



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### DETERMINANTS OF TOURIST SATISFACTION IN TANZANIA HOTELS

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#### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the determinants of tourist satisfaction in Tanzania hotels. It aimed to achieve this through a cross sectional survey of five touristic hotels in Tanzania. Thus, a sample of 140 hotel guests in Dar es Salaam was used as an investigation to test four hypothesis of quality of hotel, rooms, food and facilities leading to outcome of guest satisfaction. Using regression analysis, findings showed that quality of hotel employees and facilities are positively related to guest satisfaction. The work recommends that hotels in Tanzania must learn from this work and be aware of factors that determine tourist satisfaction.

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## INTRODUCTION

Tourist satisfaction is an important topic for both researchers and hotel managers, because a high level of tourist satisfaction leads to an increase in repeat patronage among current tourist and aids customer recruitment by enhancing an organization's market reputation (Kariru, 2014). Successfully being able to judge tourists' satisfaction levels and to apply that knowledge are critical starting points to establishing and maintaining long-term customer retention and long-term competitiveness (Henning and Klee, 1997). Conducting tourists satisfaction research is imperative not only because it provides critical managerial information, but also it enables communication with customers (Pizam and Ellis, 1999). Proper TSR is likely to produce information on service attributes that are considered important by customers, the relative importance of the attributes in customer decision making and how well an organization is currently meeting its customer needs. It will also demonstrate an organizational interest in communication with customers, which gives a sense of importance and recognition (Crompton and Love, 1995). Given the vital role of tourist satisfaction, one should not be surprised that a great deal of research has been devoted to investigate tourist satisfaction in the destination (Philemon, 2015; Okello and Yerian, 2009) and Parks (Zeinali and Jarpour 2015).

In contrast, little attention has been paid to such important tourist place like hotels, given that, hotels is an important component in the tourism industry and that tourist spend most of their time and resources in the hotel. Despite the noticeable progress achieved in the research on tourist satisfaction within service industries, what made tourist satisfied or dissatisfied is different in one industry and another. What satisfies or dissatisfies tourist in the destination is totally different from the same in parks or in hotels. For example, while Alegre and Garau (2010), found that tourists complained about overdevelopment, congestion, and the dilapidation of the environment in Spain, Akama and Kieti (2003) studied the cause for decreasing tourists to Kenya, related the decline in the number of tourists to poor transportation and political unrest. Zeinali and Jarpour (2015) investigated the determinants for Tourist Satisfaction with Ghorogh Coastal Park, the results suggest that the destination attraction and destination facilities affect destination image positively and significantly. Philemon (2015), investigate tourist satisfaction in Tanzania as destination, he found that tourists are satisfied with the tourist products consumed in Tanzania. Okello and Yerian, (2009) investigate tourist satisfaction in relation to attractions and implications for conservation in the protected areas of the Northern Circuit of Tanzania, they found that tourist attractions, and tour services were determinants of tourist satisfaction. In this few review it is concluded that, what makes tourist satisfied or dissatisfied depends upon the industry that tourist is consuming from. Again, there is paucity of research on tourists satisfaction in the area of developing countries in

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general and Tanzania in particular. Tanzania's hotels sector is part of tourism industry which continues to grow gradually year after year, after the dismal performance that followed the global financial crisis in 2009. The number of tourist arrivals increased by 24.1 percent to 1,077,058 in 2012 compared to 867,994 recorded in 2011. The arrivals increased by 4 percent from 1,095,884 in 2013 to 1,140,156 in 2014. Tourism earnings increased by 26 percent to USD 1,712.7 million in 2012 and the industry has employed over 500,000 people by 2014. Top three main source markets for Tanzania's Tourism are United States of America, Italy and the United Kingdom which contribute of 42 percent of total visitors in the country. Tourists spend an average of 10 nights consistently in 2011 and 2012 (URT, 2013, URT, 2014). The recently report published by World Economic Forum on Global Travel and Tourism Competitiveness 2015, has ranked Tanzania as 7th destination globally and 1st in Africa in natural resources.

Although there is gradually improvement of Tourism industry in Tanzania, yet its performance has been less competitive compared to some of tourism destinations in Europe, America, Asia and Africa (URT, 2012). Although Tanzania is mentioned as one top leading destination for tourist attractions in Africa, yet its performance of tourism industry is not as good as compared to some countries with less tourist attractions (MIGA, 2000). Hotel as a sub-sector of tourism has been in the complaint by the tourist for many years (URT, 2015). Tourist have mentioned their dissatisfaction with the services offered by the Tanzania hotels. However, a significant research gap exists on what would determine international tourists' satisfaction in the hotel. This paper seeks to examine these gaps by analyzing the determinants of tourist satisfaction in Tanzania hotels. The study also intends to understand the tourists' demographic features.

### Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to examine the determinants of tourist satisfaction in the Tanzania hotels. Specifically the study intended:

- To assess the impact of quality employees on tourist satisfaction in the Tanzania hotels.
- To examine the effect of quality of hotel rooms on tourist satisfaction in the Tanzania hotels
- To investigate the impact of the quality of food on tourist satisfaction in Tanzania hotels
- To assess the effect of hotel facilities on tourist satisfaction in the Tanzania hotels

### Contribution of the study

Income receipts from tourists is a vital source of income for Tanzania and directs the Tanzania economy to higher levels of growth. It is amazing how the hotel industry can generate such a major sum of profit to the country regardless of dissatisfaction on the hotel services. Hence, we suggest ways to improve the hotel services, and outline factors that determine hotel guests satisfaction so as to encourage tourists

to revisit the country. We also address some practical implications by recommending relevant satisfaction strategies.

## Literature Review

### Customer Satisfaction

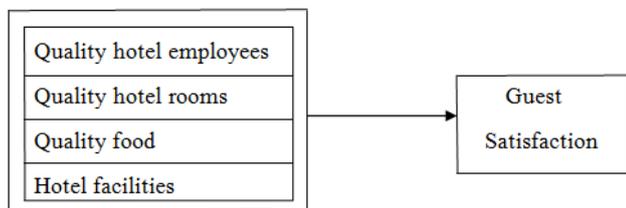
Customer satisfaction is the leading criteria for determining the quality delivered to customers through the product or service and the accompanying services (Vavra, 1997). Offering high quality service and thereby improving customer satisfaction has been identified as the most important challenge facing businesses (Barsky and Labagh, 1992). Although many scholars (Dube, Renaghan, and Miller, 1994; Kotler, 2003; Yi, 1990), have suggested various definitions of customer satisfaction, the one proposed by Oliver (1980) has been widely accepted. Customer satisfaction is an attitude or evaluation that is formed by customers comparing their pre-purchase expectations of what they would receive from a product to their subjective perceptions of the performance they actually did receive (Oliver, 1980). Measuring customer satisfaction is an integral part of the effort to improve a product or service quality, resulting in a company's competitive advantages (Cravens *et al.*, 1988; Garvin, 1991). As supported by Kandampully (2000), services are essentially an intangible experience and it is difficult for customers to evaluate the product prior to experience. Failure to pay attention to influential attributes in choice intention may result in a customer's negative evaluation, and may lead to unfavourable word-of-mouth (Chon *et al.*, 1995), and up to 60 per cent of sales to new customers can be attributed to word-of-mouth referrals (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). Hence, customer satisfaction potentially leads to purchases repetition and favourable word-of-mouth publicity.

### Determinants of Tourist Satisfaction

Given the critical role of customer satisfaction it is not surprising that a number of studies have been devoted to investigating the determinants of satisfaction. Satisfaction can be influenced by subjective (e.g. customer needs and emotions) and objective factors (e.g. product and service features). Applying this to the hospitality industry, there have been numerous studies that examine attributes that travelers find important regarding customer satisfaction. Atkinson, (1988). found out that cleanliness, security, value for money and courtesy of staff determine customer satisfaction. A survey conducted by Akan, (1995). Indicated that the primary determinants of hotel guest satisfaction are the behaviour of employees, cleanliness and timeliness. Knutson, (1998) revealed that room cleanliness and comfort, convenience and location, prompt service safety and security and friendliness of employee are important to guests. Barsky, J. and Lagagh R. (1992) stated that employee attitude, location and rooms are likely to influence travelers' satisfaction. Customer loyalty measures the degree of commitment based on obligation or consumer preferences, and degree of satisfaction. It is the tendency of a customer to choose one business or product over another for a particular need (NOVA SCOTIA, 2004). Choi and Chu, (2001), concluded that staff quality, room qualities and food are the top three hotel factors that determine travelers' satisfaction. Mei *et al.*, (1999). Found three dimensions

relating to employees (behaviour and appearance), physical facilities and reliability but the best predictor of overall service quality is the employee dimension. Therefore researcher is of the opinion that quality of hotel employees, rooms, food and hotel facilities are determinants of tourist satisfaction in Tanzania hotels context as shown in the conceptual framework.

**Conceptual Framework**



**Research Hypotheses**

- Quality of hotel employees significantly influence hotel guests satisfaction
- Quality of hotel rooms significantly influence hotel guests satisfaction
- Quality of food significantly influence hotel guests satisfaction
- Hotel facilities significantly influence hotel guests satisfaction

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study was quantitative in nature and it utilized a survey of research design. This study was conducted on five touristic hotels convenient selected in Dar es Salaam (Serena, Southern sun, Bahari beach, Giraffe and Habour view)in the year 2015. A self-administered questionnaire was developed and used to measure tourists’ satisfaction with four items in Tanzania hotels. The use of questionnaires is believed to get the most reliable responses (Hurst, 1994). The five (5) items were measured on a 5-point Likert Scale from 5= Strongly Agree to 1= Strongly Disagree. These items are Hotel employees, quality of rooms, quality of food and hotel facilities. A one item 5-point scale was used to examine respondents’ level of satisfaction. The scale was from 1= disagree to 5=strongly agree. Furthermore, the likelihood to recommend hotel to others was examined on a 5-point scale from 1=strongly disagree 5= strongly agree as adopted from Akan, (1995). Demographic information such as Age, Gender, Age, Level of Education, Occupation, Average Monthly Income, Travel party, Type of accommodation, Frequency of Visits, status of visits (fist time) and experince with the hotel brand were measured. A survey was conducted from July to October year 2015, Dar es Salaam region of Tanzania. Specifically, the survey covered 153 respondents. 148 questionnaires were collected from the field. After data cleaning, 140 questionnaires were found to be eligible for analysis. Data were analyzed using both descriptive statistics (Frequencies, Mean, and Standard Deviations) and Inferential Statistics (T-Tests). The hypothesis were tested using multiple linear. regression analysis. Before performing regression, reliability of

items were tested (see Table1), indicating the score of all items being above .06 as recommended by Nunnaly (1967).

**Table 1. Cronbach's alpha reliability test for the study items**

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
Hotel employee	4	.859
Quality of room	2	.832
Quality of food	2	.882
Physical facilities	4	.692
Satisfaction	2	.944

**Study Findings**

A sample profile indicates that out of the 140 surveyed international tourists whose the large number was in the group of 36-45 years, 51.4% were males. The finding indicates that the tourists are relatively highly educated with 69.3% having a university degree. Majority (47.1%) of the international tourists were earning between 1000-4999 USD per month with most of them being repeated the country more than three times a year (45.7%). It also indicated that most of the tourist were employed (45.7%) followed by business people (35.7%). The sample characteristics are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Sample characteristics**

Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	72	51.4
Female	68	48.6
Age		
18-25	16	11.4
26-35	39	27.9
36-45	50	35.7
46-55	21	15.0
>55	14	10.0
Level of education		
Primary school	2	1.4
Secondary school	3	2.1
Diploma	32	22.9
Graduate	97	69.3
Others	6	4.3
Occupation		
Student	12	8.6
Employed	64	45.7
Business	50	35.7
Retiree	14	10.0
Monthly Income (in US\$)		
<100	3	2.1
101-499	7	5.0
500-999	52	37.1
1000-4999	66	47.1
>5000	12	8.6
Travel frequency/year		
Once	36	25.7
Twice	23	16.4
Thrice	33	23.6
More than thrice	48	34.3
Travels in last 5 years		
Once	23	16.4
Twice	23	16.4
Thrice	30	21.4
More than thrice	64	45.7

**Model Fitness**

The F-test indicated that the model is statistically significant (see Table 3), since F calculated value is (19.681) and the

significance level is (sig = 0.000) which is smaller than the significance level approved in the research (0.05) (Field, 2014). Model interpretation ability for all predictors of satisfaction represented in R square coefficient was 0.35, indicating that 35 % of changes in tourist satisfaction level is interpreted by hotel employees, quality of room, quality of food and physical facilities. This means that as hotels increase offering quality services to tourists, leads in increase ability to satisfy tourists which also increase word of mouth recommendation, retention and profitability.

way they have been treated in friendliness, full of care and commitment by the hotel employees in which attracted their attention and made their stay more enjoyable. This study is in line with Chander *et al.*, (2016), Study they found that hotel staff were key factors on dealing with customers problems responsively and quickly. The next hypothesis 2, indicated that quality of the rooms positively influence guests satisfaction. With the different kind of food offered and the test that they have did not appear to have significance influence on guest satisfaction.

**Table 3. Model Fitness**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.607 <sup>a</sup>	.368	.350	1.51282	.368	19.681	4	135	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Hotel employee, Room quality, Physical facilities, Food quality

**Table 4. Multiple Regression Results**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.339	1.006	.306	-.338	.736
Physical facilities	.227	.062	.144	3.640	.000
Food quality	.184	.116	-.037	1.593	.113
Room quality	-.074	.161	.292	-.457	.649
Hotel employee	.203	.068	.306	2.974	.003
F value = 19.681 (Sig. .000)					
R = .607      R <sup>2</sup> = .368					

a. Dependent variable: Satisfaction

**Table 5. Summary of Hypotheses**

H <sub>1</sub> : Quality of hotel employees significantly influence hotel guests satisfaction	Supported
H <sub>2</sub> : Quality of hotel rooms significantly influence hotel guests satisfaction	Not supported
H <sub>3</sub> : Quality of food significantly influence hotel guests satisfaction	Not supported
H <sub>4</sub> : Hotel facilities significantly influence hotel guests satisfaction	Supported

## Results from Multiple Regression

The results of the multiple regression analysis that were used to test four hypotheses is presented in table 4. The results indicated that physical facilities had positive relationship and it had significant impact on tourist satisfaction (B=.227; p<.000). Also, hotel employees found having positive relationship and it had significant effect on tourist satisfaction (B= .203; p< .000) while quality of food found to have positive relationship but showed insignificant impact on tourist satisfaction (B=.184; p=.113) and quality of the room had negative relationship and insignificant impact on tourist satisfaction (B= -.074; p=.649)

## Hypotheses Discussion

The hypothesis results summarized in the Table 5 were based on the results from the guest survey. These results demonstrated that Hypothesis H1 and H4 were supported while Hypothesis H2 and H3 not supported. Regarding hypothesis H1, the study results explained previously in the text indicated quality of hotel employee's efficiently and promptly providing services to guest positively related to guest satisfaction. Furthermore good welcoming and proper treatment in the hotel is positive related to guests satisfaction. This study showed this hypothesis to be true. The reason for that is well explained with photo-elicitation. The guests were enthusiastic with the

In this study, it is particularly important to note that quality of the guestrooms was found to be not significant factor in determining guest satisfaction. One possible explanation for this is that from a customer's perspective, the guestroom, does not represents the core benefit of a hotel (temporary accommodation) for them, since they are on transit. Similarly, the study by Zeinali *et al.* (2016) reported hotel rooms to have direct effect of destination facilities on the tourist satisfaction Hypotheses 3 was, quality of food positively related to guest satisfaction. With different kind of food and taste that they have, appeared to have no significant influence on guests satisfaction. This might be due to the fact that most of the hotel guests eat from other sources other than hotels that they are in. Keeping in mind that respondents are from the hotels in Dar es Salaam, and that Dares Salaam have got many cheap places to eat, hotel guests feel free to walk around the city where they find a lot of cheap restaurant and different kind of food, which are more fresh than the ones provided by the high class hotels.

Hypothesis 4 was physical facilities has positive influence on hotel guest satisfaction. Result from the study reveal that physical facilities have significant effect on hotel guests satisfaction. Hotel guests prefer to stay in the hotels located at the beach and clean swimming pulls. It is also indicated that hotel guests were satisfied with gym facilities and enough

space for sports activities. This is so because these people have need a company after their duties while they are out of their homes, so they could use free time for doing exercises such as sports, gym and swimming. The study has confirmed the findings of Zeinali and Jarpour, (2016) which found that destination facilities is one of the determinants of tourist satisfaction in Pakistan.

### Implications

Physical facilities indicated to have most influential factor in tourist satisfaction. ( $B=.227$ ;  $p<.000$ ). This implies that tourists are generally satisfied with the quality of facilities that are provided in the hotels. However, hotel facilities that tourists were satisfied with are those that hotels do not consider to bring them into being including swimming pool, gym, and sport facilities. Borrowing from Resource based view theory, one would argue that hotels are endowed with basic factor conditions such as easy access of water, land and demographics. However, these require few or little investments. Furthermore, this finding is supported by Zeinali and Jarpour (2015) who measured tourists' satisfaction with a holiday destination and found hotel destination facilities to have significant impact on customer satisfaction. Moreover, results reported that quality of employees recorded positive effect on tourist satisfaction ( $B=.203$ ;  $p<.000$ ). Quality of hotel employees seems to be the second most influential factor in determining the overall satisfaction level. This implies that hotel employees are efficient in providing services, they are promptly in providing services, they are multilingual and have good welcoming and offer proper treatment to tourists. Similarly, Heung et al., (1996) indicated that employees are crucial to the quality of hotel services, treating employees as internal customers would enhance provision of good service to hotel customers.

### Conclusion

This study intended to examine the determinants of tourist satisfaction in Tanzania hotels. To do this the sample of 140 hotel guests from Serena, Southern sun, Bahari beach Giraffe and Harbour view were analyzed. The results indicated that most of the respondents were men (51.4%), 36-45 years of age were most of the respondents, with the monthly income ranging from 1000- 4999 USD and also repeated the country more than three times. The result from multiple regression analysis indicated that, hotel employees and physical facilities were determinants of hotel tourist satisfaction in Tanzania. Contrary, quality of food and quality of rooms found to have no significant impact on tourist satisfaction, though they have positive effect. Services in general are processes, and such customers tend to base their satisfaction with service employee not only on the outcome of the service, i.e., how the service was carried out (Gronroos, 1984). This factor measure the quality of the interactions between customers and staff in terms of the friendliness, courteousness, promptness, and efficiency of the contact. It seems that providing a high quality service is not a cost to the hotel but benefit. This variable has a strong influence on customer retention. The drive to offer a high quality service helps focus the hotel on the product, for example, by making sure things are done correctly the first

time, saving on the repetition of tasks (hence keeping cost down). It is imperative for managers in hotel industry apply an effective guest satisfaction determinants so as to make sure guest are satisfied with services which will also ensure a position on the growing global tourist market.

However, Tanzania hotel fell in the guests service offering (URT, 2014). The URT findings are supported by this study findings in that specifically, tourists were not satisfied with hotel services including room facilities like TVs, accessibility of water and electricity, cleanliness and arrangements; food quality including, hotels to have no different kind food and food which have no taste. To satisfy hotel guests, hotel managers have to devote extra efforts for human resources development. Furthermore, hoteliers should ascertain that all employees are involved in upgrading quality standards, and make them realize that a warm and cordial reception is imperative in their profession. On the other hand, proficient cooperation from employer to employees is fundamental to the provision of hospitality quality to hotel customers. Hence, in-house training programmes ought to be meticulous and improve employee courtesy, helpfulness, language skills, appearance, and check-in/check-out efficiency. Moreover, hotel industry is obliged to consider additional resources to maintain the quality of hotel rooms. Resources must be directed to improve the quality of rooms. In this regard, hoteliers need to ensure that hotels reflect their standards well, especially in designing advertisement. To satisfy customers, hotel managers should devote more effort to employees training. In-house training programmes could be arranged to improve employee courtesy, helpfulness, understandability, language skills, appearance, and check-in/check-out efficiency. Furthermore, hoteliers should ensure that all employees become involved in setting quality standards, and employees should realize that maintaining service quality is part of their job (LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1996). Hotel employees are also crucial to the quality of hotel services: treating employees as internal customers would enhance the employees' satisfaction, which is fundamental to the provision of good service to hotel customers (Heung *et al.*, 1996). Therefore, using results revealed in this study, hoteliers can plan effective marketing strategies to target their guests, satisfying them when they first visit, and then developing customer retention for Dar es Salaam hotels' services and facilities afterwards.

### Study limitations

This study has some limitations which provide opportunities for future studies. (1) This research because of being restricted to Dar es Salaam hotels, limits the generalizability of the empirical findings. (2) Using the convenience sampling approach may limit the results to the sample population. (3) Although the sample size was considered acceptable in this study (there were only 140 tourists, who participated in the complete study), a larger sample would have allowed us to run more powerful analyses. (4) This study does not differentiate the participants based on their purposes of visits. It should be noted that leisure visitors and business perhaps will have different expectation and satisfaction levels (Song and Cheung, 2010).

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