

## Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction: The Case of Star Cruise Libra, Penang

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### Abstract

Quality of service is a major competitive advantage within the tourism industry and cruise liners are no exception. In recent years, the Asian-Pacific company Star Cruises has striven to strengthen and retain the loyalty of its customer base in an increasingly challenging market. This study aims to look at the interface between Star Cruises' service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction level by analyzing data on one of its ships, the Super Star Libra, with its homeport in Penang, Malaysia. An adapted version of the SERVQUAL model was used by the researchers to evaluate the quality of service and customer satisfaction aboard the Libra, as was a questionnaire, whose instruments were developed from past studies. 102 questionnaires were given out to and collected from passengers who had ridden aboard the Super Star Libra. Results indicated that service quality dimensions such as tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy had a significant bearing on customer satisfaction. The latter also helped determine which cruise customers would prefer to spend their vacations on in the future. The outcome of this research provides useful guidelines for cruises that intend to capitalize on the quality of their service to both maintain the satisfaction of their existing customers and attract more potential customers going forward.

**Keywords:** Service quality; Customer satisfaction; Star cruise; Penang; Tourism product.



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### 1. Introduction

Tourism is the world's largest income earner. It is a popular global leisure activity and the arrival of guests from abroad helps bolster a nation's economy in many ways. Tourist spending helps promote investment and growth, which is why many governments require international visitors to bring a specific amount of currency with them to be used in-country solely for the duration of their visit. This policy enables the host country to utilize foreign capital to stimulate its economy, both within the tourism sector and otherwise (Martinez-Garcia and Raya, 2008).

Cruises have gone from a once prohibitively expensive mode of transoceanic transportation accessible only to society's elite to a now multi-million-dollar industry offering a wide variety of very affordable vacation options. A relatively small number of cruise line businesses compete for global market shares by investing heavily in the building of state-of-the-art hotel ships that boast luxurious and comfortable living spaces and sport cutting-edge naval construction designs all while adhering to the highest standards of safety (Dowling, 2006). Increasingly, some companies specialize in catering to niche customers looking to travel to more remote, exotic, and "pristine" destinations on smaller ships, sailing vessels, and yachts that carry just a few hundred passengers or less (Kjell, 2013).

Zeithaml *et al.* (1996), initially came up with ten dimensions to service quality, which they later combined into five because of strong intra-correlation determined upon further research: Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy and Tangibles. These formed the basis for a testing tool for service quality called SERVQUAL, applicable in a range of domains from financial institutions to medical centers to libraries to hotels (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1994). Although SERVQUAL is widely agreed upon as a reliable research instrument, some controversy does exist surrounding its dimensional schema and breadth of applicability. Further, Rust and Oliver identified three distinct components to perceptions of service quality comprising the product (technical quality), delivery (functional quality), and environment (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988).

Tourism can be defined as short-term (less than a year) travel to and spending of time in destinations outside of the usual environments where customers live and work. The term "usual environments" excludes travel undertaken

within one's area of permanent residence as well as frequent trips made on a routine basis, such as a drive from home to work (Shen *et al.*, 2013).

The complexity of the tourist "product" makes conceptualizing tourist satisfaction challenging (Smith, 1994). For example, increased global competition among vacation hotspots and, more precisely, DMOs (Destination Management Organizations) means determining the current and future success of a destination requires strategic analysis (Pizam and Ellis, 1999). The purpose of this study is to pinpoint those factors that make cruise liners and their destinations more competitive (Kozak and Rimmington, 1999) and contribute to customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Today's cruise tourist is often looking for a one-of-a-kind experience and no longer feels content with a run-of-the-mill package of amenities and facilities (Pizam and Ellis, 1999). Cultivating customer satisfaction, which of course influences the likelihood of future purchases, thus requires meeting this increasing demand for uniqueness and novelty (Mittal and Kamakura, 2001). Positive word of mouth among past and potential customers is one of the best marketing tools in this regard and plays an especially important role in Middle Eastern and other cultures that place a premium on frequent socializing (Pizam and Ellis, 1999).

Customer satisfaction has often been described as the perceived harmony between expectation and performance and Parasuraman *et al.* (1991) mentioned that one's level of satisfaction is determined after the experience of a product or service. On the other hand, (Liljander and Strandvik, 1993) maintain that experience is not a prerequisite for assessing service quality, which can be effectively evaluated based on knowledge about the service provider since satisfaction is subjectively perceived by the customer (Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988). Other research suggests a two-way relationship between satisfaction and service wherein the degree to which a customer is satisfied will over time influence the quality of service delivered (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Sureshchandar *et al.*, 2002).

Quality within the framework of service industries includes static as well as dynamic dimensions (Bloemer *et al.*, 1998). Static dimensions refer to customer expectations that become fixed and established aspects of service such as the offering of in-flight drinks and snacks. Dynamic dimensions are more spontaneous and unscripted and give staff the opportunity to make the experience of their customers more memorable, for example, by helping them access in-flight movies or providing them with extra pillows and blankets as requested. Dynamism in service is harder to achieve yet reaps big rewards in achieving customer satisfaction (Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2004).

Regardless of how service quality is defined, a tourism industry player must cater to customer needs first and foremost as well as achieve its quality goals consistently. More new and repeat tourists lead to more revenue for companies, which boosts performance-based pay to staff thus enhancing service quality in addition to facilitating investment in facility upgrades that help to exceed customer expectations (Albattat *et al.*, 2019; Eraqi, 2006). While both service quality and customer satisfaction have been researched broadly within hospitality and tourism studies, little remains known about satisfaction in the specific context of the all-inclusive holiday sector. The objective of this research is to shine a light on the intricate and inter-influencing relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction aboard Star Cruises' SuperStar Libra.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Service Quality

Service quality has been the subject of considerable interest from both practitioners and academics in recent years, spurred on by the original work of Parasuraman *et al.* (1985). An important reason for this interest is a belief among practitioners that high quality translates to bottom-line performance outcomes. However, they tend to use the terms "service quality" and "customer satisfaction" interchangeably. Among academics, the satisfaction construct is recognized as being independent of service quality (Caruana, 2002).

Coming up with a definition for service quality is challenging, yet marketing theorists are generally in agreement about its subjective nature: quality is in the eye of the beholder (González *et al.*, 2007). The most widely used definitions of service quality integrate customer expectations with ever-evolving company perceptions (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985; Storbacka *et al.*, 1994). For example, Wilson *et al.* (2012) understood service quality as "a global judgement or attitude relating to the superiority of a service." In addition, the five SERVQUAL dimensions – reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, and empathy – refer to the way customers think about and compartmentalize service quality (Atilgan *et al.*, 2003). Of these dimensions, reliability – the ability of a business to accurately deliver on its promises – has consistently been shown to represent the most essential determinant of service quality (Wilson *et al.*, 2012). Responsiveness denotes the capacity and willingness to assist customers promptly and without delay. Assurance speaks to the level of dependability and trust exhibited by employees. Empathy is demonstrated in the personalized attention and care given to each customer. The final dimension, tangibles, refers to equipment, facilities, and staff (Atilgan *et al.*, 2003).

### 2.2. Service Quality in the Cruise Industry

Cruises today are experiencing record demand and growth with customers able to easily choose from more travel and destination products than ever before at the click of a button. There are a number of reasons for the increasing popularity of this all-inclusive travel package. First, cruise vacations offer a wide selection of facilities and services at an affordable cost from water parks and planetariums to on-deck cinemas and high-tech billiard tables to multi-room villas and in-suite Jacuzzis. These can be enjoyed by a range of demographic groups – children and seniors, solo travelers, and groups alike. Passengers can also select a theme for their cruise, for example,

“psychic healing,” “sports,” “singles,” and even “all-nude” (Testa and Sullivan, 2002). With all this fantastic luxury and top-class entertainment, the voyage itself has become the attraction rather than its geographic destination. Gone are the days of catering to the rich alone – the modern cruise industry opens its doors to everyone and is now one of the fastest growing sectors of the travel industry. It is no wonder voice-of-customer programs have become one of the most effective marketing tools for cruise companies (Kwortnik and Han, 2011).

In comparison to other service-based industries, cruises arguably have a higher stake in customer satisfaction since the product is a veritable microcosm of the tourism and hospitality sector. From the moment they purchase their tickets to when they disembark from the ship, cruise passengers are continuously being exposed to the quality of service (Ostrowski *et al.*, 1994). Even something as seemingly tangential as live entertainment on deck may lend cruise operators a value-added advantage since shows must be ever spectacular and unexpected to compete with performances aboard other ships (Testa and Sullivan, 2002). Cruise liner dining facilities are also well-known for the huge portion sizes they offer, yet often much more differentiating are food quality, variety, and presentation. For example, cruises can enhance the reputation of their restaurants through advertising featuring colorful images of dishes along with nutritional information for health-conscious passengers. Another major facet of customer perceptions is the in-cabin lodging experience, defined not simply by berth cleanliness, but more importantly stewards’ hospitableness and attention to detail.

It is clear that the high visibility of quality (or lack thereof) on cruise liners affects customers’ emotions and perceptions in immediate ways and has a direct impact on feelings of purchase value and future purchase behavior (Hsu and Lin, 2016; Kwortnik, 2008; Ostrowski *et al.*, 1994). The rapid growth of the cruise industry – which has seen nine or more newly built vessels servicing the North American market added each year since 2001 to meet the demand of a 50% first-time customer base – has led its leaders to shift their focus from new customer acquisition to customer retention (Kwortnik, 2006). It is thus essential for companies to identify and focus on those SERVQUAL dimensions that will enhance their differentiation and maximize the satisfaction of their customers, particularly their existing ones.

### 2.3. Customer Satisfaction

The satisfaction of a customer – an interaction between his or her pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase evaluations (Ndubisi and Natarajan, 2018) is the primary factor in determining the quality of services delivered and is vital to the survival of a business (Vavra, 1997). Numerous studies have shown that attracting a new customer costs on average about five times as much money, resources, and time than retaining a current customer (Naumann and Giel, 1995). This can be attributed in part to the fact that services are often intangible, making it difficult for those on the receiving end to evaluate them prior to experiencing them (Smith *et al.*, 2016). Unsurprisingly, offering high-quality service to increase satisfaction among consumers was identified in the 1990s as the foremost challenge facing businesses (Barsky and Labagh, 1992). The impact of a failure to measure and pay heed to those factors that influence satisfaction can be catastrophic for business considering that up to 60 percent of sales to new customers can be attributed to word-of-mouth referrals Poon and Lock-Teng Low (2005).

The academic literature on satisfaction measures it utilizing the transaction-specific approach and overall perspective. The former looks at satisfaction as a customer’s emotional reaction to his or her most recent transaction, while the latter defines it as the accumulation of evaluations of past transactions (Bitner and Hubbert, 1994; Tsiotsou, 2006). Sashi (2012) mentioned that a consumer’s overall satisfaction has a much better potential of promoting positive word of mouth and repeat purchases than individually based transaction-to-transaction satisfaction (Forgas-Coll *et al.*, 2014).

Expectations have a major influence on satisfaction. Customers with high expectations will become disappointed when encountering a service that falls short and likely rate their experience as sub-par. For this reason, a luxury liner may receive a lower rating from customers than its mid-tier counterpart even though its facilities and services are viewed by the industry as objectively “superior” (Kwortnik, 2006). The challenge of customer retention can further be seen in the fact that some travelers, despite their overall satisfaction and positive word of mouth, may for a variety of reasons see a cruise as a one-time experience, which they are unlikely to have again. This explains why the established correlation between satisfaction and the three behavioral intention variables of “word of mouth,” “recommendations,” and “future patronage” are stronger for the former two than the latter (Heung and Lam, 2003; Mason *et al.*, 2006).

The existing literature suggests that gaps between expectation and experiential perception are widest for criteria related to the SERVQUAL dimensions of empathy, responsiveness, and assurance. This speaks to the imperative to selectively hire and train onboard staff who have the qualities to provide cruise passengers with highly personalized service (Heung and Lam, 2003). In addition, segmentation analysis has shown major variations in how overall satisfaction was rated by first-time and repeat travelers as well as those traveling in different cabin classes respectively. Cruise operators thus need to have a strong customer relations department specially devoted to engaging with repeat customers as well as ensure a standard level of quality for facilities and amenities in quad-sharing cabins (Kwortnik, 2006).

### 2.4. Cruise Industry

As one of the fastest-growing sectors within the tourism industry, cruise companies enjoyed an 8.4 percent annual growth rate from 1984 to 2002, spurred on by a boom in vessel construction in the 1990s. From 1970 to 2002, about 84 million people worldwide travelled on a cruise (Testa and Sullivan, 2002). During that same period, there were around 50 million deep-water cruise passengers from North America, which represents an estimated 82

percent of the global cruise market. Demand has been steadily burgeoning in Asia, however, at a rate of nearly 7.6 percent annually since the 1980s and countries like Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore are becoming increasingly popular destinations for international tourists (Ahmed *et al.*, 2002; Coggins Jr, 2014).

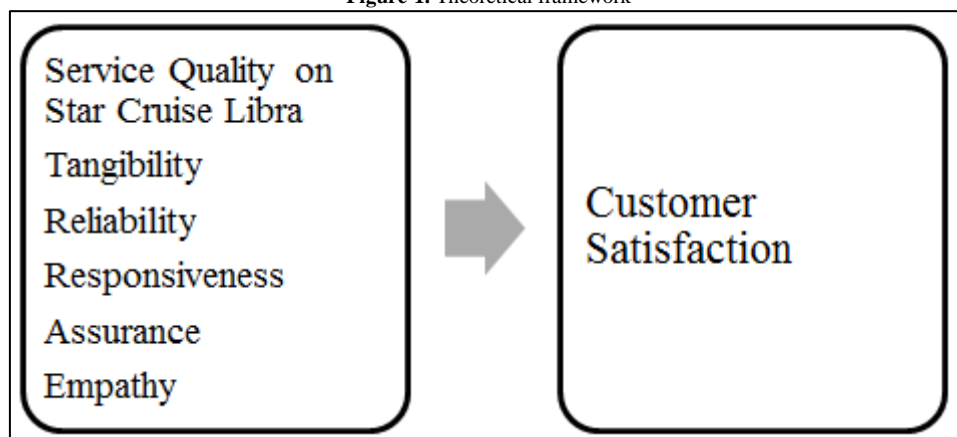
## 2.5. Star Cruises of the Genting Group

Star Cruises is one of Asia's most successful cruise companies and the third biggest in the world. Founded as an associate of the Genting Group of Malaysia and incorporated in Bermuda in 1993, it started out with just two vessels. Today, Star Cruises boasts over 26,000 lower berths in a combined fleet of 20 ships comprising three different brands: Star, SuperStar, and MegaStar. The company has purchased a number of liners from other companies including the former Sun Viking from Royal Caribbean, the former Baltic ferries Athena and Kalypso, and the former Europa from Germany's Hapag-Lloyd (Testa and Sullivan, 2002). Destinations span all over the world from Asia-Pacific to Hawaii and the Caribbean to Alaska and Antarctica. Star Cruises, headquartered in Hong Kong, has offices in over 20 locations including Australia, China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Germany, India, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States (Testa and Sullivan, 2002).

Constructed in 1988, the SuperStar Libra – named after the cardinal seventh astrological Zodiac sign – features a gross tonnage of 42,275 and a capacity for 1,480 guests. The Libra originally belonged to Norwegian Cruise Line under the name Seaward and set off for its maiden voyage from Wartsila Shipyard in Finland. It became part of the Star Cruise family in 2005, ushering in a trend in the coming years of transferring the ownership of old ships from NCL to Star Cruises. For example, the Norwegian Dream joined the Star Cruise fleet in 2012 and was renamed SuperStar Gemini. After a nearly thirteen-year career on the seas, the SuperStar Libra's public cruise operations were discontinued last year and it now serves as a hotel ship for the MV Werften, a subsidiary of Genting Hong Kong (GentingBerhad, 2015).

## 2.6. Theoretical Framework

Figure-1. Theoretical framework



### 2.6.1. Research Hypotheses

**H1:** There is a positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction on Star Cruise Libra.

**H01:** Service quality reliability positively affects customer satisfaction on Star Cruise Libra

**H02:** Service quality responsiveness positively affects customer satisfaction on Star Cruise Libra.

**H03:** Service quality assurance positively affects customer satisfaction on Star Cruise Libra.

**H04:** Service quality empathy positively affects customer satisfaction on Star Cruise Libra

**H05:** Service quality tangible positively affects customer satisfaction on Star Cruise Libra.

## 3. Research Methodology

A quantitative approach was used for this study to find out the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction on Star Cruise Libra, Penang. The data were collected using paper questionnaires and non-probability sampling. The sample chosen for this study consisted of tourists who used Star Cruise Libra services. Data were analysed using SSPS.

## 4. Data Analysis and Findings

Table-1. Demographic Analysis

Item		Freq.	Percentage
Gender	Male	54	52.9
	Female	48	47.1
Marital Status	Single	41	40.2
	Married	55	53.9
	Other	6	5.9
Occupation	Student	19	18.6
	Own Business	26	25.5
	Private	27	26.5
	Government	20	19.6
	Others	10	9.8
Age	18-20	8	7.8
	21-30	31	30.4
	31-40	35	34.3
	41-50	19	18.6
	50 and above	9	8.8
Product Purchased on Star Cruise	Café/lounge	63	61.8
	Consumer goods	1	1.0
	Skin care products	10	9.8
	Other	28	27.5
Star Cruise Liner Travelled With	Superstar Libra	98	96.1
	Superstar Aquarius	3	2.9
	Superstar Gemini	1	1.0
Monthly Income	Below \$1000	25	24.5
	\$1001-\$1500	15	14.7
	\$1501-\$2000	17	16.7
	\$2001-\$2500	15	14.7
	Above \$2501	30	29.4
General Purpose for Travelling with Star Cruise Libra	Vacation by the sea	46	45.1
	Quality time with friends and family	36	35.3
	Food and drink	20	19.6
	Entertainment/Recreational Facilities, etc.	26	25.5
	Business/Meeting Client	2	2.0
	Gambling	16	15.7
Frequency of Travel with Star Cruise Libra	First Time	71	69.6
	2nd Time	14	13.7
	3rd Time	9	8.8
	4th Time	1	1.0
	More than 5 Times	7	6.9
How do you know about Star Cruise Libra?	Radio	1	1.0
	TV Advertising	8	7.8
	Newspapers	8	7.8
	Internet	44	43.1
	Friends and Families	18	17.6
	Magazines	6	5.9
	Travel Agency	14	13.7
	Other	3	2.9



Table 1 above showed the profile of passengers, male respondents were higher than their female counterparts with a frequency of 54 for males (52.9%) compared to 48 for females (47.1%). Marital status frequency for single respondents was more than married respondents, 41 for singles (40.2%) compared to 55 for married passengers (47.1%), while those whose status was “other” had the lowest rate at 6 (5.9%). For occupation, working in the private sector at 27 (26.5%) while the lowest mean for occupation was “others” with 10 (9.8%). Respondents with their own business were at 26 (25.5%), while those working in government stood at 20 (19.6%). The rest were students at 19 (18.65%). About the age, the highest frequency was for respondents aged 31-40 at 35 (34.3%) and the lowest mean was below 20 years old at 8 (7.8%). Respondents over 50 years old were the second lowest at 9 (8.8%). The mean was 31 (30.4%) for passengers below 20 years old and 19 (18.6%) for those between the ages of 41-50. 61.8% of respondents used services at the café/lounge. For the type of Star Cruise liner travelled on, Superstar Libra at 98 (96.1%), Superstar Gemini at 1 (1.0%), Superstar Aquarius was 3 (2.9%). The highest category for monthly income was above \$2501 at 30 (29.4%) and the lowest mean was for passengers that earned both between \$1001-1500 and \$2001-2500 at 15 (14.7%). The passengers that earned below \$1000 were at 25 (24.5%), while those between \$1501-2000 were at 17 (16.7%). The general purpose for travelling on Star Cruise Libra was 45.1% loved vacationing on the sea while 54.9%. 25.5% of respondents chose to travel for the entertainment or recreational facilities, 2% travelled for business or meeting clients, and 15.7% gambling. 69.6% were first-time passengers, 13.7% were second-time passengers, 8.8% were third-time passengers, 6.9% travelled aboard Star Cruise Libra more than five times and 1% were travelling for their fourth time. Respondents heard about Star Cruise from the Internet at 44 (43.1%) while the lowest was for those who first heard about it via radio at 1 (1.0%). The means for other sources of information were as follows: 8 (7.8%) for both TV advertising and newspapers, 18 (17.6%) for family and friends, 6 (13.7%) for magazines, 14 (13.7%) for travel agencies, and 3 (2.9%) for “other.”

Table-2. Service Quality Dimensions

Item	S.D.Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	S. Agree
<b>Tangibility</b>					
Visually attractive dining area	2/2.0	2/2.0	33/32.4	47/46.1	18/17.6
Neat, clean, and well-dressed staff	1/1.0	1/1.0	30/29.4	52/51.0	18/17.6
Attractive menu that reflects the restaurant’s image	1/1.0	6/5.9	34/33.3	46/45.1	15/14.7
Clean and attractive rooms	1/1.0	4/3.9	23/22.5	51/50.0	23/22.5
Inviting atmosphere	1/1.0	1/1.0	23/22.5	53/52.0	24/23.5
<b>Reliability</b>					
Restaurant waiters or waitresses promptly visit my table and take my order	1/1.0	4/3.9	37/36.3	37/36.3	23/22.5
Staff quickly correct anything wrong	2/2.0	2/2.0	45/44.1	37/36.3	16/36.3
Staff greet me in a good manner	2/2.0	1/1.0	23/22.5	54/52.9	22/21.6
Staff provide an accurate quest check	2/2.0	2/2.0	35/34.3	48/47.1	15/14.7
Staff are dependable and consistent	1/1.0	3/2.9	28/27.5	49/48.0	21/20.6
<b>Responsiveness</b>					
Staff work in shifts to help each other maintain speed and quality of service	2/2.0	2/2.0	39/38.2	35/34.3	24/23.5
Staff help me within an acceptable period of time	1/1.0	3/2.9	36/35.3	50/49.0	12/11.8
Customers are told exactly when services will be performed	2/2.0	6/5.9	37/36.3	43/42.2	14/13.7
Cruise staff make extra effort to handle my special requests	1/1.0	7/6.9	37/36.3	43/42.2	13/12.7
Staff provide prompt and quick service	1/1.0	3/2.9	29/28.4	51/50.0	18/17.6
<b>Assurance</b>					
Star Cruise staff makes me feel comfortable and confident in my dealing with them	1/1.0	4/3.9	27/26.5	55/53.9	15/14.7
Star Cruise shows consistency and reliability in its service	2/2.0	1/1.0	30/29.4	58/56.9	11/10.8
Star Cruise has staff who are both able and willing to give information	1/1.0	7/6.9	32/31.4	50/49.0	12/11.8
Staff can answer my questions fully	1/1.0	3/2.9	32/31.4	52/51.0	14/13.7
Star Cruise makes me feel personally safe	1/1.0	1/1.0	24/23.5	48/47.1	28/27.5
<b>Empathy</b>					
Staff are sensitive to my individual needs and wants, rather than always relying on policies and procedures	2/2.0	4/3.9	37/36.3	47/46.1	12/11.8
Star Cruise has operating hours that are convenient to all visitors/guests	6/5.9	8/7.8	41/40.2	32/31.4	15/14.7
Star Cruise staff anticipates my individual needs and wants	3/2.9	3/2.9	38/37.3	48/47.1	10/9.8
Star Cruise staff are polite and courteous with me	1/1.0	1/1.0	31/30.4	52/51.0	17/16.7
Star Cruise seems to have the best interest of the customer at heart	1/1.0	3/2.9	33/32.4	46/45.1	19/18.6

Based on the table above, 46.1% agree with the attractiveness of the dining area, 32.4% were neutral, and 17.6% were strongly agree. The staff members were clean, neat and appropriately dressed with 51% , and 29.4% with neutral. Star Cruise had an attractive menu that jibed with the image of the restaurant with 45.1%, 14.7% strongly agree, and 33.3% neutral. 50% of the respondents agreed that Star Cruise had rooms that were thoroughly clean and attractive, 22.5% neutral and strongly agree. The Star Cruise’s atmosphere was inviting with 52%, 23.5% strongly agree, 22.5% with neutral. 36.3% of the respondents were neutral about whether the Star cruise restaurant’s waiters or waitresses approached their table promptly and offered to take their order, while 22.5% were strongly agree, and 3.9% with disagree. 52.9% of the respondents agreed that star cruise staff greeted them in a good manner. 22.5% of the respondents responded with neutral, 21.6% of the respondents with strongly agree. Star cruise staff provided an accurate quest check with 47.1%, 34.3% of the respondents responded with neutral, 14.7% with strongly agree. 38.2% were neutral regarding whether Star Cruise, during its busy times, had staff shift around to assist one another in maintaining both the promptness and quality of service. 34.3% of the respondents agreed in this regard. 23.5% responded with strongly agree. Star Cruise staff helped them within an acceptable period with 49.0%, 35.3% responded with neutral; while 11.8% were strongly agree. Based on the overall analysis, respondents shows their satisfaction about the five dimensions of service quality.

**Table-3.** Overall Satisfaction of Star Cruise Customers

Item	S.D. Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	S. Agree
My first impression of this Star Cruise was very good	1/1.0	1/1.0	24/23.5	53/52.0	23/22.5
The taste of the food on Star Cruise was excellent	1/1.0	3/2.9	32/31.4	56/54.9	10/9.8
I was satisfied with the quality of food on Star Cruise	1/1.0	6/5.9	30/29.4	53/52.0	12/11.8
I was satisfied with the level of teamwork and cooperation displayed by staff	1/1.0	4/3.9	31/30.4	47/46.1	19/18.6
The speed of service met my expectations	1/1.0	5/4.9	32/31.4	45/44.1	19/18.6
I was satisfied with the performance of Star Cruise staff	2/2.0	3/2.9	31/30.4	49/48.0	17/16.7
I was satisfied with the design and ambience of Star Cruise	1/1.0	3/2.9	25/24.5	51/50.0	22/21.6
I was satisfied with the safety and security aboard Star Cruise	2/2.0	0/0	20/19.6	59/57.8	21/20.6
Overall, I was satisfied with the service I experienced on Star Cruise	1/1.0	4/3.9	28/27.5	50/49.0	19/18.6
Overall, I was satisfied with the way the service was delivered	0/0	3/2.9	32/31.4	49/48.0	18/14.6

Table 3 shows that 52.0% of the respondents agreed that their first impression of this Star Cruise was very good. 23.5% responded with neutral, and 22.5% with strongly agree. The taste of the food on Star Cruise was excellent 54.9%, 31.4% responded were neutral, and 9.8% with strongly agree. 52.0% of the respondents agreed that they were satisfied with the quality of food on Star Cruise. 29.4% responded with neutral, 11.8% with strongly agree. Teamwork and coordination were displayed by the staff was satisfactory with 46.1% of the respondents agreed that 30.4% responded with neutral, 18.6% with strongly agree. Half of the respondents 44.1% agreed that the speed of service met their expectations. 31.4% responded with neutral, 18.6% with strongly agree. 48.0% of the respondents agreed that they were satisfied with the performance of the Star Cruise staff. 30.4% responded with neutral, 16.7% with strongly agree. 50.0% of the respondents agreed that they were satisfied with the design and ambience of Star Cruise, 24.5% responded with neutral; while 21.6% with strongly agree. 57.8% agreed that they felt satisfied with the safety and security aboard Star Cruise. 19.6% responded with neutral, and 20.6% with strongly agree. The respondents agreed that their overall satisfaction with the service they experienced on Star Cruise with 49.0%, 27.5% responded with neutral, 27.5% with strongly agree.

## 5. Descriptive Analysis

**Table-4.** Service Quality Dimensions of Descriptive Analysis

Item	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.Deviation
Star Cruise makes me feel personally safe.	102	1.00	5.00	3.99	.802
The atmosphere aboard Star Cruise is inviting.	102	1.00	5.00	3.96	.769
The Star Cruise staff greet me in a good manner.	102	1.00	5.00	3.91	.809
Star Cruise has rooms that are thoroughly clean and attractive.	102	1.00	5.00	3.89	.831
Star Cruise staff make extra effort to handle my special requests.	102	1.00	33.00	3.88	3.028
The Star Cruise staff are dependable and consistent.	102	1.00	5.00	3.84	.817
Star Cruise staff are dressed neatly and appropriately	102	1.00	5.00	3.83	.758
The Star Cruise staff are polite and courteous with me.	102	1.00	5.00	3.81	.754
The Star Cruise staff provide prompt and quick service.	102	1.00	5.00	3.80	.796
Star Cruise staff make me feel comfortable and confident in my dealing with them.	102	1.00	5.00	3.77	.782
Star Cruise seems to have the best interests of the customer at heart.	102	1.00	5.00	3.77	.819
During peak hours, Star Cruise has staff shift to assist one another in maintaining both the promptness and quality of service.	102	1.00	5.00	3.75	.905
The Star Cruise restaurant waiters or waitresses promptly visit my table and take my order.	102	1.00	5.00	3.75	.883
Star Cruise has a visually attractive dining area.	102	1.00	5.00	3.75	.837
Star Cruise shows consistency and reliability in its service.	102	1.00	5.00	3.73	.743
Star Cruise has staff who can answer my question fully.	102	1.00	5.00	3.73	.769
The Star Cruise staff provides an accurate quest check.	102	1.00	5.00	3.70	.815
The Star Cruise staff helps me within an acceptable period of time.	102	1.00	5.00	3.67	.759
The Star Cruise restaurant has an attractive menu that reflects its image.	102	1.00	5.00	3.66	.836
Star Cruise has staff who are both capable and willing to provide me with information about menu items, including their ingredients and how they were prepared.	102	1.00	5.00	3.63	.817
Star Cruise has staff who attend to my individual needs, rather than solely relying on company policies and procedures.	102	1.00	5.00	3.61	.821
The Star Cruise staff quickly corrects anything wrong.	102	1.00	5.00	3.61	.844
Star Cruise tells customers exactly when services will be performed.	102	1.00	5.00	3.59	.870
The Star Cruise staff anticipates my individual needs and wants.	102	1.00	5.00	3.57	.825
Star Cruise has operating hours that are convenient to all visitors/guests.	102	1.00	5.00	3.41	1.027

The highest mean point obtained from the service quality dimensions was 3.99 for Star Cruise making passengers feel personally safe, while the lowest mean was for the operating hours of Star Cruise at 3.41. 3.96 for respondents feeling satisfied about Star Cruise's atmosphere, 3.91 for feeling satisfied about being greeted by the staff of Star Cruise in a good manner, 3.89 for feeling satisfied about the cleanliness of passengers' rooms.

The mean 3.88 for feeling satisfied about the Star Cruise staff making extra effort to handle passengers' special requests, 3.84 for feeling satisfied about the dependability and consistency of the staff, 3.83 for feeling satisfied about how clean, neat and appropriately dressed the staff were, 3.81 for feeling satisfied with how polite and courteous the staff were, 3.80 for feeling satisfied about the promptness and speed of the Star Cruise staff's service, 3.77 for feeling comfortable and confident in dealing with the Cruise staff, 3.77 for feeling the staff had the best



interest of the customer at heart, 3.75 for feeling satisfied with how Star Cruise during peak hours had staff shift to assist one another in maintaining both the promptness and quality of service, 3.75 for feeling satisfied with how waiters or waitresses from the Star Cruise restaurant approached respondents' tables without delay and took their orders, 3.75 for feeling satisfied with the attractiveness of the dining area, 3.73 for feeling satisfied with the consistency and reliability of service, 3.73 for feeling satisfied with the ability of Cruise staff to answer respondents' questions fully, 3.70 for feeling satisfied about passengers' being provided with an accurate quest check by Star Cruise staff,

The mean 3.67 for feeling satisfied about Star Cruise staff helping the respondents within an acceptable period of time, 3.66 for feeling satisfied about the attractiveness of the Star Cruise restaurant's menu and how it reflected its image, 3.63 for feeling satisfied about both the ability and willingness of Star Cruise staff to give respondents information about menu items, their ingredients, and methods of preparation, 3.61 for feeling satisfied about how sensitive Star Cruise staff were to passengers' individual needs and wants, rather than always relying on policies and procedures, 3.61 for feeling satisfied about how quickly Star Cruise staff corrected anything wrong, 3.59 for feeling satisfied about being told by Star Cruise staff exactly when services would be performed, 3.57 for feeling satisfied about Star Cruise staff's anticipation of the individual needs and wants of the customer, and 3.41 for feeling satisfied about the convenience of the operating hours of Star Cruise to all visitors/guests.

**Table-5.** Customers' Overall Satisfaction with Star Cruise

Item	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I was satisfied with the safety and security on Star Cruise	102	1.00	5.00	3.95	.762
My first impression of this Star Cruise was very good.	102	1.00	5.00	3.94	.768
I was satisfied with the design and ambience of Star Cruise.	102	1.00	5.00	3.88	.811
In general, I was satisfied with the level of service I received on Star Cruise.	102	1.00	5.00	3.80	.821
In general, I was satisfied with the delivery of this service.	102	2.00	5.00	3.80	.758
In general, I was satisfied with the level of teamwork and cooperation displayed by staff.	102	1.00	5.00	3.77	.831
In general, I was satisfied with the performance and professionalism of Star Cruise staff.	102	1.00	5.00	3.74	.840
The speed of service met my expectations.	102	1.00	5.00	3.74	.852
The taste of the food on Star Cruise was excellent.	102	1.00	5.00	3.69	.728
I was satisfied with the quality of food on Star Cruise.	102	1.00	5.00	3.67	.798

The highest mean point for passengers' satisfaction was 3.95 for security and safety aboard, while the lowest mean was 3.676 for their satisfaction regarding the quality of food on Star Cruise. The mean for the first impression of passengers of Star Cruise being very good was 3.94 and the mean for passenger satisfaction with the design and ambience of the cruise was 3.88. The mean for both overall satisfaction with the service experienced on Star Cruise and the way service was delivered was 3.803.

## 6. Conclusions

This study focused on the relationship between the SuperStar Libra's customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions using an adapted version of the SERVQUAL scale model. Understanding how customer emotions and satisfaction work is key to retaining customers and making business sustainable. The greatest challenge for the cruise industry in the future will be coming up with viable ways to keep previous and existing customers engaged. This cannot be accomplished simply by launching marketing campaigns to boost sales for a certain period. Identifying the intricate factors that contribute to customer satisfaction must be part of long-term strategic thinking around incentivizing repeat purchases. It is hoped the findings presented here will empower cruise managers with the value-added knowledge to remain competitive in the ever-expanding and -differentiating tourism industry.

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