

THE ANALYSIS OF SERBIAN CUSTOMERS SATISFACTION WITH E-SERVICES QUALITY DIMENSIONS OF LODGING E-INTERMEDIARIES

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Abstract:

With the constantly rising share of online accommodation bookings, finding out how customers perceive the website e-service quality (e-SQ) is becoming increasingly important in order to build strong satisfaction and create loyal customers. The main goal of the study was to analyze how Serbian customers perceive the quality of service provided by lodging e-Intermediaries. The model used had six dimensions of e-SQ (System availability/Reliability, Structure/Usability, Information Quality, Efficiency, Safety/Privacy, and Personalization) with a total number of 22 items for e-SQ and 3 additional for customer satisfaction. Correlation matrix and multiple regression analysis were used to determine the impact of each of 6 dimensions of e-service quality on satisfaction of e-intermediary customers. As a convenience sampling approach was used, the sample comprised mostly tourism and hospitality professionals, university staff and students. The questionnaires were distributed via e-mails, social media and partially directly in printed form during the research period of 3 months (July-September, 2015). In total, 148 respondents participated in the research. The data gathered on the habits and e-intermediary use of Serbian customers show that majority of customers book accommodation via e-intermediaries up to 10 times a year, mostly for stays of up to 6 nights. Most customers begin the process of booking accommodation by going directly to the homepage of the preferred e-intermediaries or use Google search. The most commonly used e-intermediary is Booking.com. During the selection process, the majority of Serbian customers will compare multiple properties, usually even 15 and more, and will mostly book double rooms in hotels. Customer

satisfaction in this study was conceptually set very narrow within the framework of the six e-SQ dimensions. The study has shown that only three out of six dimensions have impact on customer satisfaction, comprising 63.9% of total customer satisfaction: reliability, information quality, and personalization. The study refers to the perception of satisfaction with e-service offered by lodging e-intermediaries exclusively, and therefore has limited use when it comes to other types of websites and e-intermediaries in different industries. The e-SQ dimension "information quality" has shown the largest effect on customer satisfaction in this study. There is a possibility that in different circumstances and/or environment some other dimensions may show a much greater importance. This research has shown that the e-SQ dimensions have an essential role in achieving the customer satisfaction. The results also show that there is a possibility for further improvement of lodging e-intermediary services as the customers are not fully satisfied with the most significant e-SQ dimensions. Also, the results and differences in the results of this and other studies show that it is necessary to further improve the personalization of websites and adapt them to customers from different regions and countries. Partial differences in the results of this study compared to other studies indicate that, due to the changing preferences of customers and their perception of the quality, there is a necessity to conduct the analysis of the perception of the e-SQ on a regular basis, in order to be up-to-date with the ever changing needs and expectations of customers. Also, differences in the e-SQ dimensions that have effects on customer satisfaction indicate that it is necessary to set up a broader research framework involving a greater number of e-SQ dimensions for further research.

Keywords:

service quality, online shopping, Serbia, customer satisfaction, e-intermediaries.

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