

Service Quality, Satisfaction, and Customer Loyalty in Peer to Peer Lodging in Malaysia

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Abstract

Their rise of a sharing economy in accommodation industry has changed the way people practice to own a lodging place. In 2017, 81% of Airbnb listing in Malaysia are entire houses and 18% are private room. At the same time 1.5 million inbound guests use Airbnb in Malaysia at the same year. This data show people now start with shifting from hotel industry toward peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation industry for some reason. This paper will investigate the relationship of service quality toward customer loyalty in P2P accommodation plus either customer satisfaction plays an important factor in customer loyalty. A survey question will be spread, and answer will be taken from a nonprobability sample of 300 respondents who experience using P2P accommodation customer in Kuala Lumpur. Kuala Lumpur is selected as it is the most tourist destinations to visit in Malaysia. This study will unidentified the relationship between P2P service quality and loyalty in P2P accommodation. Beside that this study will analyses are customer satisfaction factor will be mediators of the relationship between P2P service quality toward customer satisfaction. Besides that, the result will help P2P host and hotel player to understand, learn and get a recommendation on how to enhance customer experience thus it will benefit the development of lodging industry in Malaysia.

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1. Introduction

The sharing economy has rattled a lot of conservative and traditional means of how people run business and in future how to sustain and expend it. Its speedy evolution has brought argument between the theory supporter and critics. For example, the hotel and accommodation sector were the second largest sharing economy sector with a market size of USD18.2 billion in 2017 (Beutin, 2017). The sharing economy's international revenue is projected to grow from USD15 billion in 2015 to USD335 billion in 2025 (Beutin, 2017). This sharing economy concept can be utilized properly to crack unused idle property and give extra financial earning to a family. (Ang Jian Wei, 2017).

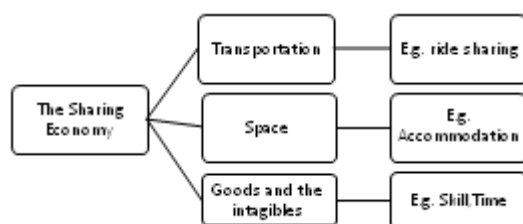


Figure 1: Characteristics of Sharing Economy system

Source: Authors' own work

Over the past few years, popularity of P2P platform like Airbnb, Rental by TripAdvisor, VRBO from Home Away and Ibilik.com in Malaysia have created a new model for accommodation industry. By using these platforms, people who own a property can rent, exchange or even donate the use of their property to others. Creating a system of ratings to minimize information asymmetries and attach prospective guests to hosts make the platform play the role as mediator (Proserpio & Byers, 2016). Beside that the platform also offering insurance, communication channels and other services.

Sharing economy can be defined as a scheme which will decrease resource or resources underutilization either for monetary or non-monetary benefits with three main characteristics (Ang Jian Wei, 2017; Ranjbari, Morales-Alonso, & Carrasco-Gallego, 2018) as show in Figure 1. Firstly, this system normally depends on internet network based that connect suppliers and customer directly. Secondly, it promotes access without effecting the land ownership. Thirdly, it gives other ways for businesses and household to monetize their underutilized resources and asset. The sharing economy normally divided into three sector which are the transportation, space goods and the intangibles industries as show in Figure 1 (Ang Jian Wei, 2017).

Problem Statement

Past a decade a new type of accommodation has emerged due to its unique features and give a significant impact to hotel industry that has monopoly the industry before (Solnet, Paulsen, & Cooper, 2010). Airbnb is considered as P2P platform that offer a new type of accommodation for customer where they able to share the economy and network companionship (Germann & Cross, 2011). It is unique and flexible which appealing to diverse customer where there are many requirements for different types of lodging (Lu & Kandampully, 2016). It is an innovative but at the same time disruptive business model where the business model is estimated \$30 billion, which is far greater compare to a big name hotel such as Hilton where the value is \$23.3 billion and Hyatt Hotels Corp also does not come to the evaluation at \$6.8 billion (Gray, 2017).

Yang, Jou, & Cheng (2011) mentioned in their study that the P2P lodging platform has put stress and tension toward the traditional hotel industry that already run in a dynamic and

really competitive surrounding. This vying burden are join with fluctuate customer demand has pushed hotel management to come out with new methods for outperforming competitors. With small dissimilar between the hotels service and product, hotel need to ramp up their customer service and promotion in order to grain customer loyalty (Kandampully&Suhartanto, 2000). There is different point of view fromBerezina, Cobanoglu, Miller, &Kwansa(2012) which debate either customer satisfaction and lodging quality are the most factor preceding in a customer to accommodate is certain places and at the same time develop customer loyalty. There are a lot of general agreement from academic and research people that acknowledge service quality is the main factor and customer satisfaction are prerequisites toward customer loyalty for some accommodation that they will chooses (Ahrholdt, Gudergan, &Ringle, 2017; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985).

A case study from (Proserpio& Byers, 2016), show that where an Airbnb start it service in Texas City, the impact on the hotels revenue in that city is about 8-10% decrease in five years. Budget hotel are viciously competing with the entrepreneur that used P2P serviced. On other hand, hotelsis morerely on business travelers and wealthier customers. This show that hotel industry are separated at different market segment while P2P platform are reaching a different niche than hotel typical (Berezina et al., 2012; Proserpio& Byers, 2016).

In 2017 data from Airbnb Malaysia show P2P hosts that used their platform canearned US\$48.1 million in revenue which show a significant increase value earned in 2016(US\$23.3 million). Data from Airbnb show that increasing number of guests are choosing to stay in Airbnb where located outside the center of attraction area with neighborhoodslike Brickfields and Taman Desa in Kuala Lumpur where there is huge increase of number people choose to accommodate there in year 2017 alone. Besides that, city which can be considerable not really famous amongtraveler when visiting Malaysia also show an increase growth for example Port Dickson.A statement from Robin Kwok a AseanAirBnb manager declare that the P2P platform will not destroy the traditional hotel industry but it will be a catalyzer for the lodging industry to promoted and sustain their business in internet of things era (Cindy Yeap, 2018).

2. Literature Review

Sharing Economy, Network Hospitality

In 2015 the term sharing economy was been added inside the Oxford Dictionary(Heo, 2016). Similarly the accurate writing to interpret the definition is moderately new (Michelini, Principato, & Iasevoli, 2018). Different aspect of sharing economy was focus by researcher using different of name for it in their literature. Table 1 show the following term for sharing economy.

Table 1: Summary of Sharing Economy Term.

Sharing Economy Term	Reference
Peer-To-Peer Economy	(Bellotti et al., 2015)
Collaborative Economy	(Dedeurwaerdere, Melindi-Ghidi, & Broggiato, 2016; Hult & Bradley, 2017; Owyang, Tran, & Silva, 2013)
Collaborative Production and Collaborative Consumption	(Hult & Bradley, 2017; Mun, 2013; Parliament, 2015; Schor, Walker, Lee, Pairig, & Cook, 2014)
Access Economy, Access-	(Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012;

Based Consumption	(Dedeurwaerdere et al., 2016; Schor et al., 2014)
Grassroots Economy, Commons-Based Peer Production and The Mesh	(Kassan & Orsi, 2012; Schor et al., 2014)
On-Demand Economy, Gig Economy, Platform Economy	(Martin, Upham, & Klapper, 2017; Office for National Statistics GB, 2017)
Product-Service System	(PwC, 2014)

Regardless many terms used to describe the 'sharing economy' mostly used term in the research or literature are 'sharing economy'(Heo, 2016) and not all the other term used can properly express every aspect in the sharing economy.

Network hospitality was described as medium in where peopleinteract one to another and perform a virtual community using internet rather than meet each other offline (Germann & Cross, 2011). This event is interrelated with the re-emergence of peer to peer economy. This is driven by the rising of online social networking such as Facebook and twitter and electronic network communication such as Whatsapp application (Germann Molz, 2014). In lodging industry, the most famous platform that driven P2P in lodging industry are Airbnb and Couchsurfing.Event thought the main concept of this both platform are similarly same which are the owner of the property such as room or house can rent their place to customer in short time period, but Airbnb is more on profit oriented and Couchsurfing is more toward community service (Ert, Fleischer, & Magen, 2016). This open a huge opportunity for some public to utilize their unused property for the used in lodging industry. This demolished the huge barrier for the new comers that want to enter the lodging industry which been monopoly by big player for such a long time. To make the platform more reliable, their reviewed system will acquirer both party which are the host and customer to reviewed each other. The both reviewed will not be post public until both sent their review in certain time period (AirBNB, 2014). This show the system value that the trust is built on review and reputation is really important as cash (Shuford, 2015). The company that just started in 2008 nowadays already operated in 34,000 different cities worldwideGray, 2017). It accommodated more that 155 million guest in 2015 which give a huge impact to existing hotel industry player for example Hilton hotel worldwide only accommodated 120 million customer for the same year(Ert et al., 2016; Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). Laitos (2014) described there will be two types of hosting that been used to host a customer which are on-site hospitality and remote hospitality. On site hospitality types of accommodation will let host and customer share the same property at the same time where else the host will not share the property at the same time, they just prepare and show the placed to the host.

Types of Literature Review

Service quality concept and idea was been discuss since the 1980s; nevertheless up until today there is no standard definition that can describe the concept of service quality (Silvestri, Aquilani, & Ruggieri, 2017). Service quality generally defines as how well the service expressed fulfil the customer satisfaction and how the customer requirement are met therefore show the pluralism of the definition mostly depend on the context (Namukasa, 2013). Based on the literature, service quality can be split into two school of thought (Karatepe, Yavas, & Babakus, 2005). Gronroos (1984) introduced the Nordic school of thought stress the two important key point which are functional quality as quality process and the outcome is called

technical quality which reflect that service quality also will be affected by the outcome, not only just their process only. North America Scholl of thought from Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1985) introduced SERVQUAL model with five dimension inside it. The five dimension are reliability, tangibles, empathy, responsiveness and assurance. This dimension is the key to measure the customer experience that will result a judgement or attitude toward the firm service quality.

There are a huge number of research have been done related to service quality in hotel industry (Akbaba, 2006; Wu & Ko, 2013; Yang, Jou, & Cheng, 2011). Service quality model based on specific situation and empirical cases in hotel industry is been done by a lot of researcher (Albacete-Sáez, Mar Fuentes-Fuentes, & Javier Lloréns-Montes, 2007; Briggs, Sutherland, & Drummond, 2007). Even though there are some critic toward SERVQUAL service quality model such as from Buttle (1996), this model is the most reliable model to be used in to analyses service quality (Mola & Jusoh, 2011; Saleh & Ryan, 1991; Akbaba, 2006). Table 2 show some model that been establish based on SERVQUAL model in hotel industry.

Table 2: Summary of empirical studies based on SERVQUAL

Service Quality Model	Detail
LODGSERV (Knutson, Stevens, Wullaert, Patton, & Yokoyama, 1990)	LODGSERV is designed to measure customer expectations for service quality in hotel industry. It consists 26-item index ($\alpha = .92$) which confirms the five generic dimensions of service quality in SERVQUAL.
LODQUAL (Getty & Thompson, 1994)	LODQUAL study the dimensions from SERVQUAL that are reliability aspects, tangible, and "contact", which contain attributes related to empathy, safety and response capacity. It evaluates a consolidation of both scales to create an instrument with 14 items grouped in two dimensions: tangibles and intangibles.
HOLSERV (Wong Ooi Mei, Dean, & White, 1999)	HOLSERV model consists of seven dimension that are reliability, assurance, price, empathy, responsiveness, information and tangibility.
LQI 'Lodging Quality Index' (Getty & Getty, 2003)	Developing LQI scale main structure are based from SERVQUAL which validate by (Ladhari, 2012) applying it to the Canadian tourist.

Apart from all the model in Table 2, there are one research from (Akbaba, 2006) that identify, from initial 29 SERVQUAL attributes there are 25 attribute identify as service quality characteristic. 'adequacy', 'assurance', 'convenience', 'understanding' and 'tangibles' are the five new dimension that been proposed. Result of this study show that mixed result in service quality measurement (Ekinci, 2002) and the selected dimension is not universal (Akbaba, 2006). This result happen because some dimension can be various in dissimilar culture and hotel setting such as motel, resort hotel, business hotel and etc (Yang et al., 2011). Additional study in hotel and tourism service framework has acknowledged the function of service quality impact the customer satisfaction. customer loyalty at the same time are significantly impact by customer satisfaction (Ahrholdt, Gudergan, & Ringle, 2017; Ramanathan & Ramanathan, 2011).

Customer Satisfaction

In business practice and scholarship, customer satisfaction is one of the main subject matter that been consider due to its consumption with post-purchase development and linkage the

process of purchasing (Liat, Mansori, & Huei, 2014). Besides that, business sustained was really on customer satisfaction (Nam, Ekinci, & Whyatt, 2011). During the purchase process, perceived award (benefit) and sacrifice experienced (cost) viewed as comparison toward customer satisfaction (Chitty, Ward, & Chua, 2007). In the context of hotel industry, customer satisfaction described the level of the company to achieved customer demand, need and expectation during their stay by customer examine and experience of the company service (Qiu, Ye, Bai, & Wang, 2015). There are concrete relationship between customer satisfaction and their loyalty as been prove by a lot of study where customer with high level of satisfaction often revisit the place or recommended the place to their friend (Jeong, Oh, & Gregoire, 2003). Another studies prove that service quality has direct significant on satisfaction beside correlation between customer satisfaction and their loyalty is also highly consequential (Yee, Yeung, & Edwin Cheng, 2010). Apart from that, other research argument the robustness between the loyalty and customer satisfaction and proposed that other service dimension may significant in loyalty sustainability and formation (Skogland & Siguaaw, 2004; Stylos & Vassiliadis, 2015).

Consumer Loyalty

The concept of consumer loyalty has collected consideration by both practitioners and academics due to its significant to hotel and accommodation because of it is associated with probability (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Saser, & Schlesinger, 1994) and satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). Consumer obligation toward chosen service or product can be best describe what are customer loyalty (Liat et al., 2014). On other hand probability of a hotel returning customer and their enthusiasm to act as a part of the organization can be said as definition of customer loyalty in hospitality setting (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). Other studies show that customer loyalty can be describe into two part which are attitudinal and behavioral (Dick & Basu, 2012; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000; Nam et al., 2011). In hotel industry, loyalty directly impact emotional and attitudinal commitment toward brand (Schall, 2003). On other hand, Back (2005) and Han (2008) suggest that attitudinal factor need to be consider as one of the important factor in customer loyalty. There are many study already acknowledge the close connection between loyalty and customer satisfaction (Berezan, Raab, Yoo, & Love, 2013), particularly importance to measure the attitudinal loyalty (Bennett, Härtel, & McColl-Kennedy, 2005; Doma, 2013). Besides that, a research also show that antecedent of customer retention mostly depends on service quality (Prentice, 2013).

3. Methodology

The study is preliminary study where it utilized quantitative approach to get a detail understanding of the relationships between service quality factors on P2P accommodating customer satisfaction and loyalty. By examining the relationship between variables this research is testing the existing empirical theories through using a numerical data which is one of the quantitative method characteristics (John w. Creswell, 2003). Questionnaires would be utilized from this research as it helps with large group of participants. The population of the P2P accommodation or lodging user multiple platform provider such as Airbnb, TripAdvisor, booking.com and another site that available in Malaysia.

Consumer who has experience P2P service in Malaysia will be taken as response to gather research data. A questionnaire was constructing a Google form and delivered to respondents via social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter, phone applications such as WhatsApp and Telegram. The advantage by conducting survey through internet or email is the data transfer between user is faster than telephone or face to face interview (Greener, 2008). A total of 300 questionnaires were targeted to be collected during the survey period and applied a convenience sampling method (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014; Siddiqui, 2013). For the purpose of this preliminary study, 30 questionnaires were distributed. This is to check the reliability and validity of the instrument so that there would not be a problem later on in the complete study (Kamarudin, 2017). Questionnaires were also distributed online. This may help the respondents that participate in this study fill up the questionnaire when they are convenient and the finished questionnaire will deliver via online which is faster and easier for the respondent to complete the survey (Greener, 2008; John W. Creswell, 2003).

In total 30 items will be adapted and modified from the previous studies and these 30 items were represented for tangible, adequacy service supply, understanding and caring, assurance, convenience, customer satisfaction and loyalty (Akbaba, 2006). The questionnaire was set based on five Likert scale measurement like Strongly Agree – 5; Agree – 4; Neither Agree nor disagree – 3; Disagree – 2; Strongly Disagree – 1; and closed-ended questions, while it takes ten to fifteen minutes for respondent to fill up the survey.

4. Finding

Hypothesis and Conceptual Model

Figure 2 shows a conceptual model drawing based on the theoretical background study which demonstrates the influence of service quality on customer loyalty mediated by customer satisfaction. Thus, following three hypotheses will be studied:

- H1 Service quality significantly and positively affects customer satisfaction with P2P accommodation.
- H2 Satisfaction exerts a significant and positive influence on customer loyalty.
- H3 Service quality exerts a direct significant and positive effect on customer loyalty.

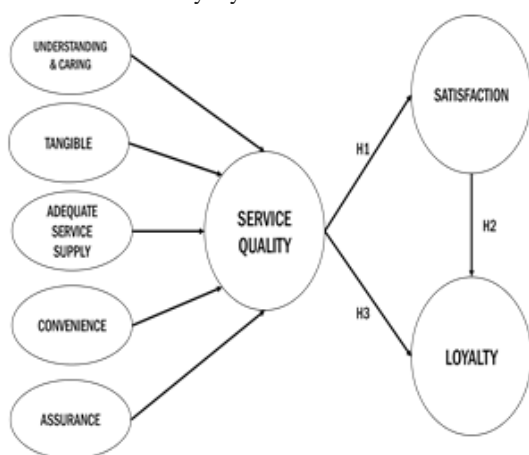


Figure 2: Conceptual Model
Source: Authors' own work

Pilot Test Analysis

A 28 respondent who has experience they stay in Malaysia using one of the P2P services has been collected using Google Form and the collected response then been analysed using partial least squares. The analysis will be done using standard setting of PLS path modelling method that first developed by Wold in 1982 and the algorithm using weight vector obtained by calculation of convergence satisfy fixed point equation in sequence of regressions. Path weighting scheme is selected, and maximum iterations is been set 300. Other than that, stop criterion (10^{-X}) was set at 7 and initial weight is 1.

Figure 4 shows the structure model of pilot test which consists of regression weight, item loading and Composite reliability value. The impact of service quality factor which are satisfaction, assurance, tangible, convenience, understanding and sharing and adequate service toward customer loyalty are systematically shown in Figure 4. Overall, satisfaction shows a huge significant as a mediator toward customer loyalty. The discriminant validity assessment shows the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlation (HTMT) between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty is 0.890, service quality and customer loyalty is 0.652, lastly service quality and customer satisfaction is 0.577. Reflective discriminant validity has been established between two reflective constructs. Construct validity test in Figure 4 shows values of Cronbach's alpha for all the variables are over 0.5, thus it can be concluded that the inferences made about the results of the assessment are meaningful and serve the purpose of the assessment. Construct reliability result was significant because rho_A value for all variables is over 0.7 and not more than 1, showing the test is free from measurement errors, since the more measurement errors occur the less reliable the test.

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Latent Variable 1	0.960	0.969	0.962	0.528
Latent Variable 2	0.927	0.927	0.954	0.873
Latent Variable 3	0.885	0.886	0.946	0.897

Figure 3: Construct reliability and validity result

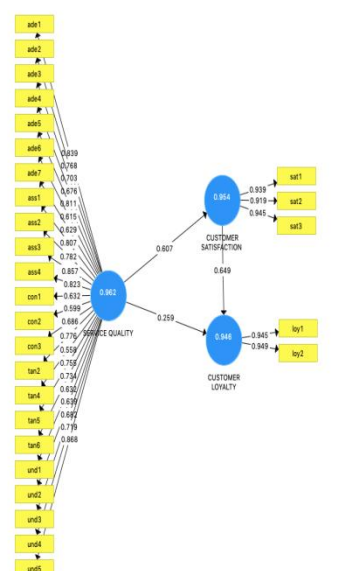


Figure 4: Pilot Test Structure Model

Path coefficient is used to determine the extent to which there is a linear relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. The path coefficient between service quality and customer satisfaction is 0.607.

which are greater than 0.1 show significant of hypothesis H1. Path coefficient between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty was 0.649 which are significant result to prove hypothesis H2. Lastly, hypothesis H3 is supported by significant value of 0.259 of path coefficient between service quality and customer loyalty.

5. Conclusion

In business success, the manager should not neglect the importance of service quality, customer loyalty and satisfaction. Liat (2014), stress these three elements will help the manager to understand and gain control on them understand and monitor of their business. This study will help the research to understand more the relationship between these three elements in different set up of peer-to-peer lodging industry in Malaysia. Customer satisfaction mediated the relationship of customer loyalty and service quality have been proven a lot from previous research. Thus, the study expected result should tell the more a less similar finding in P2P lodging industry. From the pilot test result there are positive result that the research expected result will come out with the conclusion the relationship between these three elements is universally accepted in different type of lodging service in hospitality industry. In pilot test the dimension shows significant value of loading and path coefficient that support research objective. Further research will be done by collecting 300 related respondents in Kuala Lumpur. Deeper analysis on the relationship between research independent variable (service quality) and research dependent variable (customer loyalty) will be done. Other than that, customer satisfaction will act as mediator to achieve research objective.

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