Declaration

I declare that this project: ‘Customer satisfaction in the Hudson Bay hotel’, is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Business (Hons) in Tourism & Hospitality Management. It is entirely the work of the author and has not been submitted to any other university or higher education institution, or for any other academic award in this institute. Where use has been made of the work of other people it has been fully acknowledged and fully referenced.

Signature____________________   Date:________________

Janelle Gordon                                        25th March 2011
Acknowledgements

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Abstract

This research investigates the topic of customer satisfaction, the defining of both customer satisfaction and customer service, how to measure customer satisfaction & the importance of measuring it and the factors that influence a customer’s decision in choosing a hotel.

A quantitative method was used, involving the distribution of twenty questionnaires to twenty customers.

The results were presented in graphs, the author found that majority of people understood customer satisfaction & that the majority were satisfied with their service.

It is recommended that the Hudson Bay aim to use comment cards to more of an extent to measure if customers experienced satisfaction or dissatisfaction.
Introduction

Customer satisfaction is a broad term and can be understood differently to different people. It is a term used when a person is happy with what he/she buys may it be a product or service. Customer satisfaction is very important in businesses nowadays because if customers weren’t satisfied they weren’t return.

The author choose this topic of customer satisfaction as she thought it would be an interesting topic and it would be a worthwhile topic to research for her as entering a business environment she feels everyone should understand this concept and its importance to businesses.

The research will be broken into different chapters:

Literature review, this chapter looks at contemporary literature.

Methodology: this chapter looks at the research that will be applied.

Results: this chapter analyses what the author found out from carrying out her research.

Discussion: this chapter highlights what the author found and putting that into context with the literature she researched earlier.

Conclusion: this chapter looks at what the author set out to do, how she carried research out and did she achieve what she set out to do.

The aim of this research study is: To explore customer evaluation of the Hudson Bay Hotel.

The objectives are as follows:

To investigate the factors that influence customer satisfaction

To find out what customers thought of their whole experience of their stay.
Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to investigate research that has already been carried out on customer satisfaction. The areas to be addressed include definitions of customer service and customer satisfaction, how to measure customer satisfaction, the importance of measuring customer satisfaction. The author will also be looking at the factors that influence a customer’s decision in relation to choosing a hotel.

Customer Service and Satisfaction

Quinn & Byron (1999) state ‘Customer service is the total customer experience with your company.’

‘Customer service is the ability to provide a service or product in the way that it has been promised. Customer service is an organization's ability to supply their customers' wants and needs’ (http://www.customerservicemanager.com)

Quinn and Byron (1999) state If customers become aware of service problems they are 5 times more likely to switch vendors than for price concerns or product quality issues. Customer service is about being able to supply a service or product in the way that has been promised. Customer service can mean different things to different individuals. You have to think about what do your customers want from you? What level of service suits your customers? What way do they wish to be served? Customer service is the whole experience the customer has with your company.
Whereas Moriaty (2000) states ‘Service with a smile’ implies that service is a novelty that is tacked on to product.’ This view of service oversimplifies on the necessity of meeting the needs of customers. Service involves way more than just delivering a product to a customer; a product is made up of many services that go into the making and selling of the product.

Daffy (2001) states in too many organisations there is more attention given to technology therefore less attention if any is given to the basic yet very important customer service principles. Unfortunately the levels of service’s today in most industries are still low to mediocre. Most people find it very tough to list just five businesses where they get really good service that they are happy with.

Quinn & Byron (1999) states ‘the reasons for losing customers were recorded’ as follows: The least reason was 1% of customers passed away, the second least reason was 3% of customers moved away, the third was 5% of customer’s formed other friendships, the fourth reason was 9% left for competitive reasons, the next was where 14% of customers were Dissatisfied with products or Services, and the most biggest reason at 68% was where there was an attitude of indifference shown to the customer by some employee of the supplier.

‘The author believes having good customer service is very important and in achieving good service you’re on the way to the right path of customer satisfaction.

Furthermore into the research the author came across this quote which the author believes is a very useful piece of information it states that customer satisfaction ‘is the degree to which customer expectations of a product or service are met or exceeded.’ (http://www.bnet.com)
Zeithaml, Bitner, Gremler (2006) state ‘Satisfaction is the consumer’s fulfillment response.’ It determines whether or not a feature of the product or service or the product or service itself, provides a pleasurable standard of consumption-related happiness. Failure to fulfill needs and expectations of products and services is assumed to end in dissatisfaction.

Zeithaml, Bitner, Gremler (2006) continue to state

‘Satisfaction can be viewed as contentment-more of a passive response that consumers may associate with services.’. For those services that really amaze the consumer in a good way, satisfaction may be seen as delight. In many situations, where the taking out of negative leads to satisfaction, a consumer may relate a sense of relief with satisfaction.

‘Levels of satisfaction for quality and customer service in top grade hotels were high in 2009, 90% of guests stating they were satisfied or very satisfied. Satisfaction with price was rated much lower with 70% satisfaction.’(http://www.failteIreland.ie)

The author also believes that customers are the vocal point of customer service and customer satisfaction.

Moriaaty (2000) states

‘Achieving customer satisfaction requires satisfying all of the customer’s requirements.’ In order to achieve customer satisfaction all of a customer’s needs have to be met. Customers are the utmost judge of what their needs are, and what level of service and quality is acceptable. Customers believe the whole experience that comes with the product is just as important and this can help in deciding if a customer is satisfied or not.

Quinn & Byron (1999) also believe customers are very important and go on to state Customers are the life of a company. Without customers, companies will eventually fade away. The quality of a product is vital in recruiting customers, but the quality of service is the key to growing and bringing repeat business. Hence service is more essential than one might anticipate.
Likewise Quinn (2002) states you need to make decisions that will bring your customers back, therefore you need to think like a customer. You need to get a feel for the customer. You need to be able to become a customer.

Moriaty (2000) states Customer satisfaction shows that as little as one third of all companies have a well-developed and coherent customer satisfaction process that is tied to controlling strategies and plans. ‘However, many companies do have elements of a total customer satisfaction process in place-survey techniques, sales force feedback activities, market segmentation strategies or innovative order entry and quality techniques.’

Quinn (2002) states you need to think like a customer, you need to know how a customer operates therefore the appropriate decisions have to be made to get repeat business.

The author thinks being customer driven is very important.

Quinn (2002) continues to state being customer driven in a company means that all the important decisions are made around the interests of the customer. Every member of staff within the company should see the customer as being their main first priority.

*Employees who are satisfied in their jobs provide higher levels of customer service. Putting employee and customer satisfaction in the spotlight’ ([http://www.leader-values.com](http://www.leader-values.com))*

Chenet & Johansen (1999) state

‘*Customer satisfaction is based on three main pillars*: 

‘*Product quality, Price, Service*’
**Product Quality**

Customer’s analysis the quality of a product from three different perspectives:

*Product features*

*The features of a product are what the product does.*

*Product benefits*

*The benefits of a product are what it can do for a specific customer.*

*Competitive advantage*

*A product gives a competitive advantage to a customer when the benefits it generates for that particular customer are higher than competing products.*

**Price**

Chenet & Johansen (1999) continue to state ‘*Price affects customer satisfaction in two ways:*’

*Value for money*

How a person evaluates if the quality of a purchase matched what they paid for, did it live up to their expectations. This evaluation is done in terms of what benefits they get from a certain product and what they pay to receive these benefits in comparison with the price of other competitive products.

*Flexibility*

‘*Customers also take into consideration the possibility of getting discounts for high volume purchases or the effect of seasonal variations on prices, credit terms etc.*’


**Service**

‘Customer satisfaction is also based on service quality. Service quality is generally defined as the difference between our perceptions of the service received compared to our expectations.’

Chenet & Johansen (1999) continue to state ‘Research that has been carried out in the United States (Parasuraman, 1998 Journal of Business &Industrial Marketing) shows the presence of five different dimensions, whereas the European research indicates four.’

1. ‘Tangible elements of service

2. Reliability

3. Responsiveness

4. Customer Care’

Chenet and Johansen (1999) continues to state ‘by tangible elements of service we mean all physical facilities, equipment and technology, which have been put into place to improve service. Tangible means things which can be seen, heard, felt and touched by customers while they receive service.’

Reliability is being able to perform the promised service dependably and precisely. Reliability is the most important requirement of a customer. Reliability is about having precise information, keeping promises, and constant interaction with customers.

‘Responsiveness includes all the service activities of a firm which show the willingness to help customers and deliver prompt service.’

Customer Care is important in two ways. It’s about considering what the customer needs, identifying them, giving care and special attention to the customer and showing empathy towards them. Although it is really about being able to be courteous while showing trust at the same time, knowing the customers products and understanding what they need.
How to measure customer satisfaction

Hill, Brierley, MacDougal (2003) state in order to measure customer satisfaction you would need to provide the best lead indicator of future loyalty. ‘A customer satisfaction measurement programme will enable you to’:

- ‘Understand how customers perceive your organization & where your performance meets their expectations.’

- ‘identify PFI’s (Priorities for improvement’) - these are areas where improvements in performance will create the biggest gain in customer satisfaction.

- ‘Undertake a cost-benefit analysis’ - to evaluate the impact of addressing the PFI’s upon the business.

- ‘Pinpoint ‘understanding gaps’- Where your own staff have an incorrect view of customers’ needs or their ability in providing for what the customer needs.

- ‘Set goals of service improvement & monitor progress’

- ‘Benchmark’-Compare your performance with that of other companies

- ‘Increase profits through improved customer loyalty & retention.’

Also Quinn & Byron (1999) state in order to analysis how well and precisely your company is doing, it must be seen through the eyes of your customers. You should allow for customers to let you know what final results to analysis and track the internal methods that are used to create those final results. It is also vital that you inform staff of everything you learn. Otherwise they won’t know what areas of priority improvement to focus on. Basically, measurement systems will keep you in contact with your customers and will inform everyone in your organisation of how well the company is doing in keeping customers happy.
The importance of measuring customer satisfaction

‘It is no secret that companies want to hold on to their customers. After all, repeat customers are a key part of success in the business world. The general belief is that it costs companies much more money to get new clients than it does to simple keep existing customers. This is why measuring customer satisfaction is so vitally important.’

(http://www.customersatisfactionsurveyreviews.com)

The author feels Customer Perception is very important the author feels it ties in with customer service and customer satisfaction as this is how the customer perceives everything about their experience.

Daffy (2001) states one person never sees the same as the other. What one customer sees as being alright another may see it as being very good, people have different views. Such as what is not acceptable to one customer may be seen as acceptable to another. It’s all down to how each customer perceives the service they are getting.

Daffy (2001) goes onto state what a customer thinks they are getting from your product or service will more than likely be different in reality. But to a customer perception is reality. This means that it can be just as important to take care of a customer’s views of your product or service as it is to take care of the reality. This can be essential to some businesses but if we are to handle perceptions, we need to know how they came about. We need to know how our customers create these perceptions about our specific product or service. A lot of research has already been done that provides helpful answers to these questions. ‘This is called the SERVQUAL research, (an operational instrument used to measure the service quality construct.) It was done by Zeithmal, Parasuraman, Berry.’
Customer Perceptions of service are determined by:

32% Reliability
22% Responsiveness
19% Assurance
16% Empathy
11% Tangibles
Factors that influence a customer’s decision when choosing a hotel

The author feels providing for customer’s needs is key in a business as this can be the making or breaking of a customer being satisfied or dissatisfied. This can also influence a customer’s decision in choosing one hotel over the other.

Margaret Linehan (2007) states ‘During the 1940s, Abraham Maslow, an American organisational psychologist, was one of the first to classify human needs or motives. Maslow suggested that human needs may be classified into motivating factors that influence behaviour. He proposed that these needs are based on a hierarchical model, with basic needs at the bottom and higher at the top.’

Maslow believes there are five particular needs, they are as follows:

**Physiological needs**- shelter, food, air, clothing, sleep. Safety and security needs these are for example a safe environment, job continuity, and a pension plan.

**Belongingness needs**- need for love, friendship, happiness and wanting to be accepted, in an organisational setting, such as teamwork, social interaction at work.

**Esteem needs**- these are an individual’s status need for a good image, self-esteem, status and to get respect from others.

**Self-actualisation needs**- are the need for achievement and self-fulfilment and continued development in an individual.

Margaret Linehan (2007) continues to state ‘Maslow believed that people tend to satisfy their needs systematically, beginning with the basic physiological needs and then moving up the hierarchy.’
Conclusion

Now that the literature review is completed, the author has an overview of Customer Satisfaction and Customer Service. The literature review has identified there is a lot of literature available on customer satisfaction, which wasn’t to the knowledge of the author before the research was carried out. The primary sources of information are academic books. Now that the literature review is complete the author is now ready to do the Methodology.
Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter the author introduces the research method. The author asks her questions based on Customer Satisfaction. The author will outline the research methods available, a brief of the chosen procedure to be used, participants, procedures, limitations, ethical considerations and method of analysis.

Research Methods

The author has the option of choosing from two types of research methods: qualitative and quantitative. Hair, Moneey, Samouel, Page (2007) state ‘Quantitative data are measurements in which numbers are used directly to represent the characteristics of something. Since they are recorded directly with numbers, they are in a form that lends itself to statistical analysis.’ The reason for doing this research is to recognise how a lot of people in a population share certain characteristics or like a certain idea. (http://www.uwa.com)

Nykiel (2007) states ‘The advantage of Quantitative is that it can reliably determine whether one concept, idea, product, package and so on, is better than the alternatives.’ He goes on to state the disadvantages of Quantitative research the disadvantage would be ‘the issues are only measured if they are known prior to beginning of the survey.’

Hair, Moneey, Samouel, Page (2007) state ‘Qualitative data represent descriptions of things that are made without assigning numbers directly. Qualitative data are generally collected using some types of unstructured interviews or observation.’ Focus groups and in depth interviews are often used in this method. ‘This method should be used when you really want to understand in detail why an individual does something’. (http://www.uwa.com)
There are two main advantages of this research method: Nykiel (2007) states it allows for communication with respondents. The second advantage is that it allows for communication between respondents. However, the disadvantage of this method is it’s unreliability as a predictor of the population. This website (http://www.uwa.com) states this method can be useful as a tool for considering what is vital to customers and why it is so vital. It also aids to recognise issues and consider why they are vital.

Nykiel (2007) states ‘Qualitative research is essentially evaluative, not generative. ’Quantitative research is thought to be objective, whereas qualitative research often involves a subjective element.’

The research method chosen by the author is a Quantitative approach. The reason the author chose this method was she felt it was the most appropriate for her, having had experience of conducting this method before and due to the small time frame the author felt it would suit her more than a Qualitative approach. The author also felt it would be a quick and easy way of gathering the relevant information needed to do the research.

A Quantitative approach is carried out using a Questionnaire. Questionnaires are an inexpensive way to gather data from a potentially large number of respondents. Often they are the only feasible way to reach a number of reviewers large enough to allow statistically analysis of the results. The author thought for her research on Customer Satisfaction a Questionnaire was a very useful tool to get the appropriate information to achieve her aim and objectives.

‘The responses are gathered in a standardised way, so questionnaires are more objective, certainly more so than interviews.’

‘Generally it is relatively quick to collect information using a questionnaire.’

(http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk)

The author also carried out secondary research, as referenced earlier in the literature review the author studied the Failte Ireland survey 2009. (See appendices 3)
Participants

The author chose to randomly select twenty participants in no particular order. She also felt that the gender of the participants wasn’t valid but the age group was valid she aimed her questionnaires more so to an older market who were hotel residents as she wanted to get a demographic of this market. As the authors aim was to explore customer evaluation she felt selecting the participants randomly would be best. ‘Random selection is how you draw the sample of people for your study from a population. Random assignment is how you assign the sample that you draw to different groups or treatments in your study.’

(http://www.socialresearchmethods.net)

Procedures

The author sought permission from the HR manager of the hotel to distribute the Questionnaires along with giving a cover letter explaining the research in writing. The author designed twenty Questionnaires, making adjustments to the layout several times. She then chose twenty random participants to distribute the Questionnaires to, where they answered the Questionnaires.

Ethical Considerations

When distributing the Questionnaires the author took into consideration the feelings & confidentiality of the participants and the right to answer the Questionnaire voluntarily and to skip any questions if the participants weren’t comfortable in answering, this was all informed to each participant before the answering of any questions. It was very important to the author that the participants felt at ease answering the questions and not pressurised.
Limitations

There was a limitation to the study which was understood by the author, only twenty questionnaires were allowed to be distributed to twenty participants. The author also took into consideration that some participants mightn’t have answered the Questionnaire as best they could or may have answered it quickly. Also the author took into consideration some participants may have misinterpreted some questions. Other factors may include no real interest and the time taken to conduct the Questionnaire may have caused problems in the study.

Method of analysis

The author illustrated the findings on graphs and charts such as on pie charts and bar charts as she thought these would illustrate the findings as best way possible. The author hoped the findings would be clear and would aid her in her research on Customer Satisfaction.
Results

Introduction

In this chapter the author is going to present the results of her research on customer satisfaction. As stated earlier in the methodology the author is using a Quantitative approach through the use of questionnaires. In analysing her results the author hopes to achieve her objectives:

To investigate the factors that influence customer satisfaction

To find out what customers thought of the whole experience of their stay

After getting no feedback from the previous hotel, the author went to the Hudson Bay hotel where she got permission straight away from the marketing manager Michelle Peake. Later that day the author tested her questionnaire on people in the library, where people spotted mistakes, they were quickly rectified before a sample was sent that evening to Miss Peake. Early the following morning the author went into the hotel to administer the questionnaires as she wanted a demographic of hotel residents. The customers were very helpful and the hotel was very cooperative.

When the author was complete she went to reception where she notified one of the receptionists that she was finished and that the findings were available anytime.

Results

Age group

The purpose of asking this question is to get an average age of the customers, to see which age group is most interested in the hotel and to see which age group is easier to satisfy.

The majority (90%) of the participants were aged 31 and over, which left the remaining (10%) of the participants aged between 21-26, this shows that the hotel may be aiming at an older market, or maybe what the hotel has to offer appeals to an older customer.
Please tick the most appropriate category for you

The purpose of this is to see which category the hotel is most aiming at and which category is it grasping the most.

![Bar chart showing reasons for participants coming](image)

**Reason for participants coming?**

- **No. of participants**
  - Business Trip
  - Leisure Trip
  - VFR
  - Sports Trip
  - Family Trip

**Figure 1**

The above diagram shows the hotel is most popular (55%) amongst people who are looking for a relaxing break the reason maybe because it was midterm break and this time of the year would be most popular for ‘leisure trips’ & ‘family trips’ (30%). Next was ‘Business trips’ (15%).
Please specify where you are from?

The purpose of this question is to see how well known the hotel is and to see what county brings the most clientele for the hotel.

![Bar chart showing the distribution of participants by their origin](Figure 2)

Looking at above chart 55% of participants were from a ‘county within Ireland’, these participants were from Kildare, Kilkenny, Monaghan & Kerry. The second most popular answer was Dublin with 35% of participants coming from there this shows the hotel is very popular amongst Dublin people the reason for this probably due to the new motorway. The last (10%) was participants who didn’t answer the reason, maybe people found it too personal.

This shows the hotel is popular along coastal counties like Dublin & Kerry and with the hotel having a waterfront this may be a reason for the interest in these counties.
To investigate the factors that influence customer satisfaction

Q1. How long was your stay?

The purpose behind this question is to find out are people who stay longer more satisfied than those on a shorter stay and vica versa, also to see does people who stay longer have a better experience than those who stay shorter.

65% stayed between ‘2-3 days’, the reason for this again probably due to the midterm break. Next was ‘other’ (20%) which was made up of 1 night stays along with 2 & 3 nights, followed by (15%) which was 1 week day stay.
Q2. Please specify how you heard about the hotel?

The purpose of this is to see which channels of distribution are more effective and which gets the attentions of the customer most, to see which satisfies the customer the most.

![Graph showing how participants heard about the hotel]

There were 4 boxes for this answer, the most popular way people heard about the hotel was ‘word of mouth’ (55%) this is always the case as this is a marketing tool in itself. Next was ‘other’ (20%) this was made up of TV programme, stayed previously, family & friends, Coma business organisation. Followed by ‘newspaper’ (15%) then lastly ‘internet’ (10%).
Q3. Please specify why you choose to come to the hotel?

The purpose of this is to see is the hotel known for its good service and the reasons for choosing this hotel above the rest in the town.

![Bar chart showing the reasons for choosing the hotel](image)

**Reason for choosing the hotel?**

- **Good reputation**: 8
- **Relatives & Friends had stayed**: 5
- **Good service**: 4
- **Kids club**: 2
- **Conference**: 2
- **Bay**: 2

The most popular answer was ‘good reputation’ (35%), the next was ‘relatives had stayed here before’ (25%) joined with ‘good service’ (25%) these are three very good reasons as they show signs of previous customers being satisfied and are always good reasons for customers wanting to come back. Lastly was ‘other’ (15%) this was made up of kids club, conference and bay.
Q4. What do you think of the location of the hotel?

The purpose of asking this is to see does the location influence the customer’s decision and customer satisfaction.

65% thought the location was ideal away from the busy town this says to the author that this aspect lends itself to customer satisfaction and the rest (35%) said it was good this says to the author that they were happy.

(ii) Do you think the surrounding scenery, plays a factor in the hotel getting custom?

The purpose of this question is to measure how important is local scenery in choosing the hotel.

All (100%) agreed with this question this shows that this aspect helps sell the hotel.

Q5. In today’s economic climate, in your opinion do you think good customer service is essential and plays a huge part in regaining repeat business?

The purpose of this is to see just how important good service is to customers.

85% agreed, one participant said ‘If facilities were good and staff rude I would not come again.’ This shows the absolute importance of providing a good service. 15% had no comment.
(ii) **Do you think good service is linked with customer satisfaction?**

This shows people’s views on this topic.

90% agreed. The remaining 10% had no comment.

(iii) **What do you think customer satisfaction is?**

The purpose of this question is to find out peoples understanding of customer satisfaction.

![Bar Chart](image)

**Figure 5**

35% thought it was ‘customers needs being met’, 15% chose ‘value for money’ 15% chose ‘other’ these answer were as follows: ‘**Thinking ahead of customer**’, ‘**being happy with the hotel**’, ‘**a warm feeling & comfort in surroundings**’, 10% chose friendly staff & staff availability, 10% chose ‘wanting to come back’, 15% didn’t comment. This shows that the majority of participants had an understanding of customer satisfaction.
Q6. **On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being very poor and 5 being excellent) how would you rate the staff**

The purpose of this question is to see how important staff are in the process of customer satisfaction.

Friendliness: 55% thought staff were excellent which is more than half this shows that most were pleased, the remaining (5%) gave 2, (15%) gave 3, (25%) gave 4.

Efficiency: Overall participants thought staff were very efficient (40%) gave 5, (35%) gave 3, (25%) gave 4.

Helpfulness: 50% thought staff were excellent, (40%) gave 4 and (10%) gave 3, overall staff were very helpful to all participants.

Responsiveness: (45%) gave 4, (35%) gave 5, (15%) gave 3, (5%) gave 2; overall participants seem to be reasonably happy.

Q7. **Did you feel the hotel met your needs in every way/were you satisfied?**

The purpose of this question is to see was customer satisfaction achieved.

95% expressed satisfaction. 5% did not respond.
Q8. Would you return to this hotel?

The purpose of this question is to ascertain willingness of repeat business.

Figure 6

90% said they would return this shows that all these participants had a good experience and there is a possibility of repeat business. 10% said ‘maybe’.
Q9. In your opinion, could the hotel improve on their service?

The purpose of this question is it shows whether the customer was happy or not and did the services meet their needs and add to their experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Could hotel improve on its services?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>0</td>
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Figure 7

45% said ‘yes’ and 45% said ‘no’ this shows an average, its neither good nor bad and 10% no comment, maybe they were undecided.
To find out what customers thought of the whole experience of their stay.

Q10. **What do you think of the facilities of the hotel?**

The purpose of this question is measure how important facilities are in choosing a hotel.

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about hotel facilities](image)

50% thought the facilities were ‘very good’ & 40% thought they were ‘excellent’ this shows that this aspect of the hotel really added to the whole experience. 5% said ‘good’ & the other (5%) said ‘average’. 
Q11. Do you think your experience was value for money?

The purpose of this is to measure was the experience worth what they spent.

All (100%) participants agreed this shows that their experience was value for money while staying in the hotel.

Q12. Would you recommend this hotel to your family and friends?

The purpose of this is to see were people satisfied enough to recommend the hotel to their nearest and dearest.

Customers had to select an option, 90% said ‘yes’ this shows that they had a good experience, and 10% said ‘maybe’.

Q13. Did you have a good experience and do you think good service played a part?

The purpose of this question is to measure how important services are in a person’s experience and does service influence a good experience.

85% agreed, one participant said ‘We stay here every yr for the last 3 yrs (A) good service. This shows a good service goes hand in hand with a customer’s experience. 15% were undecided.
Q14. **What factor contributed most to your overall enjoyment of the hotel?**

The purpose if this is to measure what stood out the most and influenced the customers experience the most and did the service have a part in this.

15% didn’t answer, but the majority 85% had all positive feedback. ‘location, location, location’ ‘very child friendly & great food’. ‘The whole package’ all these comments show the hotel provided a good experience for all participants may it be for the service or whatever, the majority had an enjoyable experience.

**Summary of findings**

The findings show that the majority of participants had an understanding of customer satisfaction, each participant seemed to have their own take of what it meant to them such as ‘value for money’, ‘customers needs being met’.

This shows the importance of customer satisfaction to different people, it means something different to everyone.
Discussion

Introduction

In this chapter the author will be discussing the findings of the method chosen, the author chose a quantitative approach through the use of questionnaires. The author hopes to achieve her aims & objectives while carrying out this research on customer satisfaction. The aim & objectives of this research are very important as they give shape & definition to the whole research, as stated earlier the author’s aim is to explore customer evaluation of the Hudson Bay Hotel.

The objectives of the research are outlined as follows:

To investigate the factors that influence customer satisfaction

To find out what the customers thought of their whole experience.

Discussion

Objective One: To investigate the factors that influence customer satisfaction

For the purpose of this research the author explored literature on the topic of customer service & satisfaction as the author believes they both go hand in hand.

As researched earlier in the literature review Quinn & Byron (1999) state ‘Customer service is the total customer experience with your company.’ When participants were asked could the hotel improve on their service (45%) said ‘yes’ even though this is only near half of participants this still shows signs of dissatisfaction as one participant said ‘There’s always room for improvement.’ ‘More staff at reception.’ The author agrees this category of participants fits in with what Daffy’s views. Daffy (2001) states most people find it very tough to list just five businesses where they get really good service that they are happy with. Quinn (1999) also states the reasons for losing customers and one of these reasons are 14% of customers are dissatisfied with products/services.
The other (45%) said ‘no’ this says to the author that these participants were content with their service. The remainder of participants (10%) had no comment. These results also show the importance of service to different people, and how it can hinder in customer satisfaction.

This shows what the author researched earlier ties in with the results she found, the author presumes every participant got the same service so this shows people perceive things differently.

Daffy (2001) states one person never sees the same as the other. What one customer sees as being alright another may see it as being very good, people have different views. Such as what is not acceptable to one customer may be seen as acceptable to another. It’s all down to how each customer perceives the service they are getting.

‘Customer service is the ability to provide a service or product in the way that it has been promised. Customer service is an organization's ability to supply their customers' wants and needs’ (http://www.customerservicemanager.com)

For question five, participants were asked if they thought good service is essential and plays a huge part in regaining business, the majority (85%) of participants agreed. One participant said ‘Definitely, if we weren’t satisfied we wouldn’t come back.’ Another participant said ‘Yes- 3 things location-handly, quality & service- essential, facilities-necessary.’ ‘Yes, it is vital; it is how a business keeps the customers coming back’. It is clear from the literature review that what the author has researched becomes apparent in the results.

For part (1) & (2) of question 5, (90%) thought good service is linked with customer satisfaction, this shows that the majority of participants agree with the author, a participant said ‘Yes, customer service is everything to a hotel. It is most important.’

This shows the significance of how important the two are and how they go hand in hand with one another.
Moriaty (2000) states

‘Achieving customer satisfaction requires satisfying all of the customer’s requirements.’

Zeithaml, Bitner, Gremler (2006) state ‘Satisfaction is the consumer’s fulfillment response.’

After analysing the results the author agrees with the authors she researched previously.

Looking at the results the participants had their own individual views on customer satisfaction and what it meant to them, 35% of participants thought it was ‘customers needs being met’, 15% chose ‘value for money’ 15% chose ‘other’ these answer were as follows: ‘Thinking ahead of customer’, ‘being happy with the hotel’, a warm feeling & comfort in surroundings’, 10% chose friendly staff & staff availability, 10% chose ‘wanting to come back’, 15% didn’t comment.

Before the research the author did not think staff were very much involved in this process of customer satisfaction. As researched earlier ‘Employees who are satisfied in their jobs provide higher levels of customer service. Putting employee and customer satisfaction in the spotlight’ (http://www.leader-values.com)

The author feels if staff are not happy in work they won’t provide a good service, staff are essential in customer satisfaction. This shows the utmost importance of staff as they are a feature of the product and they are a part of the process of customer service. They also mean a lot to customers as the staff make the experience more memorable, looking at Question 6 which was used to see what did participants think of staff, shows on a scale of 1 to 5 upon friendliness, the majority of participants (55%) thought staff were excellent which is more than half who were very happy with this aspect. On efficiency, participants thought staff were very efficient (40%), on helpfulness half of participants thought staff were excellent.

On responsiveness, (35%) thought they were very responsive. Overall looking at the way staff treated customers was very good, and the author feels this may have added to their experience. Looking at these findings shows on average the majority of participants were happy with the service and this shows to the author that these participants are on the right path to customer satisfaction. As Quinn (2002) states every member of staff within the company should see the customer as being their main first priority. The author believes her findings correspondent with Quinn.
Looking at the results of the length participants stayed, shows the majority of participants (65%) stayed between 2-3 days, one participant said ‘We were looking for quiet, peaceful few days and we got them’. After analysing the results the author can observe these participants were more satisfied than those who stayed shorter, this says to the author that participants who stay longer have more time to get to know the hotel and can become more familiar of its services.

For question 7 & 8 the author can measure a link between the two, when participants were asked did the hotel meet their needs 95% expressed satisfaction & 5% did not respond. The research literature can be understood more as Moriarty (2000) states ‘Service with a smile’ implies that service is a novelty that is tacked on to product. Service involves way more than just delivering a product to a customer; a product is made up of many services that go into the making and selling of the product.

When participants were asked would they return to the hotel 90% said they would return this shows that all these participants had a good experience. The remainder of participants 10% said ‘maybe’. This shows of the 90% who said they would return shows customer satisfaction was achieved and there is a possibility of repeat business. The author’s results go in line with Quinn & Byron, (1999) they state the quality of a product is vital in recruiting customers, but the quality of service is the key to growing and bringing repeat business. The author believes it’s very important to regain repeat business.
Objective Two: To find out what customers thought of their whole experience of their stay.

For question 13, the majority of participants 85% agreed that they had a good experience and that good service played a part, one participant said ‘We stay here every yr for the last 3 yrs (A) good service.’ This shows a good service goes hand in hand with a customer’s experience and the importance of a good service in relation to the customer’s experience. 15% were undecided.

Quinn & Byron (1999) state ‘Customer service is the total customer experience with your company.’

The author now understands Quinn & Byron better.

After researching and looking at the results the author can measure the importance of facilities in relation to a customer’s experience, when participants were asked what they thought of the facilities 50% thought the facilities were ‘very good’ & 40% thought they were ‘excellent’ this shows that this aspect of the hotel really adds to the whole experience and is an important aspect for a hotel to get right, 5% said ‘good’ & the other (5%) said ‘average’. This shows overall that participants were happy with the facilities in the hotel.

The author looked at hotel reports carried out by Failte Ireland the website states:

‘Levels of satisfaction for quality and customer service in top grade hotels were high in 2009, 90% of guests stating they were satisfied or very satisfied. Satisfaction with price was rated much lower with 70% satisfaction.’(http://www.failteIreland.ie)

In the author’s findings the (95%) majority of participants needs were met, this shows Failte Irelands report back ups the author findings.
When the author analysed her results about value for money all (100%) participants agreed. One participant said ‘booked during sale €69 for B&B & room for two, excellent value,’ another said ‘The price was very affordable.’

This shows the author got a higher response for price than what Failte Ireland reported.

Participants were asked for their reasons for choosing this hotel above the rest, the most popular answer was ‘good reputation’ (35%), the next was ‘relatives had stayed here before’ (25%) joined with ‘good service’ (25%). The remainder chose ‘other’ (15%) this was made up of kids club, conference and bay.

Margaret Linehan (2007) states ‘Maslow suggested that human needs may be classified into motivating factors that influence behaviour. He proposed that these needs are based on a hierarchical model, with basic needs at the bottom and higher at the top.’ This shows to the author that the participants believed that their needs would be met, as they heard positive feedback from other people.

Having analysed the results the Hudson Bay hotel are on the right path to customer satisfaction, the hotel are in line with Chenet & Johansen (1999) as they state

‘Customer satisfaction is based on three main pillars’

‘Product quality, Price, Service’
Limitations

The author encountered some problems in research along her way; she found it very tough to get permission from any hotel to do her dissertation. After asking a hotel there was no response even after 2-3 weeks. This gave the author a disadvantage in her research. Thankfully when she went to the Hudson Bay, they gave permission straight way.

If the author was to carry out the research again she would ask permission from a few hotels instead of waiting for one hotel as this took up too much time, and gave her a setback.

The author choose a quantitative approach, she was very happy with the method chosen it worked really well and she got all the relevant information she wanted from using this method.
Conclusion

The author set out to conduct research on customer satisfaction of a Hotel. The author achieved her aims and objectives by researching literature, she was surprised to find so much literature on the topic on ‘customer satisfaction’, she researched literature such as customer satisfaction definitions, customer service, the importance of customer satisfaction etc.

The author carried out a quantitative approach through the use of questionnaires, which were distributed to twenty customers within the Hudson Bay hotel. The author got a lot of relevant information from customers, the majority of people understood the concept of customer service & satisfaction and they also understood their importance, this shows to the author that more and more people nowadays know what they want and know what they should get. They are aware of what they are entitled to such as one participant said ‘being happy with the hotel’, a warm feeling & comfort in surroundings’.

When the author asked in the questionnaire were you satisfied 95% expressed satisfaction, this shows these people are happy and may return again as when asked would you return 90% said they would return they shows immediate customer satisfaction.

Overall the author feels that the majority of participants understood customer satisfaction, the author thinks there should be more about satisfaction levels in hotels and other businesses. Customers should voice their opinion more, at the end of the day customers should be every businesses main priority. Also the author got a great response when handing out the questionnaires some people were very happy to voice their opinion.

Having conducted this research the author believes further research and a detailed analysis is needed in the area of customer care.
**Recommendations**

More awareness of customer satisfaction is needed maybe through the use of questionnaires. Customers could give their email address and the hotel could forward on a questionnaire to see if a high level of satisfaction was achieved, not only would this make the customer feel special and feel more cared for it may also create repeat business. The author acknowledges that comment cards are used but not to the extent that they should be.


-http://www.customerservicemanager.com

-http://www.leadervalues.com

-http://www.bnet.com

-http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk

-http://www.socialresearchmethods.net

-http://www.failteireland.ie

-http://www.customersatisfactionsurveyreviews.com

-http://www.uwa.com
Cover Letter

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Janelle Gordon. I am a 4\textsuperscript{th} year student studying Tourism and Hospitality Management in AIT. As part of my B.A. (Honours) degree, I am required to conduct a mini dissertation on a topic of my choice.

I have chosen to research Customer Satisfaction as nowadays this is very important within many industries and due to the economic climate this topic is getting more important to businesses in getting repeat business. As part of the research, I ask you to complete the following questionnaire. Your participation in this study is voluntarily and there is no pressure to take part.

You may also feel free to skip any questions you aren’t comfortable in answering. If you choose to participate all the information will be taken into complete confidentiality and will not be published at any time and you will remain anonymous.

I would be very grateful if you could answer all questions as best and as honestly you can.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Janelle Gordon
Questionnaire on Customer Satisfaction

Please specify your age:

17-20 yrs  □  21-26 yrs  □  27-30 yrs  □  31+  □

Please tick the most appropriate category for you?

Business trip  □
Leisure trip  □
VFR (Visiting family and friends)  □
Sports trip  □
Family trip  □

Please specify where you are from? (Please tick one)

Athlone  □
County within Ireland  □  Please state __________________________
Dublin  □

Q1. How long was your stay?

1 week day  □
2-3 week days  □
Weekend  □
Other  □  Please specify length __________________________
Q2. Please specify how you heard about the hotel? (Please tick one)

- Word of mouth
- Internet
- Newspaper
- Other Please specify___________

Q3. Please specify why you choose to come to this hotel? (Please tick one)

- Good reputation
- Relatives and Friends had stayed here previously
- Good service
- Other Please specify_______

Q4. What do you think of the location of the hotel? (Please tick one)

- Too far from the town
- Ideal location away from the busy town
- Good

(ii) Do you think the surrounding scenery, plays a factor in the hotel getting custom?

Yes □ No □
Q5. In today’s economic climate, in your opinion do you think good customer service is essential and plays a huge part in regaining repeat business?

(ii) Do you think good service is linked with customer satisfaction?

(iii) What do you think customer satisfaction is?

- Customer’s needs being met
- Friendly staff & staff availability
- Value for money
- Thinking about coming back

Other □ Please state
Q6. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being very poor and 5 being excellent) how would you rate

The staff

Friendliness
1  2  3  4  5

Efficiency
1  2  3  4  5

Helpfulness
1  2  3  4  5

Responsiveness
1  2  3  4  5

Any other comments

Q.7 Did you feel the hotel met your needs in every way/ were you satisfied?

Yes ☐ If ‘yes’ please specify why you chose this answer

No ☐ If ‘no’ please specify why you chose this answer
Q8. Would you return to this hotel?

Yes  □
No  □  If ‘no’ please specify reason _____________________________
Maybe  □
Undecided  □

Q9. In your opinion, could the hotel improve on their service?

Yes  □  If ‘yes’ please specify in what way they could improve
___________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

No  □

Q10. What do you think of the facilities of the hotel?

Excellent  □
Very Good  □
Good  □
Average  □
Q11. Do you think your experience was value for money?

Yes □ If ‘yes’ please specify why you chose this answer______________________

________________________________________________________________________

No □ If ‘no’ please specify why you chose this answer______________________

________________________________________________________________________

Q12. Would you recommend this hotel to your friends and family?

Yes □

No □

Maybe □

Undecided □

Please give reasons why you choose that answer

________________________________________________________________________

Q13. Did you have a good experience and do you think good service played a part?

Yes □

No □

Undecided □

If answered ‘yes’ please specify? ____________________________________________

If answered ‘no’ please specify? ____________________________________________
Q14. What factor contributed most to your overall enjoyment of the hotel?

THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION