



An Empirical Investigation on Relationship between Training Service Quality and Employee Satisfaction in Hotel Industry

Smita Sucharita Mohapatra¹, Uma Sankar Mishra^{*2} and Sitikantha Mishra³

¹ Assistant Professor, School of Hotel Management (SHM), Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism Management, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, PIN-751030, E-mail: smitamahapatra77@gmail.com

² Professor, Institute of Business and Computer Studies (IBCS), Faculty of Management Sciences, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, PIN-751030, *E-mail: connectuma123@gmail.com, umasankarmishra@soa.ac.in

³ Professor & Dean, School of Hotel Management (SHM), Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism Management, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, PIN-751030
E-mail: dean.shm@soa.ac.in

Abstract: Delivering better service quality seems to be a prerequisite for success of any service industry like hotels. It helps in identifying the areas of managerial attention for future growth of both organizations and its employees. For disposing quality service, hotel employees should be trained properly to match customers' expectations. However, the quality of such training activities should be accessed properly, so that hotel employees will have higher level of satisfaction. The current research paper is just a small attempt to investigate the possible facts showing the relationship between quality of employee training service and employee satisfaction among hotel employees. A sample of 315 hotel employees was studied through one readymade survey instrument during the year of 2017 choosing few prominent hotels of India. Employees were selected by convenience method and data were collected by personal contact approach. After making data analysis through structural equation modeling, it was found that all the dimensions of training service quality were strongly associated to the outcomes, except the employee relation aspects of employee satisfaction.

Key Words: Training Service Quality, Employee Satisfaction, Structural Equation Models, Hotel Industry, India

JEL Classification Codes: M54, C39

INTRODUCTION

Training and development is the field which is concerned with organizational activity aimed at bettering the performance of individuals and groups in organizational setting. It is a combined role often called

human resources development (HRD) meaning the development of “Human” resources to remain competitive in the marketplace. Training focuses on doing activities today to develop employees for their current jobs and development is preparing employees for future roles and responsibilities.

During the training, employees will be introduced what is the work is about, how to do, what kind of role does the job play in the whole business, it helps them to understand their work better and also love what they do by understanding the work. After systemized training, employees will understand what important role their jobs play, and with the information, knowledge and experiences obtained during the training, they will be more confident with their work, so that better services will be provided. Employees gained not only professional knowledge and skills during training, training also broadens their choices on setting career targets. They can get the opportunity to get to know other positions, increases the possibilities of promotions in the meantime. Training helps the employee become an effective problem solver. Practical experience can be taught and guided in the training; employees will learn the methods of solving problem or complaints during training. It makes the employee to become productive more quickly. By training, employees get familiar with their work tasks, advanced knowledge and techniques which improve their capabilities, increases productivity.

Training embodies different levels of human activities. On one level, training focuses on how people guide and teach one another, while on another level, training seems to include how people interact and the impact of such interactions. On an even higher level, training seems to depict how a person generates from his/her experiences a set of concepts, rules and principles in order to improve his/her own performance (Swerpersed, 2003). According to Mathefane (2007), in a successful training programme, the intervention acts not as a treatment for organisational ills, but rather as an instrument of change. The training function holds valuable intelligence regarding employees’ core skills, and an effective training intervention can move people in the right direction.

The hotel industry in India has gone a radical change in recent time. Delivering quality service to customers is of prime concern for the employees of hotels. Again, to deliver quality customer service, employees need to be satisfied in their respective work environment. Getting good and proper trainings to hotel employees may create higher level of employee satisfaction. However, the quality of employee training programmes has to be accessed on regular basis. In this context, the current research paper aims to investigate the relationship between quality of employee training service and employee satisfaction among hotel employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee training activity has a strong influence on perceived service quality. A shared understanding among employees plays an important role in enhancing perceived service quality (Yoo D.K *et al.*, 2007). In addition, customer satisfaction mediates between perceived service quality and financial performance of hotels. A rapidly changing hotel business environment has increased the speed of skill mismatch for employees (Gattiker, 1995; Fossum *et al.*, 1986). Accordingly, employees must have to receive some form of training in their job and further rely on training to improve and modify their current skills and obtain new skills (Mathieu *et al.*, 1992; Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991).

Training enables employees to clearly understand their responsibility, monitor their job performance, and adapt work routines in dynamic circumstances. Training in skill, leadership, customization, information-

sharing, and the process of development and performance management will provide better problem-solving capability and improve service quality. Although management cannot control perceived service quality directly, employee training enables them to render service quality for customers in consistent and reliable manner (Yoo D.K *et al*, 2007).

According to Presbury R, *et al.*, 2005, the four major factors creating impediments to improvements of service quality in hotel industry are budget constraints, staff attitude, high customer expectation and lack of proper mentoring. Quality has come to be recognized as a strategic tool for attaining operational efficiency and improved business performance. This is true for both the goods and services sectors. However, the problem with management of service quality is that it is not easily identifiable and measurable due to inherent characteristics of services which make them different from goods. Notwithstanding the importance of service quality, there have been methodological issues and application problems with regard to its operation. Quality in the context of service industries has been conceptualized differently.

Although researchers have studied the concept of service for decades, there is no conceptualization of service quality (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Rust & Oliver, 1994). Different researchers focused on different aspects of service quality. The most common definition views quality as the customers' perception of service excellence (Berry *et al.* 1988; and Parasuraman *et al.* 1985). The underlying meaning of this definition is that customers form the perception of service quality according to the service performance they experience in the past. Therefore, the service quality is dependent on customer's perceptions of the service.

Training in hotel industry now days found to make a link between job satisfaction and employee intention to stay (Chiang C F, *et al.* 2005). Generally it is widely acceptable by most researchers that training increases employee satisfaction and retention (Conrade & Woods, 1994; Wesley & Skip, 1999). Training is an important component of maintaining internal service quality also (Burke, 1995; Heskett, Jones, *et al.* 1994). Internal service quality in the job environment explains greatly to employee satisfaction. In this context, the following research hypothesis got formulated based on past literature survey.

H₁: *Hotel employees' perceived training service quality strongly affects their satisfaction level.*

METHODS AND DESIGN

The study was mainly based on field survey and exploratory in nature. The sources of data were mainly primary and collected through one tailor-made questionnaire. However, few secondary sources were also referred in Indian context. The data for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire from 315 hotel employees covering all parts of the country, India during the year of 2017. While choosing hotel employees, the method of convenient sampling was followed and the respondents were approached personally. Initially 500 samples were planned covering almost all the states. But, because of less accessibility to few of all states, unwillingness of the hotel management to provide data, time and budgetary constraints restricted the sample size to 315. A questionnaire for employee survey was designed keeping the broad parameters in mind, which was pre-tested before finalization. The data were collected for perceived training service quality and employee satisfaction, in a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from one indicating strongly unfavorable response category to seven indicating strongly favorable response category. The questionnaire containing all the items related to service quality (Parasuraman, A, Zeithaml, V A and Berry, L L, 1988; Chun-Fang Chiang, Ki-Joon Back, Deborah D. Canter, 2005) and employee satisfaction was developed

with minor modifications, which was used for employee survey and administered keeping the broad objectives in mind. Apart from this, some other type of data like demographic background, reasons for using the training service, etc. were collected. The data collected through measurement instrument were entered into an Excel spread sheet and then transferred to SPSS data sheet for further processing. Cross tabulations were made to understand the underlying relationships among the variable under study keeping the broad objectives in mind. Finally, for structural equation modeling purpose, Amos-17 software package was used. Structural models were developed and tested on the basis of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), after studying measurement models.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1
Employee Profile

<i>Parameters</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Age	Below 20 years	12	3.8
	20-29 years	69	21.9
	30-39 years	95	30.2
	40-49 years	94	29.8
	50 years and above	45	14.3
Education	Matriculate	43	13.7
	Intermediate	31	9.8
	Diploma	10	3.2
	Graduate	120	38.1
	Post Graduate	81	25.7
	Professional course	30	9.5
Gender	Male	228	72.4
	Female	87	27.6
Monthly Family Income	Less than Rs.10, 000	46	14.6
	Rs.10, 001 – 25, 000	92	29.2
	Rs.25, 001 –50, 000	123	39.0
	Rs.50, 001 and above	54	17.1
Experience	Less than 1year	10	3.2
	1 Year to 2 Years	30	9.5
	2 Years to 3 Years	46	14.6
	3Years to 4Years	25	7.9
	4Years to 5Years	32	10.2
	Above 5 Years	172	54.6
Type of Job	Support Service	275	87.3
	Core Managerial Service	40	12.7
Total		315	100%

The demographic backgrounds of the sample respondents in six parameters are presented in Table 1 to understand the employee profiles i.e., age, education, gender, monthly family income, experience and type of job category.

It is observed from the table 1 that young and middle aged hotel employees (between the ages 20 years of 39 years) constitute the majority of sample (52.1%). The proportion of very young population (below 20 years) is the lowest in sample (3.8%). This behaviour corroborates the general trend in the industry. Similarly, the graduate and post-graduate respondents dominate the sample (38.1% and 25.7% respectively). This observed feature may be due to urban concentration of the sample and increased willingness of educated people to participate in the survey. Again, the representation of the females (27.6%) is smaller in the sample as less number of women in developing nation like India are working and that too in hotel industry. So far the financial matters and professional job life are concerned; male members are more dominated in the trend of Indian culture. Similarly, the income groups having income between Rs. 25000 to Rs. 50000 dominate the sample (39% of sample respondents). The years of job experience distribution showed that almost 55% of total sample employees are well experienced (more than 5 years) and therefore less chance of giving ambiguous response related to their job. Most of the employees surveyed (87%) were engaged in hotel supporting service in contrast to core managerial jobs.

Further, to assess the probable relationships of perceived training service quality of hotel employees with their satisfaction level simultaneously, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to validate the formulated hypothesis (H₁). AMOS (v.4) software was employed to carry out SEM path analysis. As seen in Figure 1, there were five dimensions of perceived training service quality (PTSQ), namely, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (Parasuraman, A, Zeithaml, V A and Berry, L L, 1988), which were taken as observed variables of the construct of PTSQ. Again, for the construct employee satisfaction (ES), another five measuring items were taken as shown in Fig. 1.

Table 2 shows the output of SEM indicating a significant positive relationship of PTSQ with employee satisfaction, at 1% level. Similarly, there is also a positive relationship of HRM practices with performance. However, from SEM path diagram it was seen that the observed variable “Employee relation” of ES constructs is not highly loaded with it as its factor loading is 0.49, which is less than the standard. Hence, it was interpreted that employee relation aspect did not contribute much to employee satisfaction, so that there is no role of PTSQ on employee relation aspect.

Table 2
Structural equation model results of direct relationships

<i>Relationships between variables</i>			<i>Estimate (B)</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>C.R</i>	<i>p-level</i>
ES	←	PTSQ	0.046	0.008	5.905	0.000**

** significant at 1% level

Table 3 shows the model fit indices of SEM as found in the empirical investigation. Based on this table, (Chi-square = 106.251, DF = 34, $p < .01$); (CFI = 0.968); (RMSEA = 0.072); (NFI = 0.954); (GFI = 0.940). These model fit indices provided evidence towards the validity of the empirical model (Hair et al., 2006).

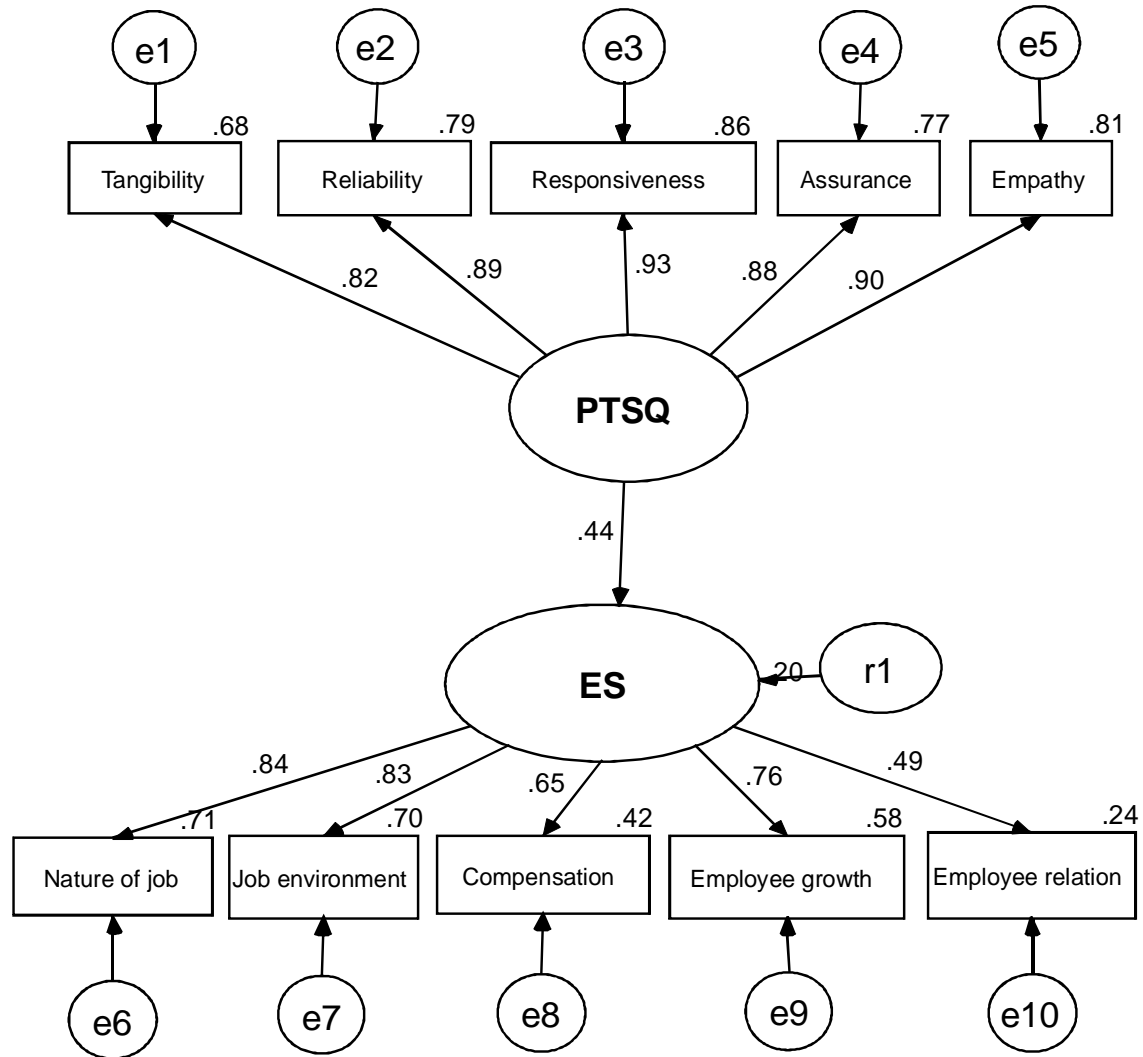


Figure 1: Structural Equation Model linking PTSQ with ES

Table 3
Fit Indices of SEM

Chi-square	106.251 (DF= 34)**
CFI	0.968
NFI	0.954
GFI	0.940
RMSEA	0.072

Note: **p < .01

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Delivering suitable employee training and achieving employees' satisfaction is at the heart of modern HR policy, which is a major concern of both top management and administration in hotel industry of India.

The derived outcome of this study may encourage hotel managers and authorities to give training a higher importance. Training quality as perceived by hotel employees is a direct antecedent or determinant of employee satisfaction, which may ultimately lead to organizational growth. The current paper could find the empirical evidence and structural equation model for all these simultaneous links showed good indices of model fit also. Both training quality and employee satisfaction should be assessed together to measure the impact of training quality on employees' happy feelings and intention to stay.

REFERENCES

- Burke, R. J. (1995). Management practices, employees' satisfaction and perceptions of quality service. *Psychological Reports* 77, pp:748-50.
- Chun-Fang Chiang, Ki-Joon Back, Deborah D. Canter (2005), "The Impact of Employee Training on Job Satisfaction and Intention to Stay in the Hotel Industry", *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, Vol. 4(2), pp: 99-118.
- Conrade, G., & Woods, R. N. (1994). Training in the U.S. lodging industry: Perception and reality. *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 35(5), pp:16-21.
- Cronin, J and Taylor, S A (1992). "Measuring Service Quality: A Re-examination and Extension," *Journal of Marketing*, 56(July), 55-67.
- Fossum, J, Arvey, R., Paradise, C. and Robbins, N. (1986), "Modeling the skills obsolescence process: a psychological/economic integration", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 1, pp: 362-74.
- Gattiker, U. (1995), "Firm and taxpayer returns from training of semiskilled employees", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp: 1152-73.
- Hair J. F., Black W. C., Babin J. and Anderson E. (2009). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Englewood Cliff, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Heskett, J. L., Jones, T. O., Loveman, G.W., Sasser, W. E., & Schlesinger, L. A. (1994). Putting the service-profit chain to work. *Harvard Business Review* 71(2), pp:164-74.
- Mathafena, R.B. (2007). "Investigating the effectiveness of the Leadership Development Intervention in changing leadership practices in Markham". *Published dissertation. Pretoria: University of South Africa*.
- Mathieu, J., Tannenbaum, S. and Salas, E. (1992), "Influences on individual and situational characteristics on measures of training effectiveness", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp: 828-47.
- Parasuraman, A, Zeithaml, V A and Berry, L L (1985). "A Conceptual Model of Service Quality and Its Implications for Future Research," *Journal of Marketing*, 49 (Fall), 41-50.
- Parasuraman, A, Zeithaml, V A and Berry, L L (1988). "SERVQUAL: A Multiple Item Scale for Measuring Consumer Perceptions of Service Quality," *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12-40.
- Presbury Rayka, Fitzgerald Anneke & Chapman Ross (2005), " Impediments to improvements in service quality in luxury hotels", *Managing service quality*, Vol 15, No 4, pp: 357-373.
- Rust, R T and Oliver, R L (1994). *Service Quality — New Directions in Theory and Practice*, Sage Publications, New York.
- Schlesinger, L. and Heskett, J. (1991), "The service-driven service company", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 69, No. 5, pp: 71-81.
- Swepers, N (2003), *Dissertation of limited scope submitted in part fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology in the University of South Africa*
- Wesley, S. R., & Skip, S. (1999). Training and its impact on organizational commitment among lodging employees. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* 23(2), pp: 176-94.
- Yoo Dong Kyoon, Park Jeong Ah (2007), "Perceived service quality analyzing relationships among employees, customers, and financial performance", *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, Vol. 24, No. 9, pp: 908-926.