A STUDY OF HONG KONG TRAVELERS'

SATISFACTION LEVELS WITH HOTEL

SERVICES IN SHENZHEN SPECIAL

ECONOMIC ZONE OF CHINA

By
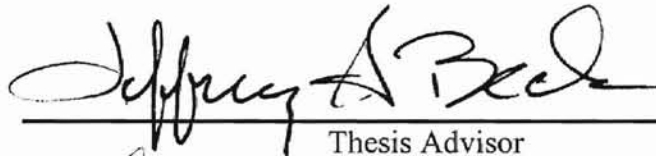
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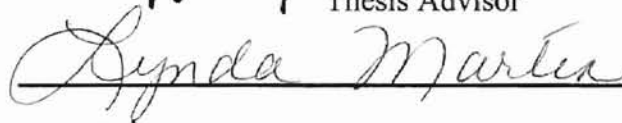
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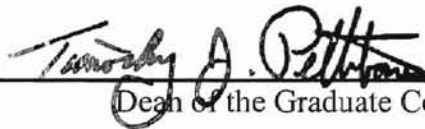SERVICES IN SHENZHEN SPECIAL

ECONOMIC ZONE OF CHINA

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Weizhao Xu and Kehua Zhi, and my elder sister

Zhouhong Xu

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Their would like to express my sincerely appreciation to my advisor and committee chair, Dr. Jeff Beck for his constructive guidance, inspiration and friendship. He was not only an incredible advisor, but also a very nice, kind and patient professor. His guidance, encouragement and support were invaluable to me. Thank you Dr Beck.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Customer satisfaction has been recognized as one of the most important studies of

measuring service quality in hospitality industry (Barsky & Huxley, 1992; Knutson,

1988; Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988). Customer satisfaction provides benefits for a firm, and

higher levels of customer satisfaction lead to greater customer loyalty. In the long run, it

is more profitable to keep good customers than to constantly attract and develop new

customers to replace the ones who leave (Lovelock, C., & Wright, L., 1994). In order to

improve customer satisfaction levels, managers must find out how satisfied or dissatisfied

current customers actually are. By measuring the satisfaction levels of their customers,

managers can assess the current position of the company in terms of whether the services

provided meet customers' needs and expectations. An analysis of the elements or

attributes of customer satisfaction may provide clues regarding what actions a manager

should take to meet the needs of customers and increase the likelihood that they will

come back.

As China's first special economic zone designed to pilot the country's reform and opening

drive, Shenzhen has made brilliant achievements in its hotel industry. Before the

establishment of the special zone in 1979, there were only 7 hotels and several restaurants in Shenzhen. The number of tourists who stayed for more than one day in Shenzhen was below 1,000. After the establishment of the special zone, tourism flourished. By 1999, there were 254 hotels and holiday villages with 26,864 guestrooms and 54,138 berths (The yearbook of China tourism statistics, 2000). The achievements attained by the Shenzhen hotel industry ranked among the best in the country. Hong Kong was always the biggest customer source for the Shenzhen tourism because Shenzhen has the geographic advantage of connecting with Hong Kong. Among all the international travelers, Hong Kong travelers contributed the most to the Shenzhen hotel industry.

Opportunities and Challenges Faced by Hotel Industry in the SSEZ Area

Shenzhen Special Economic Zone

In August 1980, The People's Congress of China passed "Regulations for The Special Economy Zone of Guang Dong Province" and officially designated a portion of Shenzhen as The Shenzhen Special Economy Zone (SSEZ).

The SSEZ is located in the South of Guangdong Province of Southern China. It is belt-shaped with a total area of 327.5 square kilometers. Hong Kong is located just at the south of this region with a board with SSEZ (see figure 1). Commuting between Shenzhen and Hong Kong is very convenient. There are frequent buses, trains, and ships connecting the two cities.

The word "Special" in this context describes special economic systems and policies. That is, the central government gives the SSEZ special policies and flexible measures, allowing the SSEZ to utilize a special economic management system, for example:

- Special tax incentives for foreign investments in the SSEZ.
- Greater independence on international trade activities.
- Economic characteristics are represented as "4 primacies": 1) construction primarily relies on attracting and utilizing foreign capital; 2) primary economic forms are sino-foreign joint ventures and partnerships as well as wholly foreign-owned enterprises; 3) products are primarily export-oriented; 4) economic activities are primarily driven by market.
- SSEZ are listed separately in the national planning (including financial planning) and have province-level authority on economic administration. SSEZ's local congress and government has legislation authority.

During the past twenty years, the SSEZ witnessed the highest rate of development in China. Between 1990 and 1998, local GDP has been increasing at an average rate of 32.2% per annum. GDP for 1998 stood at US$ 15.57 billion, ranking the sixth among major mainland cities.

The trading relationship between Shenzhen and Hong Kong is rapidly growing. Shenzhen now receives foreign investments from over 40 countries and regions. More than 10 thousand foreign companies have opened businesses in the city. About 70% of those are Hong Kong based. Shenzhen now ranks No. 1 in the nation in export revenue, most of

which go through Hong Kong. Hong Kong has become the Shenzhen's largest partner in international trade.

Figure 1: Map of the Shenzhen and Hong Kong
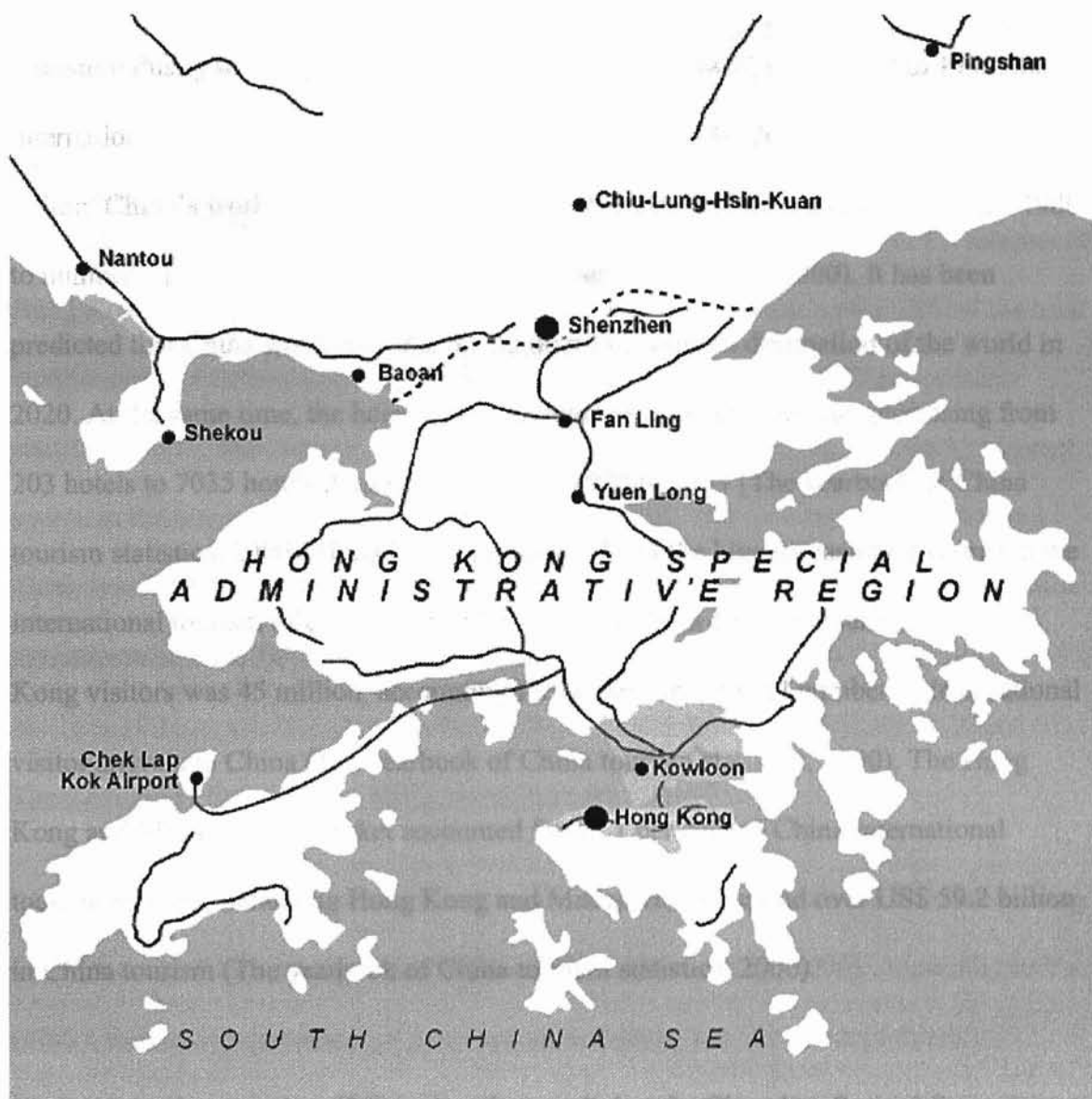
The Opportunities Faced by Tourism Industry in the SSEZ

Since China implemented the policies of reform and opened to the outside world, the tourism industry in China has witnessed a continuous growth. From 1978 to 1999, the international tourism receipts of China increased from US$0.26 billion to US$14.10 billion. China's world ranking of tourism receipts increased from number 34 in the 1980 to number 7 in 1999 (The yearbook of China tourism statistics, 2000). It has been predicted that China would become the number one tourism destination of the world in 2020. At the same time, the hotel sector maintained a fast growth rate, increasing from 203 hotels to 7035 hotels during the period of 1978 to 1999 (The yearbook of China tourism statistics, 2000). Hong Kong has always been the biggest customer source in the international tourism of China (Liu, 1995). From 1978 to 1999, the number of Hong Kong visitors was 45 million, accounting for 80 per cent of total number of international visitor arrivals to China (The yearbook of China tourism statistics, 2000). The Hong Kong and Macao visitor market accounted for 42.1 per cent of China international tourism receipts, indicating Hong Kong and Macao visitors spend over US$ 59.2 billion in China tourism (The yearbook of China tourism statistics, 2000).

Since the implementation of China's reform policies, the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone has emerged as an important window to the outside, as well as a strategic gate allowing tourists from the Asia - Pacific region to enter China via Hong Kong, one of China's major points of entry. The biggest entry and exit port in China is the Shenzhen Port, which has 12 first-class ports and 5 second-class ports. A port operation system integrating transportation by land, sea and air has been formed. The number of tourists

and persons that leave or enter the country through the Shenzhen Port exceeds 50 million each year, accounting for more than 51% of the total number of persons that leave or enter Mainland China through all ports. These factors have guaranteed an endless stream of guests entering and leaving the SSEZ the year around. In 1999, the international tourism receipts in Shenzhen were US$1.11 billion, ranking fourth among Chinese major cities (The yearbook of China tourism statistics, 2000). In the same period, the number of Hong Kong tourist arrivals to Shenzhen was 108 million, accounting for 72% of the total number of international tourist arrivals in this area (The yearbook of China tourism statistics, 2000). This suggests that Hong Kong tourists are the most important customer source in the international tourism market of the SSEZ. The total revenue of the hotel sector was US$ 467 million with 254 star-related hotels in 1999 (The yearbook of China tourism statistics, 2000).

The Challenges Faced by the SSEZ Hotel Industry

With more hotel construction, the room supply has surpassed the tourist demand, leading to tough competition among hotels in China (Pine, Zhang & Qi, 2000). According to Yu (1992), the over-development of hotel accommodations has become a problem confronting the Chinese government. Even more, hoteliers began to make every effort to compete with each other (including "price wars") (Zhang, Qin & Li, 2000). Service quality, as one of the most important strategies to attract the customer, has improved since the 1980s when China's hotel industry began to grow. Since 1988, the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) has been carrying out its Star-Rating Standard Evaluation System in all tourist hotels. One of the most important aims of the system was

to enhance the service quality standards. In addition, a large influx of foreign capital and brands forced the local and state hotel operators to improve their establishments and services. However, by comparison with international standards, the service standards in China's hotel industry were still poor. The lack of education and training in tourism management was the major reason for the problem of poor service in the hotel industry in China (Zhang, 1987). Since China was closed to the West for so long, many hotel employees had service attitude problems, which drew constant complaints from international tourists. The hotel industry also faced the problem of finding quality employees to provide services to meet the standards of international tourists. Most service employees in China lacked an understanding or appreciation of international service standards (Tsang & Qu, 2000). Even more, after entering the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, China started to permit operators who are capable of building 100 percent foreign-owned hotels to enter into the Chinese market without limitation; these operators will be allowed to hold the majority equity upon entry. This will bring tougher competition from international counterparts.

Moreover, the recent development of China's reform, has led to an economic focus away from the highly developed eastern area to central and western developing areas. This, in turn, has led to a decline in the source of tourists to the SSEZ. In fact, the SSEZ is no longer the only gateway, but instead one of the many gateways now open in Mainland China.

The hotel industry in the SSEZ needs to improve service quality to meet the requirement of challenges and opportunities. Assessing the needs and satisfaction levels of its biggest customer source, Hong Kong travelers, is the first step for the development.

China's Hotel Rating System

Since 1988, the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) has been carrying out its Star-Rating Standard Evaluation system in all tourist hotels. The objectives of the program is to enhance the management and service standards of tourist hotels in China and to protect the interests of hotels, travel companies and consumers (Yin, 1987). The criteria adopted in the classification include the following six categories: (1) architecture and level of service, (2) facilities, (3) maintenance, (4) sanitation and hygiene, (5) service quality and (6) guest satisfaction.

Hotels are rated by the National Hotel Evaluation Committee (NHEC) under the six criteria. According to Yu (1992),

> "The category 'architecture and service levels' involves an evaluation of hotels by
> their managers or owners. The NHEC has established entry requirements for all
> tourist hotels for each of the five star categories. If an individual hotel meets the
> minimum requirements for a certain star rating, it can apply for that star rating
> from the NHEC. The entry requirements for each of the five star categories focus
> on nine specific areas: (1) architecture, (2) lobby, (3) guest room, (4) dining room,
> (5) lounge and coffee shop, (6) public space and facilities, (7) service quality, (8)
> kitchen, and (9) guest security. The standards required in those nine areas for the
> different star categories position most hotels in a particular category and
> altogether eliminate other hotels that are not qualified for the rating process. The
> qualifying hotels are then rated by NHEC under the six criteria mentioned earlier.
> For the first two criteria, architecture and facilities, the NHEC uses a detailed
> scoring system for each star category and all the hotels are rated by this system in

the areas of architecture and facilities. In the areas of architecture and facilities, the required scores to earn a star rating are: 1 star, 80 points; 2 stars, 120 points; 3 stars, 220 points; 4 stars, 300 points; and 5 stars, 330 points. The rating of maintenance and sanitation and hygiene is conducted on a single form, also according to a scoring system. The actual points each hotel scores are compared to a preset standard established by NHEC and converted into a percentage based on that standard. The established standards are 1,428 points for maintenance and 1,159 points for sanitation and hygiene. The required percentages for the different star ratings are: 1 star, 90 percent; 2 stars, 90 percent; 3 stars, 92 percent; 4 stars, 95 percent; and 5 stars, 95 percent. The rating of service quality is also performed according to a scoring system, but by using a separate form. As with the rating procedure for maintenance and sanitation and hygiene, evaluating this category involves collecting raw scores and converting those into a percentage of a predetermined standard (1,350 points). The required percentages for 'service quality' for the different star ratings are the same as those for maintenance and sanitation and hygiene, shown above. For the category 'guest satisfaction', a guest survey is conducted by NHEC at all the participating hotels. Guests' responses are rated under a scoring system. However, the NHEC does not publish the specifics of that scoring system. Therefore, the criteria for rating guest satisfaction are unclear. After hotels are rated in each of the five areas mentioned earlier (i.e., architecture and facilities, maintenance, sanitation and hygiene, service quality, and guest satisfaction), the scores and percentages for each hotel are tabulated. Based on each hotel's final score, the NHEC makes its final decisions and designates the qualifying hotels as belonging to one of the five different star categories."

Problem Statement

Research has recently been conducted on service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry in China (Tsang & Qu, 2000; Heung, 2000). However, little research has focused on Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels in the hotel industry of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone (SSEZ) of China, even though Hong Kong is the most important customer resource. Many hospitality enterprises set customer satisfaction goals without any clear understanding of the levels of satisfaction by current customers. Hoteliers must gauge customers' expectations and assess the current level of service quality their

businesses provide to improve the overall service quality of the hotel industry in the SSEZ. In order to satisfy Hong Kong travelers' needs, their perceptions of service quality in the SSEZ must be studied.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to assess Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels regarding hotel service quality in the SSEZ area.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Find out whether there is a significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level.

2. Discover underlying dimensions of Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area.

3. Evaluate differences between Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area.

4. Identify the relative importance of each underlying dimension of the Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction.

5. Suggest the future development of service quality standards for the hotel industry in the SSEZ in meeting the needs of Hong Kong travelers.

Hypotheses

Generated from the objectives of the study, the following are null hypotheses for this study:

H1: There is no significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level.

H2: There is no significant difference between Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area.

H3: Each derived Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction dimension has no different impact in contributing to the Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction

Definition of Terms

For this study, the following terms are defined so that the intent of the research was understood.

Hong Kong Travelers – The Chinese compatriots who reside in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and use the product or services in hotels of the SSEZ area.

Customer Satisfaction – " An emotional response to the experiences provided by,

associated with particular products or services purchased, retail outlets, or even molar

patterns of behavior such as shopping and buyer behavior, as well as the overall

marketplace." (Westbrook and Reilly, 1983, p. 256).

International Visitors (Inbound Visitor Arrivals) – Foreigners or compatriots from Hong

Kong, Macao and Taiwan who come to China within the reporting time for sightseeing,

holiday, visiting friends and relatives, medical care, shopping, meeting, or taking part in

economic, cultural, sports, or religious activities (The yearbook of China tourism

statistics, 2000).

International Tourism Receipts – The total expenditure made by inbound tourists within

the territory of China (the mainland) in the course of travel on transport, tours and

sightseeing, lodging, food and beverage, shopping, entertainment and etc (The yearbook

of China tourism statistics, 2000).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the previous research conducted on customer satisfaction. This chapter is divided into six main areas: The importance of customer satisfaction, definition of service quality and customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction measurement, customer satisfaction research in the hospitality industry, attributes derived in previous customer satisfaction research in the hospitality industry, and a conclusion. In each of the areas, the most important research, which brought significant influence on the concept, was reviewed. The review establishes the basic structure of customer satisfaction research and will be helpful with this research.

The Importance of Customer Satisfaction

According to Merli (1990), the organization's survival depends on the customer. The customer should be the organization's top priority. Customers who are satisfied with the quality of their purchases from an organization become reliable customers. Therefore, customer satisfaction is essential and is ensured by producing high-quality products and services. It must be renewed with every purchase. This cannot be accomplished if quality,

even though it is high, is not continuous. Continual improvement is the only way to keep customers satisfied and loyal. The general reason for studying customer satisfaction is the profitability that is generally believed to be brought by a customer's satisfaction with a product or service (Barsky and Labagh, 1992; Gundersen, Heide & Olsson, 1996). Deming (1991, p141) stated " Profit in a transaction with a customer that comes back voluntarily may be 10 times the profit realized from a customer that responds to advertising and other persuasions." Fornell (1992) mentioned that customer satisfaction may lead to favorable word-of-mouth publicity and subsequent repeat purchases. Garvin (1991) stated that evaluating customer satisfaction is an integral part of a process that attempts to improve a product's quality that eventually leads to improvement of a company's competitive advantage. Hayes stated that knowledge of customer expectation and requirements provides understanding of how the customer defines quality of service and products, and facilitates the development of customer satisfaction questionnaires (Hayes, 1997, p 7). Assael stated "satisfaction reinforces positive attitudes toward the brand, leading to a greater likelihood that the same brand will be purchased again... dissatisfaction leads to negative brand attitudes and lessens the likelihood of buying the same brand again". (Assael, 1987, p 47)

A principal aim of customer-satisfaction/dissatisfaction research is to determine what would affect the satisfaction. The satisfaction level regarding a service experience is related to the value or importance customers give to that service multiplied by how well its attributes meet their expectations (Barsky & Labagh, 1992).

According to Crosby (1993), the reasons to focus on the research of customer satisfaction are:

1) Satisfied customers could be the most effective form of promotion;

2) Satisfied customers are loyal customers; and

3) Satisfied customers are often and willing to pay higher prices.

According to Naumann (1995), the reasons for measuring customer satisfaction are to:

1) Get close to the customers;

2) Measure continuous improvement;

3) Achieve customer driven improvement;

4) Measure competitive strengths and weakness, and

5) Link Customer Satisfaction Management (CSM) data to internal systems.

Definition of Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

According to Oberoi & Hales (1990), the characteristics of service can be defined as:

1. Intangibility: There is no complete physical form, which can be perceived by the consumer at the pre-purchase stage, as an object or thing.

2. Direct consumer involvement in the production of the service. It means that a service is unique to the consumers' requirements and that standardization of service is difficult or impossible.

3. Inseparability of the production and consumption process. It means that services cannot be stored.

4. Perishability of the service product. It means that since a service is created upon purchase, it cannot be stored nor can it be resold.

Davis and Stone (1985) divided the service encounter into two elements: direct and indirect services. Lovelock (1985) divided the service attributes into two groups: core and secondary. Even more, Lowis (1997) classified the service encounter attributes into two groups: essential and subsidiary. Service of hospitality can also divided into tangible and intangible. For example, the hotel room is tangible and the greeting from hotel employees is intangible.

Quality is a dynamic state associated with products, service, people, processes, and environments that meets or exceeds expectations. What is considered of quality today may not be good enough to be considered quality tomorrow.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, (1988) coined the term service quality as being perceived by customers, which is a gap between the customer's expectation of a service and the customer's perception of service received. Parasuraman et al.'s definition is the most widely recognized and used in service quality research.

Since 1976, the term customer satisfaction has frequently appeared in the marketing literature. However, no consensus of a definition for customer satisfaction has been reached (Yau, 1994). A large amount of research has been done by psychologists and marketing researchers, applying a variety of psychological theories to assess customer satisfaction (Yau, 1994). Some researchers defined customer satisfaction as a post-consumption evaluative judgment concerning a product or a service (Yuksel &

Rimmington, 1998; Fornell, 1992). Oh and Parks (1997) defined customer satisfaction as a complex human process, which involves cognitive and affective processes, as well as other psychological and physiological influences. The traditional definition of customer satisfaction follows a disconfirmation paradigm of consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (CS/D), which suggests that CS/D may result in interaction between a consumer's pre-purchase expectation and post-purchase evaluation (Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1990). Studies of consumer behavior emphasize customer satisfaction as the core of the post purchase period (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). Customer satisfaction is also defined as a psychological concept that involves the feeling of well-being and pleasure that results from obtaining what one hopes for and expects from an appealing product and/or service (WTO, 1985). Satisfaction with a hospitality experience such as a hotel stay or a restaurant meal is defined as a sum total of satisfactions with the individual elements or attributes of all the products and services that make up the experience (Pizam & Ellis, 1999).

Dissatisfied customers are more likely to present a complaint for low performance or absence of a desired feature than anything else. But an operation that exceeds the threshold performance standard apparently may not receive a compliment on the attribute. For example, a customer may be likely to complain about a dirty tablecloth but will hardly give compliment for the clean tablecloth.

Customer - Satisfaction Measurement

According to Pizam & Ellis (1999), the previous research on customer satisfaction measurement has been the development of nine distinct theories of customer satisfaction. The majority of these theories are based on cognitive attention, while other theories have been introduced without any empirical research. The nine theories include:

1. Expectancy disconfirmation;

2. Assimilation or cognitive dissonance;

3. Contrast;

4. Assimilation-contrast;

5. Equity;

6. Attribution;

7. Comparison-level;

8. Generalized negativity; and

9. Value-precept.

Customers' overall satisfaction with a hospitality service encounter is a sum total of the difference between their perceived outcome and expectations in relation to a group of weighted attributes, some of which carry minimum thresholds, plus an additional mysterious factor. They also give a mathematical depiction of overall customer satisfaction:

$A_{jk} = \Sigma n \ W_{ik} \ B_{ijk}$

With $B_{ijk} > I$

Where

A_{jk} = consumer k's overall satisfaction score for hospitality enterprise j,

W_{ik} = the importance weight assigned by consumer k to attributes i,

B_{ijk} = consumer k's rating of the amount of attribute I offered by enterprise j,

n = the number of product/service attributes, and

I = a minimum level (threshold)

It means (Barsky & Labagh, 1992, p 33) customer satisfaction is determined by:

1. expectations and other pre-experience standards;

2. product-service performance;

3. factors affecting the actual perception of the service.

"Customer satisfaction measures how well customer expectations are met by a given transaction" (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). The early roots of customer satisfaction measurement (CSM) could be found in the corporate image studies of the 1960s (Crosby, 1993). It served two roles, providing information and enabling the service organization to communicate with customers. Historically, the assumption has been that a linear relation exists between satisfaction/dissatisfaction and disconfirmation of performance evaluations. In recent years, there have been several ways to evaluate the customer satisfaction and quality of services, which focused on perceptions and attributes of customers. Assessment of satisfaction is made during the service delivery process (Pizam & Ellis, 1999).

Oliver (1981) introduced the expectation-disconfirmation model for studies of customer satisfaction in the service industry. Expectation can be described as mutable internal standard which is based on a multitude of factors including needs, objectives, past

personal or vicarious experiences with the same establishment hospitality, with similar

establishments, and the availability of alternatives (Pizam & Ellis, 1999). According to

Augustyn & Ho (1998), the means through which customer expectations are generated

include:

1. Word-of mouth communication,

2. Personal needs,

3. Experience, and

4. External communications that influence customers' expectations.

Expectancy-disconfirmation theory posits that with a target product or service as a result

of subjective comparisons between their expectations and perceptions, customers form

their satisfaction. Customer's perceptions or evaluations of the comparisons could be

identified by using a "worse than / better than expected" scale. The resulting perceptions

are called "subjective disconfirmation" as a psychological construct. Customer

satisfaction is a direct function of subjective disconfirmation. The size and direction of

disconfirmation determine the level of satisfaction. The disconfirmation paradigm is

generally accepted as the construct that best explains customer satisfaction (Heung,

V.C.S., 2000; Pizam & Ellis, 1999).

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) introduced the SERVQUAL scale, for

measuring service quality. The SERVQUAL model employs a multiple-item scale that

measures service quality as perceived by consumers. Customers are asked to complete a

series of scales that measured their expectations of a particular service organization on

aspects of five quality dimensions, which are:

1) Reliability - the ability to offer promised services;

2) Tangibles- the appearance of physical facilities;

3) Responsiveness- the willingness to provide appropriate services;

4) Assurance- the ability of employees to convert trust and confidence; and

5) Empathy- the provision of caring and attention towards customers.

Service quality is defined as the arithmetic difference between customer expectation and perceptions across 22 measurement items. The SERVQUAL scale focuses on the performance component of the service quality model in which quality is defined as by the equation "Quality = Perception-Expectation (Q=P-E)". There are five service quality gaps, which are as follows:

- Gap 1: The difference between consumer expectation and management perceptions of consumer expectations.

- Gap 2: The difference between management perceptions of consumer expectations and service quality specifications.

- Gap 3: The difference between service quality specifications and the service actually delivered.

- Gap 4: The difference between service delivery and what is communicated about the service to consumers.

- Gap 5: The difference between consumer expectations and perceptions.

The use of regression analysis and other dependency models to derive the importance of attributes relative to an outcome measure is a great development of this research (Allen & Rao, 2000). SERVQUAL has been found to be a relatively simple and inexpensive

instrument that provides valuable information on service quality. SERVQUAL is one of the most popular methods of measuring customer satisfaction levels in the hospitality industry since its introduction (Fick & Richie, 1991; Lee& Hing, 1995; Ryan & Clif, 1997). The above mentioned research compared the expectations to perceptions of actual performance to illustrate how tourism-related organizations can improve their service quality (Heung, Wong, & Qu, 2000).

Even though the SERVQUAL has been widely used customer-satisfaction measurement, researchers criticized that it has limitations, including issues relating to accuracy (Carman, 1990; Finn & Lamb, 1991), measuring time (Babakus & Boller, 1992), measuring scale (Lewis & Mitchell, 1990), and service quality dimensions (Brown, Churchill & Peter, 1993).

One of the most important limitations of SERVQUAL is that it lacks well-developed consumer expectations (Carman, 1990). Consumers' expectations are influenced by several factors, including 1) one's prior experience with the product; 2) communication with the salesperson and/or referent others; and 3) an individual's personal characteristics. Expectations are not well developed for many first time customers of a service. Therefore, the seller should be cautious as to the formulation and the realistic levels of expectation that should be given to these customers, because the difference between expectation and the actual performance will result in the development of satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Cronin and Taylor (1992) indicated that the 'expectations' series of SERVQUAL questions have poor discrimination power. Teas (1994) proposed

that the wording of 'expectations' questions should be changed. Some researchers suggested the use of importance scores in place of customer expectations (Lewis & Chambers, 1989; Martin, 1995). "A comparison of mean scores on the importance of service attributes and an organization's perceived performance in delivering those attributes provides a straightforward measure of how a particular service meets an individual customer's needs" (Ennew, Reed & Binks, 1993, pp 61). Comparison of importance and performance is one of the frequently used methods of customer satisfaction measurement (Yuksel & Rimmington, 1998).

The independent examinations of importance and satisfaction have been invaluable in assessing and improving performance. When the two concepts are merged and used together, an important element of efficiency can be introduced into the utilization of organizational resources. The efficiencies gained from the simultaneous application of these two concepts have been recently acknowledged in the field of marketing (Graf, Hemmasi & Nielsen, 1992).

Knutson, Stevens, Wullaert, Patton & Yokoyama, (1991) created a lodging specific instrument called LODGSERV to measure customer expectations for service quality in hotel experience. DINESERV is also used as a specific tool for measuring service quality in restaurants (Stevens, Knutson & Patton, 1995).

Customer Satisfaction Research in the Lodging Segment

The hospitality literature has witnessed increasing interest in research on customer satisfaction. Researchers have tried to apply related theories and methods in the hospitality industry (Oh, 1999). In order to study the gap between management perception of guest's expectations of hotel service, Lewis and Klein (1987) interviewed 23 upper-management staff of a 400-room hotel, and then asked the same questions of 116 guests staying in that hotel. Lewis and Klein found that management's perceptions of guests' expectation were in 17 of 44 different hotel attributes. Barsk and Labagh (1992) introduced the expectancy-disconfirmation model into both the hotel and restaurant industry. Gundersen, Heide & Olsson (1996) employed LISREL analysis to two alternative models of hotel guest satisfaction, and found that tangible aspects of the housekeeping department and intangible aspects of reception had the strongest effect on overall satisfaction. Oh (1999) proposed and tested an integrative model of service quality, customer value and customer satisfaction. Using a sample from the luxury segment of the hotel industry, this study provided preliminary results supporting a holistic approach to hospitality customers' post-purchase decision-making process. Tsang and Qu (2000) assessed the perceptions of service quality in China's hotel industry from both international tourists' and hotel managers' perspectives. They concluded that tourists' perceptions of service quality was lower than their expectations and that the managers' perceptions on service delivery was lower than the tourists' perceptions of actual service quality in China's hotel industry. Choi & Chu (2001) examined the relative importance of hotel factors in relation to travelers' overall satisfaction levels with their hotel stays in Hong Kong and the likelihood of returning to the same hotels in their

subsequent trips. This study identified seven hotel factors that were likely to influence customers' choice intentions: 'staff service quality', 'room qualities', 'general amenities', 'business services', 'value', 'security' and 'IDD facilities'. In order of importance, 'staff service quality', 'room qualities' and 'value' were the three most influential factors in determining travelers' overall satisfaction levels and their likelihood of returning to the same hotels.

Attributes Derived in Previous Customer Satisfaction Research

in the Hospitality Industry

A review of the literature indicates that some common attributes are important for customers in evaluating hotel quality of performance. These attributes include cleanliness, location, room rate, security, service quality, and reputation of hotel or chain (Knutson, 1988; Lewis 1984, 1985; Qu, Ryan, & Chu, 2000, Clow et al.1994, Gundersen, Heide, & Olsson, 1996). Alpert (1974) stated that 'determinant' attributes are termed as those that directly influence choice. They may arouse the purchase intention and differentiate from competitive offerings. Perception of hotel attributes is defined as the degree to which travelers find various services and facilities important in promoting customers' satisfaction for staying in a hotel (Wuest, Tas, & Emenheiser, 1996).

Knutson (1988) found that the most important attributes for initial hotel selection and repeat patronage selection for frequent travelers were cleanliness and comfort, convenience of location, promptness and courtesy of service, safety and security, and

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friendliness of employees. Lewis (1984,1985) showed that leisure travelerss were more concerned with quiet surroundings, service quality and location, while quality, security and image were perceived as important in a hotel choice. Clow, Garretson, & Kurtz (1994) identified past experience as the most important factor that directly influences a guest's evaluation of security, reputation and quality of service. Qu, Ryan & Chu (2000), in their survey to explore international travelers' satisfaction levels towards service and facility quality in the Hong Kong hotel industry, found that six dimensions had a significant impact on the overall satisfaction of travelers. These dimensions were quality of staff performance, quality of room facilities, value for money, variety and efficient service, business related service, and safety & security. Gundersen, Heide, & Olsson (1996) showed tangible aspects of housekeeping department and intangible aspects of reception were found to have the strongest effect on overall satisfaction.

Conclusion

From the review of literature, clearly, customer satisfaction is critical to customer-oriented businesses which include hotel service. To provide high quality service and continuous quality improvement, many hotel companies have created quality measurement programs that attempt to relate service attributes to customer satisfaction levels.

A widely used method of customer-satisfaction measurement is the SERVQUAL instrument. A number of researches conducted on customer satisfaction in hospitality

industry applied the SERVQUAL or modified SERVQUAL instrument. Those researches compared the expectations to perceptions of actual performance to indicate the service quality of hospitality-related organization (Q= P-E). However, SERVQUAL has been criticized for its several limitations. A comparison of mean scores on the importance of service attributes and the perceived performance in delivering those attributes provides a straightforward measure of how a particular service meets an individual customer's needs. In the case of this study, the "level of importance' instead of 'expectation' is used in the instrument and the comparison of importance and satisfaction is applied to measure how hotel services in the SSEZ meet the needs of Hong Kong travelers.

Even though there is ample literature on total quality, there are two main obstacles managers in the hospitality industry face in their quality improvement efforts. First, few empirical studies gave recommendations that could help managers clearly identify the main areas of importance to the customers. Second, the measuring instruments for customer satisfaction are frequently too general or too ad hoc to ensure relevant and valid measurements for tracing the guests' quality perception (Gundersen, Heide & Olsson, 1996).

In the case of this study, special attention is given to facilities and services specific to hotel industry in the SSEZ area to ensure relevant and valid measurements for tracing the Hong Kong travelers' quality perception. We will give recommendations that could help hotel managers in the SSEZ area clearly identify the main areas of importance to the Hong Kong travelers.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology involved in conducting this study. This chapter is divided into four sections: research design, instrument, data collection, and data analysis. The section on research design describes the research design used in this study to gather data. The instrument section describes the participants of this survey and the creation of this research instrument. The section of data collection describes chronologically the methods used by the researcher to gather the data. The data analysis section describes the analytical procedures used in this study.

Research Design

The research for this study is basically descriptive. According to Churchill (1996), the purposes of descriptive research are:

1. To describe the characteristics of certain groups;

2. To estimate the proportion of people in a specified population who behave in a certain way;

3. To make predictions where possible.

Descriptive research encompasses an array of research objects. However, it is more than a fact gathering expedition. Descriptive studies require a clear specification of who, what, when, where, and how of the research.

In the case of this study, it aims at describing Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone (SSEZ). In order to achieve this goal, a survey was conducted to measure: 1) Hong Kong travelers' demographic profiles and levels of satisfaction, 2) the relationship between the rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level (Hypothesis 1), 3) the difference between Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of the importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area (Hypothesis 2), and 4) relative importance of each underlying dimensions (Hypothesis 3).

Instrument

A self-administered questionnaire instrument was developed through the evaluation of questionnaires used in current related research (Tsang & Qu, 2000; Qu, Ryan, & Chu 2000; Heung 2000; Pizam & Ellis 1999; Gundersen 1996) and was modified to address the uniqueness of Hong Kong travelers and the SSEZ environment. The instrument was reviewed by Institution Review Board (IRB) of Oklahoma State University and approved by IRB on April 11, 2002 (Appendix A).

The instrument is two pages in length. The first page, a cover page, (Appendix D) served the purpose of an introduction letter, and explained to the target population the

importance of the study and the general instructions on how to finish the survey. A statement about the confidentiality of the study was utilized, which indicated that the responses would be kept anonymous and confidential, and the participation was voluntary. The phone number and e-mail address of the researcher was provided at the end of the cover letter to help convey trust to the participant that the survey was legitimate and important.

The questionnaire was designed with six sections (See Appendix E). The first section asked Hong Kong travelers information regarding what kind of hotel they typically stay at, the purpose of visitation, and the frequency of visitation. The second section contained the attributes of Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels towards hotel services in the SSEZ area, and the attributes of Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels with hotel services in the SSEZ area. Thirty-four attributes with five facets were included. The third section contained a question asking Hong Kong travelers' overall perceived levels of importance regarding hotel services in the SSEZ. The fourth section contained a question asking Hong Kong travelers the overall levels of satisfaction with hotel services in the SSEZ area. The fifth section asked the possibility that Hong Kong travelers will come back to hotels in the SSEZ area. The sixth section contained questions requesting the demographic data of the Hong Kong travelers, including gender, education, age, and occupation.

A five-point Likert scale was adopted in the third section and the measurement attributes of the second section on Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of the importance levels

regarding hotel services in the SSEZ (from "1-Very low importance" to "5-Very high importance"). A five-point Likert scale was also adopted in the fourth section and the measurement attributes of the second section on Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels with hotel services in the SSEZ (from "Strongly Dissatisfied" to "Strongly Satisfied"). In the fifth section the five-point Likert scale ranged from "Definitely No" to Definitely Yes". Since some Hong Kong travelers are unable to read English, this survey instrument was translated into Traditional Chinese. Both the English version and Tradition Chinese version were used.

A memo to the hotel managers was also sent with the questionnaire (See Appendix C). The memo served as instruction explaining how the hotel managers should deliver the questionnaires to Hong Kong guests. Since all the managers in the three selected hotels can read English, the memo was developed in English.

Data Collection

The researcher contacted most of the star-rated hotels in the SSEZ. Three of them agreed to participate in the survey. These hotels are The Pavilion Hotel (five stars), Shenzhen Bay Hotel (four stars), and Xili Lake Resort (three star). Due to the nature of the population, a convenient sampling method was used in this study. The target population included the Hong Kong travelers staying in the three hotels from April 13, 2002 to April 22, 2002. A total of 250 Hong Kong travelers were approached. The survey was conducted from 9:00am to 12:00 pm. Every Hong Kong guest who checked out of the hotel was interviewed to be indicated the sample.

The questionnaire and memo to hotel managers were sent by e-mail as an attachment. When the hotel managers in these three hotels received the e-mail, they printed the questionnaires out and delivered them to the Hong Kong guests in their hotels, according to the memo's instruction. During the ten days, managers in these three hotels supervised the survey conduction. As each Hong Kong guest checked out of their hotel, they were approached to fill out a questionnaire. The survey was conducted strictly according to the instruction of the memo. After the survey was finished, all the questionnaires were collected and sent back to the researcher by express mail.

Data Analysis

The hypotheses were tested by analyzing the collected data. Statistical analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Window Version 10.0 (SPSS) program. In this study, several statistical tests were used to analyze the data, i.e. frequency, mean, factor analysis, paired sample t-test, and multiple regression analysis.

Descriptive statistics were used to consolidate the data. A frequency analysis was conducted for all demographic questions and the questions regarding overall Hong Kong travelers' perceived levels of importance and levels of satisfaction, as well as the return intention. The mean and standard deviation was computed for all the Hong Kong travelers' levels of satisfaction to identify central tendency of Hong Kong travelers' perception attributes.

One–way ANOVA multiple comparison analysis was conducted to find out whether there is a relationship between the rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level (Hypothesis 1). If the significance value (F-value) was less than 0.05, the difference between the scores was considered statistically significant.

Factor analysis was employed to identify the underlying dimensions of travelers' satisfaction levels with hotel services in the SSEZ. Factor analysis examines the correlations among the attributes to identify these basic dimensions. The dimensions usually are named by examining the factor loadings that represent the correlations between each attribute and each factor. The principal-component method and varimax rotation were used. The criteria for the number of factors (dimensions) to be extracted were based on eigenvalue, percentage of variance, significance of factor loading, and assessment of the structure. A loading cut-off of 0.50 was adopted in this study. A variable was considered of practical significance and included in a factor when its factor loading were equal to or greater than 0.5. Only factors with an eigenvalue greater than or equal to one were considered significant. The solution that accounted for at least 60% of the total variance was considered as an accepted solution.

The purpose of using the Paired Samples T-Test is to measure the same variable on two different occasions for the same subject. In this study, the Paired Samples T-Test analysis was used to determine whether significant differences exited between Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ (Hypothesis 2) and how well the hotels services in the SSEZ meet

the needs of Hong Kong travelers. To determine the significance of the difference, the t-value, degrees of freedom, and 2-tail significance were examined. If the significance value was less than 0.05, the difference between the scores was considered statistically significant.

Multiple regression analysis was applied to explore how the satisfaction dimensions derived from the factor analysis were related to the dependent variable – Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction. Hypothesis 3 was tested by using regression analysis. The regression analysis identified the relative importance of the hotel factors derived from the factor analysis in determining or predicting Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction. The significant factors that remained in the model were shown in order of importance based on the beta coefficients. The higher the coefficient, the more the factor explained the contribution of the hotel factors to the Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this study was to assess Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels regarding hotel service quality in the SSEZ area. The major objectives of this study were to: 1) Find out whether there is a significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level; 2) find out the underlying dimensions of Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in this area; 3) evaluate differences between Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of the importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area; and 4) identify the relative importance of each underlying dimension.

There were three null hypotheses for this study:

H1: There is no significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level.

H2: There is no significant difference between Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area.

H3: Each derived Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction dimension has no different impact in contributing to the Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction

250 questionnaires were distributed to the Hong Kong travelers in three hotels of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone from April 13, 2002 to April 22,2002. A total of 162 questionnaires were returned. From the returned questionnaires, 152 were usable, indicating a response rate of 60.8%.

Instrument Reliability

To evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement attributes of this study, Cronbach's Alpha, a reliability analysis, was run on the 34 hotel attributes regarding levels of importance and levels of satisfaction, respectively. The coefficient alpha was used with coefficients greater than or equal to 0.70 considered acceptable and a good indication of construct reliability (Nunnally, 1978). Table I shows the results of the analysis. The reliability coefficients of the hotel attributes regarding levels of importance and satisfaction were .9393 and 0.9647, which are above the minimum acceptable levels and can be concluded that the measurement attributes were reliable.

TABLE I

RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT FOR HOTEL ATTRIBUTES REGARDING LEVEL

OF IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION

Hotel attributes	N of case	N of item	Reliability Coefficient
Level of importance	152	34	.9393
Level of Satisfaction	149	34	.9647

Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

The research instrument elicited Hong Kong customer feedback on seven demographic

questions and two questions asking overall satisfaction as well as intent to return. These

demographic questions included: gender, occupation, age, education, what star hotel they

typically stay at, frequency of visit, and purpose of visit.

The demographic profile of the respondents is shown in Table II. Male respondents

outnumbered female respondents in the current study; 94(63.5%) to 54 (36.5%). The

main age groups were between 31-40 years (46.6%), 21-30 years (24%), and 41-50 years

(21.2%). Only 1.4% were aged 20 years old or below and 0.7% were 61 years old or

above. Most of the respondents (62.3%) had completed college education. Of the

respondents, 30.6% were managers, followed by self-employed (22.9%), salaried

employees (20.8%), and government officials (10.4%).

TABLE II – DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	54	36.5%
Male	94	63.5%
Total	148	100.0%
Age		
20 years old or below	2	1.4%
21-30 years old	35	24.0%
31-40 years old	68	46.6%
41-50 years old	31	21.2%
51-60 years old	9	6.2%
61 years old or above	1	0.7%
Total	146	100.0%
Education		
High school or less	22	15.1%
College	91	62.3%
Greater than college	33	22.6%
Total	146	100.0%
Occupation		
Government official	15	10.4%
Management	44	30.6%
Salaried employee	30	20.8%
Hourly employee	2	1.4%
Self employed	33	22.9%
Student	7	4.9%
Retired	4	5.8%
Others	9	6.3%
Total	144	100.0%

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The traveling characteristics of respondents are shown in Table III. The majority of the

respondents typically stayed at 3-star hotels (43.8%) and 4-star hotels (37.7%). Most of

the respondents (74.7%) were more-than-one- time visitors. Most of the respondents

considered their purposes of visit as business (31.0%), leisure (20.7%),

conference/convention (16.6%), and visiting friends and relatives (13.8%)

TABLE III
TRAVELING PROFILES OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	Percentage
Type of hotel		
1-star hotel	0	0.0%
2-star hotel	4	2.7%
3-star hotel	64	43.8%
4-star hotel	55	37.7%
5-star hotel	19	13.0%
Others	4	2.7%
Total	146	100.0%
Frequency of visit		
First time	37	25.3%
More than one time	109	74.7%
Total	146	100.0%
Purpose of visit		
Business	45	31.0%
Shopping	14	9.7%
Leisure	30	20.7%
Visit friends/relatives	20	13.8%
Conference/convention	24	16.6%
Others	12	8.3%
Total	145	100.0%

Since the major objective of the study was to test Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels with hotel services in the SSEZ, the frequency analysis was also applied to test overall levels of satisfaction and respondents' return intention (See table IV). The result showed that 73.8% of all respondents were somewhat satisfied or very satisfied with the hotel services in the SSEZ. Most of the Hong Kong travelers (68.4%) indicated that they would probably or definitely come back. This result was consistent with the result of respondents' satisfaction level.

TABLE IV

RESPONDENTS' OVERALL SATISFACTION AND RETURN INTENTION

	Frequency	Percentage
Overall satisfaction		
Very Dissatisfied	0	0
Somewhat dissatisfied	4	2.6
Neutral	29	19.1
Somewhat satisfied	91	59.9
Very satisfied	28	18.4
Total	152	100.0
Return Intention		
Definitely no	0	0
Probably no	1	.7
Neutral	47	30.9
Probably yes	68	44.7
Definitely yes	36	23.7
Total	152	100.0

The Mean Scores of Level of Importance and level of Satisfaction

The mean scores of the each statement regarding the levels of importance and levels of satisfaction are presented in Table V. It was found that all the attributes' mean scores were above 3.0 on a 5- point scale with response ranging from 1 to 5. It was found that 'the high degree/level of hygiene of food' (4.53), 'cleanness of room' (4.46), 'quietness of room' (4.47), 'security of room' (4.49), and 'high quality food in restaurant(s)' (4.26) had the highest means scores in terms of level of importance. 'reasonable room rate/value for money' (4.07) and 'cleanness of room' (3.87) had the highest mean scores in terms of satisfaction level. The mean score of overall level of importance was 4.16. The mean score of satisfaction level was 3.94 and that of return intention was 3.91 (Table VI).

TABLE V

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANCE LEVELS AND THEIR

LEVELS OF SATISFACTION REGARDING HOTEL SERVICES IN THE SSEZ

Variable	N	Mean (Level of Importance)	Std. Deviation	Mean (Satisfaction)	Std. Deviation
Professionalism of staff	152	3.94	.930	3.52	.935
Special attention given by staff	152	3.34	1.091	3.44	.904
Friendliness and courtesy of staff	152	4.08	.932	3.71	1.021
Efficiency of operation staff	152	4.03	.963	3.53	1.042
Staff understand your requests	152	3.84	.957	3.68	1.014
Available of staff to provide service	152	3.78	.957	3.64	.973
Responsiveness to complaints	152	4.00	1.016	3.40	1.044
Variety of services offered	152	3.54	.976	3.56	.968
Reservation system is reliable	152	4.05	.882	3.82	.973
Quick check-in and check-out	152	4.17	.852	3.70	1.085
Safe box is available	152	3.48	1.061	3.61	1.086
Information desk is available	152	3.78	1.079	3.62	.990
Cleanness of room	152	4.46	.805	3.87	.965
Quietness of room	152	4.47	.754	3.74	1.007
Security of room	152	4.49	.755	3.76	.977
Reasonable room rate/value for money	152	4.17	.890	4.07	.981
Attractive decor, furnishings of room/lobby	152	3.74	.946	3.85	3.357
Reliable message and wake-up service	152	3.97	1.023	3.82	1.006
Valet/laundry service is efficient	152	3.59	1.118	3.47	1.022
The high degree/level of hygiene of food	152	4.53	.772	3.76	.851
High quality food in restaurant(s)	152	4.26	.842	3.58	.865
Elegant banquet service	152	3.70	1.086	3.54	.885

(Continued)

TABLE V (cont.)

RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION OF IMPORTANCE LEVEL AND THEIR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION REGARDING HOTEL SERVICES IN THE SSEZ

Variable	N	Mean (Level of Importance)	Std. Deviation	Mean (Satisfaction)	Std. Deviation
Opening hours of the restaurant(s)/bar(s)	152	3.86	.966	3.64	.912
Variety of choices of food	152	3.94	.944	3.46	.929
Available of room service	152	3.59	1.025	3.45	1.009
Desirable environment in restaurant(s)/bar(s)	152	3.73	1.042	3.59	1.006
Reasonable price of food/beverage/services	152	3.91	1.079	3.85	1.155
Access to and appeal of surrounding area	152	3.89	1.058	3.68	1.038
Up-to-date modern facilities	152	3.79	.881	3.45	.897
Adequacy of fire safety facilities	152	4.20	.944	3.63	1.022
Availability of year-round swimming pool	152	3.40	1.081	3.53	1.133
Availability of business center facilities	152	3.66	.927	3.57	1.014
Availability of sauna and health club	152	3.36	1.077	3.49	1.016
Availability of conference/meeting facilities	152	3.66	1.003	3.48	.983
Valid N (listwise)	152				

1) Based on a 5- point scale ranging from 1 – very unimportant to 5 - very important for variables in terms of level of importance.

2) Based on a 5- point scale ranging from 1 – very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied for variables in terms of level of satisfaction.

TABLE VI

MEAN SCORE OF OVERALL LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION, AS WELL AS RETURN INTENTION

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Overall level of importance	152	4.16	.692
Overall level of satisfaction	152	3.94	.693
Return Intention	152	3.91	.754
Valid N (listwise)	152		

1) Based on a 5- point scale ranging from 1 – very unimportant to 5 - very important in terms of level of importance.
2) Based on a 5- point scale ranging from 1 – very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied in terms of level of satisfaction.
3) Based on a 5- point scale ranging from 1 – definitely no to 5 – definitely yes in terms of intend to come back.

One-way ANOVA

The objective 1 was to find out whether there is a significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level. Hypothesis 1 postulated that there is no significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level. In order to test this hypothesis, a one–way ANOVA multiple comparison analysis of rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level was conducted. The Tukey Post Hoc Test was used to examine all possible multiple comparisons of group means. The results were listed in Table VII.

TABLE VII

RESULT OF ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.114	4	1.028	2.158	.077
Within Groups	67.201	141	.477		
Total	71.315	145			

It was indicated that there was no significant overall satisfaction difference among rate of hotels (F= 2.158, Sig.= .077). Hypothesis 1 cannot be rejected. The Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level was not associated with the rate of hotel they stayed.

Objective 2 of this study was to find out the underlying dimensions of Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area. To achieve this, factor analysis was employed to reduce the 34 attributes regarding Hong Kong travelers' levels of satisfaction into a set of new composite dimensions with a minimum loss of information. The factor analysis in this study was used for two purposes: 1) to obtain a relatively smaller number of variables that explain most of the variations among the service attributes, and 2) to create correlated variable composites from the original attribute for subsequent analyses such as paired sample t-test and multiple regression analysis.

For the purpose of interpretation of factors, a loading cut-off of 0.5 was adopted in this study. Five factors with eigenvalues equal to or greater than one were extracted. These factors were labeled as 'room quality', 'staff service quality', 'facilities', 'food and beverage quality', and 'value'. The attributes not included in the dimensions were: 'safe box is available' (factor loading was .411) and 'access to and appeal of surrounding area' (factor loading was .392). The factor loadings for these attributes were below the cutting point of .50. Table VII showed the results of the process. The selected five factors represented 65.9 percent of the explained variance, which satisfied the predetermined target of 60 percent of the variance.

To test the presence of correlation among variables, Barlett's Test of Sphericity was used with the 34 perceived levels of satisfaction scores, the value of the test statistic for

sphericity was large (3615.4) and statistically significant at .000. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy of the 34 variables was .937. This value is above 0.8 and can be considered as meritorious (Kaiser, 1974). The cumulative variable was 65.9%. The communalities of the items ranged from .793 to .485 and the average communality of the variables was above .50, suggesting that the variance of the original values was reasonably explained by the common factors. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of each factor. The results showed that the alpha coefficients for the five factors were ranged from .710 to .911, which were considered acceptable as a good indication of construct reliability (Nunnally, 1978).

Table VIII revealed the results of the factor analysis

TABLE VIII

RESULTS OF FACTOR ANALYSIS

Item Statement	Factor Loading					Communality
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	
F1 – Room quality						
Security of room	.731					.708
Reliable message and wake-up service	.727					.718
Reservation system is reliable	.719					.674
Quietness of room	.707					.574
Quick check-in and check-out	.696					.648
Cleanness of room	.651					.662
Information desk is available	.546					.611
Attractive decor, furnishings of room/lobby	.533					.617
F2 – Staff service quality						
Staff understand your requests		.754				.724
Efficiency of operation staff		.712				.685
Professionalism of staff		.708				.740
Available of staff to provide service		.708				.687
Responsiveness to complaints		.659				.670
Friendliness and courtesy of staff		.653				.690
Variety of services offered		.640				.602
Special attention given by staff		.540				.598
F3- Facilities						
Availability of conference/meeting facilities			.721			.725
Adequacy of fire safety facilities			.689			.679
Availability of year-round swimming pool			.681			.650
Availability of sauna and health club			.674			.733
Up-to-date modern facilities			.624			.703
Availability of business center facilities			.620			.661

(Continued)

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TABLE VIII (Cont.)

RESULTS OF FACTOR ANALYSIS

Item Statement	Factor Loading					Communality
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	
F4 – Food and beverage quality						
Opening hours of the restaurant(s)/bar(s)				.711		.667
Available of room service				.696		.649
Elegant banquet service				.695		.617
Variety of choices of food				.659		.634
Desirable environment in restaurant(s)/bar(s)				.621		.663
Valet/laundry service is efficient				.532		.624
The high degree/level of hygiene of food				.524		.610
High quality food in restaurant(s)				.501		.640
F5 – Value						
Reasonable price of food/beverage/services					.816	.793
Reasonable room rate/value for money					.731	.706

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	
Eigenvalue	16.0	1.87	1.84	1.40	1.31	
Variance (percent)	47.1	5.5	5.4	4.1	3.8	
Cumulative variance (percent)	47.1	52.6	58.0	62.1	65.9	
Cronbach's alpha	.739	.910	.911	.905	.710	
Factor Mean	3.77	3.56	3.52	3.57	3.96	
Number of items (total= 32)	8	8	6	8	2	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

Factor 1, *room quality*, contained eight items and explained 47.1% of the variance in the data with an eigenvalue of 16.0. It carried items related to the 'security of room', 'reliable message and wake-up service', 'reservation system is reliable', 'quietness of room', 'quick check-in and check-out', 'cleanness of room', 'information desk is available', and 'attractive decor, furnishings of room/lobby'.

Factor 2 was labeled as *'staff service quality'*. This factor was loaded by eight items, explaining 5.5%of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.87. The eight items were 'staff understand your requests', 'efficiency of operation staff', 'professionalism of staff', 'available of staff to provide service', 'responsiveness to complaints', 'friendliness and courtesy of staff', 'variety of services offered' and 'special attention given by staff'.

Factor 3, the *'facilities'*, contained six items and explained 5.4% of the variance in the data with an eigenvalue of 1.84. It carried items related to 'availability of conference/meeting facilities', 'adequacy of fire safety facilities', 'availability of year-round swimming pool', 'availability of sauna and health club', up-to-date modern facilities', and 'availability of business center facilities'.

Factor 4 was labeled as *'food and beverage quality'*. This factor was loaded by eight items, explaining 4.1% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.40. The eight items were 'opening hours of the restaurant(s)/bar(s)', 'available of room service', 'elegant banquet service', 'variety of choices of food Desirable environment in restaurant(s)/bar(s)',

'valet/laundry service is efficient', 'the high degree/level of hygiene of food', and 'high quality food in restaurant(s)'.

Factor 5: *'value'*. This factor included two items: 'reasonable price of food/beverage/services', and 'reasonable room rate/value for money'. It had an eigenvalue of 1.31 and an explained variance of 3.8%.

Paired Sample T-Test

The objective 3 of this study was to evaluate differences between Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of the importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area. Hypothesis 2 postulates that there is no significant difference between Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area. In order to test this hypothesis, a paired sample t-test was applied. By comparing Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and their satisfaction levels, it is possible to determine how well the hotel services in the SSEZ meet the Hong Kong travelers' needs. The differences between Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of the importance levels and their satisfaction levels were tested in terms of 'room quality', 'staff service quality', 'facilities', 'food and beverage quality', and 'value' (See Table X). Moreover, the difference between Hong Kong travelers' overall perception of importance levels and their overall levels of satisfaction was tested (See Table IX).

TABLE IX

PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST – OVERALL

	Level of importance (Mean)	Level of satisfaction (Mean)	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Overall	4.16	3.94	2.570	.011*

TABLE X

PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST - DIMENSIONS

	Level of Importance (Mean)	Level of Satisfaction (Mean)	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Room Quality	4.14	3.77	3.396	.011*
Staff service quality	3.82	3.56	2.908	.023*
Facilities	3.68	3.53	1.374	.228
Food and beverage quality	3.90	3.56	3.602	.009*
Value	4.04	3.96	4.000	.789

* t-test 2 tailed probability > .05 which means that there is a statistically significant difference.

The results indicate that there was a significant difference between Hong Kong travelers' overall perception of importance levels and their overall satisfaction levels (p= .011). The hypothesis 2 was rejected. The overall perceived levels of importance was higher than the overall levels of satisfaction, which indicated that Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels did not meet Hong Kong perceptions of importance levels regarding the hotel services in the SSEZ. It should be noted that the negative gap between Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels and perceived importance levels did not mean that Hong Kong travelers were not satisfied. From table IV, it can be seen that the mean score of satisfaction was 3.94, which was not low at all. Moreover, the Table III also showed that 73.8% of all respondents were somewhat satisfied or very satisfied with the hotel services in the SSEZ and 68.4% of the respondents indicated that they would probably or definitely come back. The results may be explained that even though most of the Hong Kong travelers were satisfied and they considered hotel services in the SSEZ very important, they had relatively lower satisfaction levels on the corresponding service attributes. Hotels of the SSEZ still need to improve their service quality.

In terms of different dimensions, there were different results shown as follows:

There was a significant difference between Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of the importance levels and their satisfaction levels in terms of 'room quality' (p = .011), 'staff service quality' (p = .023), and 'food and beverage quality' (p = .009). The Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels were higher than the satisfaction levels, which indicated that Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels in these three dimensions did not

meet the their perceived levels of importance. The negative difference between the mean scores of levels of importance and levels of satisfaction here indicated that hotels in the SSEZ need to make more efforts in this dimension to have the performance catch up with the perceptions of the importance levels.

There was no significant difference between Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and their satisfaction levels in terms of facilities ($p = .228$) and value ($p = .789$). The result indicated that Hong Kong travelers' perceived levels of importance met the satisfaction levels. Hotels in the SSEZ performed relatively well in these facets. In other words, Hong Kong travelers may consider the hotel service of 'facility' important and they may feel satisfied at the same time. They may also consider that the 'value' of hotel services in the SSEZ was reasonable.

Determinants of Overall Satisfaction Level of Hong Kong Travelers

The objective 4 of this study was to identify the relative importance of each underlying dimension. Hypothesis 3 postulated that each derived Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction dimension has no different impact in contributing to the traveler' overall satisfaction. In order to test this hypothesis, regression analysis was applied (See table XI).

TABLE XI

REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULTS: DETERMINANT HOTEL DIMENSIONS OF HONG KONG TRAVELERS' OVERALL SATISFACTION (N=152)

Goodness-of-fit					
Multiple R	.605				
R^2	.367				
Adjusted R^2	.344				
Standard error	.56				
F=16.553					
Significance F= .000					
Constant	3.933				
Variables	B	Beta	Beta^2	t	Significance
Staff service quality (F2)	.302	.435	.189	6.542	.000
Food and beverage quality (F4)	.217	.313	.098	4.700	.000
Value (F5)	.140	.209	.044	3.139	.002
Room quality (F1)	.111	.160	.026	2.409	.017
Facilities (F3)	6.897E-02	.099		1.493	.138*

❖ *Dependent variables: Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction with services and facilities provided by hotels in SSEZ area.*

❖ *Independent variables: five orthogonal factors representing the components of perceived quality of services and facilities.*

The multiple correlation coefficient (R), coefficient of determination (R^2) and F- ratio were examined to predict the goodness-of –fit of the regression model for Hong Kong travelers. The correlation coefficient of the five independent variables on dependent variable was .605, indicating that the perception dimensions were adequate in predicting Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction of the hotel services in the SSEZ area. The coefficient of determination was .367. This indicated that about 36.7% of the variation in overall satisfaction was explained by the variables. The F-ratio of 16.553 was significant ($p= .000$), indicating that the results of the regression model could hardly have occurred by chance. As measured by R, R square, and F-ratio, the regression model was considered to have achieved a satisfactory level of goodness-of-fit in predicting the variance of Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction. Research failed to reject the Hypothesis two. It meant that at least one of the five hotel factors was important in contributing to Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction.

In this regression model, four factors emerged as significant ($p< .005$) independent variables (See table X). The four factors were 'staff service quality', 'food and beverage quality', 'value', and 'room quality'. The t-values of these four independent variables were shown to be significant ($p< .05$). Four variables were retained in the model.

The model was written as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = 3.933 + 0.302X_2 + 0.217X_4 + 0.140X_5 + 0.111X_1$$

Where,

$\hat{Y}$ Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction levels;

X_2 Factor 2 - Staff service quality;

X_4 Factor 4 - Food and beverage quality;

X_5 Factor 5 – Value;

X_1 Factor 1 - Room Quality.

The model showed that four coefficients carried positive signs, indicating that there was a positive relationship between those independent variables and dependent variables - overall satisfaction. The result indicated that Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction depended largely on these four variables. The four variables were the determinant factors or the best predictors of Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction.

Of the four hotel factors, factor 2 - staff service quality (beta = .435), carried the heaviest weight in explaining Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction, followed by factor 4 - food and beverage quality (beta = .313), factor 5 – value (beta = .209), and factor 1- room quality (beta = .160). The "staff service quality' was the most important determinant of Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction, followed by 'food and beverage quality', 'value', and 'room quality'.

Discussion

In general, most of the Hong Kong travelers in these three hotels were satisfied with hotel services of the SSEZ. This is consistent with the result of survey conducted by Shenzhen Statistic Bureau in 1994 (Li, 1995), which showed that most of the international travelers (49.1% being Hong Kong or Macao travelers) were satisfied with hotel services of the SSEZ in terms of facilities, service attitude, food and beverage, and room quality, and value. It indicates that the hotel industry of the SSEZ has been keeping its hotel service quality and been able to make most of the Hong Kong travelers satisfied. However, the findings of negative gaps between 'level of satisfaction' and' level of importance' in terms of 'room quality', 'staff service' and 'food and beverage quality' suggest that hotels in the SSEZ should improve the service quality in these three dimensions to better meet Hong Kong travelers' needs.

In order of importance, 'staff service quality', 'food and beverage quality', 'value', and 'room quality' were the most influential factors in determining Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction levels. The factors of 'staff service quality', 'value', and 'room quality' are in the context of common attributes important for customers in evaluating hotel service quality. But the factor of "food and beverage quality' is not commonly found in the results of other researches. It indicates that Hong Kong travelers have their specific needs of hotel services in the SSEZ.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to assess Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels regarding hotel service quality in the SSEZ area. The major objectives of this study were to: 1) Find out whether there is a significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level; 2) find out the underlying dimensions of Hong Kong travelers' levels of satisfaction regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area; 3) evaluate the difference between Hong Kong travelers' perceived levels of importance and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ; and 4) identify the relative importance of each underlying dimension. This chapter is developed to provide the insights for the current study. There are three null hypotheses for this study:

H1: There is no significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level.

H2: There is no significant difference between Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area.

H3: Each derived Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction dimension has no different impact in contributing to the Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction

The questionnaire was designed with six sections. The first section asked Hong Kong travelers information regarding what kind of hotel they typically stay at, the purpose of visitation, and the frequency of visitation. The second section contained the attributes of Hong Kong travelers perceived importance levels towards hotel services in the SSEZ area, and the attributes of Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels with hotel services in the SSEZ area. Thirty-four attributes with five facets were included. The third section contained a question asking Hong Kong travelers' overall perceived levels of importance regarding hotel service in the SSEZ. The fourth section contained a question asking Hong Kong travelers the overall levels of satisfaction with hotel services in the SSEZ area. The fifth section asked the possibility that Hong Kong travelers will come back to hotels in the SSEZ area. The sixth section contained questions requesting the demographic data of the Hong Kong travelers, including gender, education, age, and occupation. A five-point Likert scale was adopted in the third section and the measurement attributes of the second section on Hong Kong travelers' perceived level of importance regarding hotel services in the SSEZ (from "1-Very low importance" to "5-Very high importance"). A five-point Likert scale was also adopted in the fourth section and the measurement attributes of the second section on Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels with hotel services in the SSEZ (from "Strongly Dissatisfied" to "Strongly Satisfied"). In the fifth section the five-point Likert scale ranged from "Definitely No" to Definitely Yes". Since some Hong

Kong travelers are unable to read English, this survey instrument was translated into Traditional Chinese. Both the English version and Tradition Chinese version were used.

A total of 162 questionnaires were returned and 152 were usable, which generated a response rate of 60.8 percent.

Summary of the Findings

Based on the results obtained in this study the following findings were indicated:

1. Most of the respondents (73.8%) were somewhat satisfied or very satisfied with the hotel services in the SSEZ.
2. Most of the Hong Kong travelers (68.4%) indicated that they would probably or definitely come back.

Objective 1: Find out whether there is a significant relationship between rate of hotel and Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level.

The Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction level was not associated with the rate of hotel they stayed.

Objective 2: To find out the underlying dimensions of Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area

Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of 34 hotel attributes were factor-analyzed by using

principal component analysis with orthogonal VARIMAX rotation. Five dimensions, representing 65.9% of the explained variance, were extracted from the original variables. The five dimensions (factors) were 'room quality', 'staff service quality', 'facilities', 'food and beverage quality', and 'value'.

Objective 3: Evaluate differences between Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and their satisfaction levels regarding hotel services in the SSEZ area.

The results indicated that there was a significant difference between Hong Kong travelers' overall perceived importance levels and the overall levels of satisfaction. It should be noted that the negative gap between Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels and perceived levels of importance did not mean that Hong Kong travelers were not satisfied. It may be explained that even though Hong Kong travelers considered the hotel services in the SSEZ very important, they had a lower satisfaction levels with it.

On one hand, there were gaps between Hong Kong travelers' perceived importance levels and levels of satisfaction in terms of "room quality', 'staff service quality' and 'food and beverage quality'. Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels in these dimensions fell below level of importance. In the other hand, there was no gap between Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of the importance levels and satisfaction levels in terms of 'facilities' and 'value'. Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels in these two aspects met the perceived level of importance, but had not exceeded it yet.

Objective 4: identify the relative importance of each underlying dimension.

Of the five hotel factors, four factors emerged as significant independent variables. The four factors were 'staff service quality', 'food and beverage quality', 'value', and 'room quality'. Factor 2 - staff service quality, carried the heaviest weight in explaining Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction, followed by factor 4 - food and beverage quality, factor 5 – value, and factor 1- room quality. The "staff service quality' was the most important determinant of Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction and followed by 'food and beverage quality', 'value', and 'room quality'.

Conclusion

Hotels in the SSEZ have been facing great opportunities and challenges after Hong Kong returned to China and China entered the WTO. Hong Kong is the most important customer resource for hotels in the SSEZ. Knowing Hong Kong travelers' needs is critical for hotels in the SSEZ to secure an advantage in tough competition. This study tried to find out whether Hong Kong travelers were satisfied and how they were satisfied with hotel services in the SSEZ. From the practical viewpoint, this study can make several important contributions to hotel industry in the SSEZ.

Based on the results of this study, it is possible to conclude that Hong Kong travelers in these three hotels were generally satisfied with the hotel services in the SSEZ. However, there were some service quality gaps between Hong Kong travelers' perceptions of importance levels and satisfaction levels regarding three main hotel factors. In order to

provide strategic direction in customer service management and better prioritization in service improvement, hotel operators should pay more attention to the sources of dissatisfaction (Heung, 2000). In this study, Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels still fell below perceived levels of importance in these three main hotel factors. Moreover, the 'staff service quality' was the most important determinant of Hong Kong travelers' overall satisfaction. It is suggested to give more attention to the attributes in these three hotel factors, especially the attributes in hotel factor of 'staff service quality', in improving hotel service quality. Using the results revealed in this study, hoteliers in the SSEZ can plan the development of staff service quality and effective marketing strategies to target Hong Kong travelers, satisfying them and then developing customer loyalty for the SSEZ hotels' services and facilities.

Limitations

The limitations of this study were that:

1. The respondents were sampled only from those three hotels by convenient sampling. There is a limitation for the generalization of the result.

2. The survey was conducted at only three specific hotels, which agreed to participate in the survey since they were more interested in the service quality improvement. The Hong Kong guests stayed in these hotels may have different perception or satisfaction levels from those in other hotels.

3. The survey was conducted in the month of April, thus those who visit the SSEZ area in other months were not included in the sample. The perception or satisfaction level in this period may be different from that in other periods.

4. The sample size of 152 was relatively small. It might not fully reflect the entire population.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions and limitations of this study the following recommendations are suggested:

There is a limitation for the generation of the results due to the non-random sampling adopted in this study. It is suggested that the findings may be more significant by using random sampling in the future studies.

The similar survey can be utilized periodically by hoteliers in the SSEZ area to measure whether customers are satisfied and how the customers are satisfied with the hotel services, so that hoteliers can continuously improve service quality based on the results. The method employed in this study can be used widely by each specific hotel to find out the satisfaction level of the their customers.

The similar research can be broadened to the whole hotel industry in Pearl River Delta or even Mainland China. The subject also can be broadened to the international or domestic visitors.

Further research is needed to assess other aspects of Hong Kong travelers' experience such as theme park services, shopping services, and restaurant services.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 4/10/03

Date: Thursday, April 11, 2002   IRB Application No   HE0244

Proposal Title: A STUDY OF HONG KONG TRAVELERS' SATISFACTION LEVELS WITH HOTEL
SERVICIES IN SHENZHEN SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE OF CHINA

Principal
Investigator(s):

Zhen Xu   Jeff Beck
28 N. University Pl #10   210 HESW
Stillwater, OK 74075   Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt   .

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the
expiration date Indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals
who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a
manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol
   must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year.
   This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are
   unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB
procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to
the IRB, in 203 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

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APPENDIX B

THE MEMO TO HOTEL MANAGERS

<u>Memo</u>

<div align="center">Conducting the Hong Kong Guest Survey</div>

To: Hotel Managers
From: Mr. Zhen Xu
Date: February 26, 2002

<u>Instructions for Distributing the Survey Questionnaire</u>

1. Description of the survey questionnaire:

The questionnaire includes seven sections:
Section 1: Contains purpose and instruction of the survey. The participants will be assured of the confidentiality of their response.
Section 2: Asks Hong Kong travelers their basic information in terms of what kind of hotel they typically stay at, the purpose of visit, and the frequency of visit.
Section 3: Contains the measurement attributes on Hong Kong travelers' opinions towards hotel services in Shenzhen, and the measurement attributes on Hong Kong travelers' satisfaction levels with hotel services in Shenzhen.
Section 4: Asks Hong Kong travelers the overall importance levels of hotel services in Shenzhen.
Section 5: Asks Hong Kong travelers the overall levels of satisfaction with hotel services in Shenzhen.
Section 6: Asks the possibility that Hong Kong travelers will come back to hotels in Shenzhen.
Section 7: contains the demographic data of the Hong Kong travelers.

Please read the questionnaire before it is distributed to Honk Kong guests. If you don't understand a question, please email Zhen Xu at xu_forest@yahoo.com. Thank you.

2. Selecting respondents:

Respondents should be:
❑ Hong Kong guests staying in your hotel,
❑ Aged 18 years old or over.

3. Procedure:

1) Distribution of Questionnaire:

Questionnaire should be distributed to the respondents towards the end of their staying in your hotel. For example, when Hong Kong guests are checking out at the lobby, questionnaire can be distributed.

2) Collecting of Questionnaire:

Request respondents to complete the questionnaire before they leave your hotel.

3) Answering questions from respondents about the questionnaire.

- ❑ How long does it take to complete the questionnaire? *About 5-10 minutes.*
- ❑ Do I need to write my name on the questionnaire? *No.*
- ❑ Do I have to answer all the questions? *Yes.*
- ❑ For each item, can I mark more than one number? *No.*
- ❑ What do I do if I cannot make up my mind as to which choice to mark? *Since your opinion is very important to this study, please do not leave it blank and just try to make a choice which you think may best describe your opinion. There is no right or wrong answer.*

If you still have any question regarding this questionnaire, please contact me via email xu_forest@yahoo.com.

Thank you very much for your corporation!

Zhen Xu
Graduate Student
School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration
Oklahoma State University

APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTION LETTER

The Survey of Hong Kong Travelers' Satisfaction Levels with Hotel Services in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone of China

Dear customer:

This questionnaire will take you approximately five minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated. Your answer will be of great value to our study. The purpose of this study is to access Hong Kong travelers' attitudes to hotel services in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone in order to improve the service quality of hotels in this area. Your responses and comments will help the hotels in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone serve you better.

Your responses will be kept anonymous and completely confidential, and your participation in this study is strictly voluntary.

Instructions:

- You do not need to write your name on the questionnaire. After the results are tabulated, your survey will be completely destroyed. It will be impossible to identify any of the individual results.

- Please mark the box that most accurately reflects your opinion. After you complete this questionnaire, please return it to the staffs. Please complete the questionnaire only one time.

- Even though some of the questions may seem difficult to answer, we encourage you to try to make a choice which you think may best describe your opinion. There is no right or wrong answer.

Thank you for your input!

Zhen Xu   The Pavilion Hotel
Researcher

Note:

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please contact Zhen Xu via email at xu_forest@yahoo.com or Professor Jeff Beck at beckja@okstate.edu.

This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Oklahoma State University. Contact Sharon Bacher at 001-405-744-5700 for more information.

The Survey of Hong Kong Travelers' Satisfaction Levels with Hotel Services in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone of China

Dear customer:

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- Please mark the box that most accurately reflects your opinion. After you complete this questionnaire, please return it to the staffs. Please complete the questionnaire only one time.

- Even though some of the questions may seem difficult to answer, we encourage you to try to make a choice which you think may best describe your opinion. There is no right or wrong answer.

Thank you for your input!

   Zhen Xu   Shenzhen Bay Hotel
   Researcher

Note:

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please contact Zhen Xu via email at xu_forest@yahoo.com or Professor Jeff Beck at beckja@okstate.edu.

This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Oklahoma State University. Contact Sharon Bacher at 001-405-744-5700 for more information.

The Survey of Hong Kong Travelers' Satisfaction Levels with Hotel Services in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone of China

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- You do not need to write your name on the questionnaire. After the results are tabulated, your survey will be completely destroyed. It will be impossible to identify any of the individual results.

- Please mark the box that most accurately reflects your opinion. After you complete this questionnaire, please return it to the staffs. Please complete the questionnaire only one time.

- Even though some of the questions may seem difficult to answer, we encourage you to try to make a choice which you think may best describe your opinion. There is no right or wrong answer.

Thank you for your input!

   Zhen Xu   Xili Lake Resort
   Researcher

Note:

      If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please contact Zhen Xu via email at xu_forest@yahoo.com or Professor Jeff Beck at beckja@okstate.edu.

      This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Oklahoma State University. Contact Sharon Bacher at 001-405-744-5700 for more information.

顧 客 滿 意 程 度 調 查 表

親 愛 的 顧 客：

這份顧客調查表需要您大約五分鐘填寫。非常感謝您抽出寶貴的時間參加此次問卷調查。您的意見對我們的調查意義深遠。此次調查的目的是為了讓我們更好的了解您對深圳經濟特區酒店服務的滿意程度。調查表將幫助我們更清楚您的需要，以便今後更好的提高我們的服務質量，為您提供更加優質的服務。

您的任何意見都將絕對保密。您的參加純屬自願！

填寫事項：

- 您無需在調查表中署名，當我們將您的意見總結歸類後，我們會銷毀所有的調查表。
- 請在調查表中相應方框中打勾。當您完成該調查表後，請將完成的表格交還給我們的服務人員。
- 儘管調查表中一些問題可能看起來不易回答，我們仍希望您儘量回答。調查表中的問題沒有對錯之分。

謝謝您的合作！

徐震　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　聖廷苑酒店

注：如果您有任何問題，請與作者聯係，電子郵件：xu_forest@yahoo.com　或 Jeff Beck 教授，電子郵件：beckja@okstate.edu

此研究已經俄克拉荷馬州立大學學術評審委員會審批。若您想得到更多該調查表的詳細資料，請與 Sharon Bacher 聯係，電話：001-405-744-5700

顧 客 滿 意 程 度 調 查 表

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- 儘管調查表中一些問題可能看起來不易回答，我們仍希望您儘量回答。調查表中的問題沒有對錯之分。

謝謝您的合作！

徐震　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　深圳灣大酒店

注：如果您有任何問題，請與作者聯係，電子郵件：xu_forest@yahoo.com 或 Jeff Beck 教授，電子郵件：beckja@okstate.edu

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顧客滿意程度調查表

親愛的顧客：

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謝謝您的合作！

徐震   西麗湖度假村

注：如果您有任何問題，請與作者聯係，電子郵件：xu_forest@yahoo.com 或 Jeff Beck 教授，電子郵件：beckja@okstate.edu

此研究已經俄克拉荷馬州立大學學術評審委員會審批。若您想得到更多該調查表的詳細資料，請與 Sharon Bacher 聯係，電話：001-405-744-5700

APPENDIX E

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Please tell us about yourself: (**Circle one box for each question**)

1. When you stay in Shenzhen, what "Star" hotel do you typically stay at?

1- star hotel	☐	4- star hotel	☐
2- star hotel	☐	5- star hotel	☐
3- star hotel	☐	Others _____	☐

2. Frequency of visit: First time ☐   More than one time ☐

3. Purpose of visit:

Business	☐	Visiting friends/relatives	☐
Shopping	☐	Conference /Convention	☐
Leisure	☐	_____Others	☐

II. Please circle the number, which indicates the <u>level of importance</u> of following aspects in terms of hotel services in Shenzhen hotels. Then please circle the number, which indicates your <u>level of satisfaction</u> with the following aspects related to the service quality of hotels in Shenzhen.

	Very Unimportant				Very Important	Very Dissatisfied				Very Satisfied
Services										
Professionalism of staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Special attention given by staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Friendliness and courtesy of staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Efficiency of operation staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Staff understand your requests	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Available of staff to provide service	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Responsiveness to complaints	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of services offered	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Front Desk										
Reservation system is reliable	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Quick check-in and check-out	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Safe box is available	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Information desk is available	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Room Division										
Cleanness of room	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Quietness of room	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Security of room	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Reasonable room rate/ value for money	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Attractive décor, furnishings of room/lobby	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Reliable message and wake-up service	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Valet/laundry service is efficient	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Food and Beverage Division										
The high degree/level of hygiene of food	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
High quality food in restaurant(s)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Elegant banquet service	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Opening hours of the restaurant(s)/bar(s)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of choices of food	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Available of room service	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Desirable environment in	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Restaurant(s)/ bar(s)

Reasonable price of food/ beverage/ services	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5

Facilities

Access to and appeal of surrounding area	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Up-to-date modern facilities	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Adequacy of fire safety facilities	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Availability of year-round swimming pool	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Availability of business center facilities	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Availability of sauna and health club	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Availability of conference /meeting facilities	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5

III. _Overall_, how do you rate the level of importance of hotel services in Shenzhen hotels?

Very Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Very Important
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

IV. _Overall_, how do you indicate your level of satisfaction with hotel services in Shenzhen?

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

V. _Please indicate the degree to which you intend to come back to hotels Shenzhen._

Definitely No	Probably No	Neutral	Probably Yes	Definitely Yes
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

VI. _Please give some information about yourself._

1. Gender Female ☐ Male ☐

2. Occupation:
Government official ☐ Management ☐
Salaried employee ☐ Hourly employee ☐
Self employed ☐ Student ☐
Retired ☐ _____Other ☐

3. Age
20 years old or below ☐ 41-50 years old ☐
21-30 years old ☐ 51-60 years old ☐
31-40 years old ☐ 61 years old or above ☐

4. Education
High school or less ☐ Greater than college ☐
College ☐

Thank you very much!

I.   請告訴我們您的基本情況：

1. 您平時入住哪種類型的酒店？

一星級	☐	四星級	☐
二星級	☐	五星級	☐
三星級	☐	其它＿＿＿＿＿＿	☐

2.   您到訪的次數：　　　第一次 ☐　　　　　　多次 ☐

3.   旅游的目的：

商務	☐	探訪親友	☐
購物	☐	會議	☐
娛樂	☐	＿＿＿＿＿＿＿其它	☐

II. 您認為深圳地區酒店為您提供的以下服務項目重要嗎？請標出您認為它們在您入住期間對您的*重要程度*。之後, 標出深圳地區酒店為您提供的以下服務項目的*滿意程度*。

	非常 不重要	＿＿＿			非常 重要	非常 不滿意	＿＿＿			非常 滿意
服務										
服務人員專業程度	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
服務人員給予特殊的照顧	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
服務人員友好，誠懇	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
服務人員工作效率高	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
服務人員能理解您的需求	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
有足夠的服務人員	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
酒店對顧客投訴的處理	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
多元化的服務	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
前臺										
可靠的訂房系統	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
入住登記，退房快速	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
提供保險箱	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
提供問詢服務	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
客房										
房間整潔，舒適	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
房間安靜	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
房間安全	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
房間價錢合理	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
房間/大堂裝修吸引人	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
留言和叫醒服務可靠	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
洗衣服務有效率	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
餐飲										
食物干淨	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
餐廳食物質素高	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
高質素的讌會服務	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
餐飲部的營業時間合理	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
多樣的食物種類	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
提供送餐服務	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

餐廳/酒吧環境怡人	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
食物/酒水價錢合理	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
酒店設施											
酒店位置優越，交通便利	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
酒店服務設備先進	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
安全設施齊備	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
酒店有游泳池(全年開放)	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
酒店有商務中心	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
酒店有桑拿和健康中心	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
會議設施齊備	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5

III. *從整體來看，您認為以上深圳地區酒店服務項目的重要性。*

非常 <u>不重要</u>	比較 <u>不重要</u>	即不重要， <u>也不不重要</u>	<u>比較</u> <u>重要</u>	非常 <u>重要</u>
□	□	□	□	□

IV. *從整體來看，您對深圳地區酒店服務質量的滿意程度。*

非常 <u>不滿意</u>	比較 <u>不滿意</u>	即不滿意， <u>也不不滿意</u>	比較 <u>滿意</u>	非常 <u>滿意</u>
□	□	□	□	□

V. *您覺的您會再次入住深圳地區酒店嗎？*

<u>絕對不會再來</u>	<u>可能不會再來</u>	<u>不確定</u>	<u>可能會再來</u>	<u>一定會再來</u>
□	□	□	□	□

VI. *請提供您的個人資料：*

1. 性別 　　　　　　　　　　　　　女 □　　　　　　　　　　　　男 □

2. 職業：
   - 政府官員 □　　　　管理人員 □
   - 受薪工人 □　　　　時薪工人 □
   - 自僱 □　　　　　　學生 □
   - 退休 □　　　_____其它 □

3. 年齡：
   - 20 歲或以下 □　　　41-50 歲 □
   - 21-30 歲 □　　　　51-60 歲 □
   - 31-40 歲 □　　　61 歲或以上 □

4. 教育：
   - 預科或以下 □　　　　大學以上 □
   - 大學或大專 □

多謝您的合作！

VITA 2

Zhen Xu

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: A STUDY OF HONG KONG TRAVELERS' SATISFACTION LEVELS WITH HOTEL SERVICES IN SHENZHEN SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE OF CHINA

Major Field: Hospitality Administration

Biographical:

   Personal data: Born on August 3, 1974 in Xingjing, P. R. China.

   Education: Graduation from High School of in June1992. Received Bachelor of Science Degree in Tourism and Hotel Management from Zhongshan University in June 1996. Completed the requirement for the Master of Science degree with a major in Hospitality Administration at Oklahoma State University in August 2002.

   Experience: Employed as a Bar Tender and Receptionist at Paradise Hill Hotel, Zhuhai China in 1996. Employed as an Assistant Manager and manager of Administration Department at Financial Training Center of People's Bank of China, Shenzhen China, from 1997 to 2000. Employed as a Research Assistant for School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration at Oklahoma State University from 2000 to 2002.