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## Gender Differences among Hotel Guest towards Dissatisfaction with Hotel Services in Kuala Lumpur

Mohammad Zaim Mohd Salleh<sup>a\*</sup>, Aini Mat Said<sup>b</sup>, Elistina Abu Bakar<sup>a</sup>, Ainunnazlee Mohd Ali<sup>a</sup>, Ibrahim Zakaria<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 42300 Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

<sup>b</sup>Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43300 Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

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### Abstract

Delivering a quality service to consumer is one of the important goals of every organization because it will lead to consumer loyalty. However if a service failure occur finding the source of the dissatisfaction is important in order for the service provider to make improvement or remedy. This study aims to identify the gender differences between male and female in dissatisfaction towards hotel services in Kuala Lumpur. Total of 400 respondents were selected from 20 hotels located in Kuala Lumpur. The respondents' selection was based on those who have encountered any dissatisfaction with the hotel that they stayed. They consisted of 54.5 percent female with an average age of 29.9 years old and majority of the respondents had tertiary education level. The result indicates that demographically, male reports greater dissatisfaction than female.

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### 1. Introduction

The aim of every company is to satisfy their customers and to gain profit thus delivering a quality service is very important. Quality services usually lead to satisfaction. The result of increasing competition in hospitality industry

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\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +603-32585131; fax: +603-32585000.  
E-mail address: [zaim3085@puncakalam.uitm.edu.my](mailto:zaim3085@puncakalam.uitm.edu.my)

nowadays has made the understanding and satisfying their guest important to business (Li, 2010). Meanwhile hotels performance and competitiveness usually are depending on their ability to satisfy their customer effectively and efficiently (Heung and Xie, 2012). The reason for this is because service industries are currently facing the pressure to develop and maintaining their current customers (Lin, 2010). The impact of consumer satisfaction and quality perception on long-term performance of service firms is supported not only by theory but also by empirical studies (Duque and Lado, 2010).

Although zero defect is the desired objective for most firms, it is impossible for the organization to achieve the goal as the service industry where the multi-dimensional nature of the service encounter create an environment where service failure is inevitable (Mueller et al., 2003). Service failures are critical incidents in consumer experience. Therefore, when there was a service failure, this can lead to dissatisfaction. Colgate and Norris (2001) added, the service failure was the problem that a consumer has with a service. Weiner (2000) mentioned that, the level of dissatisfaction was likely to be higher if the guest encounter the service failure and did not see any effort made by the service provider in performing the recovery.

Therefore, consumer dissatisfaction has been a significant interest to both academician and business worlds (Velazquez, Saura and Contri, 2007). Consumers become dissatisfied because they experience product or service performance below the expectation (Oliver, 1997). In Malaysia, tourism has become one of the important contributors to the economy (Jamaluddin, 2009). According to the Ninth Malaysia Plan (Malaysia, 2006), tourism is the second largest source of income in Malaysia after manufacturing through foreign exchange. Hotels and accommodation facilities are very important in promoting the tourist destination. According to Awang, Ishak, Radzi dan Taha (2008), hotel sector is one of the contributors towards the national economy in expanding both domestic and inbound tourism. Kuala Lumpur is one of the tourist destinations in Malaysia as it is the capital city of Malaysia. In the year 2011, a number of 3,760,375 domestic guests stayed at the hotel in Kuala Lumpur while in 2010 with 3,729,245 guests (Tourism Malaysia, 2011). Therefore this study aims to identify the difference between male and female in dissatisfaction.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Dissatisfaction**

Dissatisfaction can be defined as the disconfirmation of service expectation caused by the service failure (Michel, 2001). Consumer becomes dissatisfied when they experience product or service performance below expectation (Oliver, 1997). The expectations are determined by factors such as advertising, prior experience, personal needs, word-of-mouth and the image of service provider (Michel, 2001). Hotels provide services that are perceived in different ways by different people and people develop expectation of services that may not always match with what they received resulting in customer dissatisfaction and potential complaint (Ngai, Heung, Wong and Chan, 2007). Most of the literature today on consumerism is focusing on achieving the consumer satisfaction (Velazques et al, 2010). However, it is important that to understand the other side of the satisfaction which is dissatisfaction and its consequences. Literature review on consumer dissatisfaction has received significant interest during the consumerism movement in 1960's and 1970's (Lundstrom and White, 2006). During this year of the movement, the view on consumerism is as the rights of the consumer to safety, to be informed, chooses and be heard. When the consumer rights were violated therefore it will lead to dissatisfaction (Day and Aaker, 1970). Velazques et al, (2010) also mentioned that, although there is a growing attention on the dissatisfaction literature, the consumer satisfaction however still has the positive judgment and thus is more extensive.

Boote (1998) stated that there are at least six possible theoretical approaches to dissatisfaction: disconfirmation of expectation, attribution, equity, experience based norm, perceived performance to an ideal, comparison based on promises, and non-cognitive, affective approach. Boote (1998) also stated that from the theories stated above, the three most widely discuss theory especially in complaint behavior literature are disconfirmation of expectation, attribution and equity. Disconfirmation of expectation is the most widely accepted theory on consumer dissatisfaction (Boote, 1998). Homburg and Giering (2001) mentioned that, the consumer defined their satisfaction and dissatisfaction based on post-purchase evaluative judgment concerning the specific buying decision. Oliver

(1980) stated, according to the paradigm of confirmation-disconfirmation, the consumer basically assess their level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction by comparing the actual experiences and their previous experiences, expectation and the perceptions of the products or services performance. Carev (2008) mentioned that this theory suggest three outcome which were possible (1) Confirmation occurs when the performance given to the consumer matches the standard from which the consumer has set in their mind which will lead to a neutral feeling; (2) Positive disconfirmation occurs when the performance given to the consumer is greater than the standard that the consumer had in their mind which will lead to and; (3) Negative disconfirmation occurs when the performance of the service provider is less or worse than what the standard set by the consumer which will lead to dissatisfaction. This was also agreed by Patterson and Johnson (1993) which mentioned that consumer expectation are (a) confirmed when the product or services are up to the consumer expectations; (b) negatively disconfirmed when performance is not up to what the consumer expected and (c) positively disconfirmed when the performance given is greater than expected. Boote (1998) added, if the perceived quality is lower than expectation, therefore negative disconfirmation is to be the result of the cognitive state where the consumer dissatisfaction will result in affective state.

Kim et al. (2003) stated that knowing the causes and consequences of this type of consumer behavior is a key in an environment with ever increasing competition between products and types of sales outlet. According to Kim and Lynn (2007), when the service failure occurs, manager need to find the problem and rectify it before consumer leaves and this will help in not only retaining current customer but also prevents the loss of future customer because the dissatisfied customer are likely to express their dissatisfaction

In contrast towards customer dissatisfaction, Liu et al. (1997) mentioned that a central aspect of successful customer relationship management is the effective management of post-purchase satisfaction. This is because the impact of consumer satisfaction and quality perception on long-term performance of service firms is supported not only by theory but also by empirical studies (Duque and Lado, 2010). For example, the investment in improving consumer satisfaction has been demonstrated to provide superior returns to shareholders (Aksoy et al, 2008). Therefore, it is important for the marketers to find ways to improve consumer satisfaction rating (Duque et al, 2010).

## 2.2 Gender and dissatisfaction

Although there were some research that shown that gender were unrelated to customer satisfaction however, some research has shown that customer characteristic such as gender has a great impact on the level of customer satisfaction (Ibrahim Abdullah Aljasser & Bokkasam Sasidhar, 2013). Past research that has been done shown that women report greater overall satisfaction than men (Bryant & Buller, 1987; Bryant & Cha, 1996; Mittal & Kamakura, 2001). The reason for this is that women may be more experience shoppers with more skill at making attribute comparisons (Anderson, Pearo & Widener, 2008). The experience enable women to identify items that best fits their personal needs and leads to higher overall satisfaction then men (Bryant et al., 1996).

Mittal et al. (2001) added that women are less likely to tell the truth about negative experiences then men. Past research also identified that the difference in relative weights that men and women assign to the service concepts components that are often attributable to the differences in leadership style (Eagly, Makhijani and Klonsky, 1992).

Iacobucci and Ostrom (1993) mentioned that there are finding that suggest that women focus more on the interpersonal components of a service interaction. Zeithaml (1985) added, in general buying behaviour, past research has shown that women's purchases are influenced more heavily by their evaluations of personal interactions. Gilbert and Warren (1995) also stated that women's purchase behaviour is influence by the sales personnel consolations than men's purchases.

Therefore, based on the discussion regarding gender and customer satisfaction, it was found out that women will be more satisfied than men. This will lead to the idea that men are more dissatisfied than women.

## 3. Methodology

This is a cross sectional study. The number of respondents was 400 respondents. Many researchers suggest that the

first column of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table should suffice (Confidence Level = 95%, Margin of Error = 5%) and it may be used to determine the appropriate sample size for almost any study. If the exact population size is not listed, use the next highest value. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), for the highest number of population, 384 of sample size should be appropriate to generalize the results. Therefore, a total number of 400 respondents were considered sufficient for this study. Systematic sampling was used to determine the respondents for this study. Systematic sampling can be defined as every k-th name on the list was chosen to be the sample of the research (Salkind, 2006). The list of hotels in Kuala Lumpur was gathered based on the Malaysia Accommodation Directory 2010-2011 that were published by Tourism Malaysia. There were 81 hotels rated 2 star to 5 star in Kuala Lumpur. A number of 20 hotels were selected for this study. Therefore, every fourth hotels from the list were chosen. A number of 20 respondents for each hotel were selected systematically. Every third guest that came out from the hotels was chosen to be included in the finding. Before they were handed the questionnaire, the screening question was asked to them to indicate that they has any dissatisfaction with the hotel that they have stayed. If they do not have any dissatisfaction, the next third guest will be chosen. The respondents for this study were those who have experience with the hotel that they have stayed. Therefore, only those with dissatisfaction were chosen to be the respondent for this study.

#### 4. Findings

In this study, there were 54.5 percent (218) female and 45.5 percent (182) were male. The average age of the respondent is 29.90 with most of them are between 26 to 32 years old. Most of the respondents are Malay with 57.5 percent. The highest education background of the respondents was bachelor degree with 43.8 percent. Most of the respondents are working in the private sector with 51.7 percent.

Table 1: Respondent's Demographic Profile

<b>Gender</b>				
Male			182	45.5
Female			218	54.5
<b>Age (years old)</b>				
<26 years old			142	35.5
26-32 years old			143	35.8
>32 years old			115	28.7
Min=18	Max=53	Mean=29.90	Median=29	Standard Deviation=6.430
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Malay			200	57.5
Chinese			106	26.5
Indian			64	16.0
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Single			181	45.3
Married			217	54.3
Widowed/Divorced			2	0.5
<b>Highest Education Level</b>				
SPM			105	26.3
STPM			23	5.8
Diploma			52	13.0
Bachelor Degree			175	43.8
Master's Degree and PhD			45	11.3
<b>Personal Income</b>				
<RM1000			48	12.0
RM1001 – RM2000			39	9.8
RM2001 – RM3000			103	25.8
RM3001 – RM4000			165	41.3
RM4001 – RM5000			31	7.8
RM5001 – RM6000			8	2.0
RM6001 – RM7000			4	1.0
>RM7000			2	0.5
<b>Occupation Sector</b>				
Government			143	35.8
Private			207	51.7
Self Employed			50	12.6

In the areas of dissatisfaction, female report greater dissatisfaction than male. The result of the table was found out that the number of female in dissatisfaction were slightly higher than male. The reason was probably because women focus more on the interpersonal components of a service interaction (Iacobucci and Ostrom, 1993). This

was supported by Zeithaml (1985) where women’s purchases are influence more heavily by their evaluation of personal interactions.

Table 2: Areas of Dissatisfaction

	Gender			
	Male	%	Female	%
Receptionist	58	45.3	70	54.7
Lobby	35	38.0	57	62.0
Guest Room	41	36.0	73	64.0
Rest Room	47	32.9	96	67.1
Restaurant	50	47.2	56	52.8
Wi-Fi	104	55.3	84	44.7
Facility	43	43.0	57	57.0
Hotel Worker	28	25.7	81	74.3

Therefore, in order to identify whether the dependent and independent variable significant differences existed in terms of dissatisfaction among gender, Independent sample t-test was employed to test whether the significant difference exist.

Table 3: Independent Sample T-Test for Gender

Gender	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	df	p-value (2-tailed)
Gender	2.556	387.685	.011

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

From the result, there is a significant differences in consumer dissatisfaction between male and female ( $p = 0.014, <0.05$ ). Male were found out to be more dissatisfied than female. This was supported by the past research that has been done in the past has shown that women report greater overall satisfaction than men (Bryant & Cha, 1996; Mittal et al., 2001). According to Dimitriadis (2006), women also are likely to be more satisfied and committed and loyal than men. This might be because of women are less likely to tell the truth about negative experiences than men (Mittal et al., 2001).

### 5. Conclusion

The result indicated that the gender also play a significant role in determining dissatisfaction. Gender has a significant difference in consumer dissatisfaction. From the result shown on the area of dissatisfaction, there were differences between male and female in consumer dissatisfaction. In the descriptive table, it is shown that female were most dissatisfied compared to male except on the Wi-Fi services on the areas on dissatisfaction because of the number of female respondent were slightly higher than male. However, in the independent sample t-test, the result showed that there is a significant difference in consumer dissatisfaction between male and female and based on the mean score, the male were more dissatisfied than female.

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