

4-27-2021

Hotel Wellness Final Draft

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Hotel Wellness Programs Research

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HOSP 6900 Hospitality Capstone

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April 27, 2021

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT..... 3

INTRODUCTION..... 4

LITERATURE REVIEW..... 5

METHODOLOGY 6

FINDINGS.....7

LIMITATIONS 8

IMPLICATIONS..... 8

CONCLUSION..... 9

REFERENCES..... 11

Abstract

Hotel wellness programs have been recognized by businesses and societies fostering wellness among individuals. Sometimes, responding to higher costs and enhancing corporate social responsibility for these programs have grown well in popularity (Torres & Zhang, 2021). Most hotels that offer a healthy lifestyle program focus on aspects of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness in the pursuit of total well-being (PR Newswire, 2018). Since this is the foundation for these wellness programs, it is paramount that guests are able to have options in activities they partake in that are offered by their hotel of choice. The objective is for guests to be able to accomplish their health goals and maintain their lifestyle while away from their home. In doing so, creating wellness amenities throughout hotel properties may help motivate patrons to commit to a healthier and positive lifestyle. Properties are beginning to introduce a healthier cuisine option for guests which a majority of the menu items will be well-balanced choices using organic produce and other products. In addition, a popular form of wellness tourism represents forty-one percent of wellness tourism expenditure, growing across the entire hospitality industry (Jung et al., 2018). Additionally, spas that are in hotels present opportunities to create special treatments that support the promotion of wellness-being and healthy lifestyle options in the hotel. Whether it involves a certain specialty for treatments, chemicals used in products, or even the setup of the spa outlet there are ways that wellness can be successful in a department whose sole purpose is on enhancing wellness-being (Han et al., 2019). There are various wellness programs that offered throughout various hotels worldwide and it is imperative to understand what guest's preferences are for these programs.

Keywords Wellness-Being, Healthy, Lifestyle

Introduction

Certain large name brand hotels have either created wellness programs or introduced lifestyle features. This involves designing a space that is the epitome of a standard apartment with amenities that are used in our everyday lives. “Customers of today make purchases and consumptions on wellness-related products or services and aligned with new consumer trends major hotel brands initiate wellness marketing strategies and promotions” (Park et al., 2020). Being able to understand how guests react to the wellness products offered requires research on post purchase and being able to help acquire knowledge on preferences (Han et al., 2019). Spas are one way hotels utilize this service for wellness programs because of the treatments that are offered and are not specific to any amenities. Previous research that has been conducted had concluded that quality, emotion, satisfaction and desire are key indicators on how guests make their decisions as a process (Chua et al., 2015). Based on this information, having wellness-being programs that are specifically catered to a guest’s persona and goals are important to focus on for hotels who are creating and maintaining these programs. Wellness tourism is projected to grow nine percent per year, making it fifty percent faster growth of global tourism (Han et al., 2017). Guest desire is one of the most direct driving forces and variables of intention in understanding wellness-being programs in hotels (Han et al., 2019). Also, behavioral intention plays a role in how guests will react to a specific service or product (Han et al., 2019). Because of this information, a hypothesis is made that both emotion and perception are key indicators of effect on desire (Han et al., 2019). The purpose of this article is to review the published research on the effects of wellness programs on guest satisfaction and understanding the background behind the factors that create these positive experiences for health wellness-being.

Literature Review

Due to the difference in customer expectations and hotel investment, wellness attributes in the upper-upscale and luxury hotels can differ from the other lodgings” (Huh et al., 2019). Wellness is a way of life by creating a healthy body, mind, and spirit through knowledge and positive interventions (Messerli & Oyama, 2004). Customer expectations and vary between various tourism destinations (Park et al., 2020). There is a hotel that offers wellness programs such as healthy nutrition options and wellness activities (Ban & Seres, 2018). The purpose of the hotel’s program is to raise their star rating higher from four stars to five. Also, "the concept of wellness-related lifestyle is based on a concept proposed by Mueller and Kaufmann and includes seven factors, namely social contact, healthy diet, travel, vacation, holistic achievement, fitness, and environmental protection" (Chen et al., 2014). Wellness-related lifestyle, perceived value, motivational factors, and respondents’ characteristics are important for hotels to analyze (Težak, 2019). “The well-being concept concentrates on how tourism satisfies tourists’ psychological, social and spiritual factors, while healthy lifestyle links physical behavioral factors to tourism” (Težak, 2019). This well-being concept plays a role in overall life satisfaction finding purpose, meaning, and happiness (Težak, 2019). These indicators are also imperative for creating hotel wellness-being programs and is displayed worldwide, outlining the future for these programs as there is always a continuous shift of growth in the hospitality industry. In addition, one tool of measurement that was used to help determine guest satisfaction is SERVQUAL (Han et al., 2019). This compromises of tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). These are indicators that help hospitality firms better understand the derivative on guest satisfaction characteristics.

SERVQUAL used assurance and empathy to separately measure characteristics such as communication, credibility, security, competence, access, understanding, and knowing our customers (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Through these dimensions, SERVQUAL's objective is to be a tool used by service businesses to help outline guest perceptions and expectations (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In addition, SERVQUAL can also be used as a tool to help categorize levels of service quality based on high, medium, and low measurements which based on results will be used to gain managerial insights (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Essentially, the focus is on enhancing the levels of service for our guests and using tools to help make companies better.

Methodology

The main priority discussed in the articles used is to integrate hotels with wellness programs, where guests can help live and maintain a healthy lifestyle without being in the very own comfort of their home. This research analyzes results from guest data that helps understand overall guest satisfaction the positive of having a wellness program in a hotel. Going forward in research, understanding what specific features in wellness guest rooms based on results from customer's preferences will help determine what amenities are necessary for creating the ultimate healthy guest experience. Therefore, tangibility is crucial in these hotels that offer wellness-being programs because guest perceive the outward appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Having the right facilities on a hotel property should align with one's desire to work towards fitness and should cater through guest needs with variety in product.

Reliability as well will measure how services are delivered properly and effectively (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Also, empathy is important because it allows easy communication, access, and customer understanding as aspects to guest satisfaction, especially healthy wellness-

being where this subject may be sensitive to some people (Parasuraman et al., 1988). This is why emotion plays a vital role in influencing overall guest satisfaction is hospitality (Han et al., 2019). University students from the Republic of Korea conducted their hypothesis on presenting an online survey to a select few random guests from a hotel where guests used spa and wellness services in Korea (Han et al., 2019). Based on this method of research, this shows that any hospitality company throughout the rest of the world can also conduct research from initiating surveys to help obtain a deeper understanding on how guest satisfaction is achieved during a stay at a hotel that offers healthy wellness-being programs. Easy measurement from survey can focus on levels of satisfaction on each service (Han et al., 2019).

Findings

The University students from the Republic of Korea conducted a SERVQUAL designed survey on a randomly selected pod of guests in Korea who stayed in hotels that offer wellness-being programs. A hypothesis was proposed that guest satisfaction derives from understanding that both emotion and perception are key indicators of effect on desire (Han et al., 2019). The results from their survey concluded that of the participants overall, nearly fifty-eight percent of the participants were males and approximately forty-one percent of guests were female (Han et al., 2019). The age of the largest group was between ages fifty to fifty-nine years old at twenty-five percent, followed by ages thirty to thirty-nine at twenty-two percent, then ages forty to forty-nine at around twenty percent, then ages twenty to twenty-nine at sixteen percent, and ages sixty and older at fifteen percent (Han et al., 2019). In terms of wellness-being use at the spa within the previous six months, around forty-eight percent of the overall guests had reported spa use in their hotel, which years after, the percentages for the previous years had fluctuated (Han et al., 2019).

Questions asked on the SERVQUAL survey had guests rate their satisfaction rating from one being dissatisfied to seven being extremely satisfied, or strongly disagree to strongly agree, and bored to relaxed (Han et al., 2019). This level of various feedback is vital for hotel's feedback and future growth to improve their outlets, providing an enhanced level of service. In another study, another group of university students in Asia collected data through guest reviews aligned with six wellness attributes, which are physical fitness, beauty care, diet, nutrition, mental activity education, and meditation (Park et al., 2021). While most hotels in the world offer gyms and even spas, the focus of these hotels is to go further and analyze nutrition and promote mental health through reading clubs and seminars inside the hotel property making this program unique (Park et al., 2021).

Limitations

While it would be ideal for everything to be flawless in a wellness-being program, it regrettably is not. There are limitations of the research that has been conducted. Research was collected by students who proposed research from Hotel Room Executives, where COVID played a significant role in limitations on the hospitality industry (Guillet & Chu, 2021). These students suggested that there should be a more in-depth understanding and implementation of how crisis occurs as well as the recovery period (Guillet & Chu, 2021). Eventually, the effects of the pandemic will run its course and die out. Therefore, the hotel will need to examine a strong recovery process when this is over, which will require a sense of reassurance and trust developed from guests who are looking to travel again as well as experience wellness-being programs (Guillet & Chu, 2021). With the factors of guest satisfaction concluding that quality, emotion, satisfaction and desire are key indicators on how guests make their decisions as a process (Chua

et al., 2015), having a worldwide pandemic shutdown has certainly placed a halt in any key motivators for overall guest satisfaction.

Implications

The results from my findings have indicated that the university students in Korea concluded from their survey that of the participants overall, nearly fifty-eight percent of the participants were males and approximately forty-one percent of guests were female (Han et al., 2019). The age of the largest group was between ages fifty to fifty-nine years old at twenty-five percent, followed by ages thirty to thirty-nine at twenty-two percent, then ages forty to forty-nine at around twenty percent, then ages twenty to twenty-nine at sixteen percent, and ages sixty and older at fifteen percent (Han et al., 2019). Based on this information, a majority of guests who enjoy wellness travel from Korea are aged fifty and older. This survey can be used anywhere in the world that is wanting to better understand the target market for travelers who prefer to stay in hotels that offer a wellness-being program. In addition, guests were also asked to rate their wellness experience from hotel based on a scale ranged one to seven which represented their satisfaction levels from their stay, whether the guests agreed or disagreed with the statement provided on the SERVQUAL evaluation (Han et al., 2019). In addition, information was tested with a relationship regarding guest preference for satisfaction versus emotion, and results showed that satisfaction was a significant positive function of pleasure (Han et al., 2019). Next the students assessed the effect of pleasure, where results had shown that pleasure had a significant positive impact on desire (Han et al., 2019). This information gathered demonstrates that in this niche market each characteristic played a role in supporting other emotions and feelings towards satisfaction utilizing a hotel wellness program. This is also important to understand for hotels who want to conduct research on key indicators for satisfaction as well.

Conclusion

Furthermore, surveyed information and data has shown that there are various indicators that help drive guest satisfaction towards hotel wellness-being programs. In order to obtain a deeper knowledge on our target market as hoteliers, collecting feedback on our guests is paramount. The purpose of this article was to review the published research on the effects of wellness programs on guest satisfaction and understanding the background behind the factors that create these positive experiences for health wellness-being. With wellness being an ongoing focus for hospitality firms, there will be limitations that will serve as an obstacle of a company's mission and vision for any planned projects that will take off one day. As long as wellness businesses continue to keep up with the constant changing trends in the hospitality and wellness industry, there is no doubt that any hotel will be successful in promoting a healthier world.

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