

## Determinants of Customer Satisfaction in Sustainable Hospitality: Evidence from Mussoorie

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- Mussoorie

### Abstract

This study looks at how GP, FQ, and SQ affect customer satisfaction in Mussoorie's hospitality scene. With sustainability and experience-based travel becoming more important, the research digs into how green efforts and service quality work together to shape tourists' overall impression. The team gathered data from 410 people who'd eaten at local spots and used Python to crunch the numbers, running summaries, testing connections, and building regression models to see what really matters. So, what came out of it? All three—GP, FQ, and SQ—make a real, positive difference in customer satisfaction. FQ stands out as the top predictor, with SQ next, then GP, showing that food quality beats everything, but service and green practices still matter. The model explains a lot of the changes in customer satisfaction, confirming that mixing sustainability actions with traditional service really works.

From a research angle, this adds to what we know by putting green practices on the same level as service quality in one model tailored for Mussoorie. For managers, the message is clear: you've got to boost service and embed eco-friendly habits at the same time. Do both, and you'll not only improve customer satisfaction, but you'll also keep your edge in a busy tourism market.

## 1. Introduction

“Sustainable tourism isn't just a buzzword anymore—now it's essential for destinations to stay competitive or even survive in the global tourism world,” say Bramwell and Lane. Tourism today is

about more than just relaxation or fun. After the global shakeup from COVID-19, people around the world started rethinking not just where they go, but how they travel and how they use services. You can actually see this shift—travelers want experiences that are better for the planet, align with their values, and feel meaningful. Sustainability and green practices aren't just background noise anymore; they're front and center in tourism talk. Recent studies back this up—travelers think about sustainability when they rate hotels, and how eco-friendly a place is can affect their satisfaction and whether they'll return (Han et al., 2020; Verma et al., 2019). Jang Hyun Han, for example, found that hotels going green make guests happier and more loyal. Robin Nunkoo points out that how tourists see sustainability can build trust and make people feel attached to a destination. All this research shows that being environmentally responsible isn't a bonus anymore—it's an expected part of today's travel experience.

You see the same trend happening in India, with its own unique twists. India's got a huge range of tourism options, from rich cultural routes to wild ecological hotspots, and more of those places are adopting sustainability practices. Recent evidence shows Indian travelers are paying more attention to environmental issues and picking eco-friendly hotels or services on purpose. Studies by Verma and Chandra (2018), Mishra et al. (2022), and Sharma and Gupta (2023) all point out that what hotels and destinations do for the environment has a big impact on Indian tourists' choices and attitudes. This awareness really stands out among younger people, who tend to link green practices to better quality and more ethical experiences. But even with all this progress, research still often talks about things like service quality, value, or destination image like they exist in their own bubbles—without fully weaving sustainability into the main framework of what makes tourism work.

Tourism research has looked at all kinds of tourist behaviours — things like satisfaction, loyalty, and whether people come back. But honestly, it hasn't really dug deep into how sustainability connects with the parts of travel that matter most, like food. Food isn't just something people eat when they travel. It shapes the whole experience. It's about tasting new cultures, feeling like you're somewhere authentic, and paying attention to health. Since the pandemic, travellers care even more about food — they want it to be organic, locally sourced, and prepared cleanly (Kumar et al., 2021; Joshi & Rahman, 2022). That shift says a lot: people's interest in sustainability, health, and authenticity are all blending together into their travel habits.

Meanwhile, people are pretty worried about what unchecked tourism can do. Rapid growth, especially without many rules, has created problems like overcrowding, hurting the environment, and putting too much pressure on local infrastructure. Hill stations like Mussoorie feel this the most. It's still super popular because of its natural beauty and climate, but more tourists also means more stress on natural

resources, trouble with waste, and not enough focus on sustainable development goals. That imbalance — lots of growth but not enough sustainability — raises real questions about whether places like Mussoorie can keep attracting visitors for the long haul.

Even with these issues, Mussoorie is still a major spot for hospitality, packed with hotels and restaurants that fit just about any tourist's preferences. These places do more than just offer a place to stay or something to eat — they're the main link between tourists and the destination. The way these businesses deliver their services really impacts how visitors feel and whether they're satisfied. So, looking into how sustainability practices mix with traditional ideas about service matters a lot.

This study focuses on three main things: green practices (GP), food quality (FQ), and service quality (SQ), and how they shape customer satisfaction (CS). Green practices are all the eco-friendly things hotels and restaurants do, like saving energy, cutting waste, and sourcing supplies sustainably. People already recognize these for boosting customer opinions and promoting responsible consumption. Food quality is the heart of hospitality — taste, freshness, presentation, authenticity — all these plays straight into how customers judge the experience. Service quality is about how staff treat guests and how well everything works — things like being responsive, reliable, and professional. These have always mattered for satisfaction. Including these three aspects is deliberate and makes sense for this context. Food and service quality have been studied a lot, but adding green practices paints a fuller picture, especially in places where people care about sustainability. That way, the study looks at hospitality from both a practical and ethical lens.

The big question this research wants to answer is simple: how do green practices, food quality, and service quality affect customer satisfaction in Mussoorie's hospitality scene? The goal is to see both how each one matters on its own, and how they add up in a real destination with real challenges. What comes out of this? Hotels and restaurants need to do more than just offer good service—they have to make sustainability part of what they do. If they ignore this, they're not only hurting the environment but also risking customer satisfaction and the long-term appeal of Mussoorie itself.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **GP and CS**

Green practices are taking center stage in hospitality research these days, especially as tourism shifts toward sustainability. A lot of recent work points out that going green isn't just some behind-the-scenes change—it's a smart move that really shapes how guests see and feel about their experience. Singh (2025) looked into green practices at hotels and found something interesting: when hotels commit to eco-friendly initiatives, guests are more willing to pay and tend to rate their experiences

higher. Chang (2024) backed this up too, showing that eco-friendly operations don't just make visitors feel good about the environment—they actually raise satisfaction levels by boosting a hotel's perceived responsibility and value.

The gist is, when hotels prioritize sustainability, guests catch on. It sends a quiet but powerful message about the company's ethics, which puts people at ease. But it's more than just a feel-good factor. Recent studies link green practices with bigger ideas like value, trust, and meaningful engagement. Ru-Zhue et al. (2025) found that when tourists see quality in green service, they engage more—trust goes up, value goes up, and the whole experience gets stronger. Yadav (2025) noticed the same thing in hospitality and gastronomy: sustainability leads to better performance, happier customers, and a stronger brand. So green practices aren't on the sidelines anymore—they're right at the heart of how guests judge service.

There's another layer to all this, too. Researchers are starting to agree that when hotels go green, they don't just help the planet. These moves usually make companies run more efficiently and line up better with what today's guests expect. That's a double win: better environmental and economic results. This matters even more in places struggling with sustainability issues, as travellers now expect companies to act responsibly.

Still, there's work to do. Plenty of research has explored individual benefits, but we're not seeing enough about how green practices fit together with those classic service elements, especially in newer tourist spots. That's a gap worth exploring. With more travelers caring about the environment and sustainability growing more important for hospitality businesses, it just makes sense to treat green practices as a central part of understanding what drives customer satisfaction. That's why this study puts green practices front and centre.

Hence, it is hypothesised that:

**H1: GP have a significant positive impact on CS.**

### **FQ as a Determinant of CS**

People have always seen food quality as a big factor in how satisfied customers feel, especially in hospitality and tourism. But lately, research has started connecting food quality to shifting consumer tastes—especially since the pandemic, when health, safety, and sustainability suddenly mattered a lot more. These days, tourists judge their food experiences on more than just flavour and appearance. They're paying attention to freshness, authenticity, and where the ingredients come from. Kumar and

colleagues in 2022 showed that high-quality food bumps up tourist satisfaction, both by making the meal enjoyable and by adding value to the whole experience. Joshi and Rahman in 2023 noticed a real uptick in demand for organic and local food, which affects the way tourists choose meals and how happy they are afterward.

Studies recently have shown food quality isn't just about satisfaction—it also affects whether tourists come back or recommend a place to others. In 2024, Sharma and co-authors found food quality predicted customer satisfaction better than most other aspects of service in hospitality. This means a lot in places where food represents local culture and tradition, giving tourists a direct way to connect with regional identity. Mishra and Singh in 2023 pointed out that authentic local cuisine boosts tourists' satisfaction with their overall experience, especially in regional spots.

Now, researchers are digging into how food quality ties in with sustainability and responsible choices. Tourists are starting to link food quality with ethical values—like using local ingredients and eco-friendly cooking methods. Bringing quality and sustainability together makes food an even bigger factor when it comes to customer satisfaction.

Still, not much is known about how food quality interacts with eco-minded practices. In places like Mussoorie, where local dishes and hospitality are core to tourism, figuring out how food quality influences the experience matters a lot. That's why this study includes food quality as a main variable—trying to capture its real impact on customer satisfaction in a setting where sustainability is front and centre.

Hence, it is hypothesised that:

**H2: FQ has a significant positive impact on CS.**

### **Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction**

Service quality keeps showing up as one of the main topics in hospitality research, mostly because it's so closely tied to customer satisfaction and what people actually do after their stay. Even now, with newer ideas like sustainability getting more attention, studies still show that service quality has a huge impact on how customers judge their experiences. Right now, people usually see service quality as a mix of things like responsiveness, dependability, assurance, and empathy—all of these shape what happens between the staff and the guest.

Research backs up this connection between service quality and satisfaction. Gupta and Singh (2022) found that when service quality goes up, customers are happier and more likely to stick around, which just shows how important it is for hotels and restaurants to be efficient and offer personal touches. Verma and colleagues (2023) showed that how staff behave and how quickly they respond can really shape what customers think and whether they leave satisfied. So even in different situations, service quality is at the heart of a great hospitality experience.

There's also a new twist: recent studies are looking at how service quality changes in light of sustainability and technology. Al Mushattat et al. (2025) pointed out that combining innovative service with sustainability efforts actually makes service more effective and boosts customer reviews. Basically, it means service quality isn't fixed—it always evolves as customer expectations shift and the industry changes.

Service quality matters even more in places with lots of tourists and all kinds of expectations. If hotels can consistently deliver great service in these environments, it not only makes customers happier, it also improves how people see the destination overall. Mussoorie, for example, gets a ton of tourists and has all sorts of service encounters, so taking a closer look at service quality is key if we want to really understand what makes customers satisfied there.

That's why this study includes service quality as a major factor—so we can see how it affects customer satisfaction along with green practices and food quality. By doing this, we get a full picture of what drives satisfaction, covering both familiar and new influences in hospitality. Hence, it is hypothesised that:

**H3: SQ has a significant positive impact on CS.**

### **Understanding the framework of the study**

In this study, GP, FQ, and SQ are the main independent variables. They're basically the key factors that shape how customers judge their hospitality experiences. Together, they cover both sustainability-focused elements (that's GP) and core service features like food quality and service quality. So, this setup gives us a well-rounded way to look at customer perceptions, as shown in Fig 1. On the other hand, CS is the dependent variable. It's the overall result—how customers feel after their service encounters. This depends on how well hotels or restaurants handle environmental responsibility, product quality, and how good their service is. The model argues that if GP, FQ, and SQ improve, CS goes up too. There's a straightforward link from these main predictors to the outcome.

### 3. Methodology

This study takes a straightforward quantitative angle to figure out how GP, FQ, and SQ play into CS for visitors in Mussoorie. The analysis leans heavily on a positivist approach, meaning it relies on actual data to look at how these variables interact statistically. Researchers pulled information from tourists eating at local restaurants, cafes, and hotels. They used a simple survey tool, and since tourists were right there, they went with convenience sampling. Out of the 450 surveys handed out, 410 ended up being usable after a quick screening, which gave them a solid base for regression analysis and made their results more trustworthy.

For the survey itself, they borrowed multiple question items from previous research to make sure their measurements were on point. GP covered things like reducing resource use, handling waste properly, and picking sustainable options. FQ looked at taste, freshness, how food looked, and whether it felt authentic. SQ focused on things like speed, reliability, and how staff acted—basically, how well service was delivered. CS was measured by people's overall response to their dining experience. Responses were logged on a five-point scale—going from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'—so everything was scored the same way. They ran the analysis using Python, leaning on pandas, scipy, and stats models libraries. First, they checked for missing data, extreme outliers, and any weird distribution patterns to make sure everything looked good. Summary stats came next, just to get a sense of how people answered. They used Pearson correlation to spot connections between GP, FQ, SQ, and CS. After that, they threw all the predictors into a multiple regression to see how much each one mattered for CS. This gave them both raw numbers and standardized ones, plus p-values, making it easy to see which predictors packed the most punch. Model fit was checked with  $R^2$  and adjusted  $R^2$ , with the F-test showing if the overall model held up.

To double-check their findings, they ran extra diagnostics. Multicollinearity got tested using VIF values, and nothing seemed too intertwined. They also looked at residuals to make sure the results didn't break any distribution rules and that variances stayed steady, keeping the model solid. All in all, their method offers a clear, reliable way to unpack how GP, FQ, and SQ shape CS in Mussoorie's hospitality scene.

### 4. Results

The empirical evaluation utilised 410 usable responses obtained from visitors in Mussoorie who had recent dining exposure in local food outlets. The findings are organised in a structured sequence, incorporating summary measures, correlation assessment, and regression estimation to analyse the associations among GP, FQ, SQ, and CS. Initial analysis focused on descriptive measures to capture the distributional characteristics of the variables. As shown in Table 1, the average scores reflect generally positive perceptions across all constructs, with FQ reporting the highest mean value, followed sequentially by CS, SQ, and GP.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

Construct	Mean value	Std Dev.	Min	Max
GP	3.82	0.66	2.10	5.00
FQ	4.15	0.57	2.60	5.00
SQ	3.97	0.61	2.30	5.00
CS	4.08	0.59	2.50	5.00

The elevated average values indicate that respondents hold favourable views regarding FQ and SQ, whereas GP, despite being comparatively lower, also reflects a positive perception. To further assess the associations among the constructs, Pearson correlation was applied. As illustrated in Table 2, all variables exhibit positive and statistically significant relationships with CS.

**Table 2: Correlation Matrix**

Variable	GP	FQ	SQ	CS
GP	1.000	0.438**	0.402**	0.529**
FQ	0.438**	1.000	0.571**	0.701**
SQ	0.402**	0.571**	1.000	0.668**
CS	0.529**	0.701**	0.668**	1.000

Note: \*\*p < .01

The results indicate that FQ shows the highest association with CS (r = 0.701), followed by SQ (r = 0.668) and GP (r = 0.529), suggesting that all predictors maintain a significant linkage with CS. To evaluate their predictive effects, a multiple regression procedure was carried out. The summary of the estimated model is reported in Table 3.

**Table 3: Model Overview**

R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error
0.781	0.610	0.607	0.372

The model accounts for 61.0% of the variation in CS, reflecting substantial explanatory strength. The adjusted  $R^2$  further supports the stability of the estimates. As reported in Table 4, the ANOVA results confirm that the regression model is statistically significant

**Table 4: ANOVA**

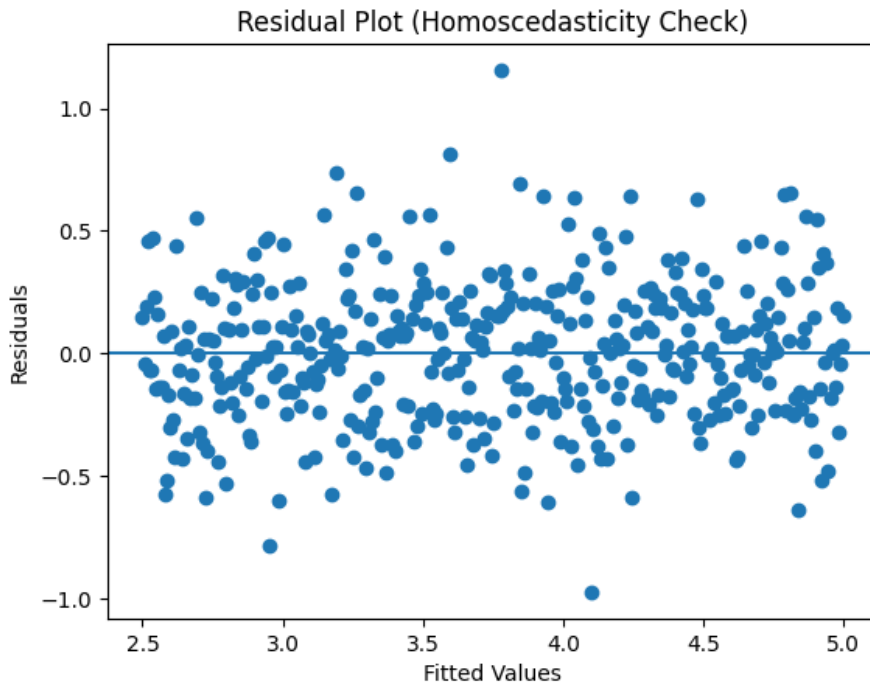
Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	51.284	3	17.095	123.46	.000
Residual	32.758	406	0.081		
Total	84.042	409			

The obtained F-statistic ( $p < .001$ ) indicates that the estimated model fits the data well. The coefficient estimates are reported in Table 5, outlining the individual influence of each predictor.

**Table 5: Regression Coefficients**

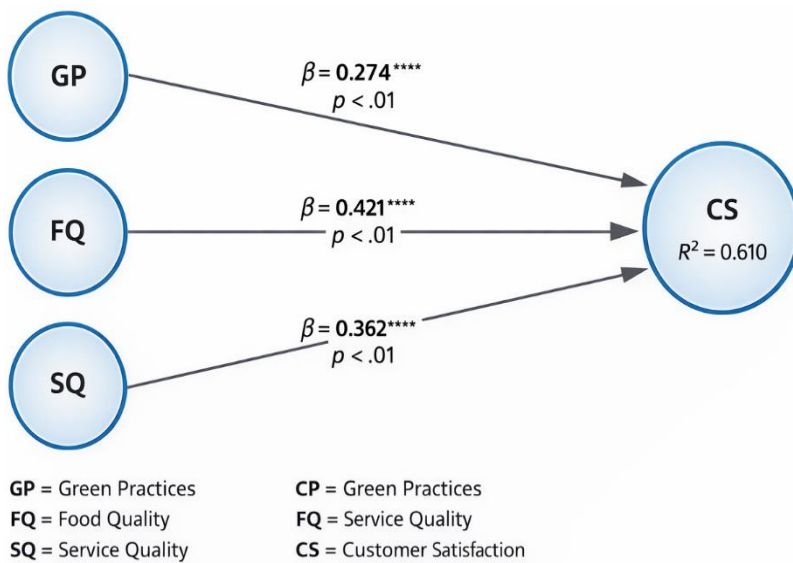
Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t	Sig.
Constant	0.795	0.204	—	3.89	.000
GP	0.251	0.049	0.274	5.12	.000
FQ	0.405	0.058	0.421	6.98	.000
SQ	0.338	0.055	0.362	6.14	.000

The estimates show that GP, FQ, and SQ each exert a statistically significant positive influence on CS. Among the predictors, FQ demonstrates the highest impact ( $\beta = 0.421$ ), followed by SQ ( $\beta = 0.362$ ) and GP ( $\beta = 0.274$ ), thereby supporting H1, H2, and H3. Further checks were conducted to ensure model validity, where VIF values remained below the acceptable limit of 5, indicating no issues related to multicollinearity. Examination of residual patterns (refer to Figure 2) confirms that the assumptions of normal distribution and constant variance are adequately met.



**Figure 2: Residual plots**

Furthermore, a conceptual path diagram illustrating the relationships between GP, FQ, SQ, and CS is presented in Figure 3, providing a visual representation of the tested model. Overall, the results demonstrate that both traditional service factors (FQ and SQ) and sustainability-oriented practices (GP) serve as important contributors in influencing CS within the hospitality setting of Mussoorie.



**Figure 3: Structural Model with Standardised Path Coefficients**

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study sheds light on how green practices (GP), food quality (FQ), and service quality (SQ) affect customer satisfaction (CS) among visitors in Mussoorie. The results walk through each hypothesis one by one, making it easy to see the relationships being tested.

First up, H1 gets confirmed: green practices have a clear, positive impact on customer satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.274, p < 0.01$ ). So, tourists really do care about eco-friendly moves by hotels—these efforts actually boost how satisfied people feel. Maybe that's because travelers are getting more conscious about the environment, especially in places like Mussoorie where ecological concerns are front-and-center. Green initiatives signal to tourists that the business acts responsibly and cares about quality. That kind of behavior hits home, making the whole trip better. Studies by Lee et al. (2022) and Kim and Han (2023) back this up, showing green efforts in hospitality make guests happier and influence their behavior. Wang et al. (2024) also found that sustainable practices lead to better reviews and stronger emotional ties with service providers. For hospitality businesses, it makes sense to focus on real, visible green actions—think waste reduction or buying local. And don't just do them; talk about them, both onsite and online, because that boosts awareness and satisfaction.

Next, H2 holds up too. Food quality has an even stronger positive influence on customer satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.421, p < 0.01$ ). Food still sits at the heart of the travel experience, especially where local flavors shape culture. Tourists almost always link great food to great service, so top-notch cuisine leaves a big mark on how satisfied they feel. In Mussoorie, with its local delicacies and variety, food sets places apart. Nguyen et al. (2022) and Park et al. (2023) found food quality predicts satisfaction and keeps visitors coming back. Choe and Kim (2024) pointed out that authenticity and freshness really elevate guests' experiences. So, hotels and restaurants should lock in quality, taste, hygiene, and presentation—and using locally sourced, organic ingredients not only makes food better, it fits the sustainability trend.

Then there's H3. Service quality gives a big bump to customer satisfaction as well ( $\beta = 0.362, p < 0.01$ ). It's proof that good service still matters a lot. When staff are efficient and friendly, especially in busy places like Mussoorie, guests notice and appreciate it. Studies by Ali et al. (2022) and Rahman et al. (2023) confirm that service quality is key for satisfaction. Torres and Kline (2024) showed that personal and responsive service makes guests feel more connected. To keep guests happy, hospitality businesses should keep investing in staff training, focus on quick and personal responses, and stay consistent—especially during peak seasons.

So, big picture: both traditional service factors (food and service quality) and modern green initiatives are crucial for customer satisfaction. Food quality is the top predictor, but green practices are becoming more important as tourists' expectations shift. Seeing these factors together gives a fuller picture of what shapes satisfaction in places where sustainability matters. Hospitality businesses in Mussoorie should find a balance—offering excellent service while acting responsibly. If they ignore one side, they're going to fall short.

In the end, this research pushes things forward by weaving together sustainability and service in a single framework. It proves green practices, food quality, and service quality all work together to influence customer satisfaction. That's useful for researchers and anyone working in hospitality. The takeaway? There's a real need for a shift toward sustainable practices that not only protect the environment but also boost guest experiences and make Mussoorie more competitive in the long run.

## **6. Implication and limitations of the study**

This study gives some real takeaways for both people working in the hospitality and tourism industry and researchers looking into it. On a practical level, the results show just how much green practices (GP) impact customer satisfaction (CS). For places like Mussoorie, it's clear—hotels and restaurants should genuinely weave environmentally friendly actions into daily operations. We're talking proper waste management, cutting back on energy use, and choosing local ingredients. Doing things like this isn't just good for the planet; it also shapes the way guests see the business and boosts how happy they are overall.

There's more. The study finds that food quality (FQ) and service quality (SQ) play a major role in making customers happy too. Hospitality businesses have to focus on how they prepare, present, and serve their meals, and stay consistent with friendly, reliable service. Putting real effort into staff training, strict hygiene, and keeping an eye on quality doesn't just make customers happy—it also helps a business stand out among the competition.

From an academic angle, this research moves the conversation forward by connecting green practices with well-known service factors like FQ and SQ, all in one framework. Looking at these pieces together helps us get a better handle on what really drives customer satisfaction, especially in places where tourism is still growing. It also opens the door for more research on how eco-friendly moves and quality service work together to shape tourist choices and behaviour.

Of course, this study isn't perfect. One big limitation comes from using a convenience sample—the people who answered the survey might not represent all the tourists coming to Mussoorie. Future

studies can sort this out by using random sampling in various spots to get a better, more accurate picture. Another thing: the study only looks at a single moment in time. This means the data might not show how things change across different parts of a traveler's experience. Next time, tracking tourists over the course of their trip could show how green practices, food, and service quality impact satisfaction at every stage.

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