

Select Studies on Customer Delight: Case of Restaurants in Kolkata

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Abstract

The research study explores concept of customer delight in the context of restaurants in Kolkata, India. It has explored the various service encounters of full service restaurants to identify the attractive service encounters in a restaurant and to apply Kano's Model of Customer Delight. Delight has been found to be a consequence of four positive emotions, namely, surprise, joy, interest and captivation in the extant literature. Previous researches have established the relationship between each of the emotions with delight independently. This study explores the possibility of the synergistic impact of all the four positive emotions in creating delight. This study also tried to test the impact of delight on loyalty as a result of the positive ushering in the restaurant experience.

For the purpose of the study, a two-phase survey was conducted. The objective of the first survey was to identify the attractive service encounters of a restaurant service through a blueprint of the moments-of-truth. The second objective of the study was to determine whether these service encounters generated delight amongst the guests i.e. whether it conformed to Kano's Model of customer delight. The first survey identified six attractive service encounters called moments-of-truth (MT) as follows:

MT 1: Imagine the waiter gives rose while entering

MT 2: Imagine the waiter helps you to sit

MT 3: Imagine mineral water/soft drink comes complimentary with Menu Card

MT4: Imagine the waiter explains the mode of cooking

MT5: Imagine the waiter explains the nutritional value of food

MT6: Imagine Thank You card comes along with bill

These were subjected to Structural Equations Modelling to determine the synergistic impact of the antecedents of delight. Further impact of delight on loyalty was also explored. There was an attempt to determine whether loyalty was generated as a result of the ushering or whether it was loyalty towards the brand.

This study revealed that all attractive service encounters do result in the creation of delight. Delight was found to be a result of surprise and joy. The other two antecedents namely, interest and captivation had no impact on delight. The relationship between delight and loyalty was established. However loyalty was not due to the particular ushering, rather loyalty was found to be towards the restaurant brand.

Keywords: customer delight, surprise, joy, interest, captivation, loyalty