

Service Quality and Tourist Satisfaction

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Abstract

India is known worldwide an old and mysterious civilization with 2nd largest population of 1.30 billion in the world. With increasing worldwide tourism and travel for leisure, business and cultural circuits, India attracts only 2.4 million visitors annually of the 600 million who travel. India can develop a sound policy to attract tourism and travel to generate jobs at the lowest cost of investment per job in this industry as well as promote sustainable development and cultural heritage, which has been so precious to India. India needs to shed its reluctance of encouraging tourism by affluent Westerners. Tourism, if properly planned and promoted can provide 20+ million jobs in next ten years and foreign exchange in excess of 30 billion dollars. What India needs is a firm policy and commitment to expand tourism as a source of sustainable economic development with value for the tourists and enhancement of India's cultural heritage. There is a great need to look at Tourist's satisfaction level with tourism products and enhance deliverables to capture the positive behavioural intentions of tourists. Visitor perceptions of the quality of a tourist destination, satisfaction with their experience and the resulting behavioural intentions are vital for successful destination management and marketing.

Key Words: *Tourism, Service Quality, Tourism Destinations*

1. Understanding Tourism

A tourist destination can be defined as an amalgam of tourism products and services consumed under the same brand name offering consumers an integrated experience, which is subjectively interpreted according to the consumers' travel itinerary, cultural background, purpose of visit, past experience etc. (Buhalis, 2000; Fuchs & Weiermair, 2003). One of the key elements of successful destination marketing is tourist satisfaction, which influences the choice of destination and the decision to return (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). However, Omerzel Gomezelj and Mihalic (2008) note that several destination competitiveness models include elements that are the building blocks of tourist satisfaction but fail to incorporate them in a coherent and unified manner in a model that can be used as a general instrument and tool for benchmarking.

Tourism is the study of man away from his usual habitat, of the industry which responds to his needs, and of the impacts that both he and the industry have on the host's socio cultural, economic and physical environments (Jafari, 1977). Tourism is the largest industry in the world in terms of earnings and is also the largest employer of people. That is of course if tourism is considered and classified as an industry. Total revenue directly attributable to tourism, including travel and purchases by tourists is estimated at US \$ 3,300 billion. It constitutes over 13 per cent of the global GDP. Global travel and tourism revenue is expected to increase to \$6.3 trillion in the next decade. This industry provides direct employment to 262 million people, who constitute 10.5 per cent of the global work force. These numbers are expected to grow to 485 million by the year 2012. Tourism also accounts for 8 percent of the World's exports making it the largest internationally traded product or service. These statistics may appear to be incredible but are true. They also reflect the level of prosperity the world has reached where leisure has become a key priority (WTO, 2010).

As an industry, tourism has many components comprising the overall "travel experience." Along with transportation, it includes such things as accommodations, food and beverage services, shops, entertainment, aesthetics and special events. It is rare for one business to provide the variety of activities or facilities tourists need or desire. This adds to the difficulty of maintaining and controlling the quality of the experience. To overcome this hurdle, tourism related businesses, agencies, and organizations need to work together to package and promote tourism opportunities in their areas and align their efforts to assure consistency in product quality.

2. Indian Tourism at a glance

Tourism Industry in India is one of the most lucrative industries in the country and contributes substantially to foreign exchange earned. In fact during 2008, four million tourists visited India and spent US \$8.9 billion, thus making India one of the major global tourist destinations. Augmented tourism in India has created jobs in a variety of associated sectors, both directly and indirectly. Tourism is one of the success stories of the 20th century and is concerned more with the satisfaction of individual rather than with the scientific and technological achievements. Almost 20 million people are now working in India's Tourism Industry. India's tourism is thriving, owing to a huge flow in both business and leisure travel by foreign and domestic tourists and is expected to generate approximately US\$ 275.5 billion by 2018. Tourism has been a major social phenomenon, which is motivated by the natural urge of every human being for new experience, adventure, education and entertainment. The motivations for tourism also include social, religious and business interest. Tourism and leisure are perhaps the two nicest things in modern society, which helps to promote peaceful co-existence, pleasure of the individual and wellbeing of the general public. It is a smokeless industry and it has its own direct and indirect effect on economy which regarded as effective instrument of economic development with understanding of social, cultural and political life of the society, which leads to a healthier global understanding. The importance of tourism as an instrument for economic development and employment generation, mainly in remote and backward areas, has been well documented the world over.

In tourism, the product from a destination view point is a combination of various elements or components, some of which are tangible and some are intangible. The only open path for the organization in this case would be to let somebody know itself about the consumer needs, expectations, and attitudes of mind, likes and dislikes in order to put together and constantly build up the tourism products. Tourism products have to be consumer oriented. This implies that, we can no longer sell what we produce; we have to produce what consumers consider as their needs. The selling focuses on the needs of seller, marketing focuses on the needs of the buyer. The real tourist product is therefore, usually composite whether the customer buys it in packaged form or assembles it himself.

If we were to look over the whole world to find out the countries mostly richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty which nature can bestow-in some parts a veritable paradise on Earth-I should point to India, if I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts-I should point to India." *Max Mueller*

Max Muller was very much right in describing his thought about the potential of tourism in India. In the context of tourism India is becoming the buzzword the word over having emerged from behind the traditional image and with the concept of "Atithi Devo Bhav" we guarantee service through the best hospitality professionals in the world. But with .58% of International Tourist arrival India was at 41st position in 2008 (*Source: MOT, GOI*). This indicates that in spite of 5.56% annual growth in 2008, we are way behind the world. India

has a complete package of varieties to a tourist and hospitality in culture. With so much to offer the need is to channelize our resources towards growth in Tourism and Hospitality and making our country a favorable tourism destination in terms of tourism and hospitality. Tourism is critical to India. It provides substantial foreign exchange and jobs. Tourism plays an extremely important role in the Indian economy. India has the potential to become the number one tourist destination in the world with the demand growing at 10.1 per cent per annum as predicted by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Indian people are known for being friendly and warm. As quoted by D'Silva and D'Silva (2008), understanding and fulfilling needs of global tourists for quality vacationing is the kick-off for creditable performance and strong impact of India's economic growth on Tourism. Some of the must-sees in India include - Kashmir with its beautiful gardens, lakes and snow, Gateway of India and Haji Ali at Mumbai, the Taj Mahal in Agra, Kerala - the Venice of India, The Dilwara temple at Mt. Abu, The Charminar at Hyderabad, the rustic beauty of Rajasthan, the varied colors of Gujarat, the rural charm of villages in Punjab and Haryana and the various hill stations like Darjeeling, Ooty, Nainital and Shimla etc - the list is long and very colorful.

3. New Directions

The Travel and Tourism Industry is one of the largest and most profitable industries in most developed countries. Increased work related stress is forcing most working professionals to take regular breaks and holidays throughout the year. There has also been a marked improvement / rise in income levels followed by increased spending power of people that has given a major boost to the tourism industry as a whole. Countries such as USA, UK, Singapore, Thailand, Australia and Bangkok feature high on the list of favourite tourist destinations. Despite the fact that India is a large and beautiful country with many tourist attractions and places to see as well as a mix of cultures and traditions to experience, the Tourism Industry in India fails to keep up with relatively smaller countries like Singapore. Over the time it has been realized that keeping customer's preferences and satisfaction as a priority can overcome all the flaws that this industry is facing. So my research is built on the path to understand the relation between tourist satisfaction and their future positive behavior.

4. Literature Review

There have been many studies on Self Congruence in different goods and services sectors. Service quality has been researched extensively as the organizations started understanding importance of competition. Satisfaction has remained the core of research in goods as well as services sector and also in tourism. As far as future behaviour or intentions are concerned, numbers of authors have given their insights for the same. So next section is focussing on previous researches done in context of various variables taken in present study and to find whether any study has been conducted to find interrelationships among same.

4.1 About Service Quality

Service quality is consumers' over evaluation toward the perceived quality, instead of their satisfaction toward an incident or transaction (Parasuraman, *et al.*, 1985, 1988). Parasuraman *et al.* (1988, 1994) developed the conceptualization of SERVQUAL to measure the service quality. In SERVQUAL multiple-item scale, five dimensions are identified to measure service quality, including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The literature related to quality and satisfaction in the tourism and recreation field dates back to at least the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission reports of 1962 (Manning 1986). The high level and sustained interest in this topic derives from a widely held belief that the primary managerial criterion for success should be defined in terms of level of

satisfaction (Bultena and Klessig 1969; LaPage 1963). Cole and Illum (2006) and Chen and Tsai (2007) found that satisfaction fully mediates the impact of attribute-level service quality on behavioural intentions, Baker and Crompton (2000) and Chi and Qu (2008) established a partial mediation effect. In addition, Lee, Petrick, and Crompton (2007) found no mediation effect at all. An overview of the literature shows that, as a theoretical construct, customer satisfaction is problematic to define and operationalise, especially in relation to perceived service quality (Cole & Illum, 2006; Lee, Lee, & Yoo, 2000). The importance of quality in service industries as perceived by customers has spurred extensive research in this field. Probably the instrument most widely used for evaluating service quality is SERVQUAL, which was developed in the mid-1980s (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). In the past two decades, SERVQUAL has been applied to numerous service industries, including tourism (e.g., Armstrong, Mok, Go, & Chan, 1997; Atilgan, Akinci, & Aksoy, 2003; Hsieh, Lin, & Lin, 2008; Hui, Wan, & Ho, 2007).

At the destination level, a tourism product is a bundle of components such as accommodation, travel, food, entertainment, etc. To analyse the elements of tourism supply, Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, and Wanhill (1993) grouped destination attributes into the “four A’s” framework (Attractions, Access, Amenities and Ancillary services), which was later further developed by Buhalis (2000) to the “six A’s” (Attractions, Accessibility, Amenities, Available packages, Activities and Ancillary services). Chen and Tsai (2007) used the items covering the aspects of the “six As” framework to operationalise trip quality. Cole and Illum (2006) used similar attributes to evaluate the “performance quality” of a festival. Hui et al. (2007) examined which destination attributes create overall satisfaction/dissatisfaction and found that these vary across groups of tourists from different geographical regions. They also found that the set of significant predictors depended upon whether the “disconfirmation” or “perceptions only” measurement was employed. Quality in tourism is created by the processes of service delivery (e.g., friendliness, courtesy, efficiency, reliability, staff competence) and outcomes of services (e.g., accommodation, food, leisure facilities). Gronroos (1984) suggests that services have two quality dimensions: technical quality, which refers to the outcomes (what the customer gets), and functional quality, which refers to the processes (how he/she gets it). In this framework, the perceived service is “the result of a consumer’s view of a bundle of service dimensions, some of which are technical and some of which are functional in nature”, whereby functional quality cannot be evaluated as objectively as technical quality.

Among various variables, service quality, perceived value, and satisfaction have been identified as three major indicators affecting tourists’ behavioral intentions in past studies (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Petrick, 2004; Petrick & Backman, 2002). Regarding the relationships among quality, satisfaction, value, and behavioral intentions, four relationship models from different perspectives can be identified according to Cronin, Brady, and Hult (2000). The first model, based on the service value literature, suggests that value leads directly to favourable outcomes. The second model, driven from the satisfaction literature, assumes that customer satisfaction is the primary and direct link to outcome measures. The third model, centring on inter-relationships between variables, suggests service quality influences behavioural intentions only through the mediation of value and satisfaction. The fourth model assumes all three variables directly lead to favourable behavioural intentions.

In the tourism context, service quality refers to service performance at the attribute level while experience quality refers to the psychological outcome resulting from customer participation in tourism activities. The former has been defined as the quality of the attributes

of a service which are under the control of a supplier, while the later involves not only the attributes provided by a supplier but also the attributes brought to the opportunity by the visitor. Therefore, experience quality can be conceptualized as tourists' affective responses to their desired social-psychological benefits. It also refers to a specific service transaction, such as contact with people who contribute to the actual experience (Chan & Baum, 2007). Otto and Ritchie (1996) developed an experience quality scale with four factors – i.e. hedonics, peace of mind, involvement, and recognition – using consumer survey data obtained from three tourism service sectors including hotels, airlines, and tours and attractions. Hedonics is associated with the affective responses such as excitement, enjoyment and memorability. Peace of mind is concerned about the need for both physical and psychological safety and comfort. Involvement refers to the desire to have choice and control in the service offering, and the demand to be educated, informed and imbued with a sense of mutual cooperation. Finally, Recognition is linked to feeling important and confident while consumers themselves are being taken seriously. In their study on theme park, Kao, Huang, and Wu (2008) conceptualized experiential quality by four factors – immersion, surprise, participation and fun. Immersion is defined as the involvement of consumers during consumption, which leads them to forget time and emphasize the consumption process instead of consumption results. Surprise refers to the freshness, specialty, or uniqueness perceived. Participation pertains to the interaction between consumers and the product (service), and fun relates to the happiness and enjoyment consumers receive. Their results reveal that experiential quality relates positively to satisfaction and satisfaction furthermore influences visitors' behavioural intentions positively. The causal relationships among customer perceptions of service quality, satisfaction, value, and behavioral intentions have been established by previous studies (Athanasopoulos, 2000; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Chen, 2008; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Cronin et al., 2000; Petrick & Backman, 2002; Rust & Oliver, 1994; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Quality, perceived value, and satisfaction all have been shown to be good predictors of behavioural intentions (Petrick, 2004).

There has been a debate regarding the inclusion of expectations in the measurement of service quality (Teas 1993, 1994; Cronin and Taylor 1994; Parasuraman et al. 1994). While Cronin and Taylor (1994) claimed that the perceived performance measure possesses a high predictive ability, Parasuraman et al. (1994) assert that the expectation measures can assist management in identifying those areas which require immediate attention. However, Parasuraman et al. (1994) concur that if the primary purpose of measuring perceived service quality is to explain the variance on some dependent construct, then a performance-based measure is appropriate. There is a growing acceptance among researchers that service quality can be tied to perceptions of service performance (Gronroos 1993; Dabholkar 1993).

4.2 Self Concept

Tourism, as the business of attracting visitors and catering to their needs, has rapidly grown into the world's largest industry, surpassing autos, steel, electronics, and agriculture (McIntosh, Goeldner, and Ritchie 1995). past research efforts in the tourism industry have tended to focus on what tourists buy, when they buy, where they buy, and how they buy, but not so much on why they buy (e.g., Holloway and Plant 1988; Mathieson and Wall 1982; G. D. Pearce 1989; P. L. Pearce 1982). Consumer research has shown that a consumer's attitude towards a product (and product purchase) is influenced by the matching of the product user image with the consumer's self concept (Sirgy 1982). Indeed, consumer research has had a long tradition of addressing how self-concept is used as a cognitive referent in evaluating

symbolic cues. Product symbolic cues refer to stereotypic images of users of a product or store (e.g., sexy, classy, fashionable, young). The same can be said in relation to a tourist's attitude toward a destination (and travel behaviour). That is, tourists perceive destinations differently in terms of the destination's typical clientele or visitors. This stereotypic image of the kind of people who typically visit a given destination is referred to here as destination visitor image. The greater the match between the destination visitor image and the tourist's self-concept, the more likely that the tourist has a favorable attitude toward that destination (and the more likely that the tourist would visit that destination). This matching process is referred to as self-congruity as defined by Sirgy and Chenting in 2000.

Past research has already demonstrated that destination image has a direct bearing on destination travel behavior (e.g., Backman and Crompton 1991; Chon 1990, 1992; Hu and Ritchie 1993; Milman and Pizam 1995; Riley 1995). The congruence between the perceived image of a product and self-image can lead to preference for the product and, thus, result in purchasing behaviour (Mannetti, Pierro, and Livi 2004). In other words, people tend to behave congruent to their self-images.

Dimensions of Congruence. Self-concept is regarded as a multidimensional construct that contains different images that one holds about oneself (Sirgy 1982; Rosenberg 1979). People have different roles in society, such as the role of being a parent, friend, worker, or mentor. An individual develops different selves over time for different social roles or situations, and acts accordingly. The most common self-images used to measure self-concepts include actual self, ideal self, social self, and ideal social self, among which actual self and ideal self have been studied most frequently (e.g., Beerli, Meneses, and Gil 2007; Kressmann et al. 2006; Litvin and Goh 2002). Actual self refers to the way a person actually sees himself or herself; ideal self refers to the way a person would like to be; social self is the way a person presents himself or herself to others; and social ideal self refers to the way that a person would like other people to perceive himself or herself (Sirgy, Grzeskowiak, and Su 2005). Actual self-congruity occurs when individuals act consistently with their real self image and, thus, their behaviours reflect how they think they actually are.

Destination Personality

Just as brand can have distinctive personality, destinations can also possess some unique characteristics. Similarly, destination personality can have impact on tourist behaviour as brand personality on consumer behavior. A distinctive destination personality can help differentiate among destinations (Murphy, Moscardo, & Benckendorff, 2007), influence destination preference and choice behavior (Crockett & Wood, 1999, 2002; Murphy, Benckendorff, & Moscardo, 2007), positively improve destination image (Hosany, Ekinici, & Uysal, 2006, 2007), and enhance tourist loyalty (Ekinici & Hosany, 2006). Ekinici and Hosany (2006) recognized the importance of destination personality and made the first attempt to adapt Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale to tourism destination. They explained that Aaker's scale "remains the most stable, reliable, and comprehensive measure to gauge brand/product personality. Adopting Aaker's (1997) definition of brand personality, they defined destination personality as "the set of human characteristics associated with a destination"

Another effort of applying destination personality was made by Ekinici and his colleagues (Ekinici, Sirakaya-Turk, & Baloglu, 2007). They develop a path analytical model to test multiple direct and indirect relationships involving tourists' perception of host image, destination personality, and behavioral intentions (intention to return and to recommend).

Murphy, Moscardo and Benckendorff (2007) sought to determine the applicability of using destination personality to differentiate between two tourism destinations, Cairns and the Whitsunday Islands, Australia, from tourists' perspective. A total of 464 useable surveys were collected, among which 90 respondents rated both destinations, and two groups of 187 respondents rated only one destination. To further test the relationships between destination personality and self-congruity, travel motivations, and tourist visit behaviour, Murphy and his colleagues (2007) developed a preliminary conceptual model.

4.3 Self Congruence in Hospitality:

In 2003, Litvin and Kar sought to replicate Chon's (1992) work using Singapore as the destination, at the same time; they added the cultural construct of individualism/collectivism as a possible moderating variable between self-congruity and destination satisfaction. Using Chon's self-congruity scale and Hofstede's culture scale, they found that destination image/actual self-image and destination image/ideal self-image congruity were significantly correlated with visitor satisfaction, strongly supporting Chon's work. Further analysis revealed that correlation coefficients between satisfaction and self-image congruity were significantly higher for "individualists" than for "collectivists", especially so for ideal self-image congruity. Kastenholz (2004) examined the role of destination-self-congruity (DSC) in the context of rural tourism. DSC was operationalized as a direct comparison between actual self-image and affective destination image (or holistic personality of the destination).

Back (2005) made an effort to explore the effects of social image congruence and ideal social image congruence on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty in the lodging industry. He found that both social and ideal social image congruence have significant direct effects on customer satisfaction and indirect effects on brand loyalty. That is to say if there is a match between a customer's social or ideal social self-concept and the hotel brand image, the customer tends to be satisfied with the hotel. Furthermore, when satisfied with the service, the customer becomes brand loyal, holding a positive attitude toward the brand.

Ekinci & Riley (2003) endeavoured to investigate self-congruence theory in two studies, one in the setting of restaurant, the other in the setting of restaurant and hotel. They tried to test the relationships between actual self-concept and ideal self-concept and satisfaction, attitude, service quality and behavioral intention. The first study operationalized self-congruence with gap score formula, while the second uses the direct score formula. Both studies suggest that actual self-congruence and ideal self-congruence are related to consumer behavior, but with different influence. The first study indicates that ideal self-congruence has more relevance in estimating attitude, customer satisfaction and service quality; whereas the second study proposes that actual self-congruence has more influence.

4.4 Satisfaction

Satisfaction is thought to be the result from the comparison between *predicted* service and perceived service, whereas service quality refers to the comparison between *desired* service and perceived service (Zeithaml *et al*), 1993. A review of the literature also reveals that to date only a few comprehensive attempts have been made to assess service quality in the tourism industry (Ostrowski, O'Brien and Gordon, 1993). This is surprising because the tourism industry is by far the largest service industry in most Western nations. Furthermore our review of literature also reveals that only a few attempts have been made to study the student segment of the tourist industry (Hobson and Joshiam, 1992).

Customer satisfaction, quality and perceived value are three prominent marketing constructs, and their relationships with post-purchase behaviour have drawn considerable interest and

attention from practitioners and academics (Sweeney et al. 1997; Bloemer et al. 1999; Brady and Robertson 1999; McDougall and Levesque 2000; Cronin et al. 2000). Parasuraman and Grewal (2000) suggest that quality enhances perceived value, which in turn, contributes to customer loyalty. This quality-value-loyalty model accords with Heskett et al.'s (1997) service-profit chain which places perceived value at the centre of the chain linking employee satisfaction, loyalty, productivity and output quality with customer satisfaction, loyalty and profitability.

Relationship between Perceived Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction The nature of the relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction is an intriguing issue. Some researchers have suggested that perceived service quality is an antecedent of customer satisfaction (Anderson and Sullivan 1993; Ravald and Gronroos 1996; de Ruyter et al. 1997). Others have adhered to the view that customer satisfaction precedes perceived service quality (Parasuraman et al. 1988; Bolton and Drew 1991; Patterson and Johnson 1993). Teas (1993) explained that the confusion as to the causal relationship between satisfaction and perceived service quality is due to the lack of consensus on the definition and operationalisations of the two constructs. He pointed out that perceived service quality has been viewed as a global judgement in most service quality research, in contrast to the transaction-specific focus of most customer satisfaction research. It is clear that the confusion on the causal relationship is attributed to the different perspectives held by the researchers. Perceived service quality can be viewed at the level of both the transactional perspective and the global perspective (Teas 1993; Oliver 1993; Parasuraman et al. 1994). At the transaction level, perceived transaction-specific quality will influence customer satisfaction, and at the global level, the overall perception of a firm's service quality is based on customers' cumulative transaction-specific satisfaction with the service.

4.5 Future Behavioral Intentions

The future behaviour that can be exhibited by the tourist after his service encounter can be Word of Mouth about destination, Revisit Intention and Recommend the destination to others. All these are dependent on satisfaction level of the tourist.

Customer Word-of-Mouth. Garbarino and Johnson state that a crucial issue in consumer behaviour research is to identify the determinant construct for customers' behavioural intentions. Behavioural intentions can be viewed as indicators that signal whether customer will remain with or defect from the company. Word-of-mouth (a consequence measure) is the extent to which whether a customer will inform friends, relatives and colleagues about an event that has created a certain level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Customers who identify with an organization are more likely to advocate or promote the organization or cause to others through word-of-mouth (WOM) communication (e.g., Baloglu 2002; Petrick 2004). Also known as buzz, these WOM communications are far more credible than marketer-sourced promotions (e.g., Gremler, Gwinner, and Brown 2001; Herr, Kardes, and Kim 1991). WOM is also likely to significantly affect travellers' destination choices (e.g., Gitleson and Crompton 1984; Nolan 1976). Nevertheless, WOM has yet to receive much attention in the tourism literature, as Murphy (2001) notes: "Indeed, while word-of-mouth promotion is consistently identified in tourism research as an important source of information used in decision making, there has been little or no research done to investigate this phenomenon in detail." WOM is defined as product- or service-related verbal, person-to-person communication (Arndt 1967; Wangenheim 2005). Although a number of factors likely drive the tendency to promote a place by WOM, satisfaction with the destination and identity salience represent the two most likely prospects for a number of reasons. Bowman and Narayandas (2001) in their study, defined word of mouth as "whether

customers tell anyone about their experience and for how many people are told if a customer engages in WOM behaviour.”

4.6 Recommend Intention and Revisit: There are many practical reasons for studying tourists’ satisfaction levels. Since a customer’s repeated purchase and brand loyalty are closely associated with his or her satisfaction with an initial purchase, the concept of customer satisfaction is of utmost importance because of its influence on repeat purchases and word-of-mouth (WOM) publicity (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Fornell, 1992; Halstead & Page, 1992). Customer satisfaction was found to be a significant determinant of repeat sales and customer loyalty (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Liljander & Strandvik, 1995; Anderson 1998), which in the tourism context would mean tourists’ intention to revisit a country again (Weber, 1997; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). From the indicators and past research, the ‘recommend’ concept (Lam et al., 2004) is similar in meaning to ‘advocate’ (White & Schneider, 2000) and positive word-of-mouth (WOM) (e.g., Brown et al., 2005). For example, Hartline and Jones (1996) name WOM ‘word-of-mouth recommendation’, Reynolds and Beatty (1999) indicated that ‘word-of-mouth recommendations have been found to be very important in consumers’ decision making for a variety of products and services’, and Griffin (1995) contends that building relationships with customers will lead to customer advocacy, where WOM flourishes.

Much research has examined the relationship between recommend intentions and their indicators (e.g., Brown et al., 2005; Hartline & Jones, 1996; Lam et al., 2004; Reynolds & Beatty, 1999; White & Schneider, 2000).

4.7 Mood as a Moderator

Compared to intense emotions, moods are milder, pervasive, and generalized affective states that are induced by various factors (Mattila and Wirtz, 2000). Generally, moods are expressed as positive or negative without a specific target, and moods last for some duration (Fiske and Taylor, 2007). Customers enter a service establishment with prior mood states, which can be either positively or negatively valenced. Gardner (1985) defines mood state as an omnipresent and a phenomenological property of individuals’ perceived affective state that can be readily affected by a marketer’s (service provider’s) action or by the environment of the service place. Accordingly mood states have important effects on customer behaviors (Ruyter and Bloemer, 1999). The mood maintenance hypothesis (Andrade, 2005; Clark and Isen, 1982) suggests that when people are in a positive mood, they want to maintain this positive affective state by avoiding any factors that might threaten their mood. According to Curren and Harich (1994), consumers will store mood biased evaluation in memory. When faced with a similar situation, they will again search and retrieve this stored information. Indeed, extant research in consumer behaviour confirms the aforementioned scenario. Customers provide more favourable evaluations of services, places, objects, or ideas while in positive mood states (Gouaux 1971; Isen, Shalcker, Clark and Karp 1978; Johnson and Tversky 1983; Knowles, Grove and Burroughs 1993; Miniard, Bhatla and Sirdehmunkh 1992). Mood has been defined as a “mild, transient, and generalized affective state” in accordance with most commonly used definitions in the marketing literature (Curren and Harich 1994; Gardner 1985; Hornik 1993; Isen, Clark and Schwartz 1976; Knowles, Grove and Burroughs 1993; Swinyard 1993). **It is being treated as a moderating variable since it masks the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables.** In other words, “mood is a state of mind reflecting one’s feelings at any particular moment” (Comer 1980). Isen (1984) argued that moods, although transient, can be pervasive, and may redirect thoughts and actions.

5. Major Findings:

The key findings from study of literature on tourist behavioural intentions are:

- There has been extensive research on service quality in context of services including Tourism.
- Mood as a moderator has been found to be an important variable in recent studies
- Researches in past have been able to draw relationships between self-congruity and satisfaction
- Behavioural intentions have always been attributed to variables like satisfaction and quality
- Some authors have made an attempt to focus on destination personality by applying brand personality to destinations.
- Recommend intent has not been fully investigated as far as tourism industry is concerned.
- Main focus of the researches in Tourism has been lying on countries other than India like Singapore, China, and USA etc.

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