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Enhancing Guest Loyalty Through Personalization, Technology Integration, and Service Excellence: Evidence from the Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

Guest loyalty has emerged as a critical determinant of competitiveness and long-term sustainability in the hospitality industry. In an increasingly dynamic service environment, hotels are adopting personalization, technology integration, and service excellence strategies to enhance guest experiences and strengthen customer retention. The present study investigated the influence of these factors on guest loyalty and examined the organizational challenges affecting their implementation in the hospitality industry.

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A quantitative cross-sectional research design was employed using data collected from 500 respondents comprising hotel guests, staff members, and managers from selected hotels in Uttar Pradesh, India. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability and validity testing, stakeholder assessment, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The demographic findings indicated a diverse respondent profile representing multiple stakeholder groups and hotel locations. Reliability and validity assessment confirmed the adequacy of the measurement model, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding acceptable thresholds and satisfactory construct validity. Stakeholder evaluation revealed that service excellence was perceived as the most important driver of guest loyalty (Overall Mean = 4.17), followed by guest loyalty (4.10), satisfaction (4.03), technology integration (4.03), and personalization (3.96). The findings further indicated high levels of guest satisfaction, with respondents expressing strong intentions to revisit hotels (Mean = 4.05) and recommend them to others (Mean = 4.20).

The study also identified key organizational challenges affecting loyalty enhancement, including high technology costs (Mean = 4.20), lack of trained staff (Mean = 4.10), difficulties in understanding guest expectations (Mean = 4.00), resistance to organizational change (Mean = 3.90), and technical issues (Mean = 3.80). Correlation analysis demonstrated significant positive relationships among all study variables ($p < 0.01$), with guest satisfaction exhibiting the strongest association with loyalty ($r = 0.79$), followed by service excellence ($r = 0.74$), personalization ($r = 0.68$), and technology integration ($r = 0.62$). Multiple regression analysis revealed that the proposed model explained 71.9% of the variance in guest loyalty ($R^2 = 0.719$). Service excellence emerged as the strongest predictor of guest loyalty ($\beta = 0.45$), followed by personalization ($\beta = 0.32$) and technology integration ($\beta = 0.28$).

The study concludes that guest loyalty is significantly influenced by an integrated combination of superior service delivery, personalized guest experiences, and technology-enabled hospitality services. While service excellence remains the most influential determinant, effective personalization and technological innovation further enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. The findings provide valuable managerial insights for hospitality organizations seeking to improve customer retention and achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

Keywords: Guest Loyalty, Guest Satisfaction, Personalization, Technology Integration, Service Excellence, Customer Experience, Hospitality Industry, Hotel Management, Customer Retention, Service Quality.

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry has increasingly shifted from a service-oriented model to an experience-driven business environment where guest satisfaction and loyalty are considered essential for long-term competitiveness. In contemporary hospitality markets, customers expect not only quality accommodation and efficient services but also personalized, seamless, and memorable experiences throughout their service journey. As competition intensifies and customer expectations continue to evolve, hospitality organizations are focusing on strategies that enhance guest engagement and strengthen customer retention (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

Guest loyalty has become a critical strategic objective because loyal customers contribute significantly to repeat visits, positive word-of-mouth communication, and organizational profitability. Previous research indicates that retaining existing customers is more cost-effective than attracting new customers, making customer loyalty an important indicator of sustainable business performance (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Consequently, hotels are increasingly investing in customer-centric practices that improve satisfaction and emotional attachment.

Among the major determinants of guest loyalty, personalization has gained considerable importance in hospitality management. Personalized services such as customized communication, tailored recommendations, and recognition of guest preferences enhance customer satisfaction and perceived value (Kandampully et al., 2015). Simultaneously, technology integration through artificial intelligence, mobile applications, smart room systems, and contactless services has transformed hotel operations and customer interaction. These technologies improve operational efficiency, convenience, and service accessibility, thereby contributing to enhanced guest experiences (Buhalis & Leung, 2018).

Despite rapid technological advancement, service excellence remains fundamental to hospitality success. Dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and assurance significantly influence customer perception and loyalty behavior (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Frontline employees continue to play a central role in creating positive emotional experiences for guests.

Although previous studies have independently examined personalization, technology integration, and service quality, limited research has explored their combined influence on guest loyalty within an integrated framework. Therefore, the present study investigates the impact of personalization, technology integration, and service excellence on guest loyalty in the hospitality industry.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional research design to examine the influence of personalization, technology integration, and service excellence on guest loyalty in the hospitality industry. The study was conducted in selected hotels located in major cities of Uttar Pradesh, India, including Lucknow, Kanpur, Prayagraj, Varanasi, and Ayodhya. These cities were selected due to their expanding hospitality infrastructure and growing tourism activities, making them appropriate for examining service delivery and guest experience in emerging hospitality markets.

The study utilized a multi-stakeholder approach to obtain a comprehensive understanding of hospitality service dynamics. The target population comprised hotel guests, hotel staff, and managerial personnel associated with the selected hotels. A total sample of 500 respondents was included in the study, consisting of hotel guests, operational staff, and hotel managers. The inclusion of multiple respondent groups enabled the study to capture both customer perceptions and internal organizational perspectives regarding personalization practices, technology integration, and service excellence. Such an approach enhanced the reliability and practical

relevance of the findings by incorporating viewpoints from both service providers and service recipients.

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate representation from different respondent categories and hotel segments, including budget, mid-scale, and luxury hotels. Guests aged 18 years or above who had experienced hotel services during the study period were included, while staff and managers directly involved in hotel operations and customer service activities were selected for participation.

Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires developed after extensive review of hospitality and customer experience literature. Separate but related questionnaire sections were designed for guests, staff, and managers to evaluate service quality, personalization, technology usage, customer satisfaction, operational challenges, and loyalty-related perceptions. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” The service quality dimensions were adapted from the SERVQUAL model proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), while technology-related constructs were guided by the Technology Acceptance Model developed by Davis (1989).

Prior to the final survey, pilot testing was conducted to assess the clarity and reliability of the instrument. Reliability analysis using Cronbach’s alpha demonstrated acceptable internal consistency values above the recommended threshold of 0.70. Data collection was carried out through both printed and online questionnaires after obtaining informed consent from participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study.

The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to summarize respondent characteristics and study variables. Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine relationships among variables, while multiple regression analysis was employed to identify the predictive influence of personalization, technology integration, and service excellence on guest loyalty. Statistical significance was evaluated at $p < 0.05$.

RESULT

Respondent Profile and Sample Characteristics

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents included in the study. A total of 500 valid responses were analyzed, comprising hotel guests (60%), staff members (25%), and managers (15%). The gender distribution showed that male respondents represented 59.8% of the sample, while female respondents accounted for 38.0%, with 2.2% preferring not to disclose their gender. Respondents were equally distributed across the five selected cities of Uttar Pradesh, ensuring balanced regional representation. Among hotel guests, the largest proportion belonged to the 26–35 years age group (38%), followed by the 18–25 years category (32%). Regarding travel purpose, leisure travel emerged as the primary reason for hotel stays (34%), followed by business travel (26%) and religious tourism (20%). These findings indicate that the hospitality market in the study area is largely driven by younger and economically

active travelers, emphasizing the importance of personalized services, technology-enabled interactions, and service excellence in enhancing guest loyalty.

Table 1. Respondent Profile and Sample Characteristics (N = 500)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Respondent Type	Guest	300	60.0
	Staff	125	25.0
	Manager	75	15.0
Gender	Male	299	59.8
	Female	190	38.0
	Prefer not to say	11	2.2
Location	Kanpur	100	20.0
	Lucknow	100	20.0
	Prayagraj	100	20.0
	Varanasi	100	20.0
	Ayodhya	100	20.0
Guest Age Group (n=300)	18–25 years	96	32.0
	26–35 years	114	38.0
	36–45 years	54	18.0
	46–60 years	27	9.0
	Above 60 years	9	3.0
Purpose of Visit (n=300)	Leisure	102	34.0
	Business	78	26.0
	Religious	60	20.0
	Family	45	15.0
	Other	15	5.0

Measurement Model Assessment

Table 2. Reliability and Validity Assessment of Study Constructs

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Factor Loading Range	Variance Explained (%)
Personalization	5	0.82	0.65–0.82	14
Technology Integration	4	0.79	0.62–0.80	13
Service Excellence	3	0.85	0.68–0.85	16
Satisfaction	3	0.81	0.70–0.83	12
Loyalty	3	0.84	0.72–0.86	13
Total Variance Explained	—	—	—	68

Additional Validity Statistics

Test	Value
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.81
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (χ^2)	1450.35
Significance (p-value)	<0.001

Interpretation

The reliability and validity assessment demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties of the measurement instrument. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.79 to 0.85, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Factor loadings varied between 0.62 and 0.86, confirming adequate construct validity. Furthermore, the KMO value of 0.81 and significant Bartlett's Test supported the suitability of the dataset for factor analysis. Collectively, the five constructs explained 68% of the total variance, indicating strong explanatory power.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF STUDY CONSTRUCTS

Stakeholder Assessment of Key Drivers of Guest Loyalty

The findings presented in Table 3 indicate that all stakeholder groups perceived personalization, technology integration, and service excellence as important contributors to guest loyalty. Among these factors, service excellence emerged as the strongest driver, recording the highest overall mean score ($M = 4.17$), followed by loyalty ($M = 4.10$) and satisfaction ($M = 4.03$). The results suggest that guests are more likely to remain loyal when hotels consistently deliver high-quality services, maintain professional staff behavior, and provide reliable hospitality experiences.

Technology integration also received favorable evaluations ($M = 4.03$), indicating that digital services enhance convenience and support positive guest experiences. Personalization, although positively rated ($M = 3.96$), recorded the lowest mean score, suggesting opportunities for improving customized service delivery. The consistently high ratings across guests, staff, and managers demonstrate a shared understanding that service quality, personalized experiences, and technology-enabled services play a critical role in strengthening guest satisfaction and fostering long-term loyalty. Overall, the findings provide preliminary evidence that enhancing these service dimensions can significantly contribute to customer retention and repeat visitation within the hospitality industry.

Table 3. Stakeholder Assessment of Factors Influencing Guest Loyalty

Factor	Guests Mean $\pm$ SD	Staff Mean $\pm$ SD	Managers Mean $\pm$ SD	Overall Mean	Rank
Service Excellence	4.15 $\pm$ 0.76	4.05 $\pm$ 0.78	4.30 $\pm$ 0.70	4.17	1
Loyalty	4.10 $\pm$ 0.78	4.00 $\pm$ 0.80	4.20 $\pm$ 0.74	4.10	2
Satisfaction	4.05 $\pm$ 0.81	3.95 $\pm$ 0.83	4.10 $\pm$ 0.77	4.03	3

Technology Integration	3.88 ± 0.79	4.00 ± 0.76	4.20 ± 0.72	4.03	4
Personalization	3.92 ± 0.84	3.85 ± 0.80	4.10 ± 0.75	3.96	5

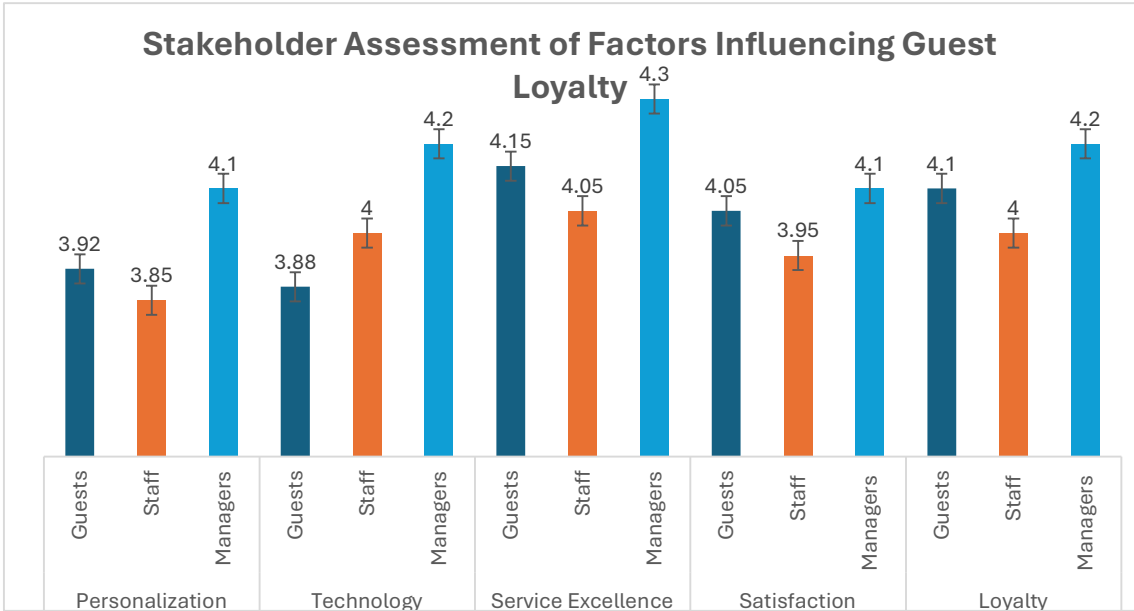


Chart 1. Stakeholder Assessment of Factors Influencing Guest Loyalty

GUEST LOYALTY INTENTIONS AND SATISFACTION

The findings indicate high levels of guest satisfaction and loyalty, with all mean scores exceeding 4.0. The highest mean score was observed for the statement “I would recommend this hotel” (M = 4.20, SD = 0.75), suggesting strong positive word-of-mouth intentions among guests. Similarly, respondents expressed high overall satisfaction with their hotel experience (M = 4.10, SD = 0.80) and a strong willingness to revisit the hotel in the future (M = 4.05, SD = 0.78). The relatively low standard deviation values indicate consistency in guest responses. Overall, the results suggest that positive guest experiences contribute significantly to customer satisfaction and loyalty, increasing the likelihood of repeat visits and recommendations.

Table 4. Guest Satisfaction and Loyalty

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am satisfied with my overall experience	4.10	0.80
I would revisit this hotel	4.05	0.78
I would recommend this hotel	4.20	0.75

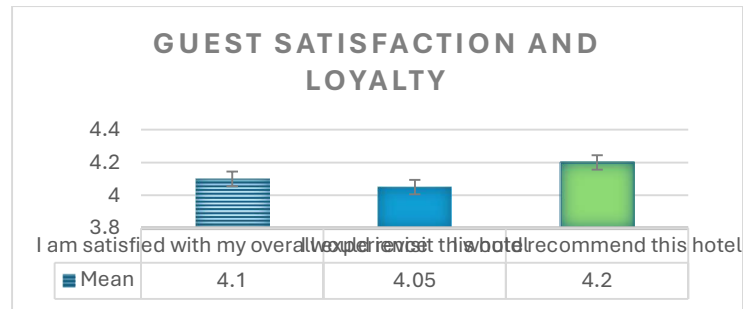


Chart 2: Guest Satisfaction and Loyalty Intentions

Organizational Challenges Affecting Guest Loyalty

Table 4 presents managerial perceptions regarding the major organizational challenges that may hinder the successful development of guest loyalty. The results reveal that the high cost of technology represents the most significant challenge ($M = 4.20$), suggesting that financial constraints limit the ability of hotels to invest in advanced digital solutions and maintain technology-driven service improvements. Given the increasing role of technology in enhancing customer experience, such constraints may reduce the effectiveness of digital transformation initiatives.

The shortage of trained personnel emerged as the second most critical challenge ($M = 4.10$). This finding is particularly important because service excellence and personalization depend heavily on employee competence and service delivery skills. Without adequate training, hotels may struggle to consistently deliver the quality of service expected by guests.

Managers also identified difficulties in understanding evolving guest expectations ($M = 4.00$), indicating that rapidly changing customer preferences create additional challenges for hospitality organizations. Resistance to organizational change ($M = 3.90$) and technical issues ($M = 3.80$) were also reported as barriers that may negatively affect service consistency and operational efficiency.

Collectively, these findings suggest that achieving high levels of guest loyalty requires more than customer-oriented strategies alone. Hotels must simultaneously address internal operational challenges, invest in workforce development, and strengthen technological capabilities to ensure that personalization, technology integration, and service excellence can be effectively translated into superior guest experiences and long-term customer loyalty.

Table 5. Managerial Assessment of Organizational Challenges Affecting Guest Loyalty

Challenge	Mean	SD	Rank
High Cost of Technology	4.20	0.76	1
Lack of Trained Staff	4.10	0.78	2
Difficulty Understanding Guest Expectations	4.00	0.79	3
Resistance to Change Among Staff	3.90	0.80	4
Technical Issues and System Failures	3.80	0.82	5

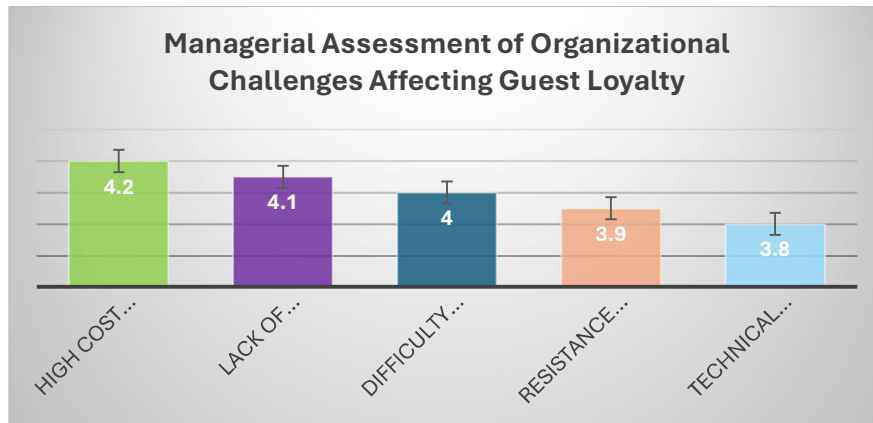


Chart 3: bar graph showing Managerial Assessment of Organizational Challenges Affecting Guest Loyalty

Correlation Analysis of Variables Influencing Guest Loyalty

The correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships among personalization, technology integration, service excellence, satisfaction, and guest loyalty ($p < 0.01$). The findings indicate that improvements in these dimensions are associated with higher levels of guest loyalty. Among the independent variables, service excellence demonstrated the strongest positive relationship with guest loyalty ($r = 0.74$), followed by personalization ($r = 0.68$) and technology integration ($r = 0.62$). This suggests that guests are more likely to remain loyal when hotels consistently deliver high-quality services, provide personalized experiences, and effectively utilize technology to enhance convenience and satisfaction.

Furthermore, guest satisfaction exhibited the strongest correlation with loyalty ($r = 0.79$), indicating that satisfied guests are more likely to revisit hotels and recommend them to others. The strong positive associations among all variables suggest that personalization, technology integration, and service excellence collectively contribute to creating satisfying guest experiences, which ultimately strengthen customer loyalty. These findings support the conceptual framework of the study and highlight the importance of an integrated customer-centric approach in fostering long-term guest relationships.

Relationship with Loyalty

The analysis also reveals strong positive relationships between the independent variables and guest loyalty:

- Personalization $\rightarrow$ Loyalty ($r = 0.68$)
- Technology $\rightarrow$ Loyalty ($r = 0.62$)
- Service Excellence $\rightarrow$ Loyalty ($r = 0.74$)

Table 6: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variables	Personalization	Technology	Service Excellence	Satisfaction	Loyalty
Personalization	1				
Technology Integration	0.61**	1			
Service Excellence	0.66**	0.63**	1		
Satisfaction	0.70**	0.65**	0.72**	1	
Loyalty	0.68**	0.62**	0.74**	0.79**	1

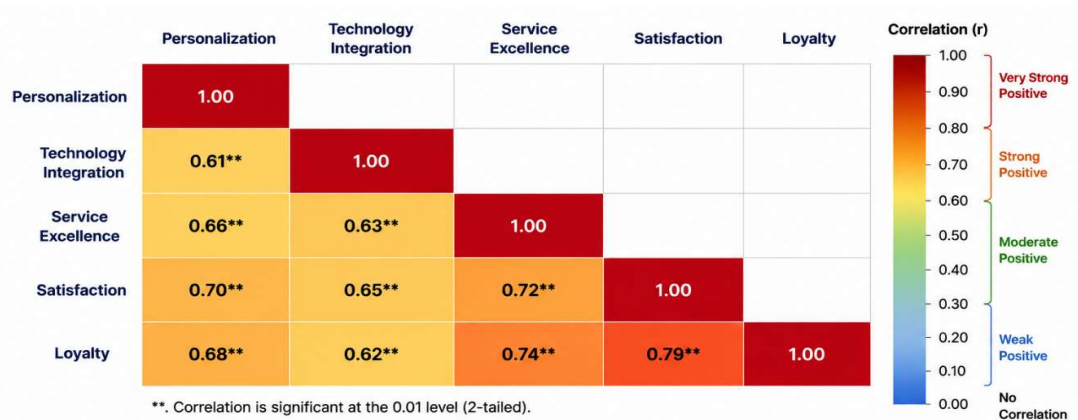


Chart 4: Pearson correlation heat map showing *correlation analysis of variables influencing guest loyalty*

Determinants of Guest Loyalty: Multiple Regression Analysis

The regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which personalization, technology integration, and service excellence predict guest loyalty. The model was statistically significant ($F = 395.20$, $p < 0.001$) and explained 71.9% of the variance in guest loyalty ($R^2 = 0.719$), indicating a strong predictive capability of the selected variables.

Among the predictors, service excellence emerged as the most influential determinant of guest loyalty ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that improvements in service quality have the greatest impact on enhancing customer retention, repeat visitation, and recommendation intentions. Personalization was identified as the second strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that customized services and individualized guest experiences significantly contribute to loyalty development. Technology integration also demonstrated a significant positive effect on guest loyalty ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the growing importance of digital services and technology-enabled convenience in shaping customer behavior.

Overall, the regression findings confirm that guest loyalty is influenced by a combination of service excellence, personalization, and technology integration. However, service excellence remains the most critical factor, emphasizing that despite technological advancements and

personalization initiatives, the delivery of superior hospitality services continues to be the primary driver of long-term guest loyalty.

Table 7. Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Guest Loyalty

Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
0.848	0.719	0.716	0.42

ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	210.45	3	70.15	395.20	<0.001
Residual	82.30	496	0.166		
Total	292.75	499			

Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	β	t-value	p-value
Constant	0.85	—	4.04	<0.001
Personalization	0.31	0.32	6.20	<0.001
Technology Integration	0.27	0.28	6.75	<0.001
Service Excellence	0.42	0.45	7.80	<0.001

Discussion

The present study investigated the influence of personalization, technology integration, and service excellence on guest loyalty in the hospitality industry. The findings revealed that respondents generally held positive perceptions regarding all study variables, with service excellence emerging as the highest-rated dimension (overall mean = 4.17). This finding highlights the critical role of service quality in shaping customer experiences and fostering long-term loyalty. The result is consistent with Parasuraman et al. (1988), who identified reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility as fundamental determinants of customer satisfaction and loyalty. Similarly, Kandampully et al. (2015) reported that superior service delivery significantly enhances customer retention and strengthens long-term relationships in hospitality settings.

Technology integration also received favorable evaluations across stakeholder groups. Managers perceived technology integration more positively than guests, suggesting that while hotels have invested considerably in digital systems, customers may not always experience their full benefits. These findings support Buhalis and Leung (2018), who emphasized that

digital transformation has become an essential component of hospitality competitiveness. Likewise, Morosan and DeFranco (2016) found that technology-enabled services such as online booking systems, mobile applications, and digital check-in facilities positively influence customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

Personalization was positively evaluated but received comparatively lower scores than service excellence and technology integration. This finding suggests that although hotels recognize the strategic importance of personalization, its practical implementation remains inconsistent. Similar observations were reported by Lemon and Verhoef (2016), who highlighted that personalized interactions throughout the customer journey significantly improve customer experiences. Kandampully et al. (2018) further argued that personalized services create emotional connections with customers, which strengthen satisfaction and loyalty.

The findings related to guest satisfaction and loyalty demonstrated particularly encouraging results. Guests reported high overall satisfaction with their hotel experiences ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.80$), while recommendation intention recorded the highest score among loyalty indicators ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.75$). Revisit intention also achieved a favorable mean score ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.78$), indicating strong potential for repeat patronage. These findings suggest that positive service experiences encourage both behavioral loyalty and positive word-of-mouth communication. The results are consistent with Oliver (1999), who identified satisfaction as a key antecedent of loyalty formation. Similarly, Rather and Sharma (2017) found that satisfied hotel guests are more likely to revisit and recommend hospitality establishments to others.

The correlation analysis further demonstrated significant positive relationships among personalization, technology integration, service excellence, satisfaction, and loyalty. Satisfaction exhibited the strongest relationship with loyalty ($r = 0.79$), followed by service excellence ($r = 0.74$), indicating that satisfied guests are more likely to develop favorable attitudes and repeat purchase intentions. These findings support previous hospitality research suggesting that customer satisfaction serves as a mediating mechanism through which service quality influences loyalty outcomes (Kandampully et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the regression analysis identified service excellence as the strongest predictor of guest loyalty, followed by personalization and technology integration. This finding confirms that while technological innovations and personalized experiences contribute significantly to customer retention, exceptional service delivery remains the primary driver of loyalty in the hospitality sector. The results reinforce the service-profit chain perspective, which suggests that superior service quality generates customer satisfaction, leading ultimately to loyalty and organizational performance.

The study also identified several organizational barriers that may hinder loyalty development, including high technology costs, lack of trained staff, and difficulties in understanding evolving guest expectations. These findings align with Ivanov and Webster (2019), who noted that successful hospitality innovation requires both technological investment and workforce readiness. Consequently, hotels seeking to strengthen guest loyalty should focus not only on technological advancement but also on employee development and service excellence initiatives.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that guest loyalty is influenced by an integrated combination of service excellence, personalization, technology integration, and customer satisfaction. Among these factors, service excellence and satisfaction emerged as the most influential determinants, emphasizing the continuing importance of delivering consistent, customer-centered hospitality experiences to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

Conclusion

The present study examined the influence of personalization, technology integration, and service excellence on guest loyalty in the hospitality industry. The findings revealed that all three factors positively contribute to guest satisfaction and loyalty, with service excellence emerging as the most influential determinant. The results further demonstrated that guests who experience high-quality services, personalized interactions, and convenient technology-enabled facilities are more likely to revisit hotels and recommend them to others. Correlation and regression analyses confirmed significant positive relationships among the study variables, highlighting the importance of an integrated approach to customer experience management. Overall, the study concludes that enhancing service quality, supported by personalization and technology integration, is essential for strengthening guest loyalty and achieving sustainable competitive advantage in the hospitality sector.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, hospitality organizations should prioritize service excellence through continuous employee training, effective service delivery, and customer-centric practices. Hotels should strengthen personalization strategies by utilizing guest data to provide customized experiences and tailored recommendations. Furthermore, investment in user-friendly digital technologies, such as mobile applications, digital check-in systems, and CRM platforms, can improve convenience and overall guest experience. Managers should also regularly monitor guest feedback and adopt proactive measures to address service gaps and changing customer expectations.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to selected hotels in Uttar Pradesh, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other geographical regions. The research adopted a cross-sectional design and therefore captured guest perceptions at a single point in time. Additionally, the study relied primarily on self-reported responses, which may be subject to respondent bias.

Future Scope of Research

Future studies may expand the geographical coverage by including hotels from different states and countries to enhance generalizability. Researchers may also employ longitudinal research designs to examine changes in guest loyalty over time. Further investigation into emerging factors such as artificial intelligence, smart hospitality technologies, sustainability practices, and customer experience management could provide deeper insights into loyalty formation in the evolving hospitality industry.

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