PREFACE

In the present era, every business firm including hotels are witnessing intense competition. To stay ahead in such a competition, most of their activities are based on prevailing and changing tastes of existing and potential customers with respect to their products. In other words, they are emphasizing on satisfying their customers (guests in case of hotels). However, simply satisfying customers is not enough in such cases. In fact, they have to win loyalty of their customers. One of the most promising paths for attaining it is through customer delight. This may be attainable by offering attractive additional features along with the basic product in any firm. Customer delight basically involves providing additional unexpected benefits along with the core product to any customer leaving him/her pleasantly surprised with excitement, positive feelings and happiness. This is as per the works of various scholars including Crotts and Magnini, and Crotts, Pan and Raschid.

The concept of customer delight is significant in the field of marketing. Marketing is the process of planning and innovating any product and formulating policies related to its pricing, promotion and delivery to the target market. Marketing essentially helps to arrive at a proper balance between the needs of a firm (including hotels) and its target customers (guests in case of hotels). Customer delight can play an important role in this regard by creating a healthy relationship with customers. This may result in loyal customers. In fact, customer delight is very essential in the hospitality industry in which hotels are a major segment. Customer delight, in case of hotels, enables them to gain loyal guests. This can immensely help in greater profitability and survivality of such hotels in the long run. This study, therefore, emphasizes on empirically establishing the presence of the sequence leading to customer delight in the hospitality industry particularly in hotels. Such an attempt may enable hotels to clearly understand the concept of customer delight. Besides, this will also help in establishing the role of different variables in creating customer delight in the hotels. Besides, this study has also aimed at the determination of the role of common hospitality parameters in constituting customer delight in the hospitality industry. This may help in finding out the main common hospitality parameters that may result in delighting experience for the guests in hotels. Proper
understanding of such parameters would, additionally, help hotels in arriving at greater understanding regarding the concept of customer delight.

As noted earlier, customer delight normally involves providing additional unanticipated benefits along with the basic product in any firm or hotel. However, with the passage of time, these delighter features may get assimilated with the satisfier features of any product. Thereafter, with every successive purchase, customers tend to expect the earlier delighter features. This may seriously affect the profitability of the firm in future through incremental costs. So, this research work also seeks to determine suitable strategies for management of customer delight in the hospitality industry particularly hotels. Such management of customer delight may be possible through its staggered delivery by means of reenacted delight and transitory delight. This study endeavours to determine suitable strategies for this purpose. Such strategies may help hotels in managing customer delight without affecting their profitability and survival. Besides, management of customer delight in hotels may also be possible through its continuous delivery. This may be achievable by means of skilled and well trained hotel employees involving reenacted delight and transitory delight. Therefore, this study also strives to determine appropriate strategies for this purpose. Such strategies may aid hotels in delighting guests on a continuous basis without affecting their profitability and sustenance. Proper emphasis on formulation and implementation of these strategies for maintaining customer delight may actually help hotels in maintaining loyal guests in the near future.

The findings of this study may immensely help in gaining greater insight into the concept of customer delight in the hospitality industry (mainly in hotels). Adequate focus on these findings may enable these hotels to gain loyal guests. Thereby, these hotels may stay ahead in the present competitive business scenario. This will be a boon for such hotels in the future.

I would also like to declare here that I have personally gone through the materials mentioned in the Bibliography.

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