areas of a business. An audit must to be assessed correctly management functions must be clearly defined. Financial strength is regarded as a point of measurement against competition. Research and development department has to be involved for product development strategies. Employee and managerial performance improvement have to be treated as crucial right from the beginning.

The company should create a list of critical success factors from the external and internal environment and build strategies on them.

In the research article titled "Service innovation and customer choices in the hospitality industry" by (Victorino et al 2005) the authors discuss the influence of creation of new or development along with operational strategy. They also try to understand the aspect of innovation has on customers and their choice with content to hotel industry. The findings suggest that service innovation has importance when people make a selection of type of lodging which impacts the customer choice the most. The study brings forth that leisure customer are more influenced by amenities that are innovative and full of leisure activities whereas business customers look for amenities and facilities like conferencing spaces, free WI-FI connectivity, business-center etc. This in-depth understanding of customers based on their choice related to innovation can help hotel to personalize and customize the offering to the minutest detail. The innovations must be able to enhance service differentiation and also earn the firm revenue at the same time. In hospitality context, hotels must make the most of technological advancement, focus more on customer preferences, quality and

interface to stay competitive in the ever-changing environment. It is important to role that guests choose to patronize hotels that give a fair value for money they spend.

Integration of service and marketing concepts must fulfill the preferences of guests. Aligning these at an operational level is required but to understand market preferences is the earlier step before adding new services or innovations. The authors list down the innovation in hospitality as boutique hotels, use of information technology(IT) such as chat bots, robots, temperature and lighting control from the smart phone, self-check-ins interactive devices in the room, customization services in another innovation in service. Though these observations come with an important after-thought,that innovation offerings on paper must be practically and operationally doable. Customers ask, seek value and make a decision. A hotel has to examine the decisions made by hotel guests and create strategies that match with these preferences result in a profitable and sustainable operational strategy.

In the paper, “Revisiting the link between business strategy and performance: Evidence from hotels” by (Gonzalez et al, 2018)where the authors present a view about the importance of a business strategy related to the performance of a firm, in this case, hotels. They offer to consider that strategic actions of a firm are influenced by the firm assets. In a hotel, the intangible resources such as goodwill, reputation, culture, management style, brand image have a positive effect on sales and market performance. Innovation differentiation strategy also helps to increase sales as these include the key areas of bookings and sales / marketing where innovation takes place at a greater frequency. In many hotels, innovation and marketing strategies can be aimed to offer quality by raising the prices, it is worthy to note that a customer may still purchase the product as he is not price sensitive. Seasonality of the hotel industry is a reality and hotels should offer discounts during low demand periods. Major technological innovations are constantly happening in the hotel sector;therefore, it must be seen whether the hotel can adapt to them. Also, strategies regarding pricing, variations as per product and service offered must be clearly spelt out as customer must not get confused.

In the paper “Social CRM as a Business Strategy” by (Woodcock et al,2011) the authors state that marketers of any business are working in very trying times. Never have they been so close and relevant to engaging with customers. Social Media(SM)

has helped to maintain customer relationship management (CRM) to very large extent. This integration is beneficial to companies as they are centered on increasing customer engagement and helpful to drive business performance. Financial benefits to a firm continue through the entire customer cycle from acquisition, retention, value development and managing to keep costs down. The inputs gained from customer behavior helps to drive benefits throughout the value chain. This integration may face hurdles which are namely organization has to be ready logistically; this may result in over hype or over expectation from customers and firms alike. If managing this project is not given careful conceptualization the project may fail.

Social media has connected the world like never before and it is of visible importance as consumers speak to not only the firm but also other customers of the brand. These conversations are about thoughts, opinions, and experiences about the brand. Consumers are becoming powerful. The control of the brand - consumer relationship is now in the hands of the customer.

Brand marketing is all about listening, serving relevant content and accumulating trust of consumers. Customers of all ages are interacting online with SM content. A customer can read a blog, leave a comment or read the message board. It is seen that ninety percent people only view content nine percent provide a comment or review and one percent create brand content. Social media customer relationships management sees the convenience of the customer to engage wherever and wherever. It provides customers with the personal experience, keeps them informed interested or even entertained. After the brand understands the customer, it customizes for him/her. Many companies collect customer data but do not really know how they are feeling acting or thinking which is an obvious deterrent in the process of customer engagement.

This research is about Kenyan hotels titled “Brand image as a determinant of customer loyalty in selected Nairobi hotels” by (Akunja, 2020) studies the relationship between brand image and loyalty of patrons. The study further propagates the importance of focus on tangible aspects of the hotels, employee – guest interactions, to find measure to sustain a corporate image versus their competition, retain loyal customers and attract new ones. Hotels must create awareness about their offerings and sustain an accepted image to begin with. Loyalty develops when customers repurchase longer and regularly. Loyal guests tend to purchase in spite of

rising prices and less likely to shift to competition. Hotels have experience to give and relationships are formed on continued usage. It must be noted that branding influences brand value.

A delightful experience is created to a customer highlighting the brand's image. Positive word of mouth (WOM) has a positive effect on an image of a brand. Guests should feel looked after by receiving personalized services regardless of their spending on the brand. Brand uniqueness largely contributes to the building of a brand image. A unique brand image also cuts through the competition by its image of providing product differentiation. A brand image is significant in creating and maintaining feelings of positive recollection in the mind of the customer. It is beneficial to create a brand image which helps to win loyalty.

2.4 Customer satisfaction:

In the paper titled "Antecedents of customer satisfaction" by (Leinkumar, 2019) explores the four dimensions which are important to arrive at customer satisfaction which is at the center of the banking industry in Sri Lanka. The author identifies service quality, value perception of customer, trust of customer and image of the bank to play as the key areas which lead to an affirmation relation to customer satisfaction. Service quality needs to be monitored seriously due to competition and customer expectations. Offering benefits to customers, banks must have an image which is customer centric and one that customer must want to associate with. Customer confidence will also be helpful for more customers to engage with banks leading to consumption of more services.

In the paper titled "Impact of E-service quality on Customer satisfaction and Customer engagement behavior towards luxury hotels" (VO,N.T.Chovancova et al, 2020), the authors discuss about the website quality of luxury hotels and their importance in attracting guests, create an impression, induce engagement behavior and create satisfaction.

A hotel website is gaining importance as a booking and information tool for guests who wish to transact with a hotel. The service quality of a hotel website is being scrutinized by guests. It should be noted that the authors feel that the system service quality and information quality measures the significance of customer perception. This study also makes an addition of the role of trust in the e-service quality

components. When excellent, the degree of satisfaction goes up. When the hotels are aware of the guest needs, interest, demand, emotions and behavior they can make the booking process more successful by leading content and creativity on the website. This it leads to repeat customers. Performance of the website is the key. If it is good more purchases happen. It is a tool to drive high yield and stand tall in the competitive market. The website information and interface must function well. This is particularly true as in E-commerce the customer cannot see, inspect the items before purchase. To chase customer involvement in hotel website information must be accurate.

The paper titled “The improving of Customer Satisfaction (CS) developing a service triangle approach” (Bahri et al,2020) has the authors study the service quality approach and introduce a triangle model. According to them, Satisfaction gets affected by perceived quality and influences future purchasing behavior. The service quality factors on CS differ in different service industries. The premise of this research is education, its quality and derivation of CS from it. Institutions offer education, collaborate and get also quality assurances from certified agencies in the world. The authors propose a service triangle which is an interactive model of service management which explains the relationship of institutions and users. Satisfied customers impact the firm’s revenue. It is the major outcome of a marketing strategy going right. This study introduces two aspects of service design and conformance to explain the relationship between quality and emotions of a customer. The SERVQUAL model measures the difference between expectations and customer perception. It taps on five factors of service quality namely reliability, assurances, tangibles, responsiveness and empathy. The model, the authors propose have three elements of service strategy, service strategy (through service people) and service system. To maximize customer satisfaction, it is important to provide highest possible level of service so as to meet customer perception. In a business, people expect the fulfillment of what is promised. It may be visible through infrastructure, technology, performance of providers’ reliability of employee knowledge and solve service issues. Responsiveness, assurance and empathy in case of resolving of problems in an understanding manner.

Service strategy is to create a simple mission and vision. Both the service providers and users must be clear about what is offered through a service framework and to get

satisfaction through main and support services. Reliable service system needs to be established.

The study titled “Customer satisfaction and loyalty in the hotel industry: The Mediating Role of Relationship Marketing (PLS Approach)” is a work by (Al - Msallam et al, 2016) where the authors of the study concur that relationship between guests and hospitality brand is based on trust and commitment. They identify factors like affective and calculative commitment, trust and customer satisfaction result in customer loyalty. The hotels must understand that the nature of this relationship must be permanent and intense for the success of strategies.

Brand Trust can be developed with a clear understanding and strategizing to create a sound reason for guests to return back to the hotel. When hotels develop a relationship, they not only secure their position with respect to competitors but also stand to gain commercially.

This research titled “Comprehending customer satisfaction with hotels: Data analysis of consumer generated services” by (Li, H., et al, 2020) understands the effect of hotel qualities on customer satisfaction by taking into account the segmentation of guests. This study also takes into account the star ratings which may contribute to customer satisfaction. The study divides the factors into basic excitement and performance inducing factors leading to customer satisfaction. Concept of inducing delight must be the focus.

The basic factors include five important qualities which must be a part of customer’s assessment to define a customer experience and satisfaction. Guests felt that the accommodation service, location, cleanliness and price should be prioritized to understand satisfaction. Luxury hotels (4-5 star) are known for the above features and must provide all to satisfy the expectations. It is observed that domestic as well as international guests would have the same expectations as per this particular category and similar rated hotels.

According to rating of the three factors change where cleanliness and price fairness would be basic factors for economy hotel though location acts as a performance factor. To induce delight in customers, room quality is on the top place followed by service and price fairness (value) for guests of domestic origin. International guests rate hotel service quality to be the most important factor to delight them followed by room and price fairness.

The paper brings forth an important observation that these factors can change are different based on type of customer segments and star ratings or category of hotels. Guests always have preconceived expectations from a branded hotel especially if it is a star rated one and hoteliers must have different strategies to achieve customer satisfaction according to segments of guests. Every hotel, according to its rating must suit their business strategies for their category of guests.

“Customer satisfaction, service quality and perceived value: An integrative model” is a study by (Tam, 2004) where the author studies the relationship between satisfaction of customers, quality of service and perception of the value concept of customer and their association of these with post purchase behavior. The study focuses on the restaurant industry as the premise of study. The authors discuss the age-old belief being partly true that satisfied customers are the ones most likely to repurchase and speak about satisfaction experiences to others. They give importance to the understanding of the perceived value which is crucial than service quality and more away to a competitor. Pricing plays an important factor in most purchase decisions. Before the purchase, customers perceive that price is an indicator of the quality and accordingly, expect service. Services lack the tangibility aspect before a customer purchase and experience, its price is deciding factor. Firms must exercise caution in promoting the reduction in prices and communicate the value which will be associated with this price to customers. To counter competition firm must strategize to increase the customer perception of value of a service and tell customer that these include monetary and non-monetary benefits which can be a measure to perceived value. When perceived value proposition is fulfilled by a firm it definitely results in repeated purchases.

In the research paper titled “Customer needs and customer satisfaction” by (Rehman et al, 2016), The authors elaborate the importance of a unique selling proposition which makes a business successful. They note that USP can change or adapt according to type of customer, market situation and needs of the customer. A customer is at the apex of the firm’s business and must get excellent customer service via recognizing their needs. Customer requirements fall in three categories what they typically want, what they expect and those they are delighted to receive. To believe

that a customer experience should be the focus for the customer being satisfied is of paramount importance for leading him / her to brand loyalty or retention.

The paper titled “Customer satisfaction measurement in hotel industry - content analysis study” by (Holijevac et al, 2020) explores the topic of measurement of customer satisfaction pertaining to the hospitality industry. Service is a factor which has been a critical factor / facet in achieving customer satisfaction. This has an influence on performance of a brand and behavior of the customer. Customer preference evaluation can be easily asked to customer via different tools. Many hotels unaware or do not utilize their potential. These tools can be incentivized to entice customers to use them. This paper focuses on guest comment cards to measure how guests rate their level of satisfaction. An online feedback form is important to get real time analytics for understanding the importance of satisfaction even if guests don't have the time to fill the form in person.

In the paper titled “Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: The role of customer satisfaction and image” by (Kandampully et al, 2000) attempts to identify the relation between customer loyalty preconditions for it to exist which are customer satisfaction and the hotel image in the customer mind. The authors focus the research on hotel chains where loyalty serves as a lifeline for the sustenance of a hotel.

The study suggests that housekeeping department contributes to the customer satisfaction most followed by reception, food and beverage and price. Customer lends to repurchase and recommends the hotel which has an excellent image which equals to presumption that it provides a promise to provide quality goods and services. It is crucial also that image is dependent on the operations and seven Ps of marketing through it should be noted that all may not have a significant influence at the same time on loyalty. Quality improvement can be achieved by upgrading services in rooms and give continuous training to housekeeping staff. A hotel can offer value consistently through offering personalized service. Hotel managers need to remember that loyalty is time specific and not permanent. This relationship with customer needs constant nurturing.

In the paper titled “Customer satisfaction and its measurement in hospitality enterprises” by (Pizam, A., et al,) The authors state the customer satisfaction is

extremely important for business survival in corporate context. Customer satisfaction is the apt determinant to understand the quality of product or service deliverance. For this to happen, constant improvement in goods / services, customer expectation awareness and maintaining of high standards is a must for any firm. Customer satisfaction is important as it directly influences repeat purchase and positive recommendation through WOM. Customer satisfaction is seen as the cheapest form of promotion. It is important for a hotel to institute customer management program (CSM) to check whether the extent of goods and services reach the customer needs or expectations. This serves as an index to measure quality of service for which knowing of customer perception is vital customer orientated hotels focus a culture that strives to retain customers and satisfy current and repeat customers. Target groups of customers can be identified and serviced according to their needs and wants. Customer complaints must be dealt without wasting time. Constant feedback system must be engaged with guests.

Satisfaction measurement through important fails to achieve the goals or objectives a company sets for itself. Reasons being numerous ranging from hotels not taking action after analysis, hotels not knowing current satisfaction levels of customers, satisfaction data does not coordinate with performance, economics success may not be got even if customers are satisfied. The hotel must employ methods of measurement which are designed properly, carried out properly, analyzed which can result in the hotel offering a supervisor quality product to its guests.

In the case study titled “Assessment of customer satisfaction in a five -star hotel - A case study” by(W.M.K.K. Karunaratne et at, 2010) here, the authors attempt to test the five angles of service quality in a hospitality context. They make customer satisfaction as a key performance indicator and apply the SERQUAL model considered were Tangibility Empathy, Responsiveness, Assurance and Reliability. The results indicated that customers chose the tangibility, staff responsiveness and assurance the dimensions contributing to the satisfaction. The paper states that different customers their knowledge about the five star hotel standards influence their expectation. These service gaps can be identified and rectified and improvement in performance can be achieved. The customers felt that the remaining two dimensions of reliability and empathy were not satisfactory. The authors conclude that customers culture religious beliefs and knowledge about what to expect from a five star hotel

impacts the customer satisfaction. Training of staff providing of latest technology, resources and facilities will help hotels to follow excellent internal communication and set a service environment which is seen as culture not just a procedure or practice.

The paper titled “A qualitative model for customer behavioral decision and satisfaction in the hospitality industry” by (Chetta et al, 2017) the authors investigate the growing importance of using qualitative data from customer content via social media to understand the intentions perception and outcomes. In reality, the customer satisfaction in hospitality is created through experience sharing reviews about product or services or social media by customer. This has led other customers to be cautious and make more accurate buying decisions. Information is passed through WOM or e-WOM which is a meaningful way to help customers. This information also impacts the final consequences of a firm.

Social media provides firm with an outlet to engage consumers and lead discussion in a formal way to achieve the goals of the firm.

This research discusses the difference in what customers expect and perceive as service. The authors found the language is used as a key criterion to measure satisfaction overall. Most common words used in conjunction to satisfaction were courteous staff, location, beach, view, service and time. Negative perceptions were seen when price, room quality and amenities were discussed.

“An investigation of the effect of online consumer trust on expectation, satisfaction and post expectation” by (Kim D.J 2012) the paper has the author study and understand the co relation between constructs of trust, satisfaction, expectation and post expectation of customers in the online purchasing activity context. This framework draws inspiration from three theories and maps the pre purchase to post purchase phases and establishing the importance between all the above constructs leading to customer satisfaction (CS) and repurchase. Trust and perceived usefulness expectations pre purchase once fulfilled after purchase leads to CS and expected usefulness is attained leading to further purchase. Firms need to remember that if there is a trust breach or failure of perceived value after purchase customer would lose interest in the company. Consumers move ahead from one single transaction to cementing / building an ongoing relationship which brings more stability to the business.

This is a longitudinal study where the findings suggest that trust and expectation of a consumer have a positive impact of CS. Usefulness is a post expectation perception which is a dependable proposition for repurchase intention which occurs after the consumer is satisfied. The study suggests that once consumers trust the firm at pre-purchase stage they have more expectations from it. And once that is fulfilled the higher will be the post purchase expectations too.

“An empirical study of the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction and repurchase intention in hotel of northern India.” by (Ara et al, 2016) states and explores the relationship between quality of service, customer satisfaction and intentions of repurchasing. The three facts that contribute to repurchase intentions are response the overall physical and substantial structure of the hotel and empathy from staff. In this study, only reliability and assurance did not make a difference for the same. The hotel management must be driven to create a guest centric environment to garner CS and further fuels repurchase behavior.

In the paper titled “Analysis of customer satisfaction in hotel service quality using analytic hierarchy process” by (Gupta et al, 2011) the authors are of the opinion that the hotel industry is developing / evolving on an ongoing basis with increase of competitors. The hotel has to give good quality of service. The premise of this study is hotels in India and the authors propose a method to evaluate the hotel service quality. They establish a customer satisfaction degree to quantify the service quality. Customer satisfaction is the tool to measure that.

The author suggests the service quality is the difference of what the guest perceives and expects. The study was conducted on the overall impression of the hotel after it was being broken up into the reception area, the rooms and the restaurant. Results show that the lobby was the most important location of a hotel to test customer satisfaction and contribute maximum to the service quality of a hotel particularly with the front office staff showing promptness. The design and décor of the lobby influence the service quality. The guest room induced customer satisfaction through safety and decoration features. The restaurant depended upon taste of food environment of the restaurant and promptness of servers especially in a luxury hotel. To find out accurate customer satisfaction parameters even different types of customers could be studied.

2.5 Consumer purchase intention

In this research article “The effects of image congruence on customer’s brand loyalty in upper middle class hotel industry”(Back, 2016)the author, studies the effects of image compatibility or harmony with regards to customers behavior of purchasing. The premise of the study is the lodging industry. Customers pick products which match their self-image. If the specific brand has a set of personality qualities which they connect with, they tend to make purchase or repurchase decisions. The hotel must develop marketing information systems to monitor the perceived brand image by customer. Hotels need to have a consistent brand image as customer not only purchase the product but see it as a symbol of luxury, self-esteem and status. Result of this research concludes that, if a hotel can find out a particular personality of customer, the marketing, advertising, interiors, look and appearance of personnel must be planned to increase the customer satisfaction which appeal to a consistent image.

Hotels can extract data from the frequent stay program access valuable data concerning the customer satisfaction and attitudinal loyalty.

The authors of the study “Identifying the factors affecting customer purchase intention” (Younuset al, 2015) highlight the factors that affect the customers intention to purchase consumer products. Firms must pay attention to these factors if they want to override their competition and ensure customer loyalty. The authors study the effects of customer knowledge, celebrity endorsement, product packaging and perceived value by customers when they intend to make a purchase.

During purchase, customer makes a cognitive decision based on their needs and wants. The decision of the consumer also depends upon internal and external environments. Many consumers give importance to the opinion of peers. While buying a branded product, knowledge is the information required to make a decision about the purchase which is required for alignment of need. Customers do not try to find the logic behind the celebrity endorsement and do blindly buy even there is an absence of rationale. Packing and design build the goodwill of the company and could be an indicator of quality to the customer. This study is conducted in Pakistan where the idea of perceived value is not strong among customers which in spite of being a strong indicator of purchase intention may not be a variable considered which may be ranked first in developed markets.

In the study titled “A preliminary study of customer expectations of hotel hospitality: Influences of personal and hotel factors” the researchers (Arriffin et al, 2012) attempt to study the customer’s expectations of a hotel’s service quality which are dependent upon the demographic, personal and hotel factors in commercial hotels. Hotel guests are unlikely to visit a hotel again on a second occasion as they seek variety and novelty in physical and experience related environment. It is the extraordinary level of service and hospitality that help to bring a guest back. There were seven personal factors and three hotel factors which are considered. Personal factors were demographics where-as hotel factors included star rating, size of hotel and location of the hotel. The findings resulted in guests expected personalization and recognition of who they are. They expected a warm welcome which is inclusive of luggage handling. Guests expected a special relationship which extended the normal service delivery. These aspects are important in relationship marketing which tell guests that they will receive extraordinary attention. Hospitality behavior is another dimension which should be delivered irrespective of the incentives. Emotional intelligence is the ability and through to process, guest request to delight customers. Emotional intelligence is important for the success of the firm where internal customer relations impact the external customer directly. Employees have to be natural and genuine in their dealings with guests. With respect to being hospitable the study showed that when employees respect and treat local guests well they tend to be the correct recruits to act as hosts. The study also brings to for the fact that holiday / leisure guests expect much more compared to guests on business. When the hotel hopes to promote an experience of a holiday, to be memorable, the culture of the hosting behavior must reflect that. The guests who are different in age, income groups and educational levels expect same basic level of amenities and facilities and no discrimination should be done there. The hotel factor of star rating is the most influential to raise guest expectations. Also, size and the location of hotel do not matter as for any size of hotel basic expectations of hospitality seldom change. Every hotel must accept guests equally irrespective of guest characteristics. This study notes that with respect to guest gender, male guests had higher expectations than female guests.

2.6 Research Gaps

The researcher has reviewed several types of literature as a part of literature review chapter. This section has helped researcher to identify variables for study. Moreover, literature review helped researcher to identify and establish relationship between variables.

Researcher has also identified research gaps which are as follows:

1. Researcher has not found a single study focusing on customer engagement as a business strategy with reference to five star hotels in Pune city.
2. Moreover, none of the study was focusing on the impact of customer engagement on customer satisfaction and customer purchase intention from the perspective of five star hotels in Pune city.
3. The topic of customer engagement has been given relevance and studied in different contexts, demographics, geographical areas by different authors explaining their perspectives. The cognizance of the above, has been taken by the researcher.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

A Study of Customer Engagement as a Business Strategy with Reference to Five Star Hotels in Pune City.

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Significance of Study
- 3.3 Scope of Research
 - 3.3.1 Geographical Scope
 - 3.3.2 Theoretical Scope
 - 3.3.3 Analytical Scope
- 3.4 Research Questions
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 - 3.7.5 Tools and Techniques of Analysis
 - 3.7.6 Statistical Tests
- 3.8 Limitations and Scope for future research

Research Methodology

This chapter includes the approach followed by the researcher in this thesis. It describes the significance of the study, poses the research statements, the significance of the study and the research gaps. The objectives of the study are also presented followed by the generated hypothesis. It further explains the research design, which consists of the type of research, sampling size, type and data collection methods. It states the selection of various tools and techniques undertaken as part of hypothesis testing.

3.1 Introduction

Marketing through means of implementing customer engagement strategies focuses on increasing the level of interaction the customers have with the firm /company or brand.

Customer engagement is a dialogue between the company and the customer. It is essential for companies to have a dedicated discussion going required to attract customers with proper information which has to be delivered through proper channels. Organizations can interact with customers across an assortment of channels including email, web, online media, local area gatherings, and that's only the tip of the iceberg. Inclusion of artificial intelligence can help brands to anticipate future behavior, suggest items, and improve the discussion to offer customers an option that could be more noteworthy than mere offering of products and services.

Customer involvement translates into benefitting the customer the most, as companies/brands curate and address the needs of the customer making it a satisfying experience for the customer. This help from the companies/brands make sure that the customer benefits from this arrangement as it is customized. This is the most ideal way a brand can show exactly how significant its audience is, and retain faithful customers for quite a long time to come.

Marketing through customer engagement has got new impetus because of the mediums of communication. The companies want to get involved with their patrons specially to know their pulse. The company wants to know profiles of the customers, their likes /dislikes and use customer preferred communication channels to meet the targeted segments of the customers. With limited time on hand and many tasks to

perform, it becomes vital to plan a powerful customer engagement framework for companies/ brands.

If companies /brands do not dig deep and use the whole expansiveness of engagement alternatives, they may wind up with an undecided execution and a misuse of their resources.

Purpose of this study is to understand the customer engagement strategies practiced by five star hotels in Pune city. It also intends to study the impact of these strategies on customer satisfaction and customer purchase intention.

3.2. Significance of Study

Hotel industry is part of service industry in general and hospitality industry in particular. Hotels focus on marketing, their main product namely rooms and provide bundle of allied services which include food and beverage, banqueting, travel services, ticket booking services, laundry services, etc. The main reason, the researcher chose this area of study is the change in marketing environment. Today's marketing model of a five star hotel is changing from the traditional path and venturing into a more progressive era which is technologically faster and real time contact can be made with guests. When customers are engaged, they feel recognized and wanted. This association with the five star hotels is valuable to them.

In the competitive business environment of today, five star hotels need to retain the customer for business as this is directly linked to earning revenue and increased occupancy. Every five star hotel needs to strategize to engage a customer and try to get repeat business. Rooms contribute to sixty per cent to the hotel's business and must be sold with dedicated effort. This is particularly true as the room is a highly perishable product. One day lost, results in loss of business forever. When a customer is engaged well, it may lead to customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers recall a particular hotel in a fond manner which may in turn influence consumer purchase intention. With the advent of new hotels entering to the market space, the existing five star hotels have to retain their customer. This study is significant as it reiterates the importance of the efforts of a hotel brand regarding engagement and its impact on customer satisfaction and customer purchase intention towards the hotel's products and services. The present study highlights that engagement strategies are the ones which are required to keep the audience captivated during the interaction between the

hotel brand and the guests in all stages of the guest cycle. Studying these strategies throughout the guest cycle is important to assess their effectiveness for continuous improvement on the part of the hotel.

3.3 Scope of Research

Scope of research covers the spread of study which was undertaken by the researcher as part of this study. It is categorized into three sections. The geographical scope presents the geographical region undertaken as part of this study. The theoretical scope includes the topic(s) and sub-topic(s) covered in this study. Finally, the analytical scope determines that the analytical tools were rigorous for the research.

3.3.1 Geographical Scope:

The researcher had chosen Pune city as a geographical spread for the study. Automobile, Information Technology, Education, Pharmaceutical are the prominent industries in Pune attracting the people not only from Maharashtra but from all parts of India and abroad alike. Further, it is a cultural capital of Maharashtra. All this together, has accelerated the unprecedented growth of hospitality industry in Pune.

3.3.2 Theoretical Scope:

The present topic covers theories with respect to customer engagement like importance of customer engagement, role of customer engagement, customer engagement tools, customer engagement in digital marketing, customer engagement in services marketing, etc.

3.3.3 Analytical Scope:

As part of this study, the collected data was analyzed with the help of statistical software. The primary data was collected by means of questionnaire for guest and interviews for hoteliers. The questionnaire for guest was close ended and this provided the researcher with the opportunity to apply statistical tools and techniques so as to analyze the data collected and report findings.

3.4 Research Questions

Extensive review of literature was conducted related to various aspects of customer engagement, importance of customer engagement, role of customer engagement, customer engagement tools, customer engagement in digital marketing, customer engagement in services marketing, etc. Based on the same, the research questions were formulated on the basis of the following points given below:

1. Whether guests perceive engagement happening in the touch points of the guest cycle?
2. Whether the customer engagement strategies lead to customer satisfaction?
3. Whether the customer engagement strategies lead to consumer purchase intention?
4. Is there an existence of a relationship between customer satisfaction and customer purchase intention?

3.5 Objectives of the Study

The researcher undertook review of existing literature in order to get an insight about the customer engagement. The various aspects ranging from the purpose of customer engagement strategies and its impact on customer satisfaction and purchase intention were the part of the preparatory study which built the following set of objectives which are presented for this research.

1. To study the customer engagement strategies in all stages of the guest cycle in five star hotels in Pune city.
2. To analyze the impact of customer engagement strategies on customer satisfaction in five star hotels in Pune city.
3. To analyze the impact of customer engagement strategies on consumer purchase intention in five star hotels in Pune city.
4. To study the relation between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

3.6 Generation of Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study were formed by the researcher after studying the literature, understanding the base which forms the basis of the hypotheses that were gradually developed. In this presented study, the following hypotheses have been generated and tested out of which the H₂ and H₃ have been further divided into five sub-hypotheses.

H₁: Guests of five star hotels in Pune city perceive the procedures followed in all the stages of the guest cycle as customer engagement strategies.

H₂: Customer engagement strategies followed in fivestar hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

The above hypothesis is divided and tested into 5-sub-hypotheses.

H_{2.1}: Customer engagement strategies followed at pre-arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H_{2.2}: Customer engagement strategies followed at arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H_{2.3}: Customer engagement strategies followed at stay stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H_{2.4}: Customer engagement strategies followed at departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H_{2.5}: Customer engagement strategies followed at post departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

H₃: Customer engagement strategies followed in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

The above hypothesis is divided and tested into 5-sub-hypotheses.

H_{3.1}: Customer engagement strategies followed at pre-arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H_{3.2}: Customer engagement strategies followed at arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H_{3.3}: Customer engagement strategies followed during stay stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H_{3.4}: Customer engagement strategies followed at departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H_{3.5}: Customer engagement strategies followed at post departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

H₄: There exists a relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

3.7 Research Design

The research design is a blue-print/master plan of all the methods and procedures or conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It is a complete scheme of the research. It constitutes the collection, measurement and analysis of data. The methodology for the research was undertaken in a systematic way. It begun with a Pilot Test, followed by main study which included data collection, analysis of collected data, interpretation of the same and ended with testing of hypothesis. The researcher has adopted descriptive research design for the purpose of present research.

3.7.1 Data Collection:

Primary and secondary data were used in the research. Any data which is collected by the researcher, especially for the study is termed as primary data. It is original and completely used for the study. Secondary data is collected by someone else and can be available in various forms. The primary data was collected from 419 customers of five star hotels. Moreover, expert interviews were conducted with the Director/Managers of sales and marketing department of five star hotels. Thus, the primary data was a combination of quantitative and qualitative data which formed a balance mix of the supervisory as well as managerial perspectives in order to attain the objectives of the research. Further, the secondary data was collected at various stages to understand, describe and enhance the study.

3.7.1.1 Primary Data Source

Primary Data was collected by means of conducting:

3.7.1.1.1 Survey: A comprehensive survey via personal interviews of customers was conducted by means of a structured questionnaire. This was supplemented by qualitative based expert interviews.

3.7.1.1.2 Expert Interviews: The researcher undertook structured interviews. The Director/ Managers of sales and marketing department and were interviewed in person. The questions asked were prepared keeping in mind the objectives of the study.

Following points were covered during the interviews:

1. Unique selling proposition of hotel
2. Customer experience with hotel
3. Hotel's communication strategies
4. Target groups of the hotel
5. Customer engagement strategies
6. Loyalty incentives to customers
7. Key Performance Indicators and goals for customer engagement
8. Content and offers of customer engagement
9. Tools and technologies for customer engagement
10. Elements to measure commercial success
11. Budget allocation system for customer engagement strategies
12. Role of employees in customer engagement

3.7.1.2 Secondary Data Sources: Researcher has collected secondary data through research papers, articles, white papers, books, dissertations, and market reports.

3.7.3 Instrument of Research:

A questionnaire was used as an instrument to collect the information. The questions were combination of both objective and numeric scale to measure the attitude and opinion of respondents pertaining to the topic of study. The said instrument was used to collect data from large number guest easily and economically. The pilot study was carried out in order to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

3.7.4 Sampling Design:

Sampling design was derived by the researcher which consisted of sampling method and estimator. The purpose was obtaining a representative sample from a given population, so that reliable conclusions can be drawn and which would be true representation of the population.

3.7.4.1 Population / Universe:

As the present study is based on customer engagement strategies with reference to five star hotels in Pune city, every customer visiting to five star hotels and marketing representative of five star hotels in Pune city are potential units of getting responses for the existing research questionnaire and is a part of the population. Though customers visiting to five star hotels are limited in numbers, no exact data is available. Thus, it can be concluded that the population is finite, but unknown. However, as there are ten five star hotels present in Pune, one representative each is also a part of population.

3.7.4.2 Sampling Unit:

Responses are collected from customers belongs to any gender, age, qualification and any number of visits to five star hotels in Pune.

3.7.4.3 Sampling Method:

For selection of customer as samples, researcher has adopted 'convenience sampling technique' for selection of sample. Convenience sampling technique is a statistical method of drawing representative data by selecting people because of the ease of their volunteering or selecting units because of their availability or easy access. In all forms of research, it would be ideal to test the entire population, but in most cases, like in the present study, the population is just too large that it is impossible to include every individual. To reduce the sampling error, the researcher has personally visited the different locations of Pune city. However, for selection of one marketing representative from hotel, researcher has contacted all hotels in-person.

3.7.4.4 Sampling Size:

This refers to the number of items to be selected from the population to constitute a sample. As per the sample size formula 'By Proportion' ($n = z^2 * p * q / e^2$), when population is infinite and at 95% confidence level and 50% precision; the sample size is 384. In response to that, researcher has received 419 appropriate responses. To get the more insight into the research topic, researcher has also contacted and collected the information from ten marketing representatives from five star hotels.

3.7.5 Tools and Techniques of Analysis:

Data analysis was carried out using statistical software. The primary data was collected in a questionnaire form and the questions were close ended. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Program (SPSS) version 17.0 was used in this study for all the statistical assessments. The data set was screened and examined for incorrect data entry, missing values, normality and outliers.

3.7.6 Statistical Tests:

In this study, descriptive statistics is used followed by inferential statistics to test the hypotheses.

1. One Sample t-Test
2. Regression analysis and
3. Correlation analysis

3.8 Limitations of the study:

For the present study, the researcher has used both primary and secondary methods of collection of various data and naturally, the data collected is likely to be affected directly or indirectly. Researcher is fully aware of these possibilities and has tried to undertake due care to see that the results would be representative of the universe. The researcher is aware of the following limitations of his work and also the scope for further study.

The limitations of the study are broadly classified on the basis of the factors given below:

1. Geographical Constraints: The researcher had chosen Pune city as a geographical spread for the study. By the limited resources available with the researcher, the

geographical area was limited. However, the study could have been conducted on a larger geographical area with availability of sufficient resources.

2. Time-frame Constraints: The study had an instinctive constraint of time frame during which it was conducted. It may not be exaggerating to say that on account of the highly dynamic nature of the research topic, it is always possible that the data, references and periodicals may become obsolete. Therefore, the study had to be completed in a given time frame. Also, because of having limitations of time, the researcher has to limit his study to the selected samples in Pune region.
3. Data collection constraints: At the outset of the need of secondary data, reliability of the presumption and observations naturally depend on the authenticity of the secondary source of information and also the information itself. While doing so and being aware of these limitations, the researcher herein has taken due care and precautions at very possible stage not allowing any prejudice or bias in the work.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Interpretation of Data, Findings and Observations

In the data analysis chapter, for first questionnaire, descriptive statistics is used followed by inferential statistics to validate the hypotheses. For questionnaire II, qualitative analysis is executed. Cronbach's Alpha reliability method is applied to check the reliability of all items in the questionnaires. At the end, summary of validation of hypotheses is presented. Broadly, following aspects are covered in the analysis of all two questionnaires:

1. Pre-arrival customer engagement strategies,
2. Customer engagement strategies at arrival stage,
3. Customer engagement strategies during stay,
4. Customer engagement strategies at departure stage,
5. Customer engagement strategies post departure stage,
6. Customer satisfaction,
7. Consumer Purchase intention,
8. Factors influencing customer other than customer engagement strategies.

Analysis for Questionnaire I:

To check the reliability of all items in the questionnaire, the researcher has applied Cronbach's Alpha reliability method. The reliability coefficient value was highly significant i.e., 0.952 and depict high reliability of the questionnaire. Reliability test was applied using SPSS software and the reliability test measures are given below:

Table 4.1: Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .952 | 60 |

Researcher has used five-point Likert scale to collect the data. Percentage, cumulative percentage, mean, standard deviation, one sample *t*-test, regression analysis and correlation analysis are used to analyze the data. Table below provides an overview of type of data and statistical tools used for analysis:

Table 4.2: Type of Data and Statistical Tools Used for Questionnaire I

| Sr. No. | Type of Data | Question Numbers | Analytical Tool Used |
|---------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Nominal and Ordinal Data | Q2, Q4, Q6, Q7, Q10, 11 | Percentage, Cumulative Percentage |
| 2 | Scale (Interval & Ratio) | Q3, Q5, Q8, Q9, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15 | Percentage, Cumulative Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation, One Sample t Test, Regression Analysis, Correlation Analysis |

Table 4.3: Demographic Profile of the Respondents'

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Gender | Male | 278 | 66.2 |
| | Female | 141 | 33.8 |
| Age | Below 30 years | 35 | 8.3 |
| | 30 to 40 years | 107 | 25.5 |
| | 40 to 50 years | 165 | 39.5 |
| | Above 50 years | 112 | 26.7 |
| Qualification | Below undergraduate | 21 | 5.0 |
| | Undergraduate | 75 | 17.9 |
| | Post graduate | 323 | 77.1 |
| Family Income (Annual) | Below 10 lakhs | 111 | 26.4 |
| | 10 to 20 lakhs | 88 | 21.0 |
| | 20 to 30 lakhs | 63 | 15.0 |
| | 30 to 40 lakhs | 47 | 11.4 |
| | Above 40 lakhs | 110 | 26.2 |
| Occupation | Salaried | 217 | 51.9 |
| | Self-employed | 142 | 33.8 |
| | Others (Home- makers) | 60 | 14.3 |
| Nationality | Indian | 408 | 97.4 |
| | Others | 11 | 2.6 |

Source: Primary Data

The breakup of respondents' demographic characteristics is shown in table 4.3. Responses were obtained from 419 respondents. Out of 419 respondents, 278 respondents are male and 141 respondents are female, accounting for 66.2 percent and 33.8 percent of response respectively. Likewise, out of 419 respondents, 165 respondents were from the age group of 40 to 50 years followed by 112 respondents from age group above 50 years and total constitute to 66.2 percent of response. Remaining 142 respondents were from the age group below 40 years, contributing to 33.8 percent of the total response.

The table also provides respondents' qualification-wise breakup. It has been observed that 77.1 percent of respondents were postgraduate followed by 17.9 percent of respondents were graduate. Merely, 5 percent of respondents were below undergraduate. Table also reveals respondents' income-wise breakup and it is observed that 111 respondents were having annual income lesser than 10 lakhs and accounted for 26.4 percent of response. Likewise, 110 respondents were having annual income more than 40 lakhs and accounted for 26.2 percent of response. Out of 419 respondents, incomes for 21 percent of respondents were 10 to 20 lakhs and income for 15 percent of respondents were 20 to 30 lakhs. For remaining 11.4 percent of respondents, the income range was 30 to 40 lakhs.

Data also reveals occupation statistics of respondents. Out of 419 respondents, 217 respondents were salaried people and accounts to 51.9 percent of response. However, 33.8 percent of respondents were self-employed and 14.3 percent of respondents were not-employed at all (house-wives). Data also reveals nationality status of respondents. Out of total respondents, 409 respondents are Indians and accounted for 97.4 percent of response. Remaining of respondents were not-Indians.

Table 4.4 (A): Frequency to stay at five star hotels

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| This is my first stay | 73 | 17.4 | 17.4 |
| Once in a year | 149 | 35.5 | 52.9 |
| Twice a year | 86 | 20.5 | 73.3 |
| More than twice a year | 111 | 26.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Source Primary Data

Five star hotels are always a preferred choice for affluent class travellers and business professionals due to the luxury offerings and personalized services. Table 4.4 (A) reveals the data of frequency of stay of respondents at five star hotels. From the given data it is observed that 149 respondents at least stay once a year in five star hotels and counts to 35.5 percent of response. Likewise, 111 respondents acknowledged that they stay more than twice a year in five star hotels and counts to 26.7 percent of response. Respondents staying twice a year in five star hotels are 86 in numbers out of 419 respondents and accounting to 20.5 percent of response. However, out of total respondents, 73 respondents are new to five star accommodation experience and it accounted for 17.4 percent of response.

Table 4.4 (B): Duration of stay at five star hotels

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Less than 3 days | 232 | 55.2 | 55.2 |
| 3 to 5 days | 151 | 36.0 | 91.2 |
| 5 to 7 days | 26 | 6.4 | 97.6 |
| More than 7 days | 10 | 2.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Source Primary Data

Table 4.4 (B) reveals the data of approximate duration of stay by respondents at five star hotels at Pune. From the given table it is observed that majority of respondents duration of stay at five star hotels is lesser than 3 days and accounts for 55.2 percent of response. Likewise, 36 percent of respondents have acknowledged that their duration of stay with five star hotels ranges between 3 to 5 days followed by 6.4 percent of respondents stay duration varies between 5 to 7 days. Remaining 2.4 percent of respondents' stay is for more than 7 days.

Table 4.5 (A): Preferred sources of bookings

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Direct enquiry / Hotel representative | 142 | 33.8 |
| Travel agent / Tour operator | 98 | 23.4 |
| Regional sales office | 10 | 2.3 |
| Hotel /Chain website / central reservation system | 186 | 44.5 |
| Online travel agent | 120 | 28.5 |
| Third party | 16 | 3.9 |
| Global distribution systems | 12 | 2.8 |
| Company booking | 87 | 20.8 |
| Walk-in | 29 | 7.0 |

Source Primary Data

Table 4.5 (A) reveals the data for preferred sources of booking by respondents. From the table it is observed that 186 respondents prefer website or central reservation system of hotels for bookings followed by reservation through direct enquiry or hotel representative by 142 respondents, accounting for 44.5 percent and 33.8 percent of responses respectively. Online travel agent, tour operators and company booking were also preferred sources of booking as acknowledged by more than 20 percent of respondents. Regional sales office and global distribution systems were among the least preferred sources of booking by respondents as observed through the data.

Table 4.5 (B): Preferred method to settle the bill while checkout

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Cash | 46 | 11.0 |
| Credit card | 288 | 68.5 |
| Debit card | 150 | 35.8 |
| NEFT | 33 | 7.8 |
| Bill to company | 61 | 14.6 |
| Credit sales | 4 | 1.0 |
| Travel agent voucher / cheques | 12 | 2.8 |
| Digital payment | 57 | 13.5 |

Source Primary Data

Table 4.5 (B) reveals the data for preferred method of payment. Data reveals that credit card was the most preferred option for payment of bills by 288 respondents followed by debit card by 150 respondents and accounted for 68.5 percent and 35.8 percent of responses respectively. Bill to company and digital payments were also preferred by more than 10 percent of respondents as payment methods at five star hotels at Pune. Credit sales and travel agent voucher or cheques were among least preferred methods for payment of bills at five star hotels.

Table 4.6: The social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 2 | .5 | .5 |
| Disagree | 9 | 2.1 | 2.6 |
| Undecided | 31 | 7.4 | 10.0 |
| Agree | 229 | 54.8 | 64.8 |
| Strongly agree | 148 | 35.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.22; S.D.: 0.71

Source Primary Data

An effective brand name of five star hotel positively creates a perception in the minds of consumers related to the emotional benefits and experience while allowing strong recall of the offering when customers are choosing a brand. To measure if social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name of five star hotel contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 229 respondents were agreeing to the fact that social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name of five star hotel contributes to level of satisfaction and this accounts to 54.8 percent of response. Likewise, 148 respondents, i.e.,35.2 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name of five star hotel contributes to their level of satisfaction.

However, 7.4 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name of five star hotel contributes to level of satisfaction. Cumulatively, merely 2.6 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name of five star hotel contributes to level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.22 with 0.71 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name of five star hotel contributes to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.1: The social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name

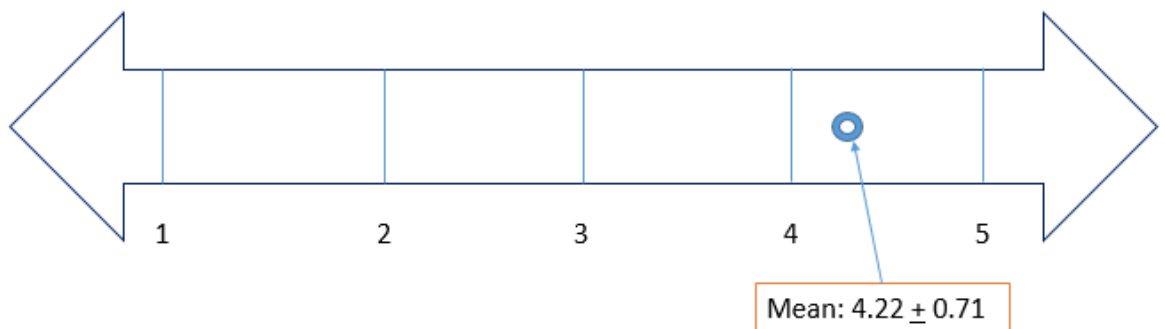


Table 4.7: Personal recognition of the guest by the hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 2 | .5 | .5 |
| Disagree | 25 | 6.0 | 6.4 |
| Undecided | 63 | 15.0 | 21.4 |
| Agree | 177 | 42.4 | 63.8 |
| Strongly agree | 152 | 36.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.07; S.D.: 0.88

Source Primary Data

Guest recognition, especially when something has gone awry in their experience, is essential in procuring a solid loyal customer base. Recognizing guest by their names is one of the common practices that are observed across hospitality sectors. To measure if personal recognition of the guest by five star hotels contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 177 respondents were agreeing to the fact that personal recognition of the guest by five star hotels contributes to level of satisfaction and this accounts to 42.4 percent of response. Likewise, 152 respondents, i.e.,36.2 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that personal recognition of the guest by five star hotels contributes to their level of satisfaction of respondents. However, 15 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that personal recognition of the guest by five star hotels contribute to level of satisfaction of respondents. Cumulatively, merely 6.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that personal recognition of the guest by five star hotels contribute to level of satisfaction of respondents. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.07 with 0.88 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that personal recognition of the guest by five star hotels contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.2: Personal recognition of the guest by the hotel

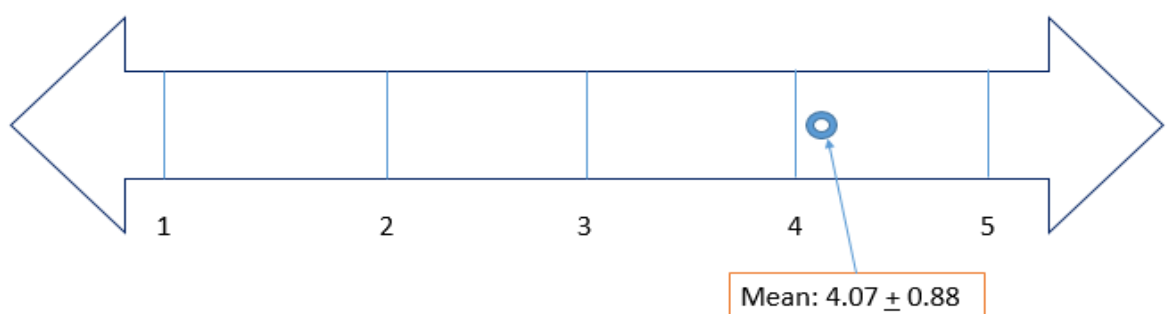


Table 4.8: Competitive pricing

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 9 | 2.1 | 2.4 |
| Undecided | 33 | 7.9 | 10.2 |
| Agree | 196 | 46.9 | 57.1 |
| Strongly agree | 180 | 42.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.30; S.D.: 0.72

Source Primary Data

Competitive pricing is the process of selecting strategic price points to best take advantage of a product or service-based market relative to competition. To measure if competitive pricing by five star hotels contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 196 respondents were agreeing to the fact that competitive pricing by five star hotels contribute to level of satisfaction of respondents and this accounts to 46.9 percent of response. Likewise, 180 respondents, i.e.,42.6 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that competitive pricing by five star hotels contribute to their level of satisfaction. However, 7.9 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that competitive pricing by five star hotels contribute to their level of satisfaction. Cumulatively, merely 2.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that competitive pricing by five star hotels contributes to their level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.30 with 0.72 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that competitive pricing by five star hotels contributes to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.3: Competitive pricing

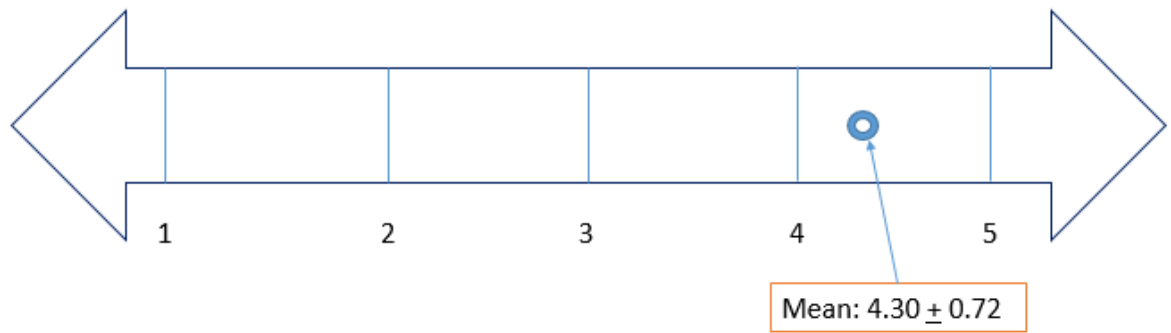


Table 4.9: Extraordinary level of hospitality given to guests

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Disagree | 4 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Undecided | 25 | 6.0 | 6.9 |
| Agree | 174 | 41.7 | 48.6 |
| Strongly agree | 216 | 51.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.43; S.D.: 0.65

Source Primary Data

It is indeed that extraordinary level of hospitality ensures a deep emotional level connect with guests. To measure if extraordinary level of hospitality contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 216 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that extraordinary level of hospitality contributes to their level of satisfaction and this accounts to 51.4 percent of response. Likewise, 174 respondents, i.e.,41.7 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that extraordinary level of hospitality contributes to their level of satisfaction. However, 6 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that extraordinary level of hospitality contributes to their level of satisfaction. Merely 1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that extraordinary level of hospitality contributes to their level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.43 with 0.65 values of standard deviations. As

standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that extraordinary level of hospitality contributes to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.4: Extraordinary level of hospitality given to guests

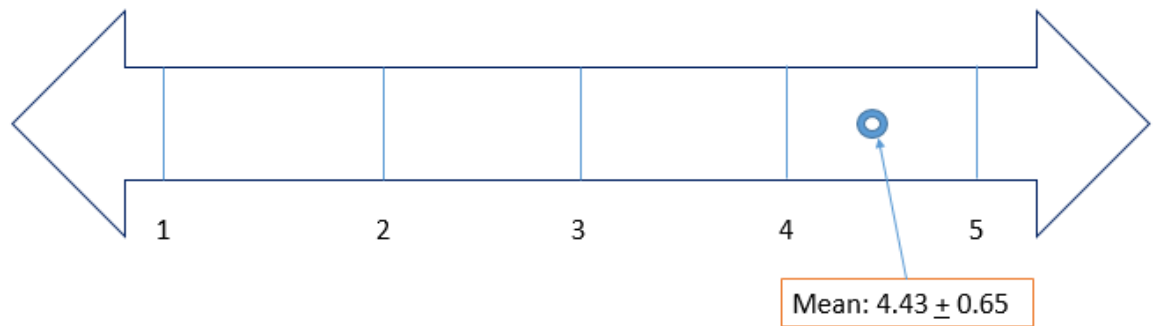


Table 4.10: Generosity of offers from the hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| Disagree | 15 | 3.6 | 4.8 |
| Undecided | 58 | 14.0 | 18.8 |
| Agree | 180 | 42.9 | 61.7 |
| Strongly agree | 161 | 38.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.13; S.D.: 0.87

Source Primary Data

A generous offer is when hoteliers offer to give something really good to their customers. To measure if generosity of offers from the five star hotels contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 180 respondents were agreeing to the fact that generosity of offers from the five star hotels contribute to their level of satisfaction and this accounts to 42.9 percent of response. Likewise, 161 respondents, i.e.,38.3 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that generosity of

offers from the five star hotels contribute to level of satisfaction. However, 14 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if generosity of offers from the five star hotels contribute to level of satisfaction. Cumulatively, merely 4.8 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that generosity of offers from the five star hotels contribute to level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.13 with 0.87 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that generosity of offers from the five star hotels contribute to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.5: Generosity of offers from the hotel

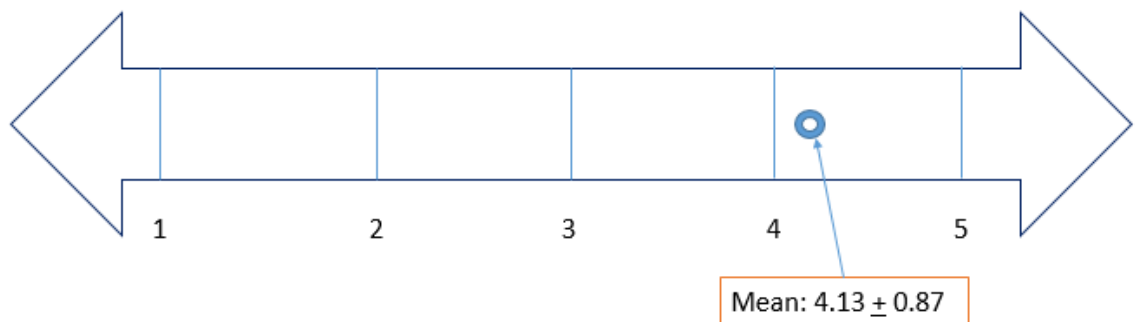


Table 4.11: Hotel handling moments-of-truth situations

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| Undecided | 50 | 11.9 | 13.3 |
| Agree | 197 | 47.1 | 60.5 |
| Strongly agree | 166 | 39.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.24; S.D.: 0.72

Source Primary Data

Moments of truth in a hotel include (but not be limited to) booking the room, check-in, check-out, dinner reservations, dinner ordering, dinner presentation, eating (quality and quantity of food) and laundry receipt. Understanding the moments of truth that are important to an organization's customers - by segment - is the key to understanding what is good customer service. To measure if moments-of-truth situations contribute to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 197 respondents were agreeing to the fact that moments-of-truth situations contribute to their level of satisfaction and this accounts to 47.1percent of response. Likewise, 166 respondents, i.e.,39.5 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that moments-of-truth situations contribute to level of satisfaction. However, 11.9percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if moments-of-truth situations contribute to level of satisfaction. Cumulatively, merely 1.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that moments-of-truth situations contribute to their level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.24 with 0.72 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that moments-of-truth situations contribute to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.6: Hotel handling moments-of-truth situations

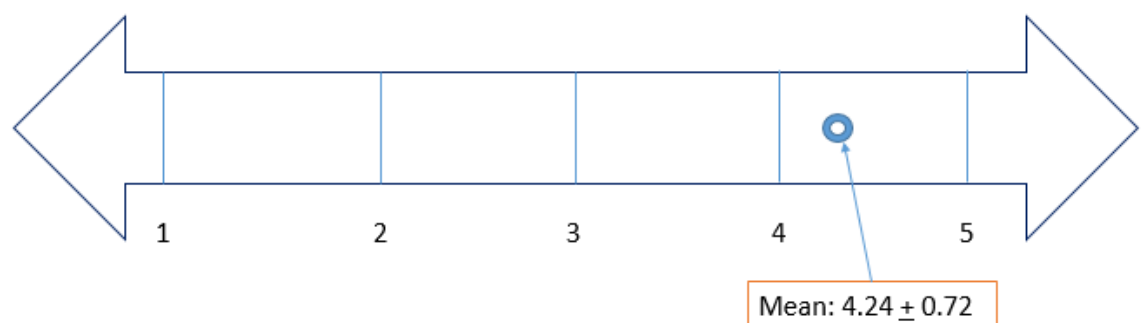


Table 4.12: Benefits of brand loyalty program

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 6 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Disagree | 24 | 6.0 | 7.4 |
| Undecided | 63 | 15.0 | 22.4 |
| Agree | 200 | 47.6 | 70.0 |
| Strongly agree | 126 | 30.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.98; S.D.: 0.90

Source Primary Data

Loyalty programs work because they make your customers feel recognized and special which further leads to retention, more referrals and profits. To measure if benefits of brand loyalty program contribute to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 200 respondents were agreeing to the fact that benefits of brand loyalty program contribute to their level of satisfaction and this accounts to 47.6 percent of response. Likewise, 126 respondents, i.e., 30 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that benefits of brand loyalty program contribute to level of satisfaction. However, 15 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if benefits of brand loyalty program contribute to level of satisfaction. Cumulatively, merely 7.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that benefits of brand loyalty program contributes to their level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.98 with 0.90 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that benefits of brand loyalty program contributes to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.7: Benefits of brand loyalty program



Table 4.13: Aligned with latest technology (IOT) at hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| Disagree | 32 | 7.6 | 8.8 |
| Undecided | 71 | 16.9 | 25.7 |
| Agree | 192 | 46.0 | 71.7 |
| Strongly agree | 119 | 28.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.92; S.D.: 0.92

Source Primary Data

Hotels use the latest technology to create digital touch points such as online check-in and checkout possibilities, mobile keys and cloud connected keyless hotel locks instead of a key card and traditional Bluetooth locks, cashless payment methods, etc. To measure if alignment with latest technology (IOT) at hotel contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 192 respondents were agreeing to the fact that alignment with latest technology (IOT) at hotel contributes to their level of satisfaction and this accounts to 46 percent of response. Likewise, 119 respondents, i.e., 28.3 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that alignment with latest technology (IOT) at hotel contributes to level of satisfaction. However, 16.9 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if alignment with latest technology (IOT) at hotel contributes to level of satisfaction. Cumulatively, merely

8.8 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that alignment with latest technology (IOT) at hotel contributes to their level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.92 with 0.92 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that alignment with latest technology (IOT) at hotel contribute to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.8: Aligned with latest technology (IOT) at hotel

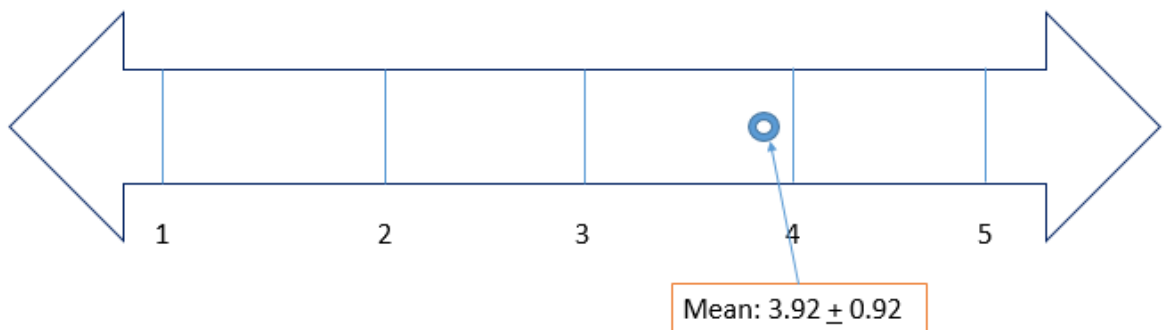


Table 4.14: Hotel's product, service, or corporate behaviour matches the promises the hotel makes

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Disagree | 2 | .5 | .5 |
| Undecided | 18 | 4.3 | 4.8 |
| Agree | 172 | 41.2 | 46.0 |
| Strongly agree | 227 | 54.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.48; S.D.: 0.60

Source Primary Data

To measure if hotel's product, service, or corporate behaviour matches the promises the hotel make contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 227

respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that hotel's product, service, or corporate behaviour matches the promises the hotel make contributes to their level of satisfaction and this accounts to 54 percent of response. Likewise, 172 respondents, i.e.,41.2 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that hotel's product, service, or corporate behaviour matches the promises the hotel make contributes to level of satisfaction. However, 4.3 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if hotel's product, service, or corporate behaviour matches the promises the hotel make contributes to level of satisfaction. Merely 0.5 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that hotel's product, service, or corporate behaviour matches the promises the hotel make contributes to their level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.48 with 0.60 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that hotel's product, service, or corporate behaviour matches the promises the hotel make contributes to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.9: Hotel's product, service, or corporate behaviour matches the promises the hotel makes

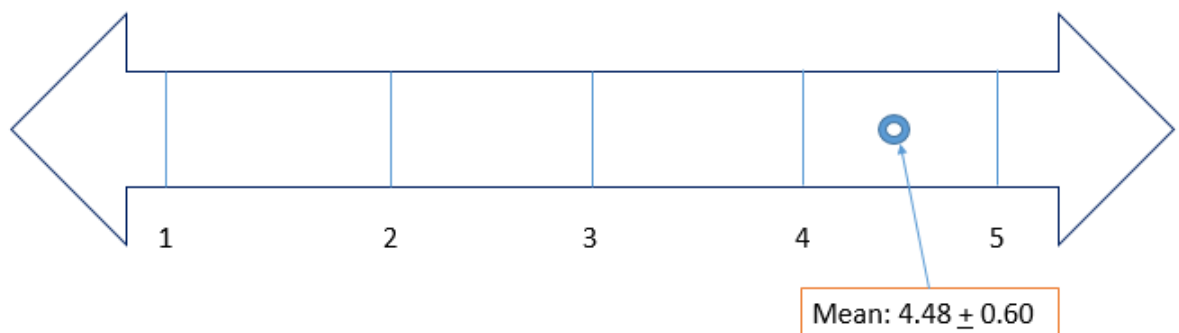


Table 4.15: Involvement/Relationship with the hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 12 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Disagree | 43 | 10.2 | 13.1 |
| Undecided | 102 | 24.3 | 37.4 |
| Agree | 175 | 41.9 | 79.3 |
| Strongly agree | 87 | 20.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.67; S.D.: 1.00

Source Primary Data

Brand involvement is the degree of affinity or importance the customer gives to a brand based. To measure if involvement with the hotel contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 175 respondents were agreeing to the fact that involvement with the hotel contributes to their level of satisfaction and this accounts to 41.9 percent of response. Likewise, 87 respondents, i.e., 20.7 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that involvement with the hotel contributes to level of satisfaction. However, 24.3 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if involvement with the hotel contributes to level of satisfaction. Cumulatively, 13.1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that involvement with the hotel contributes to their level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.67 with 1.00 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that involvement with the hotel contributes to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.10: Involvement/Relationship with the hotel

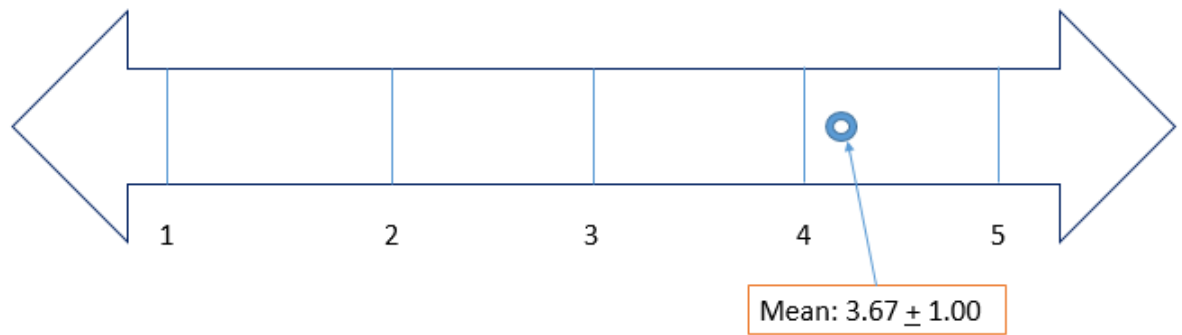


Table 4.16: Highly rated reviews about the brand

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 6 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Disagree | 16 | 3.8 | 5.2 |
| Undecided | 55 | 13.1 | 18.3 |
| Agree | 210 | 50.2 | 68.6 |
| Strongly agree | 132 | 31.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.06; S.D.: 0.86

Source Primary Data

Positive reviews convinced customers to visit the hotels. To measure if highly rated reviews about the hotel brand contributes to level of satisfaction of respondents, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 211 respondents were agreeing to the fact that highly rated reviews about the hotel brand contributes to their level of satisfaction and this accounts to 50.2 percent of response. Likewise, 132 respondents, i.e., 31.4 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that highly rated reviews about the hotel brand contributes to level of satisfaction. However, 13.1 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if highly rated reviews about the hotel brand contributes to level of satisfaction. Cumulatively, 5.2 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that highly rated reviews about the hotel brand contributes to their level of satisfaction. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.06 with 0.86 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of

respondents that highly rated reviews about the hotel brand contributes to their level of satisfaction. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.11: Highly rated reviews about the brand

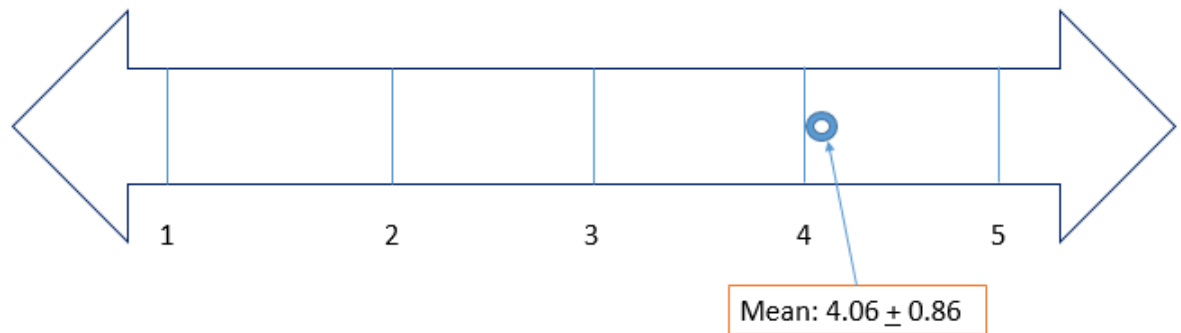


Table 4.17: Information about hotel bookings (check-in and check-out timings) well before arrival

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 1 | .2 | .5 |
| Undecided | 9 | 2.1 | 2.6 |
| Agree | 175 | 41.7 | 44.3 |
| Strongly agree | 233 | 55.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.52; S.D.: 0.57

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels send information about hotel booking well before arrival, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 233 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive information about hotel booking well before arrival and this accounts to 55.7 percent of response. Likewise, 175 respondents, i.e.,41.7 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive information about hotel booking well before arrival. However, 2.6 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive information about hotel booking well before arrival. Cumulatively, 0.5 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive information

about hotel booking well before arrival. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.52 with 0.57 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels send information about hotel bookings (check-in and check-out timings) well before arrival of guests. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.12: Information about hotel bookings (check-in and check-out timings) well before arrival

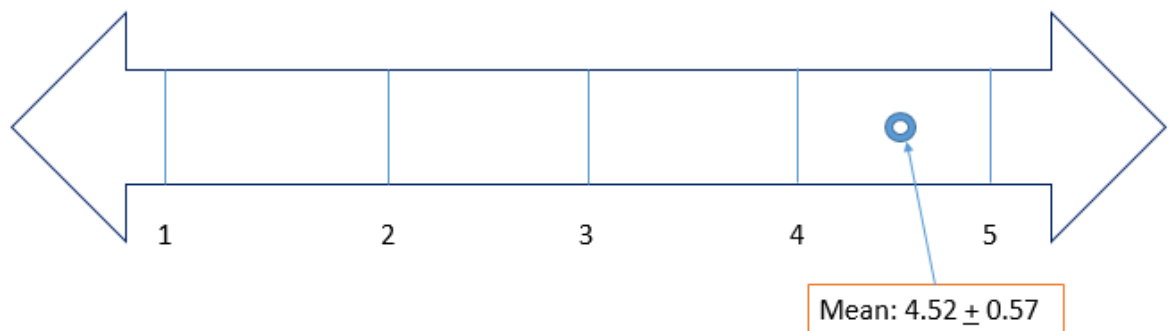


Table 4.18: Pricing of a room is well communicated by the hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 2 | .5 | .7 |
| Undecided | 13 | 3.1 | 3.8 |
| Agree | 179 | 42.9 | 46.7 |
| Strongly agree | 224 | 53.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.48; S.D.: 0.60

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels well communicate pricing of the rooms to guest, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 224 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive communication about room pricing pre-arrival and this accounts to 53.3percent of

response. Likewise, 179 respondents, i.e.,42.9 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive communication about room pricing pre-arrival. However, 3.1percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive communication about room pricing pre-arrival. Cumulatively, 0.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive communication about room pricing pre-arrival. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.48 with 0.60 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels communicate room prices well before arrival of guests. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.13: Pricing of a room is well communicated by the hotel

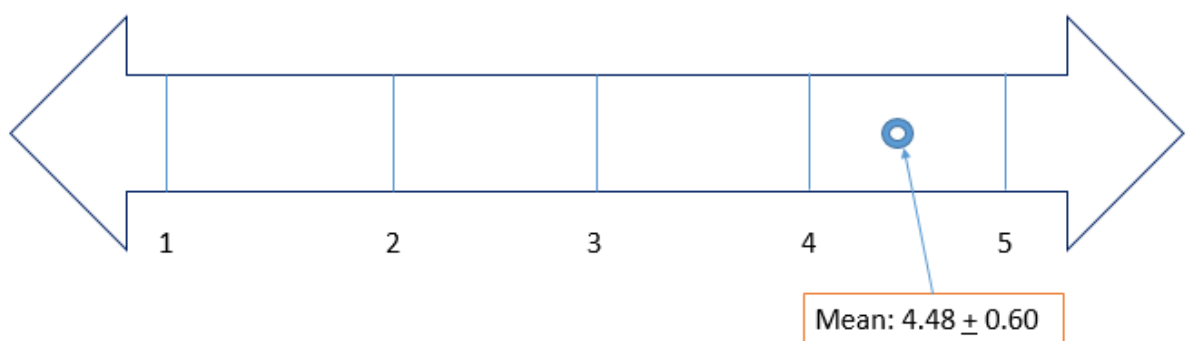


Table 4.19: Receipt of booking and confirmation mail well in advance

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Undecided | 5 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| Agree | 166 | 39.5 | 41.0 |
| Strongly agree | 247 | 59.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.57; S.D.: 0.54

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels communicate confirmation mail of booking to guest well in advance, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert

scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 247 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive communication about confirmation through mail well in advance and this accounts to 59 percent of response. Likewise, 166 respondents, i.e.,49.5 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive communication about confirmation through mail well in advance. However, 1.2percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive communication about confirmation through mail well in advance. Merely, 0.2 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive communication about confirmation through mail well in advance. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.57 with 0.54 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels communicate well in advance the confirmation for bookings through mail. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.14:Receipt of booking and confirmation mail well in advance

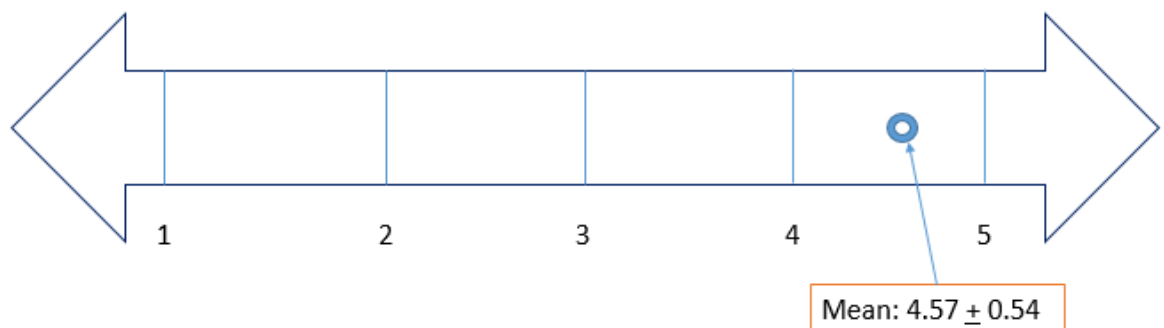


Table 4.20: Receipt of relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc.) well in advance

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 11 | 2.6 | 2.9 |
| Undecided | 36 | 8.6 | 11.4 |
| Agree | 198 | 47.4 | 58.8 |
| Strongly agree | 173 | 41.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.26; S.D.: 0.74

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels communicate relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc.) to guest well in advance, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 198 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive communication about relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc.) well in advance and this accounts to 47.4percent of response. Likewise, 173 respondents, i.e.,41.2 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive communication about relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc.) well in advance. However, 8.6percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive communication about relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc.) well in advance. Merely, 2.9 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive communication about relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc.) well in advance. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.26 with 0.74 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels communicate relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc.) well in advance. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.15:Receipt of relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc.) well in advance

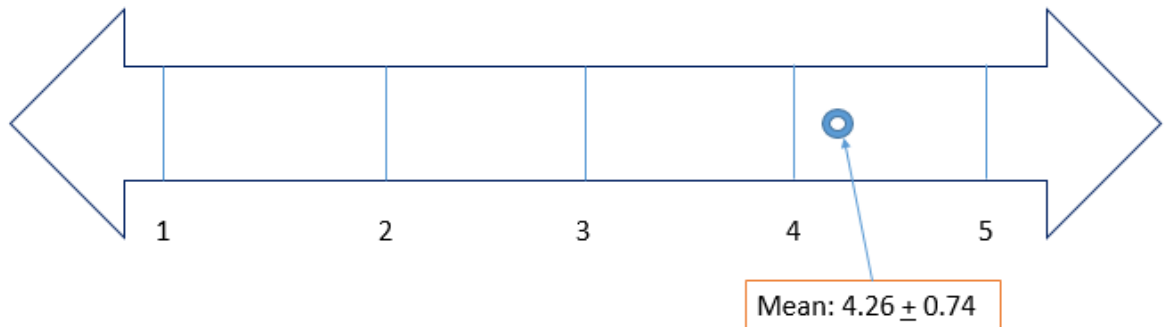


Table 4.21: Hotel always asks for customized room choice through proper communication

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 8 | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Disagree | 29 | 6.9 | 8.8 |
| Undecided | 79 | 18.8 | 27.6 |
| Agree | 190 | 45.2 | 72.9 |
| Strongly agree | 113 | 27.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.88; S.D.: 0.94

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels communicate for customized room choice to guest, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 190 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive communication for customized room choice and this accounts to 45.2percent of response. Likewise, 113 respondents, i.e.,27.1 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive communication for customized room choice. However, 18.8percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive communication for customized room choice. Merely, 8.8 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive communication for customized room choice. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.88 with 0.94 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert

scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels communicate for customized room choice through proper channels. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure4.16:Hotel always asks for customized room choice through proper communication

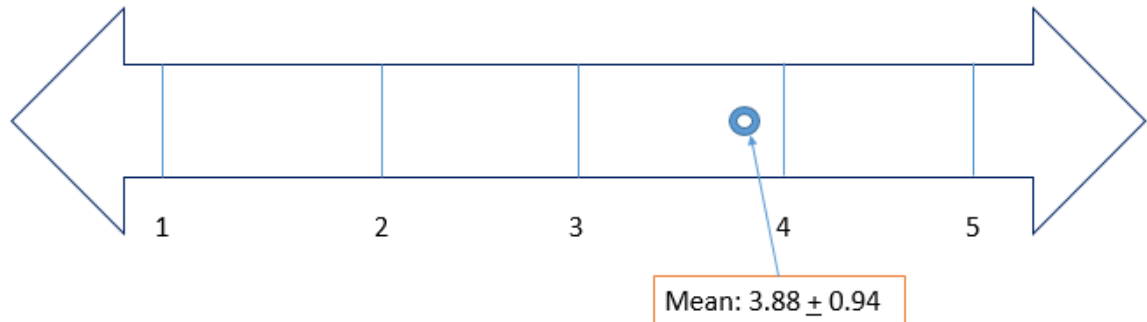


Table 4.22: Receipt of reminders for value added services or upgrades

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 7 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| Disagree | 39 | 9.3 | 11.0 |
| Undecided | 88 | 21.0 | 31.9 |
| Agree | 195 | 46.7 | 78.6 |
| Strongly agree | 90 | 21.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.76; S.D.: 0.94

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels communicate for value added services or upgrades to guest, researcher has developed and used a question based on five -point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 195 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive communication for value added services or upgrades and this accounts to 46.7 percent of response. Likewise, 90 respondents, i.e.,21.4 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive communication for value added services or

upgrades. However, 21 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive communication for value added services or upgrades. Merely, 11 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive communication for value added services or upgrades. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.76 with 0.94 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels communicate for value added services or upgrades. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.17: Receipt of reminders for value added services or upgrades

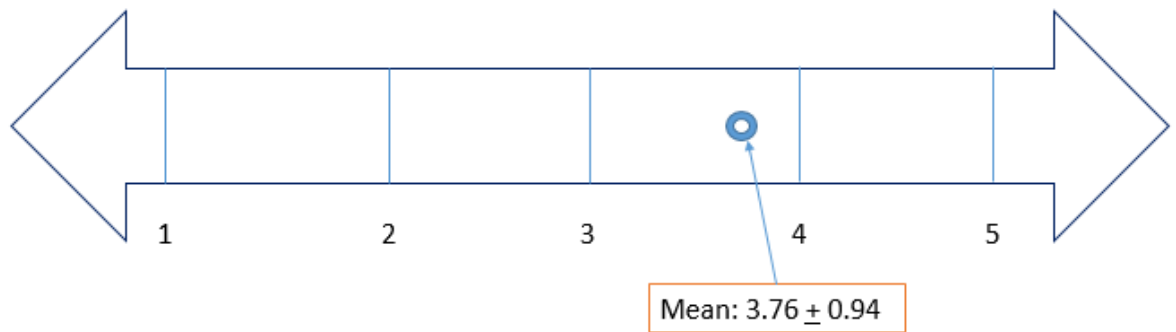


Table 4.23: Receipt of social media notifications for this hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 19 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| Disagree | 48 | 11.4 | 16.0 |
| Undecided | 100 | 23.8 | 39.8 |
| Agree | 171 | 41.0 | 80.7 |
| Strongly agree | 81 | 19.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.59; S.D.: 1.06

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels send social media notifications to guest, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 172

respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive social media notifications and this accounts to 41 percent of response. Likewise, 81 respondents, i.e.,19.3 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive social media notifications. However, 23.8 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive social media notifications. Cumulatively, 16 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive social media notifications. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.59 with 1.06 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels send social media notifications to guest. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.18:Receipt of social media notifications for this hotel

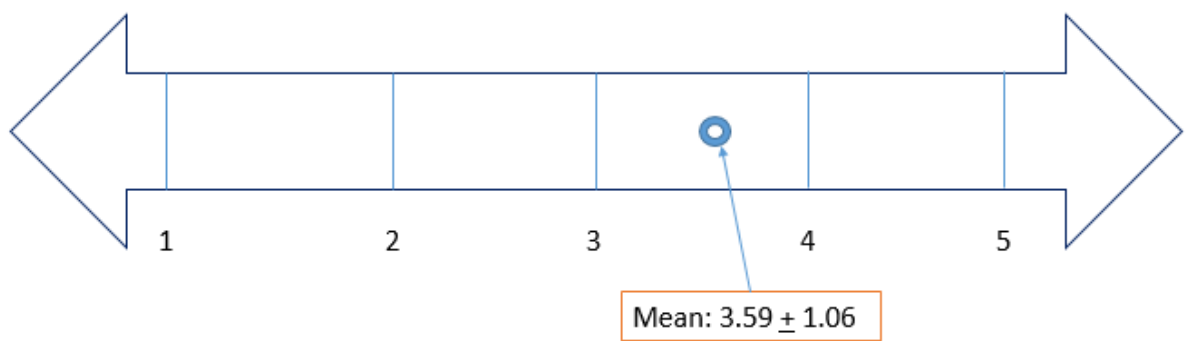


Table 4.24: Receipt of fast responses for my queries

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 12 | 2.9 | 3.1 |
| Undecided | 55 | 13.1 | 16.2 |
| Agree | 217 | 51.9 | 68.1 |
| Strongly agree | 134 | 31.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.12; S.D.: 0.75

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels respond fast to guest queries, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 217 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive quick responses to their queries and this accounts to 51.9percent of response. Likewise, 134 respondents, i.e.,31.9 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive quick responses to their queries. However, 13.1percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive quick responses to their queries. Cumulatively, 3.1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive quick responses to their queries. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.12 with 0.75 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels respond fast to guest queries. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.19:Receipt of fast responses for my queries

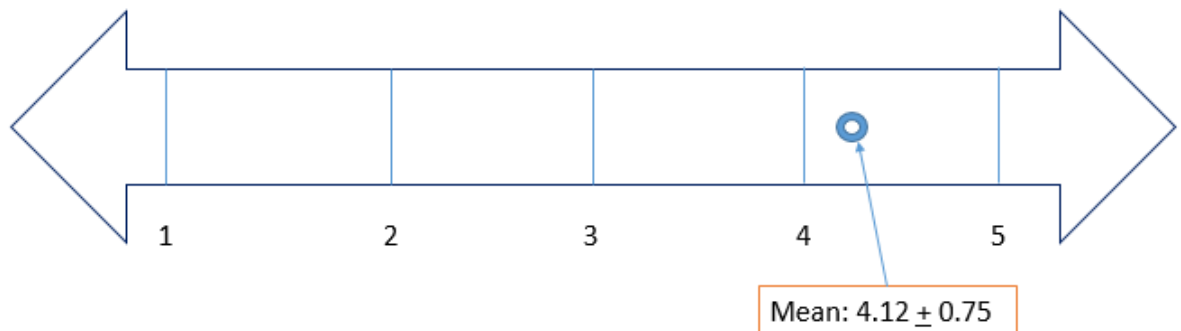


Table 4.25: Communication content targets my needs

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 10 | 2.4 | 2.4 |
| Disagree | 17 | 4.0 | 6.4 |
| Undecided | 76 | 18.3 | 24.8 |
| Agree | 210 | 50.0 | 74.8 |
| Strongly agree | 106 | 25.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.91; S.D.: 0.89

Source Primary Data

To find out if communication by five star hotels contain content that targets guest needs, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 210 respondents were agreeing to the fact communication by five star hotels contain content that targets guest needs and this accounts to 50 percent of response. Likewise, 106 respondents, i.e.,25.2 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that communication by five star hotels contain content that targets guest needs. However, 18.3 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if communication by five star hotels contain content that targets guest needs. Cumulatively, 6.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that communication by five star hotels contain content that targets guest needs. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.91 with 0.89 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that communication by five star hotels contain content that targets guest needs. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.20:Communication content targets my needs



Table 4.26: Virtual tour is possible before arrival

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 13 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| Disagree | 59 | 14.0 | 17.1 |
| Undecided | 146 | 34.8 | 51.9 |
| Agree | 135 | 32.4 | 84.3 |
| Strongly agree | 66 | 15.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.43; S.D.: 1.01

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels provide virtual tour to guest before arrival, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 135 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide virtual tour to guest before arrival and this accounts to 32.4 percent of response. Likewise, 66 respondents, i.e.,15.7 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide virtual tour to guest before arrival. However, 34.8 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels provide virtual tour to guest before arrival. Cumulatively, 17.1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels provide virtual tour to guest before arrival. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.43 with 1.01 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels provide virtual tour to guest before arrival. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.21:Virtual tour is possible before arrival

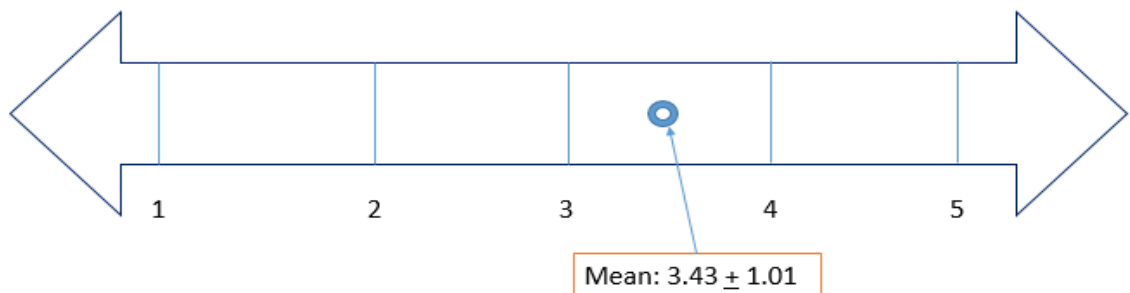


Table 4.27: Easy finding of this hotel on Google My Business Page

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 2 | .5 | .7 |
| Undecided | 19 | 4.5 | 5.2 |
| Agree | 167 | 39.8 | 45.0 |
| Strongly agree | 230 | 55.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.48; S.D.: 0.63

Source Primary Data

To find out if it is easy for guest to locate hotel on Google-My-Business Page, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 230 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that it is easy for guest to locate hotel on Google-My-Business Page and this accounts to 55percent of response. Likewise, 167 respondents, i.e.,39.8 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that it is easy for guest to locate hotel on Google-My-Business Page. However, 4.5percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if it is easy for guest to locate hotel on Google-My-Business Page. Cumulatively, 0.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that it is easy for guest to locate hotel on Google-My-Business Page. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.48 with 0.63 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that it is easy for guest to locate hotel on Google-My-Business Page. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.22: Easy finding of this hotel on Google My Business Page

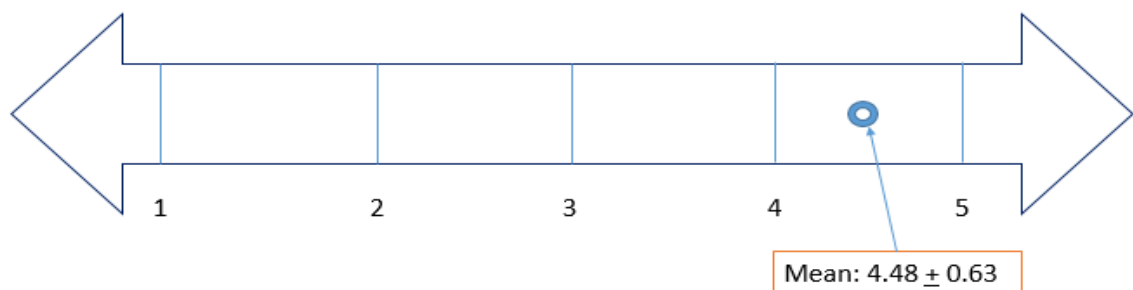


Table 4.28: Staff is very attentive at this hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 1 | .2 | .5 |
| Undecided | 5 | 1.2 | 1.7 |
| Agree | 198 | 47.1 | 48.8 |
| Strongly agree | 214 | 51.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.48; S.D.: 0.56

Source Primary Data

To find out if staff at five star hotels is attentive, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 214 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that staff at five star hotels is attentive and this accounts to 51.2percent of response. Likewise, 198 respondents, i.e.,47.1 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that staff at five star hotel is attentive. However, 1.2percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if staff at five star hotels are attentive. Cumulatively, 0.5 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that staff at five star hotels is attentive. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.48 with 0.56 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that staff at five star hotels are attentive. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.23:Staff is very attentive at this hotel

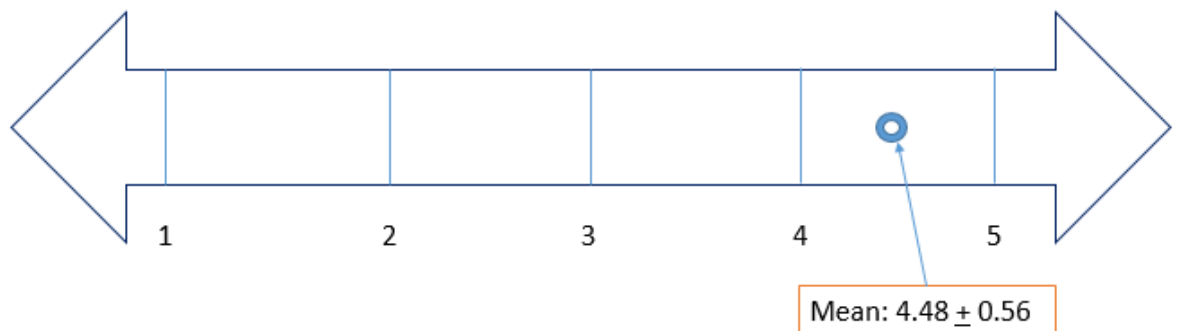


Table 4.29: Experience of smooth check-ins

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 3 | .7 | 1.0 |
| Undecided | 8 | 1.9 | 2.9 |
| Agree | 191 | 45.5 | 48.3 |
| Strongly agree | 216 | 51.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.47; S.D.: 0.59

Source Primary Data

To find out if guest at five star hotels experience smooth check-ins, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 216 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that guest at five star hotels experience smooth check-ins and this accounts to 51.7 percent of response. Likewise, 191 respondents, i.e.,45.5 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that guest at five star hotels experience smooth check-ins. However, 1.9 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if guest at five star hotels experience smooth check-ins. Cumulatively, 1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that guest at five star hotels experience smooth check-ins. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.47 with 0.59 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that guest at five star hotels experience smooth check-ins. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.24: Experience of smooth check-ins

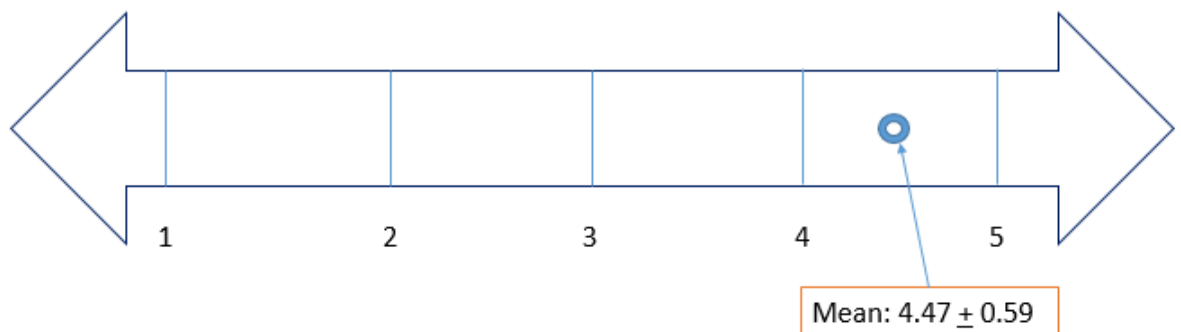


Table 4.30: Transport facility is always available

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 2 | .5 | .5 |
| Disagree | 15 | 3.6 | 4.0 |
| Undecided | 81 | 19.5 | 23.6 |
| Agree | 190 | 45.5 | 69.0 |
| Strongly agree | 130 | 31.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.02; S.D.: 0.83

Source Primary Data

To find out if transport facility is available at five star hotels, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 190 respondents were agreeing to the fact that transport facility is available at five star hotels and this accounts to 45.5percent of response. Likewise, 130 respondents, i.e.,45.5 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that transport facility is available at five star hotels. However, 19.5percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if transport facility is available at five star hotels. Cumulatively, 4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that transport facility is available at five star hotels. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.02 with 0.83 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that transport facility is available at five star hotels. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.25: Transport facility is always available

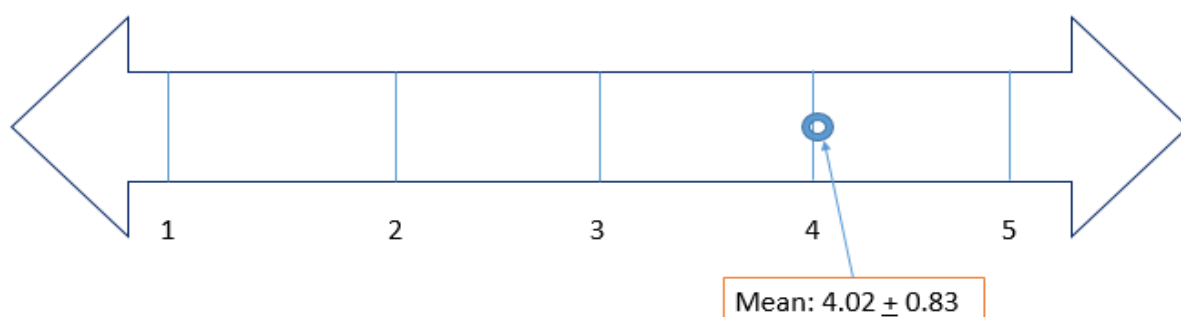


Table 4.31: Staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-in

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 2 | .5 | .5 |
| Disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.7 |
| Undecided | 20 | 4.8 | 6.4 |
| Agree | 200 | 47.6 | 54.0 |
| Strongly agree | 192 | 46.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.37; S.D.: 0.67

Source Primary Data

To find out if staff at five star hotels supports guest with prompt luggage handling during check-in, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 200 respondents were agreeing to the fact that staff at five star hotels supports guest with prompt luggage handling during check-in and this accounts to 47.6percent of response. Likewise, 192 respondents, i.e.,46 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that staff at five star hotels supports guest with prompt luggage handling during check-in. However, 4.8 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if staff at five star hotels supports guest with prompt luggage handling during check-in. Cumulatively, 1.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that staff at five star hotels supports guest with prompt luggage handling during check-in. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.37 with 0.67 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that staff at five star hotels supports guest with prompt luggage handling during check-in. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.26:Staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-in

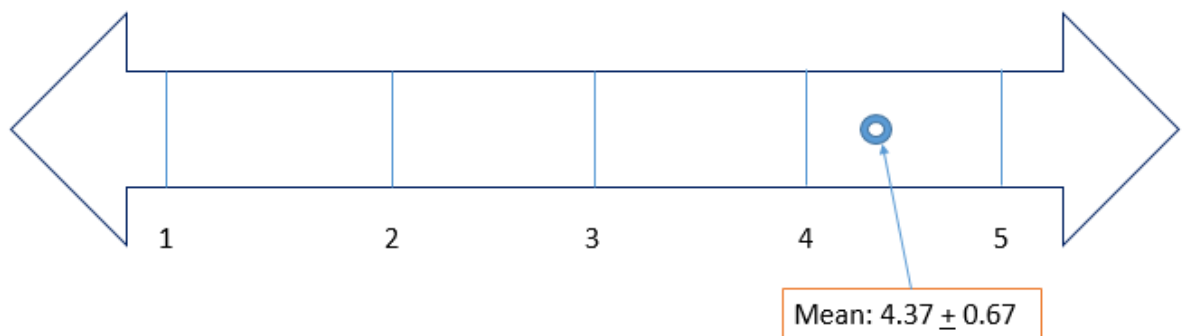


Table 4.32: Effectiveness of Escorting and room familiarization by hotel representative

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 3 | .7 | .7 |
| Disagree | 10 | 2.4 | 3.1 |
| Undecided | 22 | 5.2 | 8.3 |
| Agree | 194 | 46.4 | 54.8 |
| Strongly agree | 190 | 45.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.33; S.D.: 0.74

Source Primary Data

To find out if escorting and room familiarization is done effectively by hotel representatives, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 194 respondents were agreeing to the fact that escorting and room familiarization is done effectively by hotel representatives and this accounts to 46.4 percent of response. Likewise, 190 respondents, i.e., 45.2 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that escorting and room familiarization by hotel representative is done effectively by hotel representatives. However, 5.2 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if escorting and room familiarization is done effectively by hotel representatives. Cumulatively, 3.1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that escorting and room familiarization is done effectively by hotel representatives. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.33 with 0.74 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that escorting and room familiarization is done effectively by hotel representatives. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.27: Effectiveness of Escorting and room familiarization by hotel representative

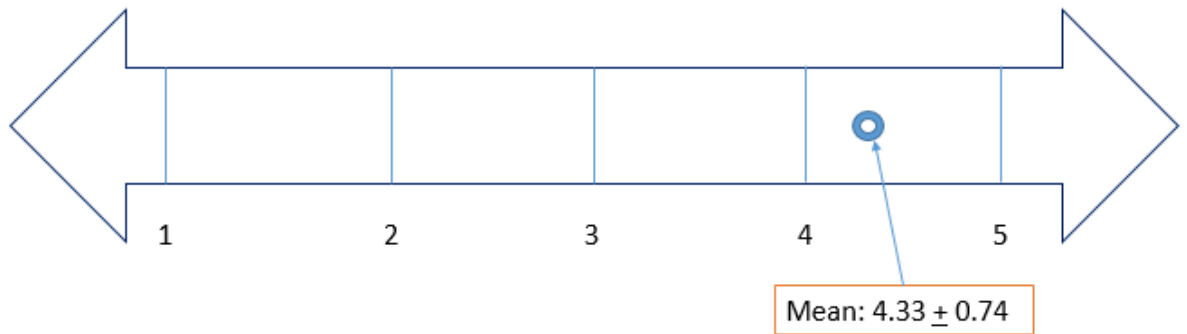


Table 4.33: Receipt of room package as per specification during booking

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 4 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Disagree | 4 | 1.0 | 1.9 |
| Undecided | 19 | 4.5 | 6.4 |
| Agree | 192 | 45.7 | 52.1 |
| Strongly agree | 201 | 47.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.33; S.D.: 0.74

Source Primary Data

To find out if guest receive room package as per the specifications during booking, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 201 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive room package as per the specifications during booking and this accounts to 47.9 percent of response. Likewise, 192 respondents, i.e.,45.7 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive room package as per the specifications during booking. However, 4.5 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive room package as per the specifications during booking. Cumulatively, 1.9 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive room package as per the specifications during booking. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.38 with 0.70 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-

third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that they receive room package as per the specifications during booking. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.28: Receipt of room package as per specification during booking

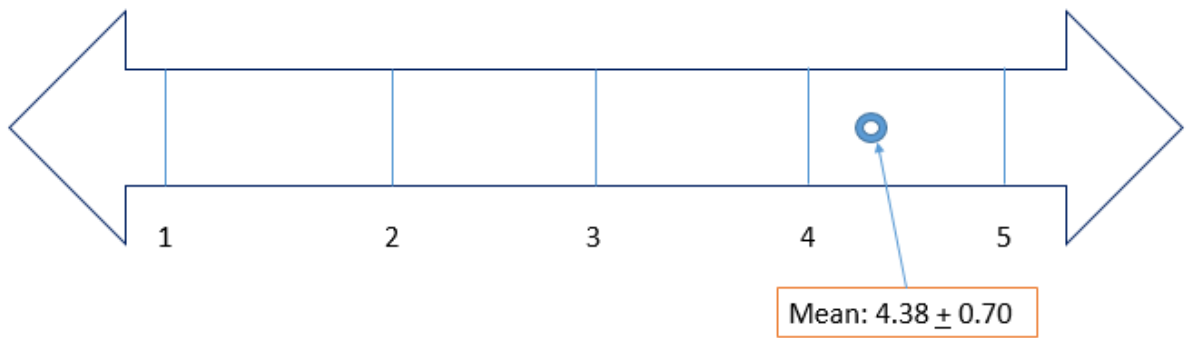


Table 4.34: Hotel ensures cleanliness and maintenance

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 2 | .5 | .7 |
| Undecided | 1 | .2 | 1.0 |
| Agree | 137 | 32.6 | 33.6 |
| Strongly agree | 278 | 66.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.64; S.D.: 0.53

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels ensure cleanliness and maintenance, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 278 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels ensure cleanliness and maintenance and this accounts to 66.4 percent of response. Likewise, 137 respondents, i.e., 32.6 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels ensure cleanliness and maintenance. However, 0.2 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels ensure cleanliness and maintenance. Cumulatively, 0.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star

hotels ensure cleanliness and maintenance. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.64 with 0.53 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels ensure cleanliness and maintenance. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.29:Hotel ensures cleanliness and maintenance

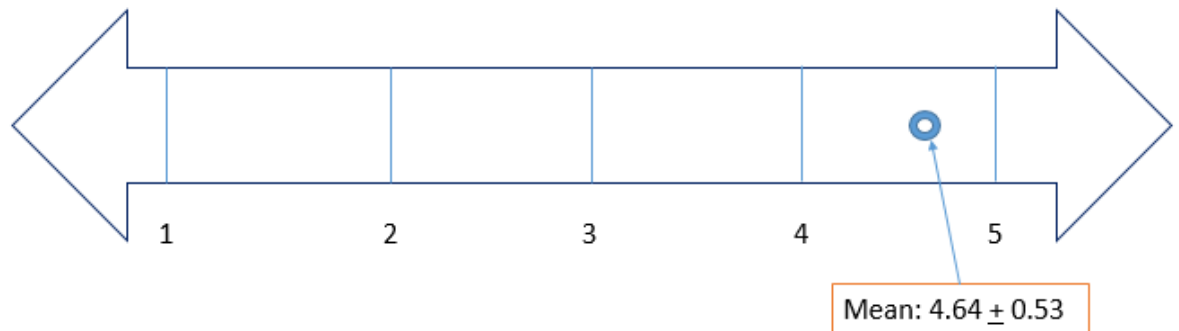


Table 4.35: Hotel replenishes in-room amenities

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 4 | 1.0 | 1.2 |
| Undecided | 4 | 1.0 | 2.1 |
| Agree | 186 | 44.5 | 46.7 |
| Strongly agree | 224 | 53.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.49; S.D.: 0.59

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels replenish in-room amenities, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 224 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels replenish in-room amenities and this accounts to 53.3 percent of response. Likewise, 186 respondents, i.e.,44.5 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels replenish in-room amenities. However, 1 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five

star hotels replenish in-room amenities. Cumulatively, 1.2 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels replenish in-room amenities. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.49 with 0.59 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels replenish in-room amenities. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.30:Hotel replenishes in-room amenities

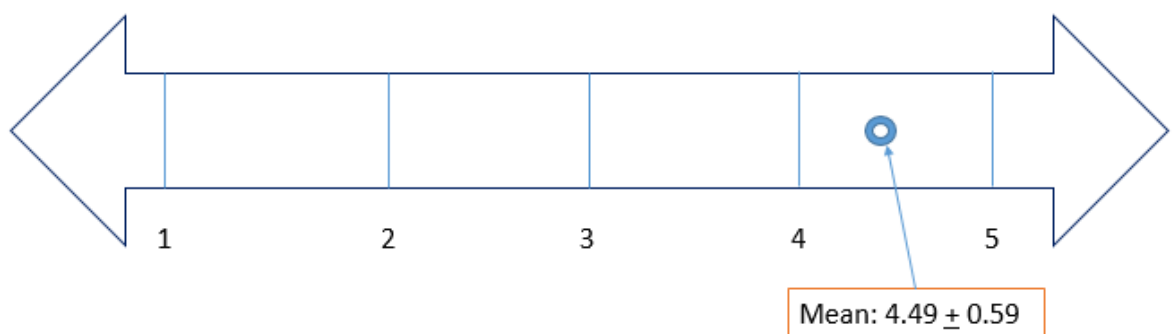


Table 4.36: Hotel quickly offers required amenities

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| Undecided | 16 | 3.8 | 5.2 |
| Agree | 186 | 44.5 | 49.8 |
| Strongly agree | 211 | 50.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.43; S.D.: 0.65

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels quickly offer required amenities, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 211 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels quickly offer required amenities and this accounts to 50.2 percent of response. Likewise, 186

respondents, i.e., 44.5 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels quickly offer required amenities. However, 3.8 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels quickly offer required amenities. Cumulatively, 1.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels quickly offer required amenities. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.43 with 0.65 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels quickly offer required amenities. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.31: Hotel quickly offers required amenities

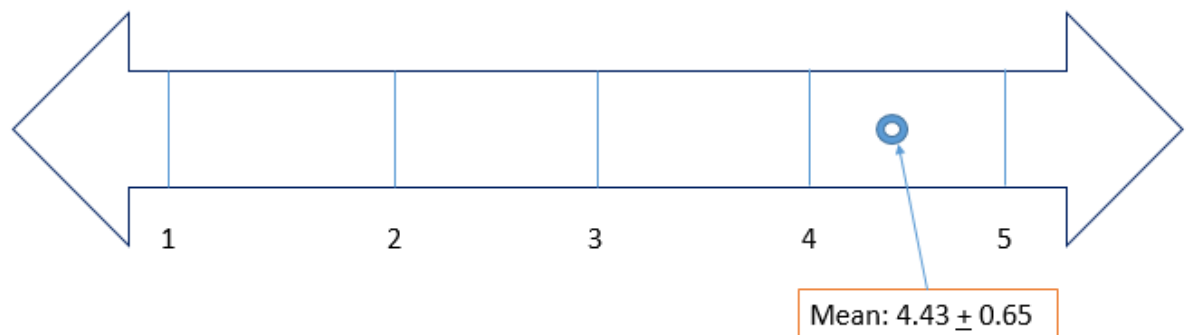


Table 4.37: Hotel gives complimentary services and gifts

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 4 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Disagree | 42 | 10.0 | 11.0 |
| Undecided | 105 | 25.2 | 36.2 |
| Agree | 159 | 37.9 | 74.0 |
| Strongly agree | 109 | 26.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.77; S.D.: 0.97

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels give complimentary services and gifts, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 159

respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels give complimentary services and gifts and this accounts to 37.9 percent of response. Likewise, 109 respondents, i.e.,26 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels give complimentary services and gifts. However, 25.2 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels give complimentary services and gifts. Cumulatively, 11 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels give complimentary services and gifts. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.77 with 0.97 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels give complimentary services and gifts. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.32:Hotel gives complimentary services and gifts

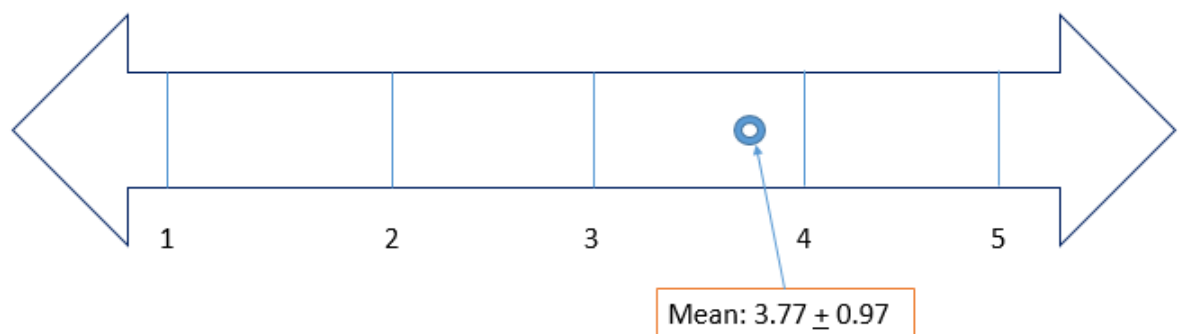


Table 4.38: Hotel remembers preferences

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 7 | 1.7 | 1.7 |
| Disagree | 33 | 7.9 | 9.5 |
| Undecided | 113 | 26.9 | 36.4 |
| Agree | 156 | 37.4 | 73.8 |
| Strongly agree | 110 | 26.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.78; S.D.: 0.95

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels remember preferences of guest, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 156 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels remember preferences of guest and this accounts to 37.4 percent of response. Likewise, 110 respondents, i.e.,26.2 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels remember preferences of guest. However, 26.9 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels remember preferences of guest. Cumulatively, 9.5 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels remember preferences of guest. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.78 with 0.95 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels remember preferences of guest. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.33:Hotel remembers preferences

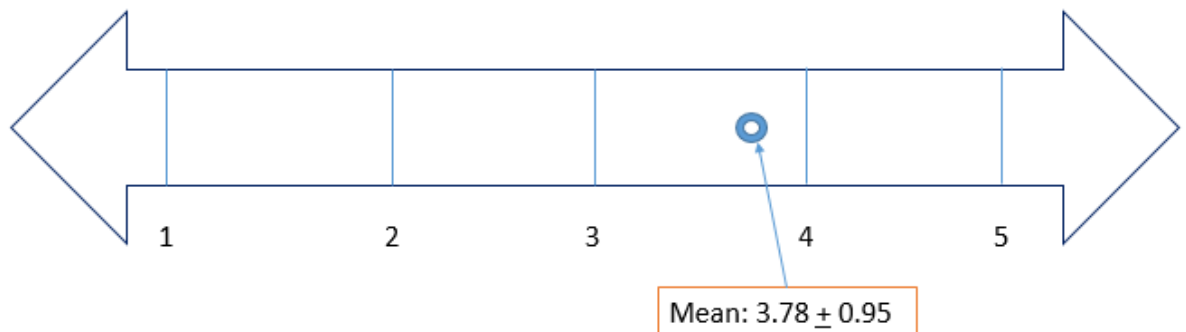


Table 4.39: Hotel listens to complaints patiently

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 6 | 1.4 | 1.7 |
| Undecided | 55 | 13.3 | 15.0 |
| Agree | 222 | 52.9 | 67.9 |
| Strongly agree | 135 | 32.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.15; S.D.: 0.71

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels listen to complaints patiently, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 222 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels listen to complaint patiently and this accounts to 52.9 percent of response. Likewise, 135 respondents, i.e.,32.1 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels listen to complaint patiently. However, 13.3 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels listen to complaint patiently. Cumulatively, 1.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels listen to complaint patiently. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.15 with 0.71 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels listen to complaint patiently. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.34:Hotel listens to complaints patiently

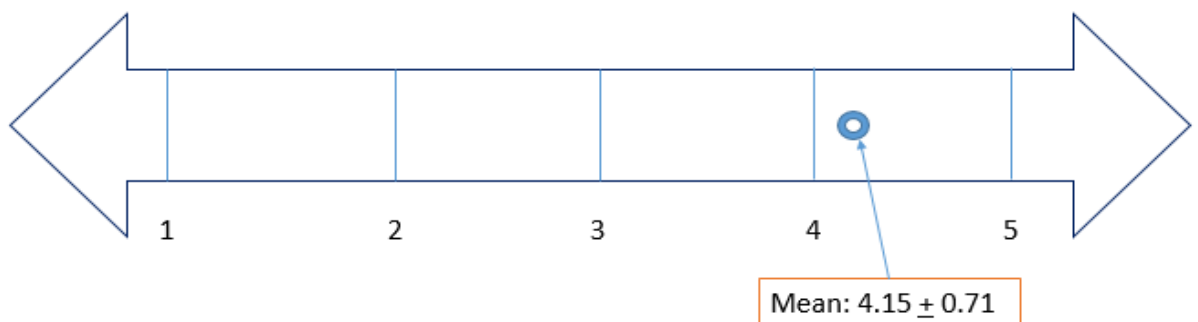


Table 4.40: Hotel provides safety and security

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 2 | .5 | .7 |
| Undecided | 14 | 3.3 | 4.0 |
| Agree | 178 | 42.6 | 46.7 |
| Strongly agree | 224 | 53.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.48; S.D.: 0.61

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels provide safety and security, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 224 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide safety and security and this accounts to 53.3 percent of response. Likewise, 178 respondents, i.e.,42.6 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide safety and security. However, 3.3 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels provide safety and security. Cumulatively, 0.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels provide safety and security. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.48 with 0.61 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels provide safety and security. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.35:Hotel provides safety and security

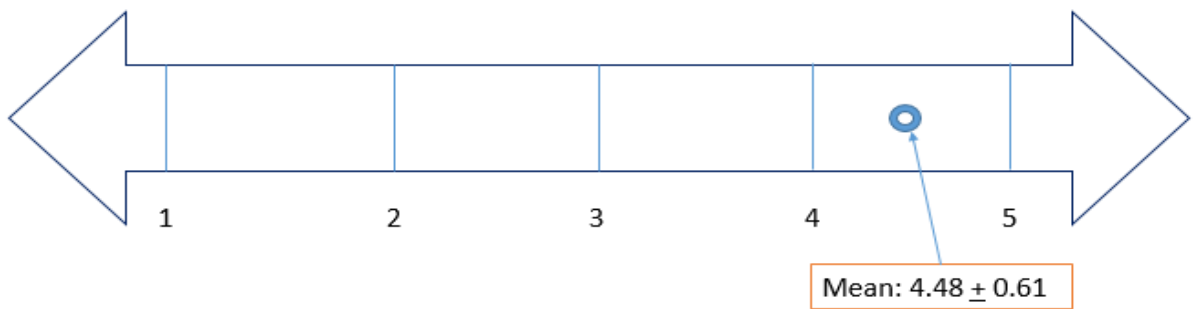


Table 4.41: Hotel provides quality food and beverages

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 3 | .7 | 1.0 |
| Undecided | 20 | 4.8 | 5.7 |
| Agree | 165 | 39.3 | 45.0 |
| Strongly agree | 230 | 55.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.48; S.D.: 0.64

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels provide quality food and beverages, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 231 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide quality food and beverages and this accounts to 55 percent of response. Likewise, 165 respondents, i.e.,39.3 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide quality food and beverages. However, 4.8 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels provide quality food and beverages. Cumulatively, 1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels provide quality food and beverages. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.48 with 0.64 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels provide quality food and beverages. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.36:Hotel provides quality food and beverages

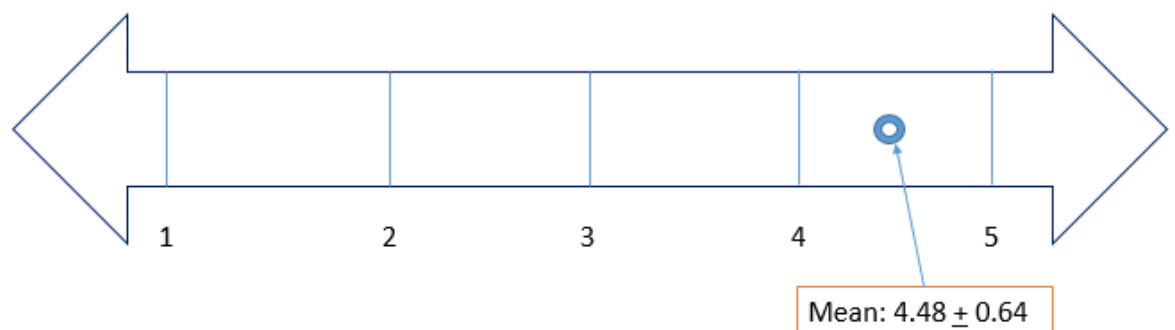


Table 4.42: Hotel provides easy check-out process

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 2 | .5 | .5 |
| Disagree | 6 | 1.4 | 1.9 |
| Undecided | 3 | .7 | 2.6 |
| Agree | 206 | 49.0 | 51.7 |
| Strongly agree | 202 | 48.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.43; S.D.: 0.63

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels provide easy check-out process, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 206 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide easy check-out process and this accounts to 49 percent of response. Likewise, 202 respondents, i.e.,48.3 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide easy check-out process. However, 0.7 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels provide easy check-out process. Cumulatively, 1.9 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels provide easy check-out process. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.43 with 0.63 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels provide easy check-out process. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.37:Hotel provides easy check-out process

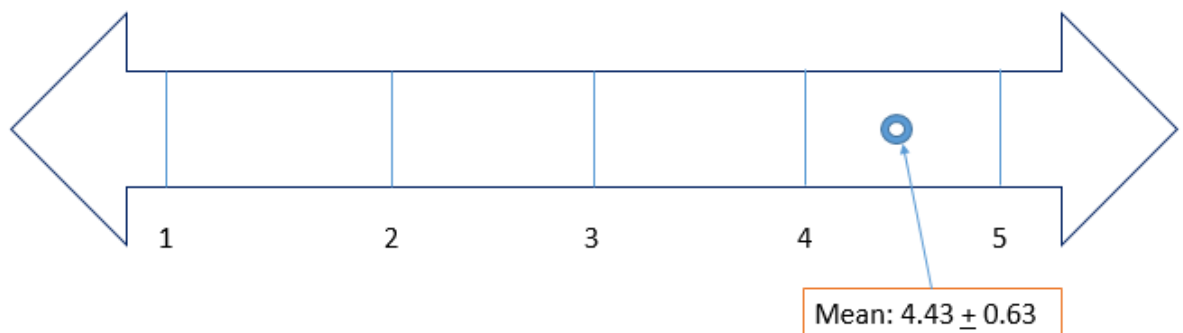


Table 4.43: Hotel reaches out for (verbal) feedback during billing

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 4 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Disagree | 19 | 4.5 | 5.5 |
| Undecided | 35 | 8.3 | 13.8 |
| Agree | 210 | 50.0 | 63.8 |
| Strongly agree | 151 | 36.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.15; S.D.: 0.82

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels reach out for (verbal) feedback during billing, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 210 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels reach out for (verbal) feedback during billing and this accounts to 50percent of response. Likewise, 151 respondents, i.e.,36.2 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels reach out for (verbal) feedback during billing. However, 8.3percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels reach out for (verbal) feedback during billing. Cumulatively, 5.5 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels reach out for (verbal) feedback during billing. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.15 with 0.82 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels reach out for (verbal) feedback during billing. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.38:Hotel reaches out for (verbal) feedback during billing

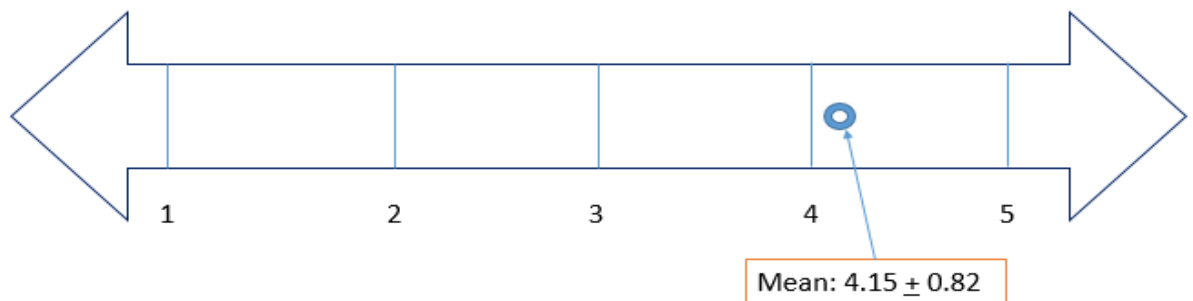


Table 4.44: Hotel provides accurate billing and payment options

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 1 | .2 | .5 |
| Undecided | 5 | 1.2 | 1.7 |
| Agree | 182 | 43.6 | 45.2 |
| Strongly agree | 230 | 54.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.52; S.D.: 0.56

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels provide accurate billing and payment options, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 230 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide accurate billing and payment options and this accounts to 54.8 percent of response. Likewise, 182 respondents, i.e.,43.6 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide accurate billing and payment options. However, 1.2 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels provide accurate billing and payment options. Cumulatively, 0.5 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels provide accurate billing and payment options. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.52 with 0.56 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels provide accurate billing and payment options. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.39:Hotel provides accurate billing and payment options

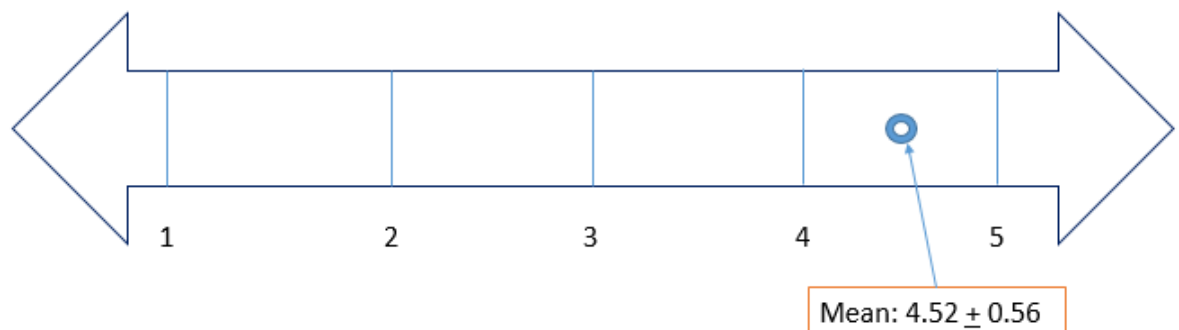


Table 4.45: Staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 7 | 1.7 | 1.9 |
| Undecided | 19 | 4.5 | 6.4 |
| Agree | 184 | 44.0 | 50.5 |
| Strongly agree | 208 | 49.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.40; S.D.: 0.67

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels' staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 208 respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels' staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out and this accounts to 49.5 percent of response. Likewise, 184 respondents, i.e.,44 percent of respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels' staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out. However, 4.5 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels' staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out. Cumulatively, 1.9 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels' staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.40 with 0.67 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels' staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.40:Staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out

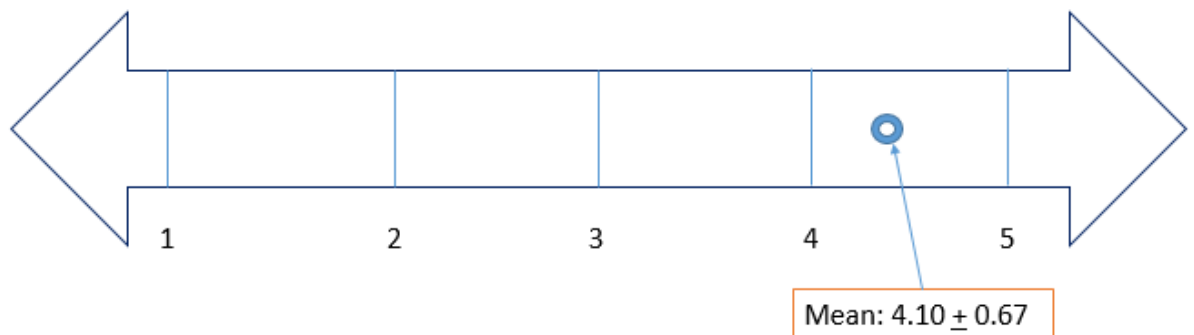


Table 4.46: Hotel always provides regular newsletters

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 11 | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| Disagree | 49 | 11.7 | 14.3 |
| Undecided | 119 | 28.3 | 42.6 |
| Agree | 173 | 41.4 | 84.0 |
| Strongly agree | 67 | 16.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.56; S.D.: 0.97

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels provide regular newsletters, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 173 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide regular news lettersand this accounts to 41.4percent of response. Likewise, 67 respondents, i.e.,16 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide regular newsletters. However, 28.3percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels provide regular newsletters. Cumulatively, 14.3 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels provide regular news letters.Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.56 with 0.97 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels provide regular newsletters. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.41:Hotel always provides regular newsletters

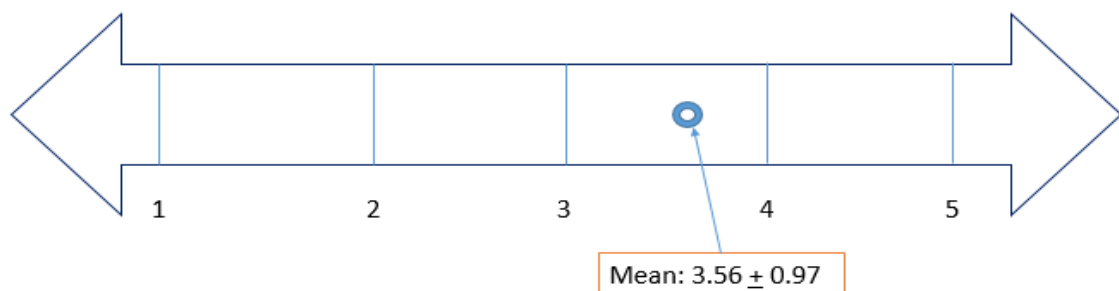


Table 4.47: Hotel always provides deals and offers

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| Disagree | 29 | 6.9 | 8.1 |
| Undecided | 85 | 20.2 | 28.3 |
| Agree | 218 | 51.9 | 80.2 |
| Strongly agree | 82 | 19.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.82; S.D.: 0.86

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels provide deals and offers to guest, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 218 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide deals and offers to guest and this accounts to 51.9 percent of response. Likewise, 87 respondents, i.e.,19.8 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels provide deals and offers to guest. However, 20.2 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels provide deals and offers to guest. Cumulatively, 8.1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels provide deals and offers to guest. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.82 with 0.86 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels provide deals and offers to guest. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.42:Hotel always provides deals and offers

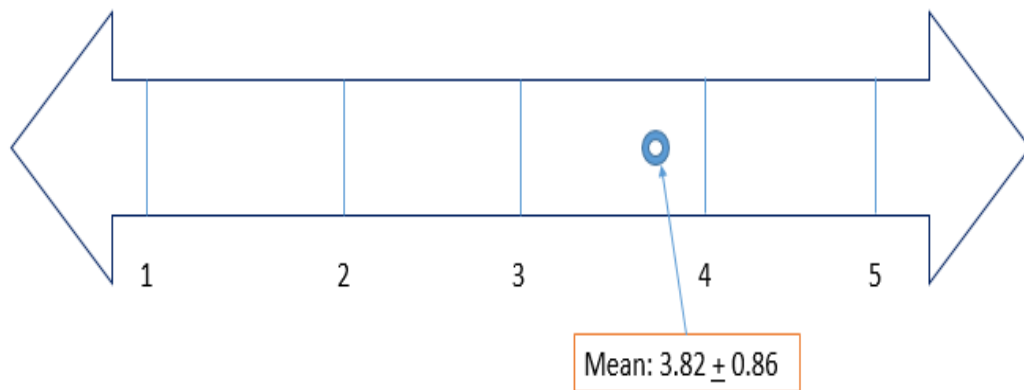


Table 4.48: Hotel always informs about loyalty benefits

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 6 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Disagree | 33 | 7.9 | 9.3 |
| Undecided | 69 | 16.4 | 25.7 |
| Agree | 217 | 51.7 | 77.4 |
| Strongly agree | 94 | 22.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.86; S.D.: 0.96

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels always inform about loyalty benefits, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 217 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels always inform about loyalty benefits and this accounts to 51.7 percent of response. Likewise, 94 respondents, i.e.,22.6 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels always inform about loyalty benefits. However, 16.4 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels always inform about loyalty benefits. Cumulatively, 9.3 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels always inform about loyalty benefits. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.86 with 0.96 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels

always inform about loyalty benefits. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.43:Hotel always informs about loyalty benefits

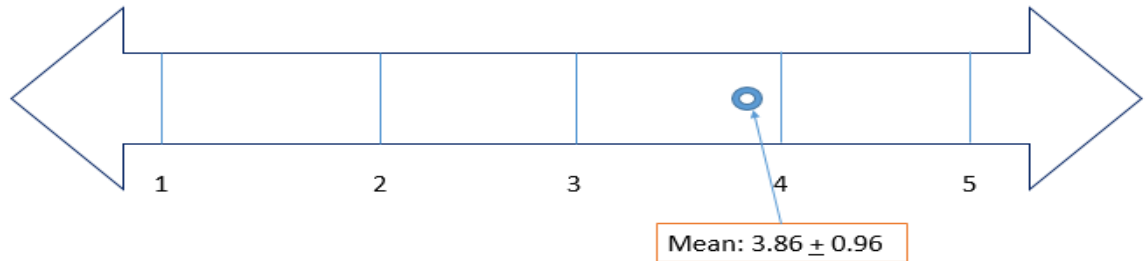


Table 4.49: Hotel asks for referrals

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 30 | 7.1 | 7.1 |
| Disagree | 85 | 20.2 | 27.4 |
| Undecided | 101 | 24.3 | 51.7 |
| Agree | 136 | 32.4 | 84.0 |
| Strongly agree | 67 | 16.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.29; S.D.: 1.16

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels ask for referrals, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 136 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels ask for referrals and this accounts to 32.4percent of response. Likewise, 67 respondents, i.e.,16 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels ask for referrals. However, 24.3percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels ask for referrals. Cumulatively, 20.2 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels ask for referrals. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.29 with 1.16 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is more than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean cannot be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels do not

ask for referrals from their guest. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.44:Hotel asks for referrals

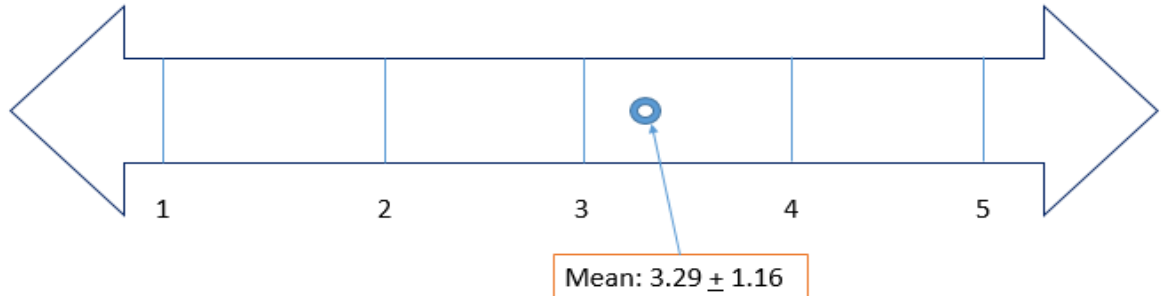


Table 4.50: Hotel is close to the ideal

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 3 | .7 | 1.0 |
| Undecided | 26 | 6.2 | 7.1 |
| Agree | 269 | 64.3 | 71.4 |
| Strongly agree | 120 | 28.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.20; S.D.: 0.59

Source Primary Data

To find out if five star hotels are close to guests' ideal, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 269 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels are close to their ideal and this accounts to 64.3percent of response. Likewise, 120 respondents, i.e.,28.6percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels are close to their ideal. However, 6.2 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels are close to their ideal. Cumulatively, 1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels are close to their ideal. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.20 with 0.59 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that

five star hotels are close to their ideal. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.45:Hotel is close to the ideal

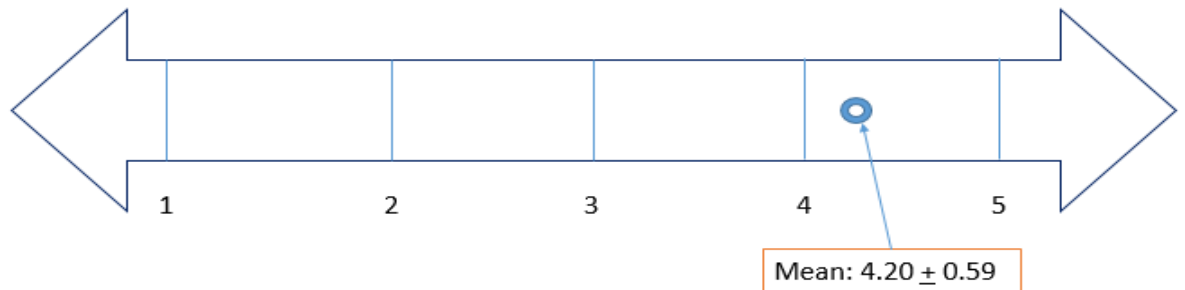


Table 4.51: Hotel is excellent

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 2 | .5 | .7 |
| Undecided | 19 | 4.5 | 5.2 |
| Agree | 247 | 59.0 | 64.3 |
| Strongly agree | 150 | 35.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.29; S.D.: 0.59

Source Primary Data

To find out if respondents find five star hotels are excellent, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 247 respondents were agreeing to the fact that five star hotels are excellent and this accounts to 59percent of response. Likewise, 150 respondents, i.e.,35.7percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that five star hotels are excellent. However, 4.5percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if five star hotels are excellent. Cumulatively, 0.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that five star hotels are excellent. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.29 with 0.59 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it

can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that five star hotels are excellent. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.46:Hotel is excellent

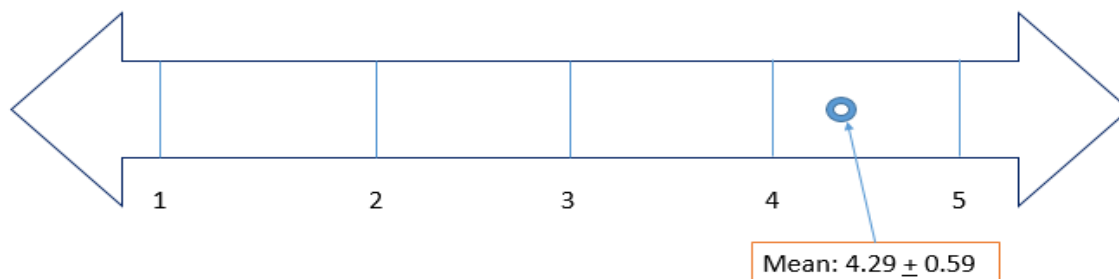


Table 4.52: Satisfaction with this hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| Undecided | 10 | 2.4 | 3.8 |
| Agree | 230 | 55.0 | 58.8 |
| Strongly agree | 173 | 41.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.35; S.D.: 0.61

Source Primary Data

To find out if respondents are satisfied with five star hotels, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 230 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they are satisfied with five star hotels and this accounts to 55percent of response. Likewise, 173 respondents, i.e.,41.2percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they are satisfied with five star hotels. However, 2.4percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they are satisfied with five star hotels. Cumulatively, 1.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they are satisfied with five star hotels. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.35 with 0.61 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of

respondents that they are satisfied with five star hotels. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.47: Satisfaction with this hotel

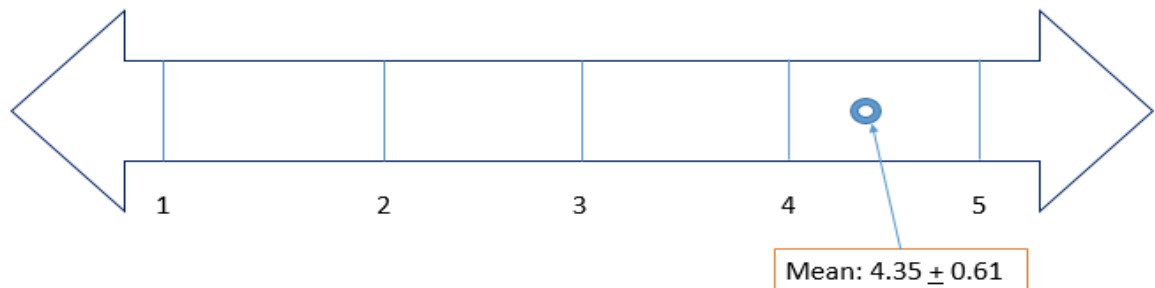


Table 4.53: Receipt of value for the money at this hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 10 | 2.4 | 2.6 |
| Undecided | 40 | 9.8 | 12.4 |
| Agree | 223 | 53.1 | 65.5 |
| Strongly agree | 145 | 34.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.19; S.D.: 0.72

Source Primary Data

To find out if respondents receive value for money at five star hotels, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 223 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they receive value for money at five star hotels and this accounts to 53.1 percent of response. Likewise, 145 respondents, i.e., 34.5 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they receive value for money at five star hotels. However, 9.8 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they receive value for money at five star hotels. Cumulatively, 2.6 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they receive value for money at five star hotels. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.19 with 0.72 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative

value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that they receive value for money at five star hotels. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.48:Receipt of value for the money at this hotel

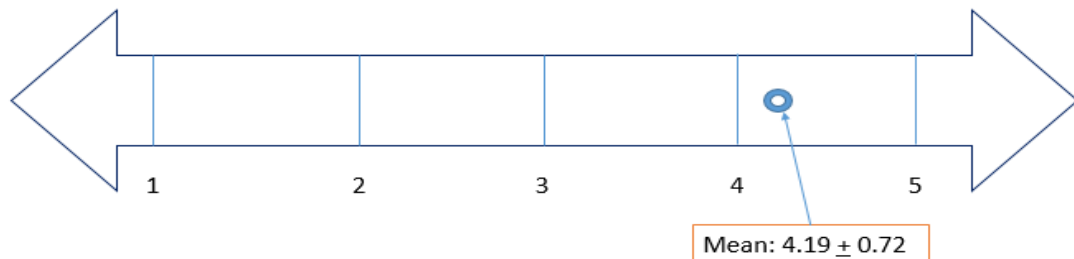


Table 4.54: Speaking positive about the hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| Undecided | 31 | 7.6 | 9.0 |
| Agree | 225 | 53.6 | 62.6 |
| Strongly agree | 157 | 37.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.26; S.D.: 0.67

Source Primary Data

To find out if respondents are speaking positive about five star hotels, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measure. From the above table it is observed that 225 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they speak positive about five star hotels and this accounts to 53.6 percent of response. Likewise, 157 respondents, i.e.,37.4 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they speak positive about five star hotels. However, 7.6 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they speak positive about five star hotels. Cumulatively, 1.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they speak positive about five star hotels. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.26 with 0.67 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from

the opinion of respondents that they speak positive about five star hotels. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.49:Speaking positive about the hotel

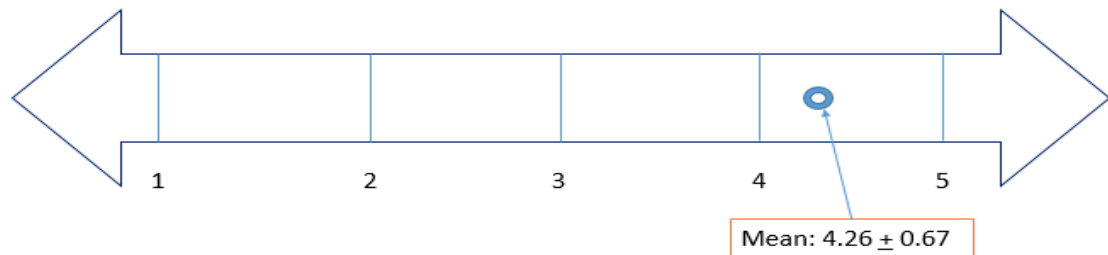


Table 4.55: Likelihood to visit the hotel again

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 6 | 1.4 | 1.7 |
| Undecided | 35 | 8.3 | 10.0 |
| Agree | 220 | 52.4 | 62.4 |
| Strongly agree | 157 | 37.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.25; S.D.: 0.68

Source Primary Data

To find out how likely respondents are willing to visit five star hotels again, researcher has developed and used a question based on five- point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 220 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they will visit the five star hotels again and this accounts to 52.4percent of response. Likewise, 157 respondents, i.e.,37.6percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they will visit the five star hotels again. However, 8.3percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they will visit the five star hotels again. Cumulatively, 1.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they will visit the five star hotels again. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.25 with 0.68 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be

concluded from the opinion of respondents that they are willing to visit the five star hotels again. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.50: Likeliness to visit the hotel again

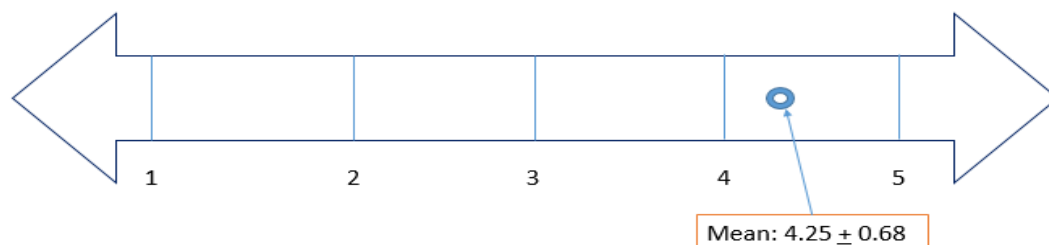


Table 4.56: Likeliness to upgrade the services during my next visit

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 2 | .5 | .5 |
| Disagree | 31 | 7.4 | 7.9 |
| Undecided | 103 | 24.5 | 32.4 |
| Agree | 169 | 40.2 | 72.6 |
| Strongly agree | 114 | 27.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.86; S.D.: 0.91

Source Primary Data

To find out how likely respondents are willing to upgrade the services during their next stay, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 169 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they will upgrade the services during their next stay at five star hotels and this accounts to 40.2percent of response. Likewise, 114 respondents, i.e.,27.4percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they will upgrade the services during their next stay at five star hotels. However, 24.5percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they will upgrade the services during their next stay at five star hotels. Cumulatively, 7.9 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they will upgrade the services during their next stay at five star hotels. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.86 with 0.91 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as

representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that they have willingness to upgrade the services during their next stay at five star hotels. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.51: Likeliness to upgrade the services during my next visit

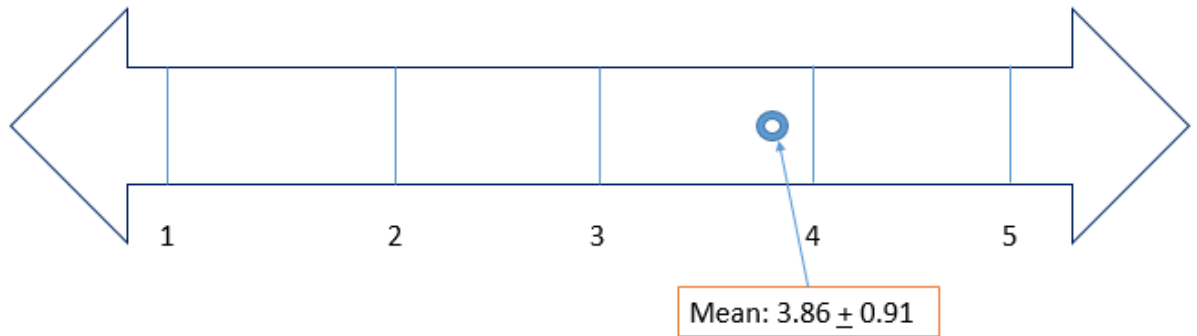


Table 4.57: Recommendation of the hotel to friends and colleagues

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 5 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| Undecided | 28 | 6.7 | 8.1 |
| Agree | 224 | 53.3 | 61.4 |
| Strongly agree | 161 | 38.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.28; S.D.: 0.66

Source Primary Data

To find out how likely respondents are willing to recommend the hotels to their friends and colleagues, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 224 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they will recommend the hotels to their friends and colleagues and this accounts to 53.3percent of response. Likewise, 161 respondents, i.e.,38.6percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that they will recommend the hotels to their friends and colleagues. However, 6.7percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if they will recommend the hotels to their friends and colleagues. Cumulatively, 1.4 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that they will recommend the

hotels to their friends and colleagues. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.28 with 0.66 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that they are willing to recommend the hotels to their friends and colleagues. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.52: Recommendation of the hotel to friends and colleagues

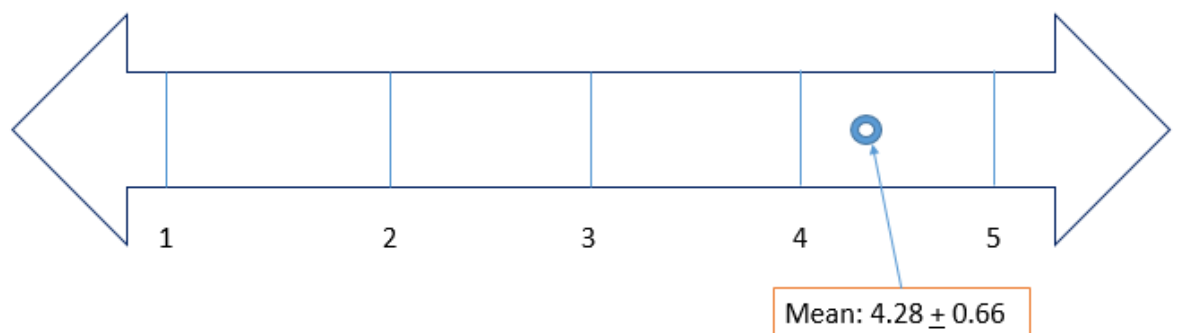


Table 4.58: Unlikeliness to think of competitor’s hotel for any specific need over the hotel

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 11 | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| Disagree | 40 | 9.8 | 12.4 |
| Undecided | 141 | 33.6 | 46.0 |
| Agree | 147 | 35.0 | 81.0 |
| Strongly agree | 80 | 19.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.58; S.D.: 0.98

Source Primary Data

To find out unlikeliness of respondents to think of competitor’s hotel for any specific need, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 147 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they will not think for competitor’s hotel for any specific need and this accounts to 35percent of response. Likewise, 80 respondents, i.e.,19percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the

fact that they will not think of competitor’s hotel for any specific need. However, 33.6percent of respondents were undecided on the fact about their unlikeliness to think of competitor’s hotel for any specific need. Cumulatively, 12.4 percent of respondents were agreeing to the point that they will think of competitor’s hotel for any specific need. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.58 with 0.98 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that they are unlikely to think of competitor’s hotel for any specific need. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.53:Unlikeliness to think of competitor’s hotel for any specific need over the hotel

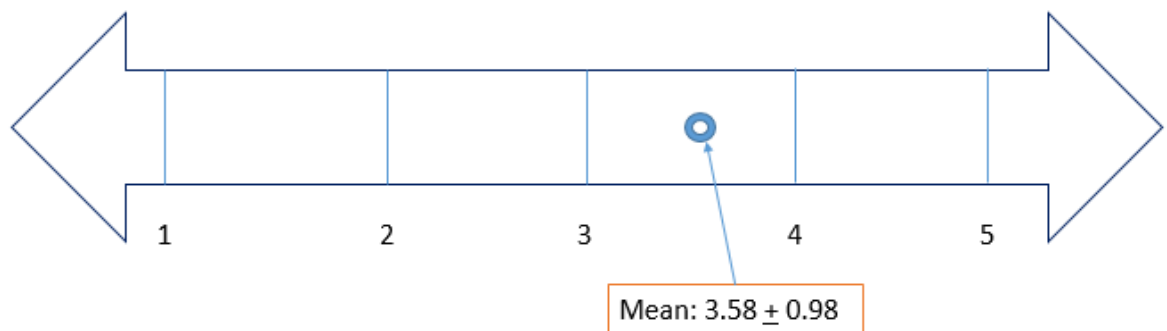


Table 4.59: Brand reputation (or goodwill)

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 9 | 2.1 | 2.4 |
| Undecided | 25 | 6.2 | 8.6 |
| Agree | 205 | 48.8 | 57.4 |
| Strongly agree | 179 | 42.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.31; S.D.: 0.70

Source Primary Data

To find out if brand reputation of the five star hotels influences consumer preferences, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 205 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they brand reputation of the five star hotels influences their preferences and this accounts to 48.8 percent of response. Likewise, 179 respondents, i.e.,42.6percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that brand reputation of the five star hotels influences their preferences. However, 6.2 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if brand reputation of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Cumulatively, 2.4percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that brand reputation of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.31 with 0.70 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that brand reputation of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.54:Brand reputation (or goodwill)

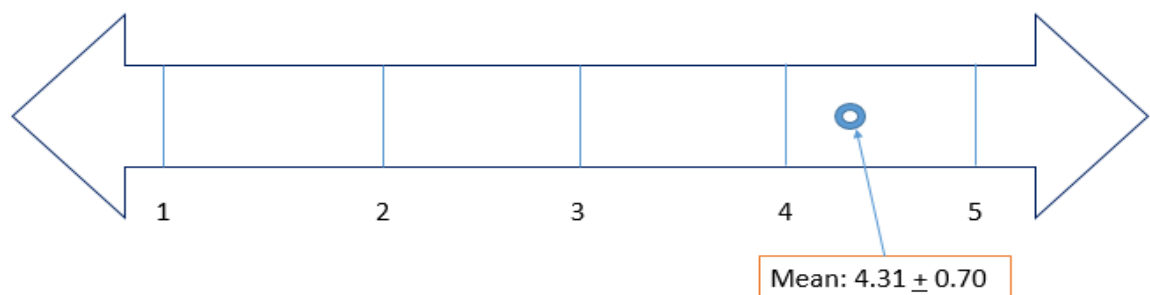


Table 4.60: Brand resonance

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 13 | 3.3 | 3.6 |
| Undecided | 45 | 10.7 | 14.3 |
| Agree | 234 | 55.7 | 70.0 |
| Strongly agree | 126 | 30.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.11; S.D.: 0.74

Source Primary Data

To find out if brand resonance of the five star hotels influences consumer preferences, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 234 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they brand resonance of the five star hotels influences their preferences and this accounts to 55.7percent of response. Likewise, 126respondents, i.e.,30percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that brand resonance of the five star hotels influences their preferences. However, 10.7percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if brand resonance of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Cumulatively, 3.6 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that brand resonance of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.1 with 0.74 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that brand resonance of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.55:Brand resonance

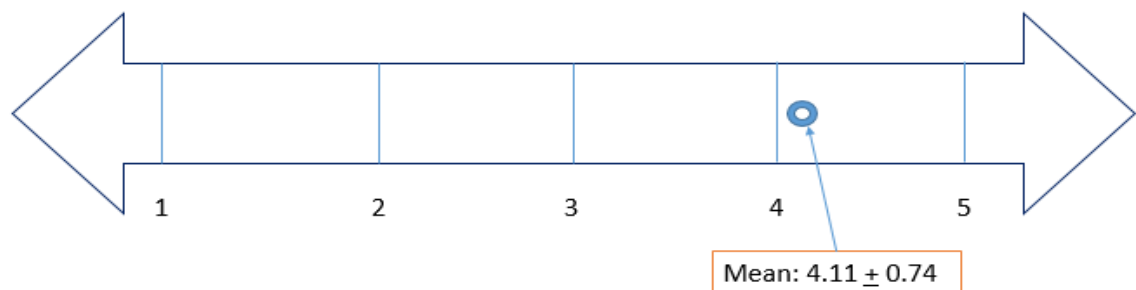


Table 4.61: Word-of-mouth

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 6 | 1.4 | 1.7 |
| Undecided | 41 | 10.0 | 11.7 |
| Agree | 213 | 50.7 | 62.4 |
| Strongly agree | 158 | 37.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.24; S.D.: 0.70

Source Primary Data

To find out if word-of-mouth of the five star hotels influences consumer preferences, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 213 respondents were agreeing to the fact that they word-of-mouth of the five star hotels influences their preferences and this accounts to 50.7 percent of response. Likewise, 158 respondents, i.e.,37.6 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that word-of-mouth of the five star hotels influences their preferences. However, 11.7 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if word-of-mouth of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Cumulatively, 1.7 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that word-of-mouth of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.24 with 0.70 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that word-of-mouth of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.56:Word-of-mouth

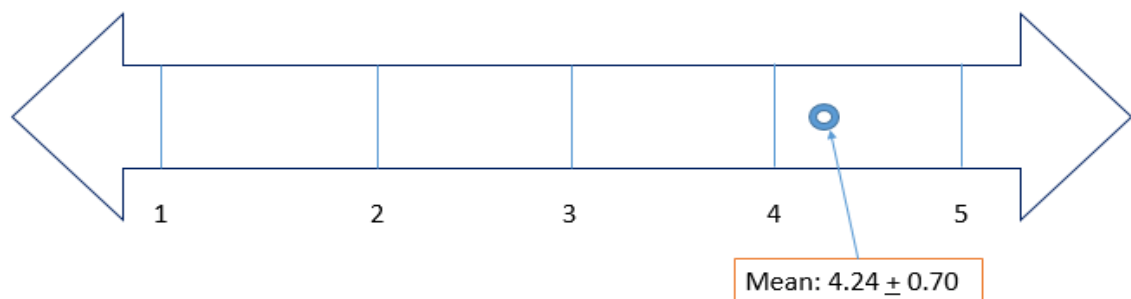


Table 4.62: Price fairness

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 1 | .2 | .5 |
| Undecided | 27 | 6.4 | 6.9 |
| Agree | 201 | 47.9 | 54.8 |
| Strongly agree | 190 | 45.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 4.43; S.D.: 0.63

Source Primary Data

To find out if price fairness of the five star hotels influences consumer preferences, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 201 respondents were agreeing to the fact that price fairness of the five star hotels influences their preferences and this accounts to 47.9 percent of response. Likewise, 190 respondents, i.e.,45.2 percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that price fairness of the five star hotels influences their preferences. However, 6.4 percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if price fairness of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Cumulatively, 0.5 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that price fairness of the five star hotels influence their preferences. Mean value of an element is observed to be 4.37 with 0.63 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that price fairness of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.57:Price fairness

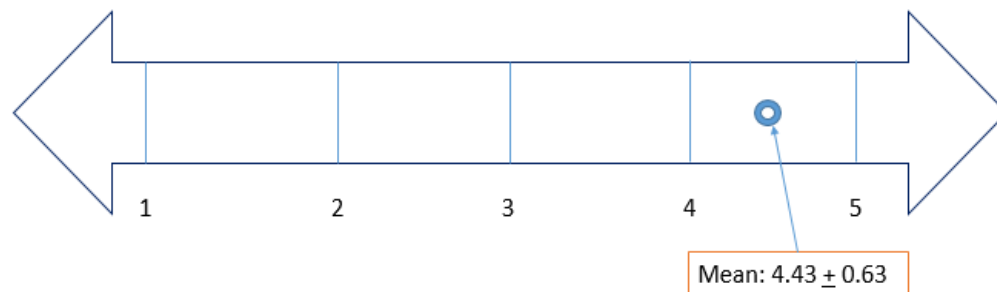


Table 4.63: Brand communication to masses

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 1 | .2 | .2 |
| Disagree | 11 | 2.6 | 2.9 |
| Undecided | 79 | 19.0 | 21.9 |
| Agree | 230 | 54.8 | 76.7 |
| Strongly agree | 98 | 23.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.98; S.D.: 0.74

Source Primary Data

To find out if brand communication of the five star hotels influences consumer preferences, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 230 respondents were agreeing to the fact that brand communication of the five star hotels influences their preferences and this accounts to 54.8percent of response. Likewise, 98respondents, i.e.,23.3percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that brand communication of the five star hotels influences their preferences. However, 19percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if brand communication of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Cumulatively, 2.9 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that brand communication of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.98 with 0.74 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that brand communication of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.58:Brand communication to masses

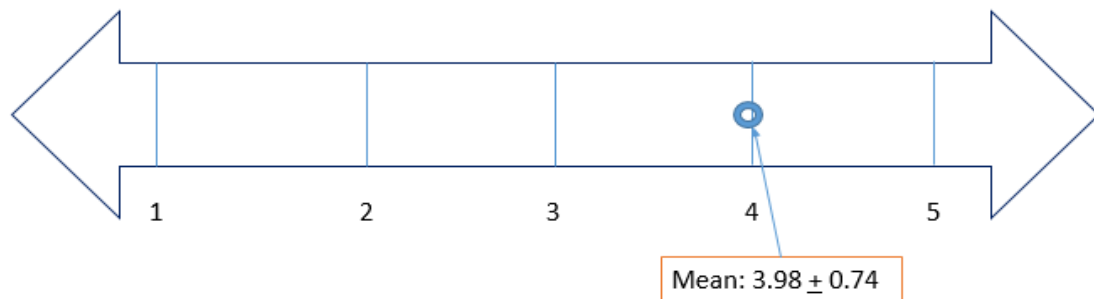


Table 4.64: Corporate Social Responsibility

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 13 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| Disagree | 37 | 9.0 | 12.1 |
| Undecided | 95 | 22.6 | 34.8 |
| Agree | 194 | 46.2 | 81.0 |
| Strongly agree | 80 | 19.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.98; S.D.: 0.74

Source: Primary Data

To find out if CSR activities of the five star hotels influences consumer preferences, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 194 respondents were agreeing to the fact that CSR activities of the five star hotels influences their preferences and this accounts to 46.2percent of response. Likewise, 80respondents, i.e.,19percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that CSR activities of the five star hotels influence their preferences. However, 22.6percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if CSR activities of the five star hotels influence their preferences. Cumulatively, 12.1 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that CSR activities of the five star hotels influence their preferences. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.69 with 0.98 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that CSR activities of the five star hotels influence their preferences. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.59:Corporate Social Responsibility

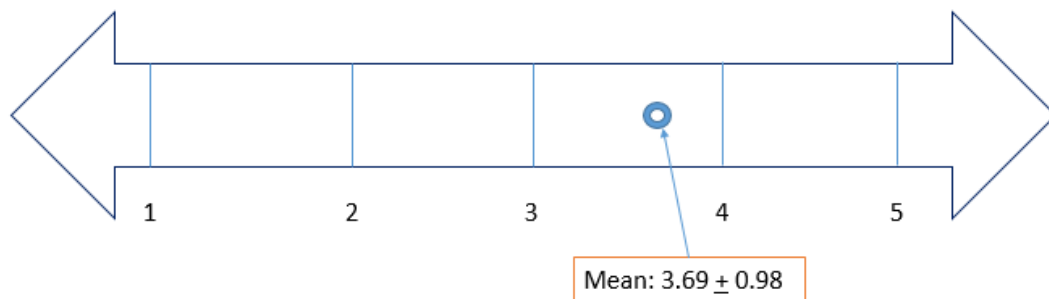


Table 4.65: Marketing channels

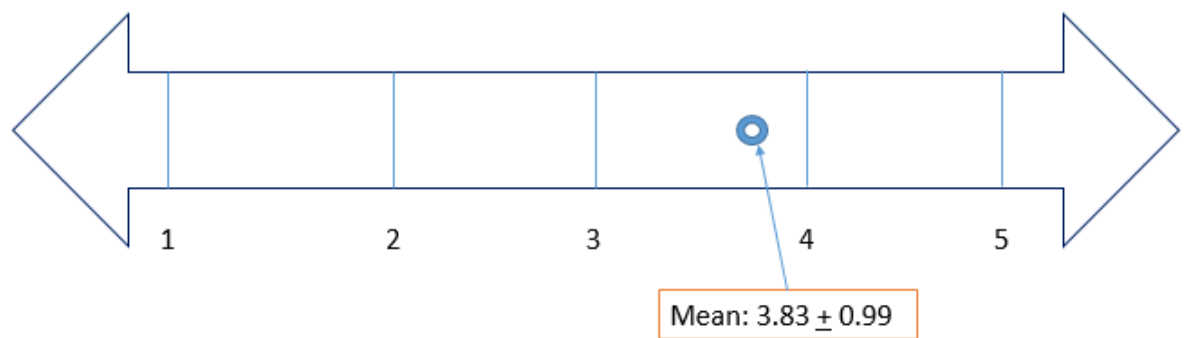
| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 17 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| Disagree | 20 | 4.8 | 8.8 |
| Undecided | 84 | 20.2 | 29.0 |
| Agree | 193 | 46.0 | 75.0 |
| Strongly agree | 105 | 25.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 419 | 100.0 | |

Mean: 3.98; S.D.: 0.74

Source: Primary Data

To find out if marketing channels of the five star hotels influences consumer preferences, researcher has developed and used a question based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measures. From the above table it is observed that 193 respondents were agreeing to the fact that marketing channels of the five star hotels influences their preferences and this accounts to 46percent of response. Likewise, 105respondents, i.e.,25percent of respondents were strongly agreeing to the fact that marketing channels of the five star hotels influences their preferences. However, 20.2percent of respondents were undecided on the fact that if marketing channels of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Cumulatively, 8.8 percent of respondents were disagreeing to the point that marketing channels of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Mean value of an element is observed to be 3.83 with 0.99 values of standard deviations. As standard deviation is lesser than one-third of mean on five-point Likert scale, mean can be referred as representative value. Thus, it can be concluded from the opinion of respondents that marketing channels of the five star hotels influences their preferences. Graphical representation of the data is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.60:Marketing channels



Validation of Hypotheses

- ▶ **H₀**: Guests of five star hotels in Pune city do not perceive the procedures followed in all the stages of the guest cycle as customer engagement strategies.
- ▶ **H₁**:Guests of five star hotels in Pune city perceive the procedures followed in all the stages of the guest cycle as customer engagement strategies.

Table 4.66: One-Sample Statistics

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|----------------------|-----|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| Pre-arrival Phase | 419 | 4.1071 | .58660 | .02862 |
| Arrival Phase | 419 | 4.4310 | .56340 | .02749 |
| During Stay | 419 | 4.3881 | .56497 | .02757 |
| Departure Stage | 419 | 4.4833 | .57157 | .02789 |
| Post Departure Stage | 419 | 3.7524 | .86049 | .04199 |

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.67: One-Sample Test

| Test Value > 4 | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---------|-----|-----------------|-----------------|---|--------|
| | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | t | df | Sig. (1-tailed) | Mean Difference | Lower | Upper |
| Pre-arrival Phase | 1.8715 | 418 | .000 | .10714 | .0509 | .1634 |
| Arrival Phase | 7.835 | 418 | .000 | .43095 | .3769 | .4850 |
| During Stay | 7.039 | 418 | .000 | .38810 | .3339 | .4423 |
| Departure Stage | 8.665 | 418 | .000 | .48333 | .4285 | .5382 |
| Post Departure Stage | -2.9485 | 418 | .000 | -.24762 | -.3302 | -.1651 |

Source: Primary Data

One sample one-tailed test is used to validate hypothesis 1. One-tailed test is used to test the statistical hypothesis that the population mean for customer engagement strategy is higher than 4 on five point Likert scale. Researcher has used 5 components (customer engagement strategies *at Pre-arrival Phase, Arrival Phase, During Stay, Departure Stage and Post Departure Stage*) to measure customer engagement strategies in five star hotels in Pune city. Table 4.66 provides descriptive statistics of customer engagement strategy.

Table 4.67 reveals statistical results for one-tailed one sample t-test. From the table it is observed that for first four components i.e. customer engagement strategies at *Pre-arrival Phase, Arrival Phase, During Stay and Departure Stage* calculated t-values are more than the table value (1.645) of t-test at 5% level of significance. As calculated values are more than table value, it can be concluded that guests of five star hotels in Pune city do perceive procedures followed at *Pre-arrival Phase, Arrival Phase, During Stay and Departure Stage* as customer engagement strategies.

However, calculated t-value for customer engagement strategies at *Post Departure Stage* is observed as -2.9484, which is lesser than table value of 1.645 at 5% level of significance. Thus, there exists enough evidence to conclude that guests of the five star hotels in Pune city do not perceive the procedures followed in the *Post departure stage* of the guest cycle as customer engagement strategies.

Conclusion: Thus, based on the above calculations, it can be concluded that guests of five star hotels in Pune city do not perceive the procedures followed in all the stages of the guest cycle as customer engagement strategies and null hypothesis stands true.

H₀: Customer engagement strategies followed in five star hotels in Pune city do not influence customer satisfaction.

H₂: Customer engagement strategies followed in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

The above hypothesis is divided and tested into 5-sub-hypotheses.

H_{2.1}: Customer engagement strategies followed at pre-arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

Table 4.68: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | .404 ^a | .163 | .161 | .54826 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pre-arrival Phase

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.68, 4.69 and 4.70 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.69 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - Pre-arrival Phase, the Regression effect has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.68 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .163 and .161 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 16.1% of the variance of 'Customer Satisfaction.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.70 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.69: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 24.555 | 1 | 24.555 | 81.689 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 125.645 | 417 | .301 | | |
| | Total | 150.200 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pre-arrival Phase

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.70: Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.605 | .189 | | 13.752 | .000 |
| | Pre-arrival Phase | .413 | .046 | .404 | 9.038 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 81.689$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 16.1% of the variance for ‘Customer Satisfaction’ ($R^2 = .163$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .161$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies followed at pre-arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

$$\text{Customer Satisfaction} = 2.605 + 0.413 \text{ Pre-arrival Phase Customer Engagement Strategies}$$

H_{2.2}: Customer engagement strategies followed at arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

Table 4.71: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .543 ^a | .294 | .293 | .50350 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Arrival Phase

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.71, 4.72 and 4.73 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.72 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - Arrival Phase, the Regression effect

has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.71 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .294 and .293 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 29.3% of the variance of 'Customer Satisfaction.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.73 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.72: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 44.233 | 1 | 44.233 | 174.483 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 105.967 | 417 | .254 | | |
| | Total | 150.200 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Arrival Phase

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.73: Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.745 | .195 | | 8.947 | .000 |
| | Arrival Phase | .577 | .044 | .543 | 13.209 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 174.483$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 29.3% of the variance for ‘Customer Satisfaction’ ($R^2 = .294$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .293$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies followed at arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

Customer Satisfaction = 1.745 + 0.577 Arrival Phase Customer Engagement Strategies

H_{2.3}: Customer engagement strategies followed at stay stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

Table 4.74: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .502 ^a | .252 | .250 | .51856 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), During Stay

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.74, 4.75 and 4.76 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.75 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - During Stay, the Regression effect has

1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.74 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .252 and .250 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 25% of the variance of 'Customer Satisfaction.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.76 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.75: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 37.799 | 1 | 37.799 | 140.566 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 112.401 | 417 | .269 | | |
| | Total | 150.200 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), During Stay

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.76: Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|-------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.967 | .198 | | 9.916 | .000 |
| | During Stay | .532 | .045 | .502 | 11.856 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 140.566$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 25% of the variance for ‘Customer Satisfaction’ ($R^2 = .252$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .250$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exist enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies followed during the stay stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

$$\text{Customer Satisfaction} = 1.967 + 0.532 \text{ During Stay Customer Engagement Strategies}$$

H_{2.4}: Customer engagement strategies followed at departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

Table 4.77: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .447 ^a | .200 | .198 | .53621 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Departure Stage

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.77, 4.78 and 4.79 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.78 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - Departure Stage, the Regression effect has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.77 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .200 and .198 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 19.8% of the variance of ‘Customer Satisfaction.’ The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.79 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial

correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.78: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 30.017 | 1 | 30.017 | 104.399 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 120.183 | 417 | .288 | | |
| | Total | 150.200 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Departure Stage

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Table 4.79: Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.201 | .207 | | 10.624 | .000 |
| | Departure Stage | .468 | .046 | .447 | 10.218 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 104.399$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 19.8% of the variance for ‘Customer Satisfaction’ ($R^2 = .200$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .198$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exist enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies followed at departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

Customer Satisfaction = 2.201 + 0.468 Departure Stage Customer Engagement Strategies

H_{2.5}: Customer engagement strategies followed at Post departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction.

Table 4.80: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | .270 ^a | .073 | .070 | .57724 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Post Departure Stage

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.80, 4.81 and 4.82 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.81 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - Post Departure Stage, the Regression effect has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.80 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .073 and .070 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 7% of the variance of 'Customer Satisfaction.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.82 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.81: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 10.918 | 1 | 10.918 | 32.766 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 139.282 | 417 | .333 | | |
| | Total | 150.200 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Post Departure Stage

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.82: Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.596 | .126 | | 28.505 | .000 |
| | Post Departure Stage | .188 | .033 | .270 | 5.724 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 32.766$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 7% of the variance for 'Customer Satisfaction' ($R^2 = .073$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .070$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies at post departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

Customer Satisfaction = 3.596 + 0.188 Post Departure Stage Customer Engagement Strategies

Conclusion: Thus, based on the above calculations, it can be concluded that Customer engagement strategies followed in five star hotels in Pune city influence customer satisfaction and alternate hypothesis stands true.

H₀: Customer engagement strategies followed in five star hotels in Pune city do not influence consumer purchase intention.

H₃: Customer engagement strategies followed in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

The above hypothesis is divided and tested into 5-sub-hypotheses.

H_{3.1}: Customer engagement strategies followed at pre-arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

Table 4.83: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | .365 ^a | .134 | .131 | .60545 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pre-arrival Phase

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.83, 4.84 and 4.85 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.84 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - Pre-arrival Phase, the Regression effect has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.83 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .134 and .131 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 13.1% of the variance of 'Consumer Purchase Intention.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.75 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with

each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.84: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 23.620 | 1 | 23.620 | 64.436 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 153.227 | 417 | .367 | | |
| | Total | 176.848 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pre-arrival Phase

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.85: Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.485 | .209 | | 11.880 | .000 |
| | Pre-arrival Phase | .405 | .050 | .365 | 8.027 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 64.436$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 13.1% of the variance for ‘Consumer Purchase Intention’ ($R^2 = .134$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .131$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies followed at pre-arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

Consumer Purchase Intention = 2.605 + 0.413 Pre-arrival Phase Customer Engagement Strategies

H_{3.2}: Customer engagement strategies followed at arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

Table 4.86: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .458 ^a | .210 | .208 | .57813 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Arrival Phase

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.86, 4.87 and 4.88 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.87 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor -Arrival Phase, the Regression effect has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.86 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .210 and .208 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 20.8% of the variance of 'Consumer Purchase Intention.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.88 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.87:ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 37.139 | 1 | 37.139 | 111.118 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 139.709 | 417 | .334 | | |
| | Total | 176.848 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Arrival Phase

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.88:Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|-------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.806 | .224 | | 8.066 | .000 |
| | Arrival Phase | .528 | .050 | .458 | 10.541 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 111.118$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 20.8% of the variance for ‘Consumer Purchase Intention’ ($R^2 = .210$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .208$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies followed at arrival stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

Consumer Purchase Intention = 1.806 + 0.528 Arrival Phase Customer Engagement Strategies

H_{3.3}: Customer engagement strategies followed during stay stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

Table 4.89: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .533 ^a | .284 | .282 | .55044 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), During Stay

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.89, 4.90 and 4.91 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.90 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - During Stay, the Regression effect has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.89 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .284 and .282 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 28.2% of the variance of 'Consumer Purchase Intention.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.91 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.90: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 50.201 | 1 | 50.201 | 165.688 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 126.647 | 417 | .303 | | |
| | Total | 176.848 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), During Stay

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.91:Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.459 | .211 | | 6.929 | .000 |
| | During Stay | .613 | .048 | .533 | 12.872 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 165.688$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 25% of the variance for ‘Consumer Purchase Intention’ ($R^2 = .284$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .282$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that during stay customer engagement strategies in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

Consumer Purchase Intention = 1.459 + 0.613 During Stay Customer Engagement Strategies

H_{3,4}: Customer engagement strategies followed at departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

Table 4.92:Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .405 ^a | .164 | .162 | .59468 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Departure Stage

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.92, 4.93 and 4.94 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.93 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - Departure Stage, the Regression effect has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.92 labelled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .164 and .162 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 16.2% of the variance of 'Consumer Purchase Intention.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.94 labelled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.93: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 29.026 | 1 | 29.026 | 82.078 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 147.821 | 417 | .354 | | |
| | Total | 176.848 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Departure Stage

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.94:Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.083 | .230 | | 9.068 | .000 |
| | Departure Stage | .460 | .051 | .405 | 9.060 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 82.078$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 16.2% of the variance for ‘Consumer Purchase Intention’ ($R^2 = .164$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .162$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies at departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

Consumer Purchase Intention = 2.083 + 0.460 Departure Stage Customer Engagement Strategies

H_{3.5}: Customer engagement strategies followed at post departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention.

Table 4.95: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .377 ^a | .142 | .140 | .60240 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Post Departure Stage

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.95, 4.96 and 4.97 display the results of the regression analysis. The table 4.96 shows the test of significance of the model using an ANOVA. There are 418 (N-1) total degrees of freedom. With one predictor - Post Departure Stage, the Regression effect has 1 degrees-of-freedom. The Regression effect is statistically significant indicating that prediction of the dependent variable is accomplished better than can be done by chance. The table 4.95 labeled Model Summary provides an overview of the results. Of primary interest are the R Square and Adjusted R Square values, which are .142 and .140 respectively. It means that weighted combination of the predictor variables explained approximately 14% of the variance of 'Consumer Purchase Intention.' The loss of little strength in computing the Adjusted R Square value is primarily due to the relatively large sample size combined with a relatively small set of predictors. The table 4.97 labeled Coefficients provides the details of the results. The Zero-order column under Correlations lists the Pearson r values of the dependent variable with each of the predictors. The Partial column under Correlations lists the partial correlations for each predictor as it was evaluated for its weighting in the model. The Part column under Correlations lists the semi partial correlations for each predictor once the model is finalized; squaring these values informs us of the percentage of variance each predictor uniquely explains.

Table 4.96: ANOVA^b

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 25.161 | 1 | 25.161 | 69.336 | .000 ^a |
| | Residual | 151.687 | 417 | .363 | | |
| | Total | 176.848 | 418 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Post Departure Stage

b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.97:Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.079 | .132 | | 23.387 | .000 |
| | Post Departure Stage | .285 | .034 | .377 | 8.327 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Primary Data

Conclusion: The prediction model was statistically significant, $F(1,417) = 69.336$, and $p(0.000) > 0.05$ and accounted for 14% of the variance for ‘Consumer Purchase Intention’ ($R^2 = .142$ and Adjusted $R^2 = .140$). At $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that customer engagement strategies at post departure stage in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention and thus researcher accepts alternate hypothesis.

From the above output, the regression equation is:

Consumer Purchase Intention = 3.079 + 0.285 Post Departure Stage Customer Engagement Strategies

Conclusion: Thus, based on the above calculations, it can be concluded that Customer engagement strategies followed in five star hotels in Pune city influence consumer purchase intention and alternate hypothesis stands true.

H₀: There exists no relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

H₄: There exists a relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

Table 4.98: Correlations

| | | Customer Satisfaction | Purchase Intention |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Customer Satisfaction | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .542** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 419 | 419 |
| Purchase Intention | Pearson Correlation | .542** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 419 | 419 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.98 displays result of correlation analysis. The results are presented in a matrix such that, as can be seen above, the correlations are replicated. Nevertheless, the table presents the Pearson correlation coefficient, its significance value and the sample size that the calculation is based on. From the above table it is observed that Pearson correlation coefficient, r , is 0.542, and that it is positively statistically significant ($p = 0.000$). A Pearson product-moment correlation was run to determine the relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

Conclusion: There is a moderate, positive correlation existing between customer satisfaction and customer purchase intention, which was positively statistically significant ($r = 0.542$, $n = 419$, $p = .000$). Thus, researcher accepts the alternate hypothesis as there exists positive relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

Findings of the Study:

1. To study the customer engagement strategies in all stages of the guest cycle in five star hotels in Pune city.

One of the strategies for building customer retention in five star hotels is to build continuous customer engagement through all stages of guest cycle. Various studies have indicated that customer satisfaction is not enough to ensure customer longevity. With respect to hotels, customer engagement is an emotional connection between a guest and a five star hotel brand. It has been always observed that highly engaged customers by hotels buy more, promote more, and demonstrate more loyalty to the brand. Providing a high-quality customer experience by the five star hotel brands is an important component in customer engagement strategy.

To study the customer engagement strategies in all stages of guest cycle in five star hotels in Pune city researcher has used 35-item scale divided into 5 components and responses were recorded on five-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree range. To interpret the data, researcher has considered mean and standard deviation values of 5 components. Data of the analysis is presented in the table below:

4.99 Mean and Standard Deviation Values

| | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Std. Deviation</i> |
|----------------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Pre-arrival phase | 419 | 4.10 | 0.58 |
| Arrival phase | 419 | 4.43 | 0.63 |
| During stay | 419 | 4.38 | 0.56 |
| Departure stage | 419 | 4.48 | 0.57 |
| Post departure stage | 419 | 3.75 | 0.86 |

Source Primary Data

Referring to above table, it can be confirmed that five star hoteliers follow customer engagement practices at the all five stages of the customer life cycle. Moreover, at each stage of guest cycle, following customer engagement strategies are observed to be practices by five star hoteliers:

1. Pre-arrival Stage:

It is a stage where guest chooses a five star hotel for stay. At this stage of guest cycle, five star hotels ensure communication of information of hotel booking well-in advance with the detailed pricing of the room. Moreover, hoteliers ensure communication of receipt of bookings and confirmation of booking to the guest as a part of customer engagement strategies.

2. Arrival Stage:

It is a stage which includes registration and room assignment process. It is also the stage where guest establishes a business relationship with hotels through one-to-one connect with front office personnel or department. At this stage five star hoteliers ensures that their staff should always remain attentive to entertain guest for arrival and ensures smooth check-in. Also, staff at front office ensures that every guest should be given the room package as specified during the booking as customer engagement strategy. The main focus at this stage is to avoid discrepancies in registration and room assignment process.

3. Stay Stage:

This is the stage when guest is actually staying in the hotel and experiencing the services provided. At this stage, hotel ensures cleanliness and maintenance of the guest room and other service areas as a part of customer engagement strategies. Moreover, focus on replenish of in-room amenities and provision of safety and security is always remain on top priorities strategies for customer engagement. This is the stage which is more important for guest satisfaction or dissatisfaction experiences with five star hotels.

4. Departure Stage:

This is the point when guest vacates the room. At this stage of guest cycle, five star hoteliers ensure easy check-out process and reaches out for (verbal) feedback. Focus is also given on prompt luggage handing by staff as a part of engagement strategy.

5. Post-Departure Stage:

It is the stage when guest leaves the hotel property. To establish long lasting relationship, it is the stage which is more important from future business perspective. As the customer engagement strategies, hoteliers provide deals and offers to the guest and inform them about loyalty benefits.

2. To analyze the impact of customer engagement strategies on customer satisfaction in five star hotels in Pune city

Customer engagement strategies of five star hotels are important as it influences their experience and can impact on customer satisfaction ratings and influence loyalty. To study the impact of customer engagement strategies on customer

satisfaction in five star hotels in Pune city researcher has developed and validated the hypothesis using regression analysis. From the analysis of the data, it has been observed that customer engagement strategies (*at Pre-arrival Phase, Arrival Phase, During Stay, Departure Stage and Post Departure Stage*) followed in five star hotels in Pune city positively influences customer satisfaction and provides support for alternate hypothesis.

Successful customer engagement strategies of five star hotels positively reinforce consumer purchase intention. To study the impact of customer engagement strategies on consumer purchase intention, researcher has developed and validated the hypothesis using regression analysis. From the analysis of the data, it has been observed that customer engagement strategies (*at Pre-arrival Phase, Arrival Phase, During Stay, Departure Stage and Post Departure Stage*) followed in five star hotels in Pune city positively influences customer purchase intention and provides support for alternate hypothesis.

3. To analyze the impact of customer engagement strategies on consumer purchase intention in five star hotels in Pune city.

In several studies, it has been always observed that there exists positive correlation between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention. However, with the present study researcher was interested to retest the relationship under the scenario of customer engagement practices by five star hoteliers in Pune city. To study to relation between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention, researcher has developed and validated the hypothesis using correlation analysis. From the analysis of the data, it has been observed that customer satisfaction and customer purchase intention are positively correlated and provides support for alternate hypothesis.

4. To study the relation between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention.

Several studies it has been always observed that there exist positive correlation between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention. However, with the present study researcher was interested to retest the relationship under the scenario of customer engagement practices by five star hoteliers in Pune city. To study to relation between customer satisfaction and consumer purchase intention,

researcher has developed and validated the hypothesis using correlation analysis. From the analysis of the data, it has been observed that customer satisfaction and customer purchase intention are positively correlated and provides support for alternate hypothesis.

Findings from Structured Interviews of Hotel Representatives

Following are the findings from the structured interviews conducted with the sales and marketing personnel of the ten five star hotels in Pune city which are listed below. It should be noted that these observations /findings are Qualitative in nature and are not used to prove any hypotheses. These testimonials from the personnel support that five star hotels in Pune city validate that customer engagement strategies are followed to increase and sustain the business on an ongoing basis.

To get the more insight into subject, researcher has also contacted Director/Associate Directors-Sales and Marketing of five star hotels from the Pune city. Having discussed in person with the key personnel of ten five star category hotels in Pune City, the following interpretation is being done on its basis. Categories of rooms available with these establishments were Deluxe, Club, Basic Suite, Penthouse, Presidential Suite, lounge facilities, Executive suites, and Junior Suites.

Type of guests patronizing these establishments

Majority of the hotels are engaged in giving service to the business-oriented or corporate category customers. Further, many of them are also having business from MICE groups. A few of them are also getting customers from Leisure groups and Government and Military officers' categories. However, tourists and leisure groups are seen as occasional customers.

Dedicated sales teams

Almost all the hotels have engaged their dedicated sales teams individually. Apart from these teams, some of them have employed national level or regional level sales personnel to look after the sales targets. Some of them have appointed agencies who are working for them on the quarterly planning. Business is also sought through social media and social events like weddings and gatherings.

Dedicated marketing teams

Almost all the five star establishments have engaged their individual marketing teams to take care of the marketing aspects. However, some are also additionally depending on agencies and their iconic brands that work for them in marketing. Most of these hotels are working on quarterly planning of sales and marketing.

Unique selling propositions

Almost all the respondent hotels have been claiming to have their location as the most strategic suiting to their customers' convenience. Their locations are easy to reach for business / corporate personnel, as all of them are situated nearer to airport, and railway station. Moreover, Pune's Camp area is considered to be one of the elite class areas having all types of facilities available to the guests. Pune's renowned IT areas like Kharadi and Magarpatta and Koregaon Park are in the vicinity of these hotels. Easy accessibility to key places is the most fascinating element for the customers.

Having good restaurants is another USP aspect that attracts the customers to avail services of these hotels. Variety of food is available here beside bar service and buffets. In some hotels, night clubs are one of the attractions for the customers.

Having brands like J W Marriott, Taj and Hyatt, and Novotel, the customers are familiar with them for their best services offered to the customers. Brands become USP in their case.

Customer experience

Majority of the hotels under study have noticed repeated customers. They seem satisfied with the services. An active feedback system is practiced in all these hotels. Customers appreciate the F and B and other services offered by the hotels. Personal attention is the key to customer satisfaction. Some of these hoteliers get customers through referrals that indicate the success of their service operation.

Communication with the customers

The hoteliers are keeping good connection with their customers by using various strategies. Sales Team is in constant connection with them. Personalized service is one of the aspects of communicating with the customers. Emails, telephonic talk and

online calling are some of the tools used for such communication. Many of the respondents use social media as the tool of communication. Publicity and advertising is also seen on some occasions as the medium of communication.

Consumer data collection

Profile segregation is widely used for collecting customer data. Sometimes, guest history card is used for collecting and preserving customer data. Sometimes, a questionnaire is prepared to collect certain type of data. Feedback system also provides good data and choices of the consumers.

Most responsive audiences/guests

Professionals from Corporate world are observed to be most responsive audiences/guests of these hotels.

Never stop doing things in five stages of customer engagement

- At pre-arrival: Calling and understanding the purpose of visit
- At arrival: Data and preference collection from customer, beginning of the hotel experience, telling about the facilities and hospitality
- During stay: Personal attention, tangible experience, spa
- At departure: Gifts, loyalty program benefits, bidding farewell
- At post-departure: Wishing on anniversaries, birthdays and important events, anticipatory actions towards engaging customer.

Opportunities to customers for engaging with brand

Hosting a cocktail dinner, arranging food festivals, offering brunch services, seasonal food and beverages, social media connectivity, activities from NGO like Santulan, Green Box, CSR activities, Anniversaries surprise rewards and such other programs are offered to customers that lead them to be loyal with the hotels and remember the brands.

Incentives / mutual benefits during disposable time to customers

Some hotels categorize their customer base as A, B, C, and D. Rewards are offered according to these grades. Some of them offer unique cards. Special offers are made for wedding ceremony, social events. Membership advantages are passed to the

customers where they can earn points and redeem in future. Some vouchers are also gifted as a part of incentives.

KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and goals for customer engagement

“Trust U Form” Measuring satisfaction seriously, holding all departments responsible for customer satisfaction, market knowledge, prices and rates, commercial aspects, revenue generation, attention to needs of the customers, problem tracking devices, service recovery are some of the key performance indicators followed in five- star hotels under study.

Content and offers to engage different audiences

Almost all hotels are having various contents and offers suiting to the needs of their customers. These include rack-rate, other discounts, promotions through website, Whats App and emails that create content according to the audiences. In short, customers are engaged through various types of contents and offers. The creation of content focuses on the types of the customers the hotels want to target.

Tools and technologies to engage customers with value-added experience

Normally the social media is explored for keeping the customers engaged throughout. Websites, Whats App Groups, Bonvoy, Zomato App, Internet, and Broadcasting are freely used as the tools of communication. Some Hotels are using Newsletters, Starbucks, Croma as the tools for engaging customers.

Holistic communications lifecycle, integrating channels, content and marketing

Most of the hoteliers under study have been using communication lifecycles and attempting to integrate their channels and contents for marketing their brands. Round-the-year communication is adopted as one of the strategic points to engage the consumers and reminding them the brand of the concerned hotels.

Sales priorities as the commercial success

All the hotel personnel accept that commercial success is vital for them. However, it is not just the sales priority but the focus is on maintaining relationship with the customers. Sales could be the by-product of other efforts. Loyalty of customers to the hotel brands is more focused and the efforts are thus directed by these hoteliers to

consolidate the customer relations. Revenue is important to all the establishments, but they agree to the fact that it comes through different means like customer satisfaction and repeat business.

Allocation of specific budget and staff resources for customer engagement

It is perceived that due to pandemic situation across globe, the priorities of five star hotels have changed. This has affected the budgets and the overall plans. In some cases, the yearly marketing budgets were large enough and still achievable. Pandemic period was crucial for these hotels as it was not easy to match the customer demand and allocate the staff resources to justify the business. Naturally, the revenue were also were drastically affected. Prior to pandemic periods, the hotels were involved in allocating specific budget and staff that caused generating the expected revenue.

Incentives/rewards to employees for engaging customers

Almost all the hotels have certain definite plans for achievers. Most of them are offering target-based incentives to the staff. Some of them are considering happy shifts for their employees thus keeping them satisfied. Satisfied and motivated staff members make the best of customer engagement. Some hoteliers consider their staff members as their ambassador and treat them accordingly. Besides offering them monetary benefit, staff members are also taken care of according to their needs. 'Employee of the month' award is also given as the motivational factor.

Identifying ideal employees participating in business goal activities through engagement practices

Almost all hotels are practicing to keep watch on ideal employees who are voluntarily involved in engaging the customers through various activities. Right attitude is the key to success of any business. Performers are certainly awarded in all establishments. However, almost all the hotels are imparting frequent training programs to the employees so as to make their job concurrent to the goals of the hotels. Induction and classroom training is the part of employee participation leading to engagement practices.

Understanding service gap, customer needs and delivery, efforts taken to improve and prioritize satisfaction

All the hoteliers under study have their own strategy of finding the service gap and working on the recovery of service. These strategies comprise of understanding customer needs and studying the delivery and thus finding the service gap. Some of them are practicing well-documented process for this purpose. Even the solutions are also suggested for the service recovery by studying these documents. Feedback system is used to find out the service gap and it is addressed according to the severity of the issues involved.

Insights about customers, their needs, and perception of the hotel

Some of the hoteliers believe that the customers must be given personal attention in all situations. Personal touch would help to resolve the issues. Well-planned and well executed feedback system could prove to be the best insight for these hoteliers to understand their customers' needs and their perception about the hotel they select for their stay in Pune.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Suggestions

In ever-changing and interactive environment of business, Customer Engagement (CE) stands for a purposeful strategy that leads to performance enhancement, sales escalation, sustainable competitive position and profits for a firm. This assertive statement is backed with the strong reasoning that customers who are engaged with a brand, have a crucial role in the marketing of the firm. They recommend the products, services of the brand to prospective customers. Customers not only provide referrals but can co-create in development of a new service or product. Customer engagement is treated as a multi-dimensional concept which includes the behavioral, emotional and cognitive aspects.

Following are the main conclusions and suggestions for five star hotels given below for the present study:

Conclusion 1

Customer engagement has garnered attention both from hotels and guests alike. The focal point is the guest who patronizes a hotel for stay or using the food and beverage facilities. Hotel Industry, in the wake of the globalization has become very competitive. Hotels are vying for guest attention. Customer acquisition and retention are goals of each hotel. One-time, satisfactory experience is not enough to ensure customer lifetime value.

1. A hotel concentrates on building an experience for the guest which has emotional value and an association get cemented with the hotel because of this particular experience.
2. The hotel studies need of guests and uses that information to strategize its marketing and operational plans.
3. The guest cycle, presents the hotel a chance, to test these customer engagement strategies in each of its stages. Each stage has a unique set of opportunities which must be used to win a customer.
4. Guests know this and also expect it at every stage. Guests like to be given importance and be recognized.

5. Every stage of the guest cycle provides the hotel touch points to interact with the guest. The interaction with guests ideally should be done to develop a sense of engagement.
6. Each stage of the guest cycle is full of complex interactions which have to be handled delicately by the employees with utmost care.
7. As found in this study, customer engagement strategies at post departure stage have not been perceived as engaging by guests.
8. Indifference may set in from guest's side after check out. They may not respond to emails or offers as they may not need them in near future. Guests may not appreciate consistent hammering of information from the hotel's side.

Thus, it is conclusive to say that guests of five star hotels in Pune city do perceive the procedures followed in the first four stages of the guest cycle as customer engagement strategies and not in the last stage of the guest cycle which is the post departure stage.

Suggestions:

In view of the procedures followed in post departure stage not being perceived as engagement strategies following suggestions are given below for the five star hotels.

Re-Strategize communication methods with different audiences analyzing content and particularly concentrating on post departure stage.

Keep in touch with customers through various ways like wishing on celebrations, festivals, special days, updating them about new offers and new products.

Reach out to with passive or quiet customers with an incentivize stay / discounted stay. Offer them food and beverage in the hotel if they do not wish to stay.

To reach out to the quiet customer, hotels need to create, track and have a list of customers who have influencer value and knowledge value about the offerings of the hotel and must share this with prospective customers on social media.

Give opportunities to guests to indulge in two-way conversations in the form of contests, online opinions, share insider trends and insights.

Build together hotel brand community with customers who are loyal. This can be done with the help of the marketing department of the hotel.

Conclusion 2

Any strategy that is planned by a hotel stands on real time data collected, past experience and trends which dominate the market. The guest cycle has all the opportunities a hotel gets to touch base with the guest. These are unique and serve a purpose after which the next stage follows. The guests see every experience as continuous process where they are exposed to various situations. This serves them an opportunity to judge the hotel's position on service quality. Every guest, who stays as a resident guest, goes through the process of the guest cycle and all stages. The guest cycle has all the opportunities a hotel gets to touch base with the guest. Opportunities can be used to create experiences for the guest. The guests see every experience as continuous process where they are exposed to various situations. This serves them an opportunity to judge the hotel's position on service quality.

1. Communication plays a significant role in letting the guest know how special they are to the hotel. Attention given to guests makes them feel wanted.
2. Once the guest establishes a sense of comfort with the hotel brand, the involvement happens. It should be noted that the emotional state of a guest needs special attention during the service delivery process.
3. While choosing a hotel to stay, the guest forms a level of perceived satisfaction about the hotel brand. That includes the brand value with its advantages, exciting offers, competitive pricing, world class level of hospitality provided and whether the hotel matches the expectations in terms of product and services offered.
4. If the guest gets to experience his / her level of perceived satisfaction through the stages of the guest cycle which the hotel carefully crafts to happen, it is conclusive to say that the customer engagement strategies make customer satisfaction a definite outcome.
5. It is up-to the hotel to create experiences for every stage in the guest's mind which are positive. The guest must have a lasting and memorable experience with the hotel, yearning to come back one more time to the same hotel.
6. Hospitality business is different due to its characteristics from other industries. It is a mix of tangible and intangible factors which have to be of a premium quality to satisfy a customer.
7. A service has to be experienced first to be noticed. Superior service quality is the key word for hotels, where the focus is not to just satisfy but to delight a guest. If this delight is achieved from matching the experience throughout the guest cycle

with the pre conceived expectations of the guest from the hotel, customer satisfaction is achieved.

8. Emotional connection is built and concretized with guests who want to stay with a particular brand and demonstrate more loyalty towards the said brand.

Thus, if a guest gets to experience his / her level of perceived satisfaction through the stages of the guest cycle which the hotel carefully crafts to happen, it is conclusive to say that the customer engagement strategies make customer satisfaction a definite outcome.

Suggestions:

Giving a customer, an incentive may induce delight as it is an unexpected gesture from the hotel's side. An instant upgrade may turn out to be an unforgettable experience for a guest. Guests always carry such associations back home as great memories which help in building of satisfaction.

Giving spot instant incentives rather than brand loyalty program points work well as it is instant gratification from guest point of view. Like quick upgrade discounts, vouchers etc., pleasantly surprising guests this way which can create affinity and customer to repurchase.

Conclusion 3

Five star hotels specifically design customer engagement strategies according to the type of guests and their needs and wants. There is careful deliberation on the segmentation of guests and their expectations from the hotel.

1. Every hotel follows a set of standard operating procedures for each of the stages of the guest cycle. To offer a more personalized experience, each guest is handled with appropriate care making certain all expectations are fulfilled. There is an emphasis given on the customer experience that is created in all the stages.
2. The requirements of a new customer slightly differ from a repeat customer. For the hotel, the ultimate goal is to retain this new customer and efforts to make that happen are devised. The hotel gets to make that positive first impression right from the pre-arrival stage to the departure stage.
3. In case of a repeat customer, who has already patronized a hotel before, the emotional connection has already been established after the first stay. When a

guest shows trust and loyalty towards the hotel, it is imperative to give that leverage to the guest.

4. With the advent of social media, the customer can be participant in the marketing activities of the hotel by either by positively commenting, or sharing their experience. It is observed that repeat customers go through the stages of consumption, contribute through feedback and participate to create content.

Thus, the customer engagement strategies are to be introduced at the all the stages of the guest cycle to create a positive and beneficial picture to the guest irrespective of whether he / she is a prospective or repeat guest. If the overall experience is positive it influences the guests to make a decision where the intention to purchase is favorable for the hotel.

Suggestions:

The packages must be planned as per the requirement of the guest as customization of the product will aid customer satisfaction. This will help the customer in decision making. Communication regarding customization of packages must be delivered through various channels by the sales and marketing department round the clock. Social media should be used in keeping the guests engaged.

Conclusion 4

In a highly competitive hospitality landscape, it is critical to understand that before engaging with the services and products of a hotel brand, a prospective customer tries to base the decision of purchase on various perceived values associated with the utility, pleasure and money.

1. The customer builds the expectations on these aspects as he is yet to experience the actual offerings. The hotel from its perspective hopes to satisfy these expectations. Naturally, the guest is pleased as he has received as per his expectations.
2. Hotels consciously curate these offerings in form of packages to make them attractive to guests. This is true in case of a new customer.
3. When a guest comes to the hotel again, he / she is termed as a repeat customer. Repeat guests come back to the hotel because of many reasons. When the previous experience with the hotel is satisfactory guests tend to evaluate the hotel on the basis of this aspect.

4. Excellent service recovery and empathetic attitude of staff are definite pull factors which bring guests back to a hotel.
5. Technological advancement has led to faster processing of this curation as there is a minimal human interference to get these packages ready.
6. Staff of the hotel also contributes to the aspect of customer satisfaction. The hotels recruit and keep best employees to interact with guests. The frontline employees are in touch with guests needs and facilitation is much faster in the delivery of service.
7. These employees are trained to understand the guest expectations and are empowered to take quick decisions in case of service recovery situations. In case of complaint handling, guests must get justice and feeling of fairness which leads to satisfaction from within. This aspect is intrinsic and motivates the guest to engage with the hotel wholeheartedly.
8. Once a guest sees the brand as an extension of self, it is safe to say brand loyalty is developed. Extrinsic motivations in form of brand loyalty programs, incentives and benefits are important part of the customer engagement process.
9. Segregation of guests according to their profile is a practice followed by hotels to make products available to the right target audience. Once this equation is matched, guests patronize the hotel as they feel comfortable to make a purchase decision in favor of the hotel by using their cognitive, emotional and behavioral capacity.

Thus, all these efforts that a hotel takes to satisfy the customer definitely impact the guest's intention to purchase and repurchase positively benefitting the hotel.

Suggestions:

Hotels must have or commit to an employee suggestions program and a customer suggestions program where the involvement of internal and external customers is important to find out pulse of both to improve performance.

Hotels must have a premium set of guests who are brand advocates due to the association with the hotel on a regular basis and they can co-create to launch offering product or services.

In digital marketing, strategies the hotel could have Live chat option or chat bots and make full use of conversational marketing and Artificial intelligence. Provision of

entertainment value through gaming or something where the guest contributes or co-creates must be planned to foster engagement.

Introduction of Artificial intelligence, in the hotel for assisting self-check-ins, chat bots for instant communication and guest queries should be encouraged. Hotels should post eighty percent of local area happenings / activities and twenty percent promotion while talking about what value does they give customer on website.

Influence marketing must be used and have travel bloggers speaking videos on your social media handle. Consideration must be given last minute walk-ins with some benefits. This would increase footfall in guest bookings.

Other Learning from the study

1. The respondents or the guests who patronize the services of five star hotels in Pune city are predominantly from the 40 to 50 age group. They belong to the well-educated group and travel to Pune on business. Majority of the respondents are Indian who were salaried people travelling for business. The respondents considered for this study always prefer to stay in a five star hotel.

The hotel's sales and marketing efforts to promote engagement during the stages of the guest cycle should be particularly at guests of this profile who would be willing to respond to the hotels marketing efforts. This should be done to increase the frequency of their visits to the hotels and offer packages to suit their purpose. These guests can be given upgrades and spot incentives when they check-in for the next time.

2. It can be concluded from data collected from the respondents suggest these guests book their stay through the website of the hotel or through the central reservation system of the hotel.

Websites are the means for hotels to make their offerings popular and attractive. Websites which are accessible with good content is what every hotel should invest in. Social media is a boon in today's marketing world. It should be used to the maximum capacity for engagement of customers. Information and communication must be constantly updated about the hotel's offers, promotions, brand loyalty benefits, events, happenings, any initiatives undertaken. Local guests who frequent the food and beverage outlets in the hotel must be engaged throughout about the same as they can earn similar benefits.

3. The guests said that they preferred using the credit card to settle their bill. Check-outs during departure stage have to be quick and efficient especially for the profile of the customers in this study. Most hotels take pre authorization of credit cards and guests can then use the option of an express checkout saving time. These details must be checked by the front desk during check-in and followed up during check -out. Bill settlement process must be used as a time to have a conversation with the guest to find out the overall experience of the stay. The guest must be given a farewell by the guest relations supervisory adding a personal touch. Solicitations for future bookings can be done at this time.
4. When guests were asked about the factors which contribute to their level of satisfaction even before they chose to stay with a particular brand they emphasized on points like the social, commercial and psychological value of a brand and guest recognition at the hotel also was important to them. Guests are also attracted to the generosity of offers, efficient handling of complaints, brand loyalty benefits and the fact that they identify with the brand personally. Corporate guests also appreciate the hotel's alignment to IOT which helps them save time and effort in a hotel. A hotel which matches its promises is the one guests want to stay at. They derive a sense of honesty about the brand and would like to patronize it. A good pricing of the rooms and facilities too leads to a guest expecting to be satisfied.

Hotels advertise and make their information available through all types of media. Accurate selection of the medium must be done. A guest who is gets this information must get a positive and satisfying impression of the hotel brand prompting him/her to make a reservation. Every hotel gets reviewed by guests on the social media or the hotel website. If most of the guests put out good satisfactory reviews it would be mostly likely to attract new guests. Thus, reviews need to treated as instant feedback and service recovery should be a priority.

5. Guests were asked about factors that influenced them along with personalized customer engagement to make a reservation at a hotel. The guests said that they would give importance to word-of -mouth, reputation of the hotel, brand resonance, brand communication of the hotel, corporate social responsibility that the hotel undertakes.

The hotel needs to create a positive image in all the above aspects along with dedicated customer engagement marketing and use that image created to generate

footfall of guests for room sale as well as the food and beverage sales. The hotel needs to have a dedicated team to handle the hotel's social media handles, tackle complaints and study reviews of guests on a regular basis. Promptness in customer handling is very crucial in the hospitality business. Guests take serious cognizance of this aspect which ultimately leads to their satisfaction and customer purchase intention towards the hotel.

Scope for Future Research

1. This present study is primarily on Indian context. This study is considering customer of Indian origin study can be carried out on other nationalities / geographies.
2. Demographics collected from the present study can be used for future study with respect to age, profession, gender and customer engagement strategies.
3. Customer engagement strategies can be studied with brand resonance, brand equity, brand communication and brand involvement.
4. Inter personal engagement could be studied between customer and employee group in hotel context.
5. Role of employee in customer engagement strategy in hotels can be studied in detail.
6. A study related to hotel's personality on the customer engagement process can be a topic for further study.

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Annexures

Appendix 1

Working definitions

- 1. Customer Engagement:** It can be defined, as the experiences and touch points that a customer has with the product and service, company, or brand. It is the relationship between the company and its customers, and is closely related to customer loyalty and retention. Customer engagement is the ongoing interaction between company and customer, offered by the company, chosen by the customer.
- 2. Customer satisfaction:** is a fundamental and frequently used concept in marketing. It is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet or surpass customer expectations getting positive feedback and a sense of gotten value for the money spent by the customer.
- 3. Consumer purchase intention:** is the sum total of a consumer's attitudes, preferences, behaviour, and decisions regarding the consumer's intention in the marketplace when purchasing a product or service.
- 4. Customer:** A customer for this study is the guest who stays the room and food and beverage facilities and amenities in a five- star hotel, is in a fit condition to be received and who is able to pay for the facilities.
- 5. Intermediary:** A person who is responsible for booking of rooms from a corporate company which provides business to the five star hotels.
- 6. Product in a hotel:** The product considered for sale in this study refers to the hotel room and food and beverage facilities.
- 7. Pune city:** This study is pertaining to Pune city which is the geographical area under Pune Municipal Corporation.
- 8. FIT (Free Individual Traveler):** An individual traveler is a customer who reserves rooms on his own who is not part of the hotel corporate list without help of any intermediary.
- 9. Business strategy:** It is a plan that the management of a company/ business implements to secure a competitive position in the market, carry on its operations, please customers and achieve the desired ends of the business.
- 10. Guest cycle in a hotel:** All the guests of a hotel have five main stages of interaction with the hotel namely pre-arrival, arrival, stay, departure and post

departure. The various stages of activities constitute the guest cycle. All guests who reserve a room with the hotel go through the same procedure from the first to the last stage in the guest cycle.

11. Definition five- star hotel according to the HRRAC (Hotel Restaurant Approval and Classification Committee)

A five- star hotel should have the following requirements:

Guest Room:

- All rooms with outside window / ventilation
- Minimum size of bedroom excluding bathroom = 200Sq.Ft (180 Square. Ftfor single occupancy)
- 100 % Air-Conditioned (Room Temp. b/w 20 C – 28 C)
- Minimum bed width for Single bed – 90 cm o Double bed – 180 cm
- Mattress thickness

Bathroom:

- All rooms with attached bathrooms
- Minimum size of bathroom – 45 Sq.Ft(< 25% Western W.C)
- Cloth hooks (2 nos.)
- Sanitary bin with lid
- Water sprays / bidets / wash lets
- Non – porous floor surface
- 24 hours hot & cold running water
- Shower cabin / curtain
- Desired (optional) bath tubs

Public Area:

- Lounge or seating area in the lobby (chairs/arm chairs/sofas’/floral display/Daily’s)
- Reception (Local maps / Room Availability / F&B)
- Valet Parking
- Heating & cooling in public areas (20 C – 28 C)

- Public restrooms for ladies, gents or unisex Room & Facilities for Differently Able: Min. 1 room for differently able (Change in anthropometrics)
- Bathrooms (Door width – min. 90 cm)
- Sliding almirah
- Ramps - Slope of 1:12 & anti-slip floor o all public areas o At least in 1 restaurant o min. entrance door width 1 m
- Public restrooms for differently able with min. requirements.

Food & Beverage (F&B):

- 1 Multi cuisine restaurant (7:00 AM – 11.00 PM),24 hour room service, Bar

Kitchen / Food Production Area:

- Refrigerator
- Segregate storage of meat, fish & vegetables
- Tiled walls & non-slip floors
- Ventilation system
- Separate garbage (wet & dry)
- Wet garbage area to be air-conditioned
- Pest control

Staff Welfare Facilities:

- Staff rest rooms – Separate for male & female – Bunk beds / well lighted & ventilated
- Locker room
- Toilet facilities (Full length mirror / Hand dryer)
- Separate Dining

Guest Services:

- Availability of wheel chair
- Valet Parking
- Dry-Cleaning Laundry
- Tea / Coffee making facility
- Shoe cleaning, shoe horn

- A Public telephone
- Doctor on call
- Newspapers in the lounge
- Travel desk in premise
- Left luggage facility / Cloak room
- Health fitness facilities (Indian system of treatments)
- Optional – Beauty salon / barber’s shop
- Utility shop / kiosk (min. 1 no.)
- Optional – money changing facility

Safety & Security:

- Metal detectors (door frame or hand held)
- X – ray machines (guest entrance screening)
- Under belly scanners for vehicles
- Security at hotel entrances
- Smoke detectors
- Emergency / backup power for signage

Communication Facilities:

- Telephone facility with arm’s reach of toilet seat
- 2 multi-purpose sockets
- Telephone in room
- Availability of PC (Paid / executive office)
- E-mail service (internet access) • Fax, photocopying

12. Brand resonance:The resonance is the intensity of customer’s psychological connection with the brand and the randomness to recall the brand in different consumption situations.

13. Brand reputation: Is how a brand (a person or an organization) is viewed by everyone else. A great brand reputation shows consumers' trust in the brand and that consumers are confident to do business with the brand.

14. Word of mouth (WOM): The customers of a company, brand or organisation is happy and satisfied with its products and services, to such any extent that they

become the brand advocates referring it to their social circle and this cycle multiplies and elongates benefitting the company in a positive manner.

- 15. Price fairness:** This is defined as the assessment of the customer and his/her emotions attached to the acceptance and justification regarding the seller's price in relation to the other options available.
- 16. Brand communication:** This refers to all the combination of the activities such as advertising, social media and the reviews that are used to communicate with the customers. This takes place every time a potential customer interacts with a brand.
- 17. Corporate Social Responsibility:** This is a management concept where companies integrate their social and environmental concerns in their business operations and the interactions with all the stakeholders.
- 18. Marketing channels:** Different mediums used to convey communication from producer to the end user.

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for customers (guests) of the five star hotels in Pune city

Title: A Study of Customer Engagement as a Business Strategy with Reference to Five Star Hotels in Pune City.

Respected Sir / Madam,

This survey is a part of research work undertaken by Ms. Manasi Sadhale, under the guidance of Dr. Suvarna Sathe towards the completion of Ph.D. in Management. The data collected through this questionnaire will be strictly used for research purpose only. The data will be kept confidential, anonymous at all times and will not be used elsewhere. Data reported will be used as a collective total. Please provide the information requested below. Your participation is highly appreciated.

Thanking You,

Manasi Sadhale,
Research Scholar
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth,
Pune

1. Name of the Respondent: _____
2. Gender:
 - A. Male ()
 - B. Female ()
3. Age:
 - A. Below 30 years ()
 - B. 30 to 40 years ()
 - C. 40 to 50 years ()
 - D. Above 50 years ()
4. Qualification:
 - A. Below undergraduate ()

- B. Undergraduate ()
- C. Post graduate ()
- a. Family Income (annual)
 - A. Below 10 lakhs ()
 - B. 10 to 20 lakhs ()
 - C. 20 to 30 lakhs ()
 - D. 30 to 40 lakhs ()
 - E. Above 40 lakhs ()
- b. Occupation:
 - A. Salaried ()
 - B. Self-employed ()
 - C. Others(please specify):_____
- 5. Nationality:
 - A. Indian ()
 - B. Others (please specify):_____
- 6. On an average, how frequently you stay at five star hotel(s)?
 - A. This is my first stay ()
 - B. Once in a year ()
 - C. Twice a year ()
 - D. More than twice a year ()
- 7. On an average, what is your duration of stay- in days, at five star hotel(s)?
 - A. Less than 3 days
 - B. 3 to 5 days
 - C. 5 to 7 days
 - D. More than 7 days
- 8. Please select your preferred source of booking for stay at five star hotel(s):
 - A. Direct enquiry / Hotel representative
 - B. Travel agent / Tour operator
 - C. Regional sales office
 - D. Hotel /Chain website / central reservation system
 - E. Online travel agent
 - F. Third party
 - G. Global distribution systems
 - H. Company booking

- I. Walk-in
9. How do you like to settle your bill while checking out?
- A. Cash
 - B. Credit card
 - C. Debit card
 - D. NEFT
 - E. Bill to company
 - F. Credit sales
 - G. Travel agent voucher / cheques
 - H. Digital payment
10. Please rate how following factors contribute to your level of satisfaction even before you choose a particular five star hotel (*as 5: Strongly Agree, 4: Agree, 3: Undecided, 2: Disagree, 1: Strongly Disagree*)

| Sr. No. | Particulars | Ratings |
|----------------|--|----------------|
| 1 | The social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name | |
| 2 | Guest recognition at hotel | |
| 3 | Competitive pricing | |
| 4 | Extraordinary level of hospitality given to guests | |
| 5 | Generosity of offers from the hotel | |
| 6 | Hotel handling moments-of-truth situations | |
| 7 | Benefits of brand loyalty program | |
| 8 | Aligned with latest technology (IOT) at hotel | |
| 9 | Your expectation that a hotel's product, service, or corporate behavior, matches the promises the company make | |
| 10 | Your relationship with the hotel | |
| 11 | Highly rated reviews about the brand | |

11. Please rate your level of agreement on the following statements with your present hotel (*as 5: Strongly Agree, 4: Agree, 3: Undecided, 2: Disagree, 1: Strongly Disagree*)

| Sr. No. | Particulars | Ratings |
|--------------------------|--|---------|
| Pre-arrival Phase | | |
| 1 | I receive information about hotel bookings (check-in and check-out timings) well before my arrival | |
| 2 | Pricing of a room is well communicated by hotel | |
| 3 | I receive booking and confirmation mail well in advance | |
| 4 | I receive relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc) well in advance | |
| 5 | Hotel always ask for customized room choice through proper communication | |
| 6 | I receive reminders for value added services or upgrades | |
| 7 | I receive social media notifications and promotions for this hotel | |
| 8 | I receive fast responses for my queries | |
| 9 | Communication content targets my needs | |
| 10 | Virtual tour is possible before arrival | |
| 11 | I can easily find out this hotel on Google My Business Page | |
| Arrival Phase | | |
| 12 | Staff is very attentive at this hotel | |
| 13 | I always experience smooth check-ins | |
| 14 | Transport facility is always available | |
| 15 | Staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-in | |
| 16 | Escorting and room familiarization by hotel representative is always done effectively | |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 17 | I receive room package as per specification during booking | |
| During Stay | | |
| 18 | Hotel ensures cleanliness and maintenance | |
| 19 | Hotel level ups in-room amenities | |
| 20 | Hotel quickly offers relevant amenities | |
| 21 | Hotel gives complimentary services and gifts | |
| 22 | Hotel remember preferences | |
| 23 | Hotel listens to complaint patiently | |
| 24 | Hotel provides safety and security | |
| 25 | Hotel provides quality food and beverages | |
| Departure Stage | | |
| 26 | Hotel provides easy check-out process | |
| 27 | Hotel reaches out for feedback | |
| 28 | Hotel provides accurate billing and payment options | |
| 29 | Staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out | |
| Post Departure Stage | | |
| 30 | Hotel always provides regular newsletters | |
| 31 | Hotel always provides deals and offers | |
| 32 | Hotel always informs about loyalty benefits | |
| 33 | Hotel suggest for referrals | |

12. Please rate your level of agreement on the following statements for customer satisfaction and purchase intention for present hotel (*as 5: Strongly Agree, 4: Agree, 3: Undecided, 2: Disagree, 1: Strongly Disagree*)

| Sr. No. | Particulars | Ratings |
|------------------------------|---|---------|
| Customer Satisfaction | | |
| 1 | In most ways, this hotel is close to my ideal | |
| 2 | This hotel is excellent | |
| 3 | I am satisfied with this hotel | |

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| 4 | I received value for the money at this hotel | |
| 5 | I will always speak positive about this hotel | |
| Purchase Intention | | |
| 6 | I am more likely to visit this hotel again | |
| 7 | I will like to upgrade the services during my next visit | |
| 8 | I will recommend this hotel to my friends and colleagues | |
| 9 | I will not think of competitor's hotel for any specific need over this hotel | |

13. Please rate your level of agreement on how below mentioned factors or marketing strategies influence you as a guest while making a reservation in a hotel (*as 5: Strongly Agree, 4: Agree, 3: Undecided, 2: Disagree, 1: Strongly Disagree*)

| Sr. No. | Particulars | Ratings |
|----------------|--|----------------|
| 1 | Brand reputation (or goodwill) | |
| 2 | Brand resonance | |
| 3 | Word-of-mouth | |
| 4 | Price fairness | |
| 5 | Brand communication to masses | |
| 6 | Corporate Social Responsibility | |
| 7 | Offers from Marketing channels (OTA, Travel Agents, Tour operators) | |

Appendix 3

A study of customer engagement as a business strategy with reference to five-star hotels in Pune city

Title: A Study of Customer Engagement as a Business Strategy with Reference to Five star Hotels in Pune City.

Respected Sir / Madam,

This survey is a part of research work undertaken by Ms. Manasi Sadhale, under the guidance of Dr. Suvarna Sathe towards the completion of Ph.D. in Management. The data collected through this questionnaire will be strictly used for research purpose only. The data will be kept confidential, anonymous at all times and will not be used elsewhere. Data reported will be used as a collective total. Please provide the information requested below. Your participation is highly appreciated.

Thanking You,

Manasi Sadhale,
Research Scholar
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth,
Pune

1. Name of the respondent: _____
2. Name of the hotel: _____
3. Designation of the respondent: _____
4. Total number of rooms in the hotel:
5. Total number of food and beverage outlets in the hotel:
6. Which types of guests patronize the hotel?
 - i. Business / Corporate ()
 - ii. Tourist/ Leisure/ FIT ()
 - iii. Leisure groups ()
 - iv. MICE groups ()
 - v. Government officials ()

- vi. Airline crew ()
- vii. Complimentary guests / House guests ()
- viii. Others (Please specify)_____

7. Do you have a dedicated sales team?

- i. Yes for the hotel individually ()
- ii. No ()
- iii. Cluster sales for the chain ()

8. Do you have a dedicated marketing team?

- i. Yes for the hotel individually ()
- ii. No ()
- iii. Cluster marketing for the chain ()

9. Please state unique selling proposition of your hotel:

10. How is the overall customer experience with your hotel?

11. Are you actively maintaining communication with your customers?

12. How are you collecting consumer data? What insights do you have about your customers?

13. Who are the most responsive or engaged audiences/ guests?

14. What is that one thing with respect to customer engagement that you think as a hotel would never stop doing?(In the 5-stages of customer guest cycle namely Pre-Arrival, Arrival, Stay, Departure and Post Departure)

15. What are the opportunities you offer customers to get engaged with your brand /hotel?

16. Do you offer incentives or a clearly articulated mutual benefit to your customers to make their participation with your brand /hotel worthwhile of their disposable time?(Elaborate)

17. What are your key performance indicators and goals for customer engagement?

18. Do you have content and offers that engage different audiences/ guest types/ guest segments? (Discuss)

19. What tools and technologies are you using to engage customers with a value added experience?

20. Are you creating a holistic communications lifecycle, integrating channels, content and marketing around the customer?

21. Do you keep sales at front of the mind and for measuring commercial success?

22. Do you believe in creating a differentiated customer experience according to segments of customers /guests and operationalize it through all the sales and marketing, customer care touch points, campaigns or programs?

23. From leadership point of view, do you view customer engagement as a priority to allocate specific budget and staff resources to drive revenue?

24. Do you have an incentive programme or rewards extrinsic or intrinsic to successfully engage your employees to further engage customers?

25. Do you as a hotel identify the ideal employees to participate in activities which achieve your business goals through engagement practices?

26. Do you understand the gap between your customer needs and your delivery? How do you improve and prioritize satisfaction?

27. What insights do you have about your customers, their needs from the hotel and perceptions of the hotel?

28. Any other remarks with respect to customer engagement strategies.

Appendix 4

Validation of questionnaire - Customers / Guests of five star hotels in Pune city

| Particulars | | Total | Pearsons Critical Value @5% Level-of- Significance | Remarks |
|---|---------------------|--------|---|---|
| The social, commercial and psychological value of a well-known brand name | Pearson Correlation | .412** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Personal recognition of the guest by the hotel | Pearson Correlation | .359** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Competitive pricing | Pearson Correlation | .276** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Extraordinary level of hospitality given to guests | Pearson Correlation | .385** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Generosity of offers from the | Pearson Correlation | .348** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical |

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| hotel | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | value, it is a valid question. |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel handling moments-of-truth situations | Pearson Correlation | .393** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Benefits of brand loyalty program | Pearson Correlation | .384** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Aligned with latest technology (IOT) at hotel | Pearson Correlation | .488** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel's product, service, or corporate behavior, matches the promises the hotel make | Pearson Correlation | .310** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Involvement with the hotel | Pearson Correlation | .432** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Highly rated reviews about the brand | Pearson Correlation | .300** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. | 0 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| | (2-tailed) | | | question. |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Information about hotel bookings (check-in and check-out timings) well before my arrival | Pearson Correlation | .470** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Pricing of a room is well communicated by hotel | Pearson Correlation | .497** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Receipt of booking and confirmation mail well in advance | Pearson Correlation | .496** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Receipt of relevant information (amenities, location, breakfast timings, etc) well in advance | Pearson Correlation | .591** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel always ask for customized room choice through proper communication | Pearson Correlation | .623** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Receipt of reminders for | Pearson Correlation | .601** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical |

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| value added services or upgrades | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | value, it is a valid question. |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Receipt of social media notifications for this hotel | Pearson Correlation | .517** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Receipt of fast responses for my queries | Pearson Correlation | .591** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Communication content targets my needs | Pearson Correlation | .623** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Virtual tour is possible before arrival | Pearson Correlation | .624** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Easy finding of this hotel on Google My Business Page | Pearson Correlation | .492** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Staff is very attentive at this hotel | Pearson Correlation | .565** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| | N | 419 | | |
| Experience of smooth check-ins | Pearson Correlation | .600** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Transport facility is always available | Pearson Correlation | .509** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-in | Pearson Correlation | .480** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Escorting and room familiarization by hotel representative is always done effectively | Pearson Correlation | .575** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Receipt of room package as per specification during booking | Pearson Correlation | .599** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel ensures cleanliness and maintenance | Pearson Correlation | .503** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel replenish in-room amenities | Pearson Correlation | .549** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel quickly offers required amenities | Pearson Correlation | .557** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel gives complimentary services and gifts | Pearson Correlation | .572** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel remember preferences | Pearson Correlation | .653** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel listens to complaint patiently | Pearson Correlation | .621** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel provides safety and security | Pearson Correlation | .560** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel provides | Pearson | .627** | 0.092 | As obtained value is |

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| quality food and beverages | Correlation | | | greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel provides easy check-out process | Pearson Correlation | .551** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel reaches out for (verbal) feedback during billing | Pearson Correlation | .534** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel provides accurate billing and payment options | Pearson Correlation | .624** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Staff supports with prompt luggage handling during check-out | Pearson Correlation | .528** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel always provides regular newsletters | Pearson Correlation | .572** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel always provides deals and offers | Pearson Correlation | .580** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid |
| | Sig. | 0 | | |

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| | (2-tailed) | | | question. |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel always informs about loyalty benefits | Pearson Correlation | .614** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel ask for referrals | Pearson Correlation | .467** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel is close to the ideal | Pearson Correlation | .588** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Hotel is excellent | Pearson Correlation | .586** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Satisfaction with this hotel | Pearson Correlation | .564** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Receipt of value for the money at this hotel | Pearson Correlation | .583** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| Speaking positive about the hotel | Pearson Correlation | .602** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Likeliness to visit the hotel again | Pearson Correlation | .581** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Likeliness to upgrade the services during my next visit | Pearson Correlation | .544** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Recommendation of the hotel to friends and colleagues | Pearson Correlation | .665** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Un-likeliness to think of competitor's hotel for any specific need over the hotel | Pearson Correlation | .439** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Brand reputation (or goodwill) | Pearson Correlation | .504** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Brand resonance | Pearson | .558** | 0.092 | As obtained value is |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------|-------|---|
| | Correlation | | | greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Word-of-mouth | Pearson Correlation | .410** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Price fairness | Pearson Correlation | .410** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Brand communication to masses | Pearson Correlation | .600** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Corporate Social Responsibility | Pearson Correlation | .542** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |
| Marketing channels | Pearson Correlation | .430** | 0.092 | As obtained value is greater than critical value, it is a valid question. |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | | |
| | N | 419 | | |