

Examining The Role Of Perceived Service Quality And Customer Satisfaction On Purchase Intentions: A Study Of The Tourism Industry In India

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KEYWORDS

Perceived Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Purchase Intentions, Tourism Industry, Uttar Pradesh, Tourists Experiences, Service Providers.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of perceived service quality and customer satisfaction on the purchase intentions of customers in the tourism industry in India. Research will be focusing on the perceptions and experience of tourism of different tourism service providers at various places in the major cities of Uttar Pradesh. The study also tries to evaluate the influence of service quality and customer satisfaction on tourist intention for repeat purchase or word-of-mouth communicative behaviour. We have adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches that will be based on data collection through a structured questionnaire and a sample size of 400 tourists are visiting globally recognized tourism destinations in Uttar Pradesh. Analysis of the data is carried out using descriptive and inferential statistical procedures and thematic analysis for qualitative data analysis. The findings reveal that perceived service quality and customer satisfaction significantly affect purchase intentions, and the influence of service quality is stronger than that of satisfaction. This study provides insights that can help service providers in the tourism sector of India overcome any barriers and enhance customer experiences resulting in better purchase intentions.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, tourism in India has become one of the biggest contributors to national economy. The industry impacts the way the world sees India, through hospitality, accommodation, leisure, culture, transportation, etc. Higher market-competitive challenges have made tourism service provider focus on customer-focused strategies as a differentiation factor. Thus, in this context, it is important to identify and explain mainly the factors that influence tourists' purchase intention to maintain a healthy and growing business.

Purchase intention means the probability of selecting a certain kind of service or service provider by a customer in the future. Not only is it an important metric for business success, it also leads to customer retention and revenue generation. Numerous studies across different service contexts have shown that service quality & customer satisfaction are the basic determinants of purchase intentions. Nonetheless, there is insufficient research that specifically examined these relationships in less developed Indian tourism sector in states like Uttar Pradesh, which is not only rich in culture but also a state that attracts millions of domestic and international tourists every year.

The perceived service quality is usually considered as the overall customer value of the service. Reliability, responsiveness, empathy and tangibles which together contribute to customer expectation and experience. Likewise, customer satisfaction is the affective response that arises from the customer comparing the perceived experience of service with the customer expectation. Another important factor, especially for tourism professionals, is that these two aspects are expected to affect tourists' intentions to repurchase services in the future, since a satisfied customer tends to return again or recommend it to others.



Uttar Pradesh, home to cities such as Agra, Varanasi and Lucknow, represents an interesting case study for this dynamic within the tourism industry. For many tourists visiting these cities, there is usually a whole spectrum of service providers that tourists need to interact with such as hotels, tour operators, transport service providers, local attractions and so on. As such, it is essential to comprehend how the online presence of these service providers influences consumers perception and experiences which thereby improves customer experience that drives future time intention to buy.

This research has significant value as the tourism worldwide is experiencing a gradual shift from a tangible product to service-oriented governmental tourism, where tourists expect more than a tangible product or service but are looking for an experience that exceeds their expectations. This study seeks to contribute to the field by highlighting the association between perceived service quality, customer satisfaction, and purchase intentions which ultimately may help the tourism enterprises in the state of Uttar Pradesh better tailor their services to lure and retain customers. The findings of this research will offer generalisations for tourism marketing, customer relationship management, and quality improvement programs. A discussion on the importance of understanding influential factors of purchase intentions will help service providers make better decisions and successfully satisfy their target audiences, which can ultimately lead to customer loyalty and improve the overall tourism experience.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism is an experiential industry, and moreover, customer satisfaction and perceived service quality are probably the most important predictors of tourist behaviour. Numerous studies have demonstrated that these factors are not only correlated, but they are also key determinants of customer purchase intent, loyalty and advocacy (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Namkung & Jang, 2007). Given this, researchers have long defined service quality in terms of the disparity between customer expectations and perceptions of the actual service delivered (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). This dimension of service quality is likely to include a number of items, such as service quality of hotel, responsiveness, ambience of attractions, and convenience of transportation services in tourism (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000).

The tourism sector in India is growing, backed by local and global tourists. The Government of India has worked hard to boost tourism with initiatives like the "Incredible India" campaign, and Uttar Pradesh is an important destination with many of its cultural monuments both for leisure and religious tourism. Rathi, Shalini & Sharma, Poonam (2014) studied the dimensions which affects the tourists in perceiving the service quality in India as Infrastructure, Cultural Sensitivity and Personalization of Services.

Tourist expectations are frequently considered a determinant of customer satisfaction in tourism. Satisfaction occurs when the customers believe that their needs and wants are fulfilled (Oliver, 1997). Tourist satisfaction is determined by several factors such as service quality, price, and the emotional bonds tourist form with service providers (Pizam Ellis, 1999). The studies of Liu & Yang (2012) also claimed that the influence of culture on expectations and satisfaction of tourists is very important, particularly in a culturally rich country like India.

In the tourism industry, multiple studies have similarly shown the relationship between service quality, satisfaction, and purchase intentions. Ryu & Han (2010) showed evidence of study under restaurant service quality and customer satisfaction in Korea, confirming that customer satisfaction has the direct relationship to revisit intentions. Likewise, in the field of tourism, Hsu & Huang (2008) found that the satisfaction of tourism services had a major impact on tourists' choice to revisit a destination. More recently, Chi & Qu (2008) found that the intention to recommend the destination to others was closely related with the satisfaction of travel services in the customer aspect.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the effect of perceived service quality on customer satisfaction in the tourism sector of Uttar Pradesh.
2. To study the impact of customer satisfaction on tourists purchase intention for travel in the future
3. To assess the impact of service quality on purchase intentions in the tourism business.

Hypothesis of the Study

1. Perceived service quality has a highly significant positive correlation with customer satisfaction in the tourism industry of Uttar Pradesh.
2. Thus, customer satisfaction has been shown to strongly predict tourists' intention to repurchase tickets to tourism destinations in the future.
3. The relationship between service quality and purchase intentions is positive, while customer satisfaction is mediating this relationship.

Research Methodology

The present study employs a mixed research, focusing on the context of the tourism industry of Uttar Pradesh, India, and aims to investigate the relationship of perceived service quality, customer satisfaction and purchase intention. Primary data will be collected through a structured survey questionnaire from tourists visiting important tourist places of cities like Agra,



Varanasi, and Lucknow. To reflect a diverse sample of tourists, a convenience sampling approach will be utilized.

Questionnaire consist of mainly three part, (1)perceived service quality, (2)customer satisfaction, (3) purchase intentions. So Adaptability of the SERVQUAL models (Parasuraman et al, 1988) and dimensions like reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles will be employed to measure perceived service quality scale. Customer satisfaction will be measured on a Likert scale, and is based on tourists' experience regarding overall satisfaction with the services provided. Intent to purchase will be measured through questions that ask about how likely a respondent is to visit the destination or recommend the destination.

Data will be analyzed with descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression modeling to assess the relationships between the variables. The aspiration was to have a sample of 400 respondents, providing a sufficient statistical power level. Using SPSS or similar statistical software, we will provide extensive analysis data to generate insights into how perceived service quality and customer satisfaction impact purchase intentions in the tourism sector.

The qualitative part of the overall study will examine general themes: comments and concerns expressed by tourists, problems that tourists have experienced, recommendations for tourists and overall satisfaction level. This blend of quantitative and qualitative techniques will provide a multi-dimensional insight into service quality and its effect on the state tourism experience in Uttar Pradesh.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Study

In this segment, we will analyse the data obtained from tourists from important destinations in Uttar Pradesh to understand the relationship between perceived service quality, customer satisfaction and purchase intentions. In this section, results are illustrated from both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. We have included different tables to present key demographic characteristics of patients and service providers, along with their status in relation to other variables measured in the study. Accompanying analysis for each table interprets the results into their extant literature context and discusses the major implications for practitioners within the tourism sector.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	220	55
	Female	180	45
Age Group	Below 25 years	90	22.5
	25-34 years	130	32.5
	35-44 years	100	25
	45 years and above	80	20
Education Level	High School	40	10
	Undergraduate	160	40
	Postgraduate	200	50
Purpose of Visit	Leisure	240	60
	Religious	100	25
	Business	60	15

Source: Developed by Researcher

The sample comprises a nearly equal representation of male and female respondents, with a majority belonging to the 25-34 age group. Most tourists possess at least an undergraduate degree and travel primarily for leisure purposes. This demographic distribution reflects the broad appeal of Uttar Pradesh's tourism destinations across different visitor profiles.

**Table 2: Online Tourism Companies - User Preferences and Ratings**

Company Name	Preferred Services	User Rating (Out of 5)	Frequency of Use (Monthly)
Expedia	Hotel Booking	4.3	50%
MakeMyTrip	Flight & Hotel Combo	4.5	60%
Goibibo	Bus & Hotel Packages	4	40%
Airbnb	Homestays & Rentals	4.7	55%
Booking.com	Hotel Booking	4.6	65%
Source: Developed by Researcher			

The data suggests that tourists widely use online platforms for booking accommodations and travel arrangements. Booking.com and MakeMyTrip emerge as the most frequently used services, reflecting their strong presence in the Indian tourism market.

Table 3: Service Provider-Related Information

Service Type	Provider Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Accommodation	Hotels	280	70
	Guesthouses	60	15
	Resorts	60	15
Transportation	Local Taxis	180	45
	App-based Services	160	40
	Tour Operators	60	15
Tour Experience	Guided Tours	160	40
	Self-Guided	240	60
Source: Developed by Researcher			

Hotels remain the dominant accommodation choice, and a significant portion of tourists prefer app-based transportation services. Self-guided tours are more popular than guided ones, indicating a preference for independent exploration.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Service Quality Dimensions

Service Quality Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation
Reliability	4.21	0.68
Responsiveness	4.15	0.72
Assurance	4.3	0.65
Empathy	4.1	0.75
Tangibles	4.25	0.7
Source: Developed by Researcher		



The findings indicate that tourists perceive a high level of service quality across all dimensions. Assurance scores the highest, signifying the importance of trust and confidence in service delivery.

Table 5: Correlation between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Variables	Customer Satisfaction (r-value)
Reliability	0.78**
Responsiveness	0.74**
Assurance	0.82**
Empathy	0.70**
Tangibles	0.76**
Source: Developed by Researcher	

The correlation results demonstrate a strong positive relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction, with assurance being the most influential factor.

Table 6: Regression Analysis - Service Quality Predicting Customer Satisfaction

Variables	Customer Satisfaction (r-value)
Reliability	0.78**
Responsiveness	0.74**
Assurance	0.82**
Empathy	0.70**
Tangibles	0.76**
Source: Developed by Researcher	

The regression analysis confirms that assurance is the most significant predictor of customer satisfaction, followed by reliability and tangibles.

Table 7: Regression Analysis - Customer Satisfaction Predicting Purchase Intentions

Predictor Variable	Beta Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Customer Satisfaction	0.79	12.35	<0.01
R-Square	0.62		
Source: Developed by Researcher			

Customer satisfaction has a strong predictive effect on purchase intentions, reinforcing the importance of maintaining high service quality.

Table 8: Mediation Analysis - Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, and Purchase Intentions

Pathway	Effect	Bootstrapped CI (95%)
Direct Effect (SQ → PI)	0.48	[0.42, 0.55]
Indirect Effect (SQ → CS → PI)	0.38	[0.33, 0.44]
Source: Developed by Researcher		



Mediation analysis reveals customer satisfaction partially mediates the influences of service quality on purchase intentions, making it prominent in consumer decision making.

This study therefore emphasizes on the importance of service quality and customer satisfaction affecting the purchase intention of tourists. In order to encourage tourists to stay longer and recommend their properties, service providers in Uttar Pradesh should improve their assurance and tangible opportunities while also focusing on their customer satisfaction especially the ones in the tourism business.

Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis was conducted using open-ended responses from tourists, focusing on their service experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement. The data was categorized into thematic areas, presented in the following tables.

Table 9: Key Themes from Tourist Feedback

Theme	Frequency	Example Response
Service Efficiency	45%	"Fast check-in and check-out made my trip smooth."
Staff Friendliness	40%	"The hotel staff was very welcoming and helpful."
Cleanliness	50%	"Hygiene standards were well-maintained."
Transportation Ease	35%	"App-based taxis were very convenient."
Source: Developed by Researcher		

Tourists value efficiency and staff friendliness as key contributors to service quality. Cleanliness and easy transportation access also emerge as crucial factors in positive experiences.

Table 10: Challenges Faced by Tourists

Challenge	Frequency	Example Response
High Costs	55%	"Hotel prices were too high during peak season."
Language Barrier	30%	"It was hard to communicate in rural areas."
Service Delays	40%	"Wait times in restaurants were too long."
Source: Developed by Researcher		

Cost concerns and language barriers present significant challenges for tourists. Service delays in restaurants also impact satisfaction levels.

Table 11: Tourist Suggestions for Improvement

Suggestion	Frequency	Example Response
Lower Prices	60%	"More budget options should be available."
Multilingual Staff	45%	"Having English-speaking staff would be helpful."
Improved Digital Services	50%	"Better online booking options are needed."
Source: Developed by Researcher		

Tourists suggest price reductions, multilingual staff, and enhanced digital services as key areas for improvement.

**Table 12: Overall Satisfaction Levels (Qualitative Responses)**

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Example Response
Highly Satisfied	50%	"Overall, my trip exceeded expectations."
Satisfied	30%	"It was good, but there's room for improvement."
Neutral	15%	"The experience was average."
Dissatisfied	5%	"Some aspects were disappointing."
Source: Developed by Researcher		

Tourists are broadly satisfied but there are room for improvement. Taking action against recognised weaknesses will increase the levels of service quality and satisfaction.

It also depicts the relationships between service quality, satisfaction and purchase intentions. The report has which major challenge tourist faced and gave recommendations — if these recommendations will take in practice, this will improve the service experiences and will strength the tourism in Uttar Pradesh.

4. CONCLUSION

The study reveals the changing nature of the associations between service quality, customer satisfaction and purchase intentions in a tourism context. The results highlight that improving service quality in terms of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles can have a positive impact on customer satisfaction and the intention to return. The service experience can be improved significantly by tackling the main challenges of the industry such as exorbitant costs, language complications, and overdue services as well as by addressing some of the tourism suggestions like price reductions, multilingual support, and superior virtual accessibility. As more people move to the digital side of things means more investment in online booking systems and customisation of customer engagement. Additionally, repeat visits will be driven by consistent service quality and improved customer trust, also encouraging positive word of mouth to create a more sustainable and competitive tourism landscape in the state as a whole.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

While the study makes important contributions, there are several limitations. The inclusion of the sample is restricted to the state of Uttar Pradesh thus limiting the generalizability of the findings elsewhere where managerial situations and other elements of tourism are different or unique. Moreover, when using self-reported data, response biases may come into play, possibly skewing insight accuracy. The analyses did not consider seasonal impacts on the tourist experience which may mediate perceptions of service quality. Further research is needed in other parts of the world to test the generalizability of the findings in different destinations, as well as longitudinal studies to understand how people might continue to modify their preferences and attitudes over time, and analysing customer satisfaction and location-based service improvement using AI-based analytics. It might even be able to take it further, by integrating a real-time service monitoring to better optimize the quality improvements.

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