

THE IMPACT OF EMOTION, CONVENIENCE, AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS CUSTOMER LOYALTY: EVIDENCE FROM JORDANIAN FIVE STAR HOTELS

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ABSTRACT

In today's world, the hotel sector is growing at a rapid pace and is becoming a worldwide industry. With intense competition, it is important for five stars hotels to be able to retain their customers and the understanding towards factors influencing customer loyalty seems to be paramount. The study examined four major predictors of customers' loyalty namely emotion and convenience. Besides, customers' satisfaction was postulated to mediate the relationship between emotion and convenience and loyalty. A survey of 371 guests of Sheraton, Le Meridian, and Marriot in Jordan shows supports all of the hypothesized relationships in the study. The findings showed that emotion and comfort were found to be significantly linked to customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction, on the other side, was shown to have a partial mediation impact on the customer loyalty relationship between emotion and comfort. In order to pick five-star hotels in Jordan, this study added to theoretical and practical knowledge by presenting information regarding determinants of consumer loyalty. As well as recommendations for potential research, the consequences of the study and guidelines for the hotel industry in Jordan were forwarded.

Keywords: Convenience, Customer Loyalty, Customer Satisfaction, Emotion, Five Star Hotels, Jordan

INTRODUCTION

In this background, the development and establishment of products and trade units have notably increased in order to boost economic growth in countries, with the tourism business taking top priority among them in the past few decades (Ghaith, Mutia, Ahmad, Enas & Abdul, 2018; Tsang, Lee & Qu, 2015). Tourism is a significant industry that encapsulates distinct infrastructure and services and for its growth, many countries have employed educational institutions to serve the sector's profession. Behind the tourism sector's success is a range of hotels that constitutes the forefront of businesses that provide tourism services. In other words, hotels have key role in developing and expanding the tourism sector and in driving the development of the country's economy (Niewiadomski, 2015).

In reality, literature has shown customer satisfaction and loyalty as the key to market success (Van Vuuren, Roberts-Lombard & Van Tonder, 2012). In addition, customer loyalty may be differentiated from customer conduct, such as positive word-of-mouth engagement, not as price-sensitive, repurchase intent, and positive feedback provision. Such advantages received by loyal customers and their preservation are particularly significant in the sense of the hotel industry, as finding new customers is five times more expensive than maintaining an established one (Ghaith, Mohd & Aseel, 2016; Sabbeh, 2018). Therefore, customer behaviour needs to be considered in terms of the variables that affect customer satisfaction and loyalty for hotel sustainability.

The Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

In his study, the independent variables were the influence of consistency and tourist satisfaction on tourist loyalty in Korea (Tourist Expectations and Tourist Motivations), while the dependent variable was tourist loyalty and mediated tourist satisfaction (Ghaith et al., 2018; Permatasari, Murwani & Suharto, 2017). This analysis indicates that tour quality determines visitor satisfaction, which indirectly impacts tourist loyalty by reducing concerns regarding tourism.

"Customer satisfaction alone, however, does not assess loyalty and in certain situations, nearly 65 percent to 85 percent of customers who see the rivals' faults "brands are either satisfied or rather satisfied with the good or service they have left" (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990; Storbacka & Lehtinen, 2001).

H₁: Customer satisfaction is positively related to customer loyalty in Jordan

The Relationship between Emotion and Customer Loyalty

Customers' emotional states have been shown to have a positive effect on the amount of money they invest in a shop, their store's liking, and the volume of products they purchase from it (Sherman, Mathur & Smith, 1997). In the hospitality industry, there found a substantial link between fifteen types of emotions and behavioural loyalty of clients who watched a hospitality event (Gross & Pullman, 2004). Similarly, in the sense of a hotel, a significant relationship between emotions and loyalty was found (Gross & Pullman, 2004). Specifically, the authors found that emotions enhance customer motivation for a revision and their willingness to suggest the brand to others (Nash & Barsky, 2002). Emotions have been shown to play a significant role in fealty-related decision-making.

Therefore, emotions have to be included as a determination of loyalty. Also; this article includes emotions as an endogenous variable in the suggested model that is related to loyalty.

H₂: Emotion is positively related to customer satisfaction in Jordan

H₃: Emotion is positively related to customer loyalty in Jordan

The Relationship between Convenience and Customer Loyalty

With the progression of mobile technologies, travellers are now enabled to access information they need and select from a veritable array of choices. Maintaining high levels of convenience has increasingly driven brand force with the primary objective of improving customer loyalty (Jiang, Yang & Jun, 2013). It has been regarded by other studies as one of the essential facets of operation, such as precision and responsiveness (Hur, Kim & Park, 2013; Udo, Bagchi & Kirs, 2010). It is disappointing that only a few studies have performed an in-depth systematic analysis into the aspects of online shopping convenience and the products/components underlying each dimension (Almarashdeh et al., 2018; Colwell, Aung, Kanetkar & Holden, 2008).

The primary objective of optimising organisational services is to produce improved favourable customer performance with satisfaction as one of the performances (Grace & O'Cass, 2004b; Voss & Parasuraman, 1995). Several scholars have discovered a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and behavioural intentions (loyalty and repurchase intentions) (Wong, Wu & Cheng, 2015; Zboja & Voorhees, 2006), but the association between intentions and behaviour has not always been shown to be valid in previous studies (Gawronski & Payne, 2011; Westaby, 2005).

H₄: Convenience is positively related to customer satisfaction in Jordan

H₅: Convenience is positively related to customer loyalty in Jordan

The Mediating Effect of Customer Satisfaction on the Relationship between Emotion and Customer Loyalty

Strong theoretical evidence concerning positive emotion-customer satisfaction is evident (Oliver, 2014). In this regard, Lin & Liang (2011) assessed service experience and found customers drawing on their emotion state and the changes therein only to have them influence their levels of satisfaction was assessed (Lin & Liang, 2011). According to psychology, literature has shown that emotions may affect evaluative processes, as Mehrabian & Russell indicate (1974). Customers' emotions and judgments, the emotions, and evaluations of customers are noted to significantly correlate with their satisfaction (Burns & Neisner, 2006).

Emotions connected to the service encounter have a crucial role to play in presenting a satisfaction summary from previous research (Aksoy, Keiningham & Oliver, 2014; Hou & Hu, 2013; Jani & Han, 2014; Martin, O'Neill, Hubbard & Palmer, 2008). For e.g., a client who feels positive feelings from the service received would demonstrate higher levels of satisfaction and this, in turn, will encourage them to choose the same service provider regularly and sell that service through their positive word of mouth (Grace & O'Cass, 2004a; Namkung & Jang, 2009). Customer satisfaction was found to be studied as a cognitive-affective condition that stems from the cognitive assessments of the emotions brought on by those assessments in a related empirical interpretation of the framework proposed (Jin, Line & Goh, 2013). A positive direct effect of positive feelings on satisfaction was also observed (Kim & Noh, 2018). The same was true on the other way around.

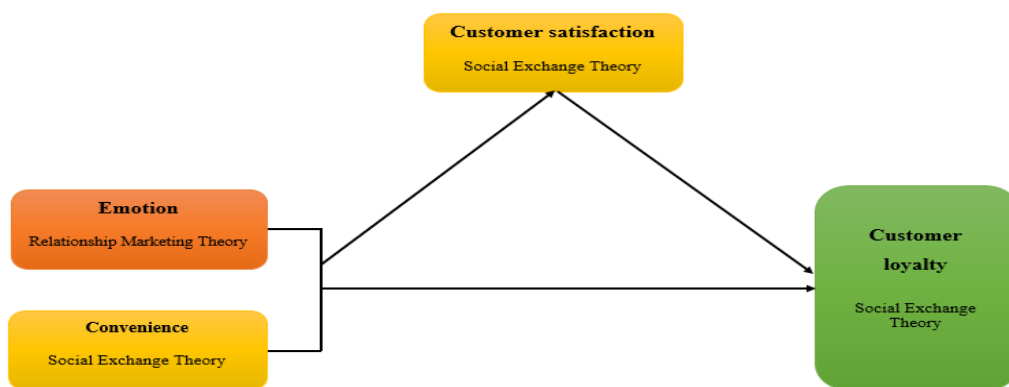
H₆: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotion and customer loyalty in Jordan.

The Mediating Effect of Customer Satisfaction on the Relationship between Convenience and Customer Loyalty

The examination of the relationship between the service convenience types and customer intentions urged authors to identify the satisfaction acts into a mediating or a moderating act. In terms of customer outcomes, convenience responds to satisfaction (Kim, 2020) and even convenience in relation to satisfaction, which in turn affects consumer outcomes (Hsu, Chang & Chen, 2012; Kuo, Cheng, Chang & Chuang, 2018). Previous studies devoted to the subject revealed an indirect positive relationship between consumer comfort perceptions and their customer intentions towards the service provider, with the mediating factor being satisfaction-in other terms, convenience has an indirect influence on satisfaction results of consumer behaviour.

In particular, convenience has been reported to significantly predict overall satisfaction in Canadian personal e-mobile usage (Shankar & Rishi, 2020), and convenience has been shown to influence customer satisfaction and repeat transactions in the telecommunications industry (Liu & Wu, 2007). Aagja, Mammen & Saraswat (2011) also found that higher perceived convenience in the sense of India contributed to a greater effect on customer satisfaction and shoppers' intentions. It is important for service providers to stay up-to-date with the positive consequences of convenience on customer loyalty (Berry, Seiders & Grewal, 2002). Convenience impacts multiple situational effects, such as behavioural intentions (Szymanski & Hise, 2000; Andaleeb & Basu, 1994), according to other studies. In addition, Kaura (2013) found that both customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in India is greatly influenced by convenience.

H₆: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between convenience and customer loyalty in Jordan.



**FIGURE 1
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

METHODOLOGY

As this is the most effective research method for this form of study, the current study utilises a quantitative research methodology. A scheme of investigation is protected by the quantitative approach by associating various variables that can be compiled into numerical results and applied to the general population (Finnerty et al., 2013). The focus population of this analysis is the category of guests (guests) who stayed at five-star hotels in Jordan, independent of their nationality. In Jordan, the total population is 9,537 (Jordan Ministry of Tourism 2018).

Convenience sampling, the sample size of 370 5-start hotel guests, is a method of sampling technique where the first respondents would be used without additional criteria in this study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

The researcher distributes the questionnaire to replied (guests) who stayed at a 5-star hotel, three identical brand hotels, and all of these hotels were picked under one "Starwood hotels" business in Jordan. Owing to intense marketing, travel packages, discounts, and outstanding facilities, these hotels tend to be regularly patronised by tourists. Between January and February 2020, data for this analysis was gathered. To assist in administering the questionnaire in Jordan, research assistants were hired.

Table 1 SAMPLE SIZE CALCULATION					
N	S	N	S	N	S
120	92	600	274	8,000	367
130	97	650	278	9,000	368
140	103	700	169	10,000	370
150	108	750	186	15,000	375
160	113	800	201	20,000	377
170	118	850	214	30,000	379
180	123	900	234	40,000	380
190	127	950	254	50,000	381
200	132	1,000	269	75,000	382

Testing the Mediating Effect

Four potential mediating influences between the exogenous variables, and the dependent variables are present in the established study model. They are suggested in the hypothesis below;

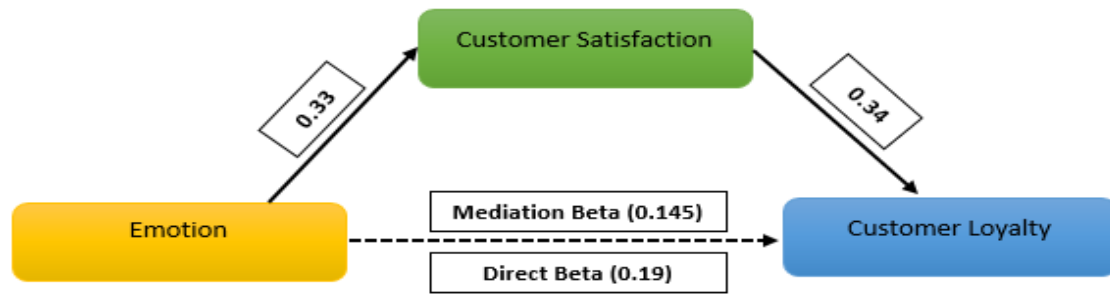


FIGURE 2
EMOTION AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY MODEL

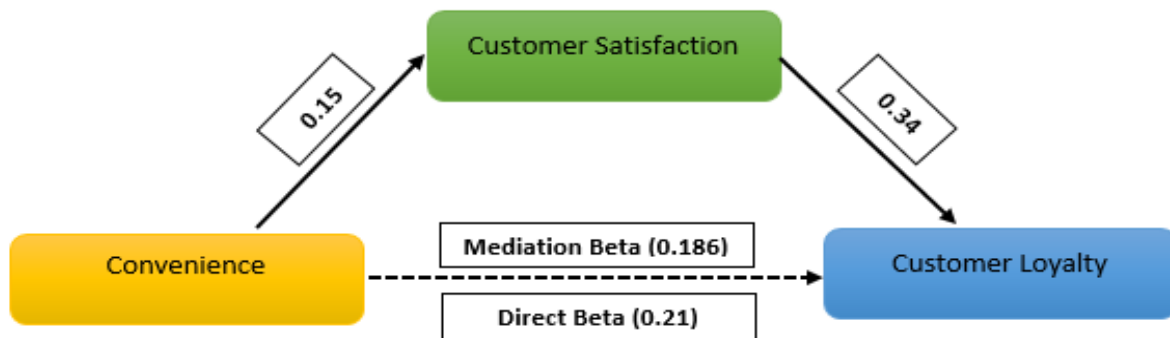


FIGURE 3
CONVENIENCE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY MODEL

If the VAF value is below 20 percent, no mediation relationship can be inferred. Value ranging from "between" 20% - 80%, can be defined as partial mediation, and a full mediation can be presumed above 80% (Kothari, 2004). Table (2) displays VAF in templates in all variables:

Table 2 VAF MEDIATOR CALCULATOR					
Variables	Std. Beta Path a	Std. Beta Path b	Indirect effect	VAF	Result
Emotion	0.33	0.34	0.145	0.44	Partial Mediation
Convenience	0.15	0.34	0.22	0.22	Partial Mediation

CONCLUSION

In sum, the proposed hypotheses in this study were all supported. The results specifically found emotion to positively influence customer satisfaction and customer loyalty indicating that a positive emotion in the minds of the customers about a hotel would provide them greater satisfaction and would affect their loyalty towards it. The results showed convenience to positively relate to both customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in Jordan indicating that customer convenience positively influence their return visits to the hotel. In relation to this, the theory and methodology of relationship marketing was focused on the real advantages perceived by customers as well as service providers across their relationships, with the aim of building and sustaining customer loyalty. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to establish successful relationships, and in this sense, the present paper contributes significantly to the marketing literature relationship by providing a model that empirically explores the experiences of Jordanian consumers regarding their relationship with five-star hotel service providers.

Prior studies have evidenced significant relationships between emotion, convenience and satisfaction, but this paper aimed to minimize the gap in the relationship marketing literature by supporting prior evidence in specific cases of Jordan. This study recommends service managers of five-star hotels in Jordan to focus on emotion and convenience to achieve high customer loyalty. Finally, the current research contributes to a better understanding of relationship marketing in the context of devoted clients of Jordan's five-star hotels, with the key variables being emotion, convenience, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty.

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