



FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY STUDY BASED ON SIDDALEPA AYURVEDHA SPA IN SRI LANKA

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Subject Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction Survey Study Based On Siddalepa Ayurvedha Spa In Sri Lanka	
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This study examines the variables that affect client satisfaction in the wellness sector with a particular emphasis on Sri Lanka Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa. This study uses a quantitative-method approach that includes surveys and a literature review to discover the major factors that influence customer satisfaction and loyalty in the spa industry. In order to provide theoretical underpinnings for the research, the literature review explores ideas like customer satisfaction, safety, value, empathy, and service quality. A survey of 25 Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa customers is used in the methodology chapter to collect data on a variety of characteristics of their experiences. Likert scale questions were used. The results show that consumers think the services are worth the money they pay, and most of them are happy with the variety of options available. In addition, prompt responses to client inquiries, a feeling of security during treatments, and a cozy spa setting are emphasised as critical elements influencing client happiness. Customers also desire staff empathy and efficient problem-solving in order to improve their overall experience. Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa is given recommendations based on these findings, which include increasing the range of services offered, improving customer communication, enhancing safety and comfort, and providing personnel with empathy training. In order to sustain service excellence, understand and accommodate consumer preferences, and consistently strive for improvement in the spa business as these are all critical components of the study's conclusion. Prospective research possibilities encompass longitudinal studies, qualitative assessment of consumer perceptions, competitive analysis, and examination of technology contribution to improving customer experiences. All things considered, the study advances the understanding of the spa industry and provides useful advice for raising customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords- Customer service , Siddhalepa, Spa , Wellness , Design,International.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Study Background

This study primarily centres on the satisfaction of customers and of health and wellness tourism in Sri Lanka. McCabe and Johnson (2013) assert that health and wellness tourism has emerged as a distinct concept within the tourist industry, and it has also been recognised as a significant topic in the field of tourism research (McCabe & Johnson, 2013). The notion of wellness tourism has gained significant popularity in both the global tourism industry and Sri Lanka at present. Contemporary travellers worldwide have a prevailing inclination towards the pursuit of health-oriented traditional, wellness, and spa tourism offerings. Several studies have demonstrated that Asia possesses a substantial and prominent market for wellness tourism. Hence, Sri Lanka is confronted with the challenge of competing with other wellness tourism destinations in the Asian region. In order to effectively compete, Sri Lanka must enhance its ability to attract a larger number of tourists from the worldwide market. In order to do this, it is necessary to inspire international tourists to visit or return to Sri Lanka and to endorse the country as an exceptional wellness tourist destination in Asia. International tourists can be incentivized to return by meeting their expectations. Hence, comprehending the determinants that impact consumer satisfaction and their inclination to revisit, repurchase, or within the wellness industry in Sri Lanka holds significant importance. Hence, the research problem is; What are the major factors determining satisfaction on wellness industry in Sri Lanka?

One of the principal tourism types that is the fastest-growing sector throughout global and national tourism is the wellness tourism. Contemporary way of life particularly in the western developed countries make people travel globally for the reasons of their self-amending and improving the source of their life. The factors of high stress, the fast pace of living, rising healthcare costs at home, demographic changes, meaning of life, or the struggle to reach a good life have been at the expense of people who get the health benefits of tourism sector. In other words, primary intention of wellness tourism is provision of opportunities for tourists to have both physical and spiritual experiences that will help in improving their well-being. As presented by the World Wellness Tourism 2020 report, the most in-demand wellness tourism products are beauty services (89%), sport and fitness services (89%), recreational and leisure spas (85%) and spa and wellness resorts (83%) respectively. We can deduce this from the World Wellness Tourism 2020 Report. Before the sector, there are four services which are identified as global products because they are accessible in every part of the world. Along with that some regional products which are handed down to a certain area or country, such as

medical services that are expand with evidence (78%), wellness rituals (65%), yoga and meditation (60%) are also common among tourists around the world (Guruge and Silva, 2020).

Tourism is a cut-throat competitive and dynamic industry, which constantly has to adjust to different needs and desires of guests; all meanwhile providing satisfied, safe and enjoyable travelers. The country's most boosting strategy in medical tourism which covers not only unique and indigenous medical practices but also a wide range of natural herbs that is native to the area as well the traditional foundation of patient's attraction. Medical tourism is viewed as a service-oriented industry so that patients' degree of happiness is about their response to the medicines and treatments rather the natural the ayurveda medicines. Quality of service holds one of the leading positions and is the major factor in determining guests' contentment during their vacation.

These days the wellness travel concept dominates the practice of the main composition of the international tourism industry and also in Sri Lanka alike. Modern visitors all over the world often look for health-related services like traditional, wellness and spa tourism together. Based on certain evidence concerning wellness tourism and its leading market in Asia, we can confidently say that Asia is large and well-developed market for wellness tourism. Thus, a Sri Lankan wellness tourism industry has to withstand the competition of other tourist countries in Asia. Sri Lanka should focus more on the international tourist market in an attempt to succeed in the battle for being a tourist destination of choice. International tourism will be promoted to tourists visiting or revisiting Sri Lanka, and the country shall be proposed as a good wellness tourist destination in Asia. The international tourists may opt to find their anticipated level of satisfaction, and hence, will come back again. This means that there is a need for a deepened knowledge on the things that determine tourists' satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction has been prevalent in every service operation because the company can only survive as long as its clients are. Venter (1997) defines satisfaction as the "consumers overall cognitive or affective response to product use", while according to Chen et al (2016), "a customer's decision on whether a product/service provides that fun-filled experience". "The satisfied customers are always a beneficial tool with six major competitive advantages: retaining customers (re-visiting), higher price, brand loyalty, word to mouth (WW), one-stop shopping and also innovating new products. Repeat purchase (visiting back) and positive word-of-mouth is essential in reducing business costs as well as increasing higher customer satisfaction that may leverage into higher spending during an extravaganza occasion since satisfied consumers are ready to pay a higher price. The purpose of this research is to find out

the factors that contribute to Customer satisfaction in the Sri Lankan Wellness and Spa industry, the particular industry being Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa Company.

1.2 Commissioning Company

Siddhalepa is not only the first and only authentic Sri Lankan Ayurveda company that has its own herbal product factories and own Ayurveda Health Resort and Hospital, but also includes a wide range of Ayurveda medical products. The Service Provider Group now has another member, the City Hotel Anarva which is going to be the very first and the only one the city hotel with 100% Sri Lankan Ayurveda treatment. Siddhalepa's pain relief balm remains the most popular mark of the Sri Lankan Ayurveda industry with 85 years in the market and the 2019 year is the jubilee year. Siddhalepa, on the other hand, uses its own home made therapeutic oils as well as ingredients in addition to its Ayurvedic treatments for its guests. Siddhalepa extends its Ayurveda Centres to Chelsea, Hamburg, and Slovakia.

Siddhalepa, founded by the Sri Lankan Kidney specialist and Astrologer Dr. Henrick de Silva Hettigoda, is an apothecary belonging to the lineage of ayurveda physicians tracing back to two centuries. In the latter part of 60's, Dr. Hennys Wickremasekara Hettigoda chose his fifth child Viktor to continue his ayurveda medical practice. Siddhalepa Ayurveda Hospital is a small specialized healthcare institution of Ayurveda which was formed almost 30 years ago and visited by many patients in Sri Lanka and the population of these patients coming from various countries has been increasing day after day as well. Then, the Siddhalepa Ayurveda Health Resort is launched on the quiet and peace-full pool of Wadduwa. In fact, the list of hotels has now expanded to Anarva Mount Lavinia, which is the only city hotel offering authentic Sri Lankan Ayurveda therapies. Hettigoda Industries is the first Ayurvedic drug-producing company in Asia that receives an International Standards Quality Systems for its detergents, as it is ISO 9002 certified in 1994 and ISO 9001 acquired in October 2000; a local health authorities' GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) certificate and an environmental certification under ISO 14 (Sri Lanka Tourism, 2024).

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the factors affecting the satisfaction on wellness industry based on Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa in Sri Lanka. The sub objectives are as listed below

1. To identify the factors affecting customer satisfaction in the health and wellness industry of Sri Lanka.
2. To evaluate the impact of the identified factors on Customer Satisfaction in in the health and wellness industry of Sri Lanka.
3. To provide recommendations and strategies for customer satisfaction improvements in the industry

1.4 Research Question

The research question of the current study is as follows

1. What are the factors that affect customer satisfaction in the health and wellness industry of Sri Lanka in the case of Siddhalepa Ayurveda Wellness and Spa

2. Theoretical Framework

➤ Independent variables

1. Value
2. Empathy
3. Quality of Service
4. Safety

➤ Dependent variable

1. Customer satisfaction

2.1 Quality of Service

Many researchers have defined services in different ways. Services are defined as intangible acts or performances that one party may give to another in the context of healthcare requirements, without resulting in the acquisition of ownership, by Kotler, Keller, Koshy, and Jha (2012, p. 322). Additionally, in the realm of economics, Karalar (2001) defined services as an intangible, non-storable activity as opposed to physical things. These services, which

include consulting, travel, and communication, are geared for fulfilling the needs of certain people. According to a research conducted in Sri Lanka, It was found that that rather than the inherent qualities of Ayurvedic medicines, the way in which tourists acquire medication and other treatments has a greater impact on their degree of pleasure (Sathiyaseelan and Gnanapala, 2015). . Because it directly affects customer pleasure and indirectly influences customer loyalty, the literature has recognised the importance of service quality in connection to business results (Al Khattab & Aldehayyat, 2011). Furthermore, as noted by Zeithaml and Bitner (2008), it has been recognised that maintaining competitive advantages and cultivating client relationships are dependent on the quality of the services provided.

In the study conducted by Kamburugamuwa (2014) regarding customer satisfaction in indigenous and Ayurveda Spas in Sri Lanka, his findings revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. The presence of background music may affect how customers feel, how they assess a product or service, and how they make decisions. This is due to the fact that background music, especially in spa settings, is an essential component of the atmosphere and ambiance (Matilla & Wirtz, 2001; Milliam, 1982; Han & Ryu, 2009). The touch sensory element should be taken into account last. Bitner (1992) said that temperature, air quality, and weather are taken into account when evaluating the touch sensory component of research. Not only is temperature important at the spa, but the actual furniture has a purpose as well.

According to Guruge and Silva (2020) research conducted in Sri Lanka, found that One important element that can have a big impact on clients is having comfortable furniture and a suitable temperature, especially when it comes to their psychological comfort while receiving services. This is especially important when considering spas that aim to help their customers unwind. Better quality of service is an integral part of tourist satisfaction today, gaining the customer's trust has now become a very critical milestone, and high reputation, in the healthcare service, is considered a key to the success of any health care provider. As a practice and a theory it has been discovered that by the means of service quality dimensions, patients' trust and reputation can be linked to tourists' satisfaction (Uyangoda, 2012).

2.2 Empathy

Being empathetic means that the business is aware of the particular needs of each of its workers. Although customised or tailored service is the foundation of empathy, it's crucial to acknowledge that each customer is unique and has different demands. Clientele are drawn to businesses that exhibit empathy and relevancy in their presentation. Employees at small

service businesses often know their clients by name and build connections based on a knowledge of their needs and preferences. empathy is one possible way that small companies can win in their attempts to fight large corporations (Hennayake, 2017).

The concept of empathy in the area of wellness and spa tourism is illustrated as the provider's aptitude to understand the client's needs and more importantly preferences and in their response deliver a meaningful and unforgettable experience. Compassion and kindness between customers and service providers are key to the psychological bonding, which occurs in the form of trust, camaraderie, and an emotional connection, which in turn leads to an incredible experience for the customer. (Kim & Ritchie, 2021) Customer testify regarding their satisfaction in wellness and spa tourism because of various issues as they relate to service quality, ambiance, cleanliness, and the professionalism of staff (Amin et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the latest research states that the empathetic involvement with the customers becomes a crucial influence on the customer's overall level of satisfaction (Chen & Chen, 2018). For customers, those service providers who are empathetic are seen as more caring, welcoming and above all they value their customers' concerns which in turn builds good relationships with the customers.

According to the study of Nagendrakumar and Rathnayake (2022) the SERVQUAL framework can evaluate the service dimensions that can affect customer satisfaction of hotel spas in Sri Lanka. Their study used the factor analysis where they found that responsiveness, reliability and empathy as the factors that can influence customer satisfaction. Especially in the wellness sector, empathy is identified as a factors that can provide success for a business and also the determine the size of the market shares of companies. The factors of empathy shows how the company and the staff treats and listens to the customers on a customerized basis to make them feel happy and satisfied. In that case, spas and hotles need to porived training programs to improve communication skills of their staff to better deal with customers with good quality and diverse range of services. In such cases, customers are more liekly to be repeat customers and repeat bookings can occues. All the features discussed so far leads to customer satisfaction in wellness tourism industry (Fonseka and Pavithra, 2021).

The cultural ethos of Sri Lanka emphasizes hospitality and warmth, providing a conducive environment for empathetic interactions between service providers and guests (Prasanna et al., 2019). Moreover, the traditional healing practices and holistic wellness offerings in Sri Lankan spas underscore the importance of empathetic care in delivering authentic and transformative experiences (Liyanage & Karunaratne, 2017).

Silva and Gunawaradana (2019) conducted a research which depicts the sympathetic orientation of the spa industry in Sri Lanka. The investigation was based on customer's perception about service quality. One of the principles that was of paramount importance was empathy for the customer as it related to overall experience and satisfaction. Research results were highlighting that spa houses should be giving more attention to the way they interact ethically with clients or else the result will have poor feedback. Although the travel industry faces the challenge with the outbreak of Covid 19, hot springs tourism in Sri Lanka held the object of study of Perera and Weerasinghe (2020). They explored the customer expectations and levels of satisfaction. It was determined that empathy was one of the defining factors of customer satisfaction, this was further evident in the trend of customers preferring personalized and empathic service among interactions. Customer expectations were found to be at the center of hot spring operators' actions in which empathic practices in handling customers' needs were enforced to ensure quality services.

2.3 Value

Most businesses know how much it costs to get a new customer, but they don't always know how much it costs to lose a customer. Several things can cause a customer to leave an organisation, such as not knowing what to do when a customer moves or not understanding how important it is for the business when a customer leaves. Not giving customers what they want often leads to bad service, low-quality products, and quality that doesn't meet customer standards. In this sense, "value" doesn't mean the amount of money it costs, but rather the benefits that people think they can get for that price. Firms should come up with core values after fully understanding the wants and situation of their customers.

Customer value and customer value in business are two different ideas that should not be mixed up. When it comes to business, the value of a customer is their long-term support that keeps the business running. On the other hand, customer value is the benefits that customers get from a product or service. The organization's main goal is to create customer value in order to attract and keep customers while also providing high-quality goods and services that are a better deal for them. By using a well-thought-out marketing plan, the business can go above and beyond what customers expect and meet their needs better than its rivals. Newspaper and Chadwick (2012) Customer value is very important for a business to stay in business and make money in the long run. Today's market is very competitive, so it's important to know how a customer rates and evaluates a service or product. There hasn't been much growth in the study of customer value in many areas yet, but it has already taught us a lot about how value is created from both the customer and the company's point of view.

A study of Sri Lanka Spas in 2021 conducted by Karunathilake and Perera found that the three most important qualities were physical change, mental change, and enjoyment in considering spa service. One study of Gunrathne (2014) used factor analysis to find four main benefits that people were looking for: social, relaxed, healthful, and rejuvenating in Sri Lankan hotels and Spas. The tourists care more about health and recovery. Neutralists like to relax and relieve stress, but they don't really want to connect with other people. Lastly, hedonists like to relax and be healthy, as well as having fun, making friends, going to the spa, being pampered, and getting away from everyday life.

A lot of experts are interested in the value construct for at least two reasons. First, there is the strong link that was already talked about between worth and satisfaction. Second, value has a big effect on what customers do after they buy something. If customers think a company is offering better value than its competitors, they are more likely to stick with that company (Molinari, Abratt, & Dion, 2008; Tam, 2004). Because of this, a company's ability to create and offer its customers better and more competitive prices has become an important marketing strategy for growing market share and making the company more money overall.

Anuwichanont and Mechinda (2009) say that quality, reputation, and emotional value were more important than price when it came to customer satisfaction in the spa business. Tam (2004) looked at the fast food business and found that there was no significant relationship between price and quality. This means that customers may not think that price affects how good something is. Hume (2008) found that there was no direct link between perceived value for money and desire to buy again in the performing arts.

2.4 Safety

The study carried out based on the wellness tourism industry of Sri Lanka by Karunathilake and Perera (2021) revealed that it is recommended to include health safety procedures to the hotel contingency plan and increase quality of hospitality using hotel human resources practices. As per research by Sivanandamoorthy (2022) consumers' plans and decisions about the spa environment are strongly affected by how they feel about things like cleanliness, adequate lighting, and loitering in Sri Lanka. This is especially true when it comes to safety issues. One thing COVID-19 has taught is that reducing contact is the key way to reduce the risk of transmission of any disease. At a Spa, while you would generally strive to give the most in-person experience to your guests, this will have to change. For example, the check-in process or the welcome desk can be eliminated from the spa experience. Instead, your customers can be offered a check-in method that is virtual to ensure that they merely must

scan a device or log in online before going in straight for their treatment. This reduces the number of people they engage with while at the spa and safeguard your staff against the risk of transmission.

A peace-so-calming natural environment, for the most part, is constructed or shaped. So, guests can feel welcome and happy after their stay. The concept of "servicescape," as defined by Bitner & Bitner (2010), encompasses room aesthetics and landscape design (outside facilities design). Noise at the level of excessive, high room temperatures, bad smell, improper room decor and the stuffy furniture can keep a guest from staying in the hotel for an extended period. Decent conditions of air-conditioned room, advanced electronics, internet connectivity that can be easily accessed and modern facilities contribute to service delivery this is consistent with the views of Nimako and Mensah (2013) which agree that flowers, paintings and ceiling and wall designs make services delivery better. Besides artefacts which are of notable importance in determining consumer satisfaction and loyalty of the spa nature setting.

2.5 Customer Satisfaction

Services sector hotel reputation begins with the quality of the service they offer to the customers. It is a reference from a dimension of brand identity and hospitality professional relationship. This highly competitive atmosphere forces hotel operators to pay attention to customer needs more often than before and this leads to an increase in hotel incomes, based on Karunathilake and Perera (2021).

As far as service quality in spa hotels was concerned, Nagendrakumar and Rathnyake (2022) distinguished six major dimensions, namely; assurance as well as employees' knowledge;; sympathy; tangibles; responsiveness and service delivery; and reliability. The writers also established that all the three service quality dimension which are "tangibles", "employee knowledge and assurance" and "reliability" are the main areas that the customers expect in these spa hotels. The same research included 85 customers of a hotel spa for the first time with no previous spa services experience. Then, it would be wiser having customers share their expectations before receiving a spa service, and again right after they get the services. This measure could have led to measurement error.

Another study explored customer perceptions of service quality in Ayurvedic wellness tourism establishments in Sri Lanka. It explored the emotions, honesty, consistency, and tangibility, among others. It exposed the necessity of empathy in modifying the customer's satisfaction

and their level of loyalty relevant to Ayurvedic wellness tourism (Karunaratne & Ranasinghe, 2016).

As Mazaheri and Chelliah indicate (2020), satisfaction is more than a cognitive component. It is rather the interplay of feelings, thinking, and mental and physical factors. Community perception is always associated with evaluating service, therefore we must provide our customers with their desired services while being sure that they will be satisfied. This is among the other examples of the same category called the match of service expectations and community perception (Mazahery & Chelliah, 2020).

Works indicate the role of service quality dimensions in evoking customer satisfaction in the context of spa and wellness. According to Silva and Gunawardana (2018) service quality dimensions including empathy, reliability and response have the most significant impact on customer satisfaction in Sri Lankan spas. Due to the same characteristics, customers perceive premium services as added value and it leads to high satisfaction and returning. (Karunaratne & Ranasinghe, 2017).

According to Zeithaml et al. (2006), buyers have two different opinions about a company: one occurs as a result of one transaction, while the other is a general perception that has emerged from the various interactions with the brand during previous times. You can look at customer satisfaction with a product or service in two ways: either conduct a single survey after the purchase, or review how customer happiness changes at different periods (Naidoo 2014). An individuals can look at customer satisfaction with a product or service in two ways: either do a single survey after a purchase, or look at how customer happiness changes over time (Naidoo, 2014). There are two different kinds of customer satisfaction: "The customer's level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a specific service interaction" and "The customer's overall level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the company based on all interactions and experiences" (Zeithaml et al., 2006). Jones and Suh (2000) say that when customers are asked about their happiness, they are more likely to give feedback on the specifics of a transaction, such as what an employee did. When asked about their satisfaction, customers are more likely to talk about their general thoughts and experiences with the company, including how honest it is, rather than focusing on specific complaints (Bogale, 2019). Service quality is likely to be different from one experience to the next, which means that customers will be satisfied with each transaction at a different level. However, there may not be a direct link between the two (Gautam, 2011). Customers who are happy with a product or service may be more likely to stick with it, according to Yu, Lei-Yu, and Yu Ching (2005). But it's important to remember that

this loyalty depends on how each customer feels about the quality and how they've experienced it.

The integration of technology in spa operations also influences customer satisfaction levels. Online booking systems, digital personalization, and virtual consultations improve the case of guests and enhances the customization, therefore contributing to guest's satisfaction (Perera & Weerasinghe, 2020). Then, maintaining a balance in between innovations made from technology and the personal human touch is important for keeping the authentic spa experience. (Karunaratne & Ranasinghe, 2017). Customer paternalism and satisfaction formulation are fundamental elements to deliver customized experiences that meet the needs of guests. Perera and Weerasinghe (2020) highlighted that the relaxation, rejuvenation, and the fact that treatments are tailored to an individual as key factors that drive customer satisfaction in Sri Lankan spas. Sharing a positive experience with the guests through a personal touch, competent staff, and peaceful environment is as important as it contributes to satisfaction and positive word of mouth recommendation.

3. Methodology

As much design as a method as quantitative research is used. Investigative research design, in turn, may be utilized when researchers endeavor to comprehend a particular phenomenon or development in detail or a community deeply. This kind of research method saves a lot of time, and they then are easily capable of describing the object in detail. Then this information is to be explored to identify trend-specific patterns, and correlations using specialized mathematical or statistical techniques (Saunders et al. , 2009). Therefore, if the investigator is thinking about searching for something new or if there is not much data on the subject, a descriptive research design will be used. Encountering with that, descriptive research design is mostly applied to research projects that intend to explore unknown fields, where the conclusion is to test hypotheses and come up with interesting ideas. The way the experiments are set up lets the researchers get a good sense of the phenomenon's nature without changing or controlling any of the factors (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). An additional benefit of a descriptive research design is that it can be used with both qualitative and quantitative research methods. On the other hand, quantitative research methods like surveys and questionnaires may be able to get you useful information in a short amount of time.

3.1 Data Collection

The author used quantitative research approach because it allows a descriptive and statistical study of the topic involving more subjects relevant to the research problem. On the other hand, it provides a higher degree of accuracy of the results and statistical inferences can be made (DeVault, 2020)..

The descriptive study uses surveys, or questionnaires, as a primary means of gathering data. Surveys appear to be a commonly utilized technique of data gathering in the fields of general management and business, even though research are primarily conducted from the perspectives of experimental psychology (Saunders et al., 2009). A representative sample of 25 Siddhalepa Ayurvedic clients were given online surveys containing both open-ended and Likert scale questions in order to gather pertinent data for this study. A range of question formats, including matrix, likert scale, rating scale, and structured open-ended formats, may be included in the surveys.

To ensure that the results are successfully communicated to the relevant stakeholders, the study will utilize a quantitative technique. By using quantitative research approaches, quantitative research makes it easier to formulate a workable set of inquiries and produces quantifiable outcomes (Majid, 2018).

In quantitative research, researchers can improve their comprehension of subject variables by selecting more robust approaches, claims Greener (2016). A significant portion of the data included in the investigation comes from officially administered surveys. Two basic categories of data are regularly used in the field of research: primary and secondary data. The main area of interest for this research project is primary data, which is information gathered by the researcher directly from first-hand participants

The survey was created using Google Forms as an online questionnaire. Consequently, it was shared with the customers who have gained the services of Siddhalepa earlier and the survey was available for 9 days from the 27th March to 05th April 2024. The researcher was able to collect 25 complete responses from the respondents. The collected data was analysed using the Microsoft Power Bi Tool that generated charts and graphs for convenient visualisation of data.

3.2 Sample and Population

The primary objective of this study is to examine the research population as the customers of Siddhalepa Ayurveda in Sri Lanka. In order to make sure that enough data is collected, the researcher got important information from a group of about 25 customers who were picked as the study's sample. People who took part was asked about the independent factors that are being looked.

4 Results

4.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter presents and discussed the results of the survey to understand the factors affecting customer satisfaction at Siddhalepa Ayurveda in Sri Lanka. The survey presents the results gathered from 25 respondents, the customers of health and wellness industry in Sri Lanka in the context of Siddhalepa Ayurveda customers.

4.2 Demographic background analysis

4.2.1 Gender

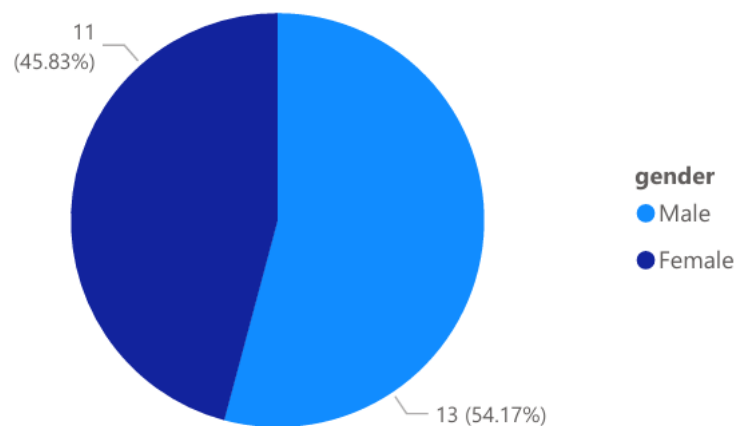


Figure 1 Gender

Based on the responses of the survey, majority of the customers are male (54.17%) while 45% of the customers are female. This shows that the number of male customers outnumber the number of female customers.

4.2.2 Age

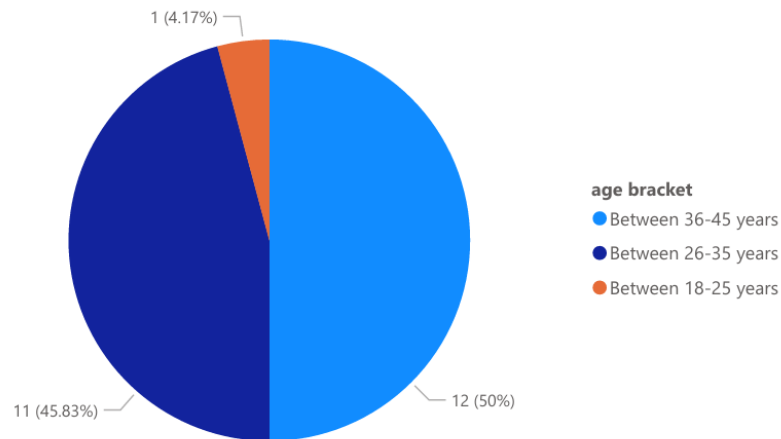


Figure 2 Age

As depicted in the above figure, highest number of respondents are between 36-45 years old which is 50% followed by 45% of the respondents between 26-35 years old and the least number of respondents are between 18-25 years. The author assumes that mostly elder people and mid aged people visit wellness center with the more focus on health with the growing in their lives.

4.3 Value

4.3.1 Services provide good value for its prices



Figure 3 Value

Based on the above figure, most of the respondents agreed that the services provided are a good value for its price while around 30% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. This aligns with the literature, which emphasizes the importance of providing value to customers beyond just the price. Gupta, Lehmann, and Stuart (2004) highlighted the significance of understanding customer wants and tailoring services accordingly to ensure perceived value. Additionally, Anuwichanont and Mechinda (2009) emphasized that factors like quality, reputation, and emotional value are more critical than price in determining customer satisfaction in the spa business. The literature emphasizes understanding and satisfying consumer demands beyond financial considerations, which is reflected in the high level of agreement among respondents considering the good value of services. This indicates that Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa is meeting client expectations and is in line with studies that highlights the significance of perceived value in addition to price.

4.3.2 Responding to customer queries

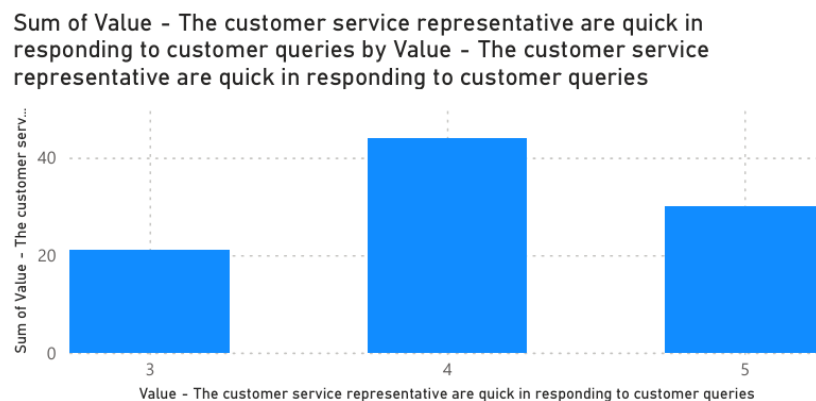


Figure 4 Responding to customer queries

According to the 25 results of the survey, it is evident that more than 40% of the respondents have agreed to the statement that customer service representatives are quick in responding to the customer queries. However, 20% of those surveyed have a stance of satisfaction with the statement. This could well be the reason why speed has ranked high among the list of values regarding to customer care based on several studies (Mutalia & Wirtz, 2001). Research demonstrates that attending to customer concerns quickly, and offering a friendly service customer finds beneficial has a good effect on customers' satisfaction with a firm and loyalty towards it (Milliam, 1982). Thus, the agility with which the spa contacts with customers and

answer the question is able to demonstrate the high-level service and improve the quality of clients experience..

4.4 Quality of Service

4.4.1 Recommend the service

Sum of Quality of Service - Considering my overall experience, I would recommend the services to a friend or a colleague by Quality of Service - Considering my overall experience, I would recommend the services to a friend or a colleague

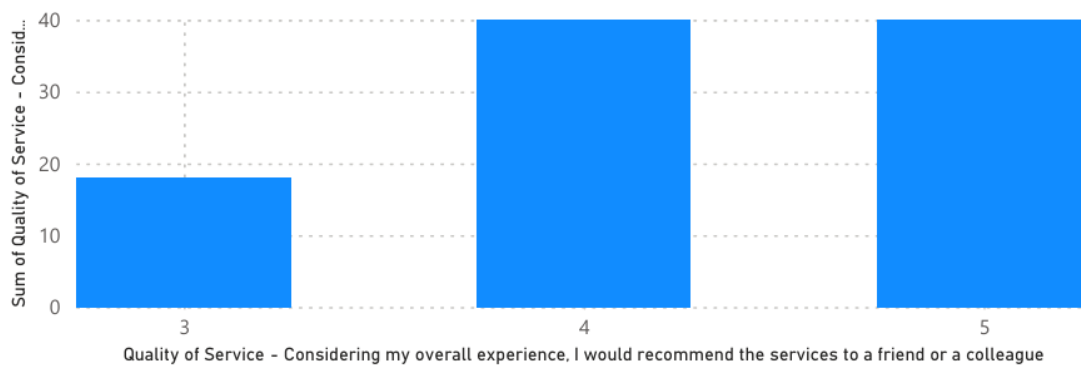


Figure 5 Recommend the service

In response to the survey, most of the respondents (40% equally both Strongly Agreed and Agreed) would advocate to the friends and colleagues. Among the respondents 20% voted on the neutral side of the statement. This goes along with the finding which points at the existence of the connection between customer's satisfaction and service quality. As Zeithaml et al. (2006) highlighted, a positive word-of-mouth and consumer satisfaction have a strong correlation, while word-of-mouth promotes brand reputation and consumer loyalty. The overwhelming and unanimous approval of the services given as a suggestion by the majority indicates the importance of service quality as far as customer satisfaction and retention is concerned. This follows on the line of previous studies where it could be demonstrated how important it is that the customer feels satisfied, to make him speak positively. This in return would improve the reputation of the brand name and enhances customer loyalty.

4.4.2 Satisfaction with a range of services

Sum of Quality of Service - I am happy and satisfied with the range of services offered by the company by Quality of Service - I am happy and satisfied with the range of services offered by the company

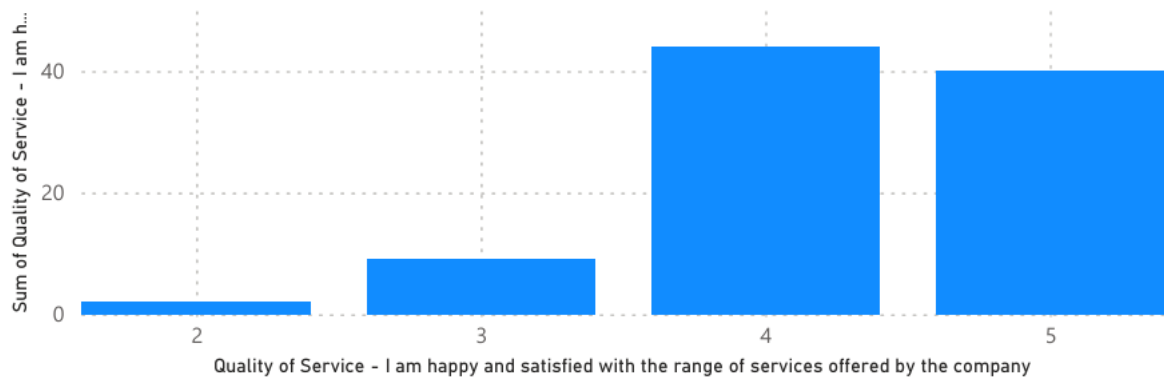


Figure 6 Range of services

According to the study results, around 45% of the respondent agreed to the statement and closer to 40% strongly agreed as well. However, there is around 5% of the customers who disagreed with the range of services offers at the Spa. This shows that the company need to focus on adding new services or modify the services to suit the customer needs and preferences as required. According to research, giving customers options that meet their various needs and preferences through a wide selection of services improves customer satisfaction (Koh et al., 2010). As a result, the spa's capacity to live up to client expectations via a variety of service options promotes client loyalty and general contentment.

4.5 Safety

4.5.1 Safe during medical and wellness sessions

Sum of Safety - I feel safe during the wellness and medical sessions at the Spa by Safety - I feel safe during the wellness and medical sessions at the Spa

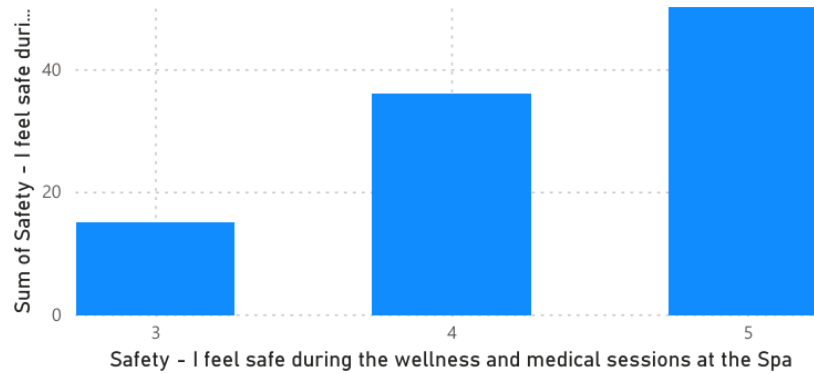


Figure 7 Safe during medical sessions

When enquired about the feeling of safety during the medical and wellness sessions at the Spa, around 50% which is the majority of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement while a little less than 20% of the customers remained neutral with the statement. As backing up these study findings are scientific facts, safety and security are proven to be two of the important factors that influence customer behavior in retail shops (Burns, et al., 2010). It has been proven that the opinions of customers on the safety aspects of an establishment can have a big influence on the emotional well-being of customers who are willing to visit the establishment again or not. The high agreement on a sense of safety shows that Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spaworries about safety concerns, and this is critical because keeping customers content and loyal entails doing so. Thus, it represents spa's commitment to the general safety of their clients that, of course, is in line with the research findings linking safety perceptions to consumer behavior.

4.5.2 Satisfaction with the available payment options



Figure 8 Satisfaction with payment options

According to the responses of the customers, almost 50% of the respondents agreed with the statement of satisfaction with the payment options available at the Spa. Also, around 35% of the respondent strongly agreed. However, around 2% of the customers disagreed with the statement. Research indicates that providing customers with convenient and safe payment options enhances their experiences and their opinions of the quality of the services they receive (Caruana, 2002). As a result, the spa's willingness to accommodate clients' wants and preferences is reflected in its ability to provide acceptable payment choices, which promotes client loyalty and general pleasure.

4.5.3 Satisfied with the environment of the Spa

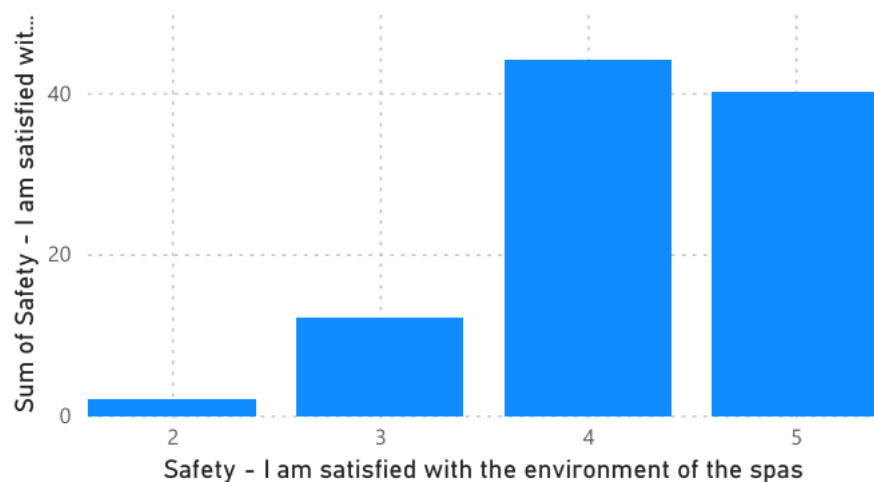


Figure 9 Satisfaction with environment

Based on the results of the survey, it is evident that most of the customers are satisfied with the environment of the spa. This is consistent with research showing how important ambiance and environment are in determining how customers experience a business (Han & Ryu, 2009). Studies indicate that a hospitable and comfortable setting boosts client satisfaction and promotes return business (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). As a result, the spa's emphasis on creating a welcoming and pleasant atmosphere helps to increase client happiness and loyalty.

4.6 Empathy

4.6.1 Solving of customer issues

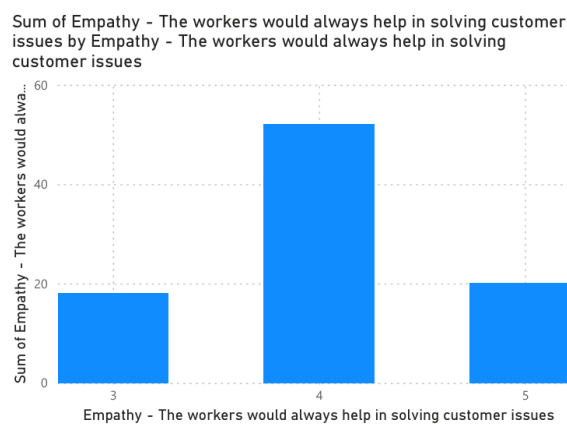


Figure 10 Solving customer issues

According to the above chart, around 60% of the customer have agreed that the customers are helped in solving the issues by the staff, which is the majority of the respondents. Moreover, 20% of the respondents have strongly agreed to the statement. This result is in line with research which points out the value of empathy and customized care in raising customer happiness, especially for small firms (Hennayake, 2017). Positive client experiences are largely dependent on Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa's ability to effectively exhibit empathy, as evidenced by the high agreement with staff support in issue resolution. This supports other studies that highlight the value of individualized care in small businesses and highlights the spa's dedication to meeting the requirements of its patrons.

4.6.2 Comprehensive way of handling complaints



Figure 11 Handling complaints

Out of the 25 respondents, more than 60% of the respondents agreed that the customer complaints are handed in a comprehensive way. While 25% strongly agreed to the statement, 15% remained neutral and around 2% had disagreed to the statement. Research indicates that resolving concerns in a timely and satisfactory manner can convert disgruntled clients into devoted supporters (Torres & Kline, 2006). As a result, the spa's effort to fully resolving client complaints is indicative of its commitment to upholding client loyalty and satisfaction.

4.7 Customer Satisfaction

4.7.1 Enjoyment of customer services

Sum of Customer Satisfaction- I highly enjoy the customer services provided by the company by Customer Satisfaction- I highly enjoy the customer services provided by the company

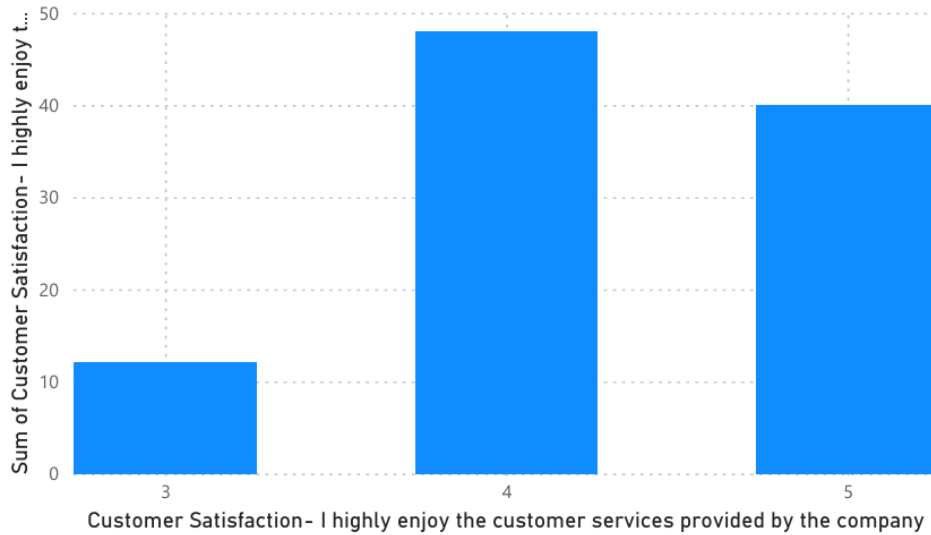


Figure 12 Enjoyment of services

As depicted in the above chart, almost all the respondents have a positive attitude towards the customer services provided at Ayurveda Siddhalepa Spa where almost 50% have agreed and 40% have strongly agreed to the statement. This is consistent with research showing how happy customers are key to building loyalty and satisfaction (Singh, 2010). Empirical evidence indicates that high views of service quality and overall satisfaction are positively correlated with pleasurable encounters with service providers (Remya, 2016). Consequently, the spa's emphasis on providing delightful client experiences boosts client happiness and loyalty in general.

4.7.2 Exceed expectations



Figure 13 Exceed expectations

As depicted in the above chart highest number of customers (55%) have agreed that the services provided at the Spa have exceeded their expectations. On the other hand, there is around 2% here their services have not exceeded their expectations. Research indicates that meeting or exceeding consumer expectations generates goodwill and referrals (Jones & Suh, 2000). Consequently, the spa's capacity to always surpass client expectations is indicative of its dedication to providing outstanding service and cultivating enduring client connections.

4.8 Revisit The Research Question

What are the factors that affect customer satisfaction in the health and wellness industry of Sri Lanka in the case of Siddhalepa Ayurveda Wellness and Spa?

The objective of the study was to determine the elements that impact consumer satisfaction in the health and wellness sector in Sri Lanka, with a specific focus on Siddhalepa Ayurveda Wellness & Spa. These findings reflect on different aspects of the consumer experience of various demographics, perceived value, the quality of service, consumer safety, empathy and overall satisfaction with the services.

Demographic Background study: The demographic study revealed a majority of the respondents were the males and the largest segment was between 36-45 years. This is congruent with argument that grownups who are in the age segments of old and middle occupy the wellness centers in a pattern, that is, the demographic pattern of the business.

Value: One of the main components of participants' opinions was that Siddhalepa Ayurveda Wellness and Spa worth their money for the prices they are being charged. The correlation here is with the existing volume of work that emphasizes the importance of customers' perceived value in the satisfaction process and in the service industry (Zeithaml, 1988; Prasanna et al., 2019).

Empathy: The research underscored the importance of training spa employees to enhance their empathetic skills for improved customer experiences. Empathy was identified as a critical factor affecting customer experience and satisfaction. The research emphasized the need for spa establishments to prioritize empathetic interactions with customers to enhance overall satisfaction and loyalty (Silva & Gunawardana, 2019).

Service Quality: The research finds that the clientele at Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa are generally content with the variety of services offered and are impressed by the majority of the customers who stated being satisfied. Nevertheless, a small minority of customers are not contented with all these things, which can be the reason for the constant improvement and re-orientation of the level of services to meet the transforming needs of the customers (Fernando and Perera, 2019).

Safety: All customers gave a clear reaffirmation of their sense of security while having their medical and wellness sessions at the spa. In this context, it is crucially vital to make sure that the clients feel and are safe and comfortable in the center. This finding also highlights that safe image of wellness spas significantly affects customers' general satisfaction and loyalty (Liyanage and Karunarathne, 2017)

The research showed that the ability of the staff to solve problems and answer customers' queries has been highly appreciated and the importance of empathy as a technique to increase customer satisfaction has been particularly highlighted (Homburg et al., 2002). In addition to that, efficient complaint management shows the willingness of the organization to meet consumers' needs immediately.

Customer Satisfaction: The results show that a large percentage of participants are satisfied with the customer services Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa provides, some of which even claim the services ultimately surpassed their expectations. Such association with prior researches that may reach out to the idea that going beyond consumer expectations is so essential to attaining higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty (Oliver, 1999).

5 Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations

Expand Service offers: Analyzing the tremendous feedback on the variation of products and services in existence, Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa would then perceive offering additional range to match a wider scope of consumer desires (Bogale, 2019). This could involve the use of new therapies, wellness initiatives developed specifically for various demographic cohorts, or certain offerings that prove favored in particular part of the stratum.

Continuous Improvement: The responses in terms of whether services exist at fair prices displays that on the whole they welcome the amount that they are charged, however it is still possible to improve. In this regard, Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa should be open-minded to consumers' feedback and make on-going changes to their services, facilities, and customer service based on analysis of this data in order to succeed consistently in the market (Sathiyaseelan and Gnanapala, 2015).

Improve Customer Communication: The findings show that the consumers rate solution of their issues in timely manner as highly desirable. Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa must be readily accessible to consumers, even in the most urgent of cases where the visitors have incomplete information about the services, a query regarding accommodation or if there is a promotion they are not aware of (Remya, 2016).

Safety and Comfort: As many of the clients experience specific security throughout their visits to the spa, it is necessary for the spa to reinforce and introduce safety protocols in an effort to maintain and improve security so as to offer a safe and comfortable atmosphere to all clientele. In most cases, these tasks could include, but not be limited to, ensuring the highest level of standard hygiene performance in each of the facilities, providing all staff members with necessary training to react quickly and efficiently to emergency situations (Remya, 2016).

In order to make clients satisfied with their service hiring staff that are empathetic and skilled in resolving issues might be centre stage. As many people add their voices praising the staff's support, in the process of solving issues. Meanwhile, that merely shows how vital a good relationship and communication are between a company and its clients (Zinledin, 2006). To achieve the goal of advancing the workers' level of personal interaction, empathy and problem-

solving, Siddhalepa Investments Spa should set aside financial resources in a continuous staff training program.

5.2 Future Possibility of Research

Contributing to this growing knowledge in the field are longitudinal studies with a focus on time change, qualitative research to peel the surface and look behind the perceptions and emotions of the customers, comparative analysis to identify the strengths and weaknesses versus competitors, investigating the influence of technology in enhancing experiences, and cross-cultural studies to understand the different customer segments, are some future research opportunities that pose to the Siddhalepa. Additionally, more individual beneficiaries can lead to more findings that can be generalized into the majority. These outlines focus on the areas where academics can make an impact in the state of knowledge about the spa sector and give some practical tips to help Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa to grow and remain in a strong strategic position.

6 Conclusion

Among the factors that aimed at customer satisfaction and loyalty in the context of Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa, our study demonstrated the central role of those factors of the satisfaction which can lead to loyalty. The research outcomes and literature review of the research show exactly the same truth, thus, it is more clear how important it is to value customers and provide the services that satisfy their needs, a great support, diversified service offerings, convenient payment options, friendly spaces, easily avoiding disappointments, the right attitudes in customers, and the ability to go beyond customers' expectation always. The integration of the aforementioned elements will ultimately boost the customer satisfaction, identify a customer's feeling towards the company products, and eventually, maintain a long-term relationship with the customers.

According to the research, Siddhalepa Ayurveda spa presented a holistic approach to client needs by listening to them at different stages, from safety and empathy to providing quality service. Customer-centric practices should be the key priority in the spa business and make the spa be competitive. Also, a growing client portfolio may be attained by the continuous provision of high-quality products and services which meet and possibly exceed customers' expectations. The presented results highlights how aptly adapting to customers' taste, maintaining a high service standards and never stop improving should be the constant efforts of the organizations to stay relevant. Siddhalepa utilizing these revealed aspects can further

the customer experience strategies, solidify the ties with the clients and create a steady flow of demand. In this way, the spa business will be able to maintain its competitive superiority over many competitors.

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Appendix 1 Questionnaire For Customer Survey

Part A- Background analysis

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

2. What is your age bracket?

Between 18-25 years

Between 26-35 years

Between 36-45 years

Above 46 years

3. How many years of customer experience do you have with the company?

Between 1-2 years

Between 2-5 years

Between 5-10 years

Above 10 years

4. Your Highest Academic Education Level

G.C.E. O/L

G.C.E. A/L

Higher diploma

Bachelor's Degree

Post graduate diploma

MBA/MSc/ MPhil

PHD

5. Please mention if you are local resident (Sri Lanka) or Foreign

Sri Lankan

Foreign

6. . Please select your monthly income range from the below list

Rs. 15,000 - Rs 34,999

Rs. 35,000 - Rs. 49,999

Rs. 50,000 - Rs. 74,999

Rs. 75,0000 - Rs. 99,999

Rs. 100,000 or more

Can you rate your agreement or disagreement on the following statement stated under each variable using the below scale.

Strongly disagree- 1

Disagree- 2

Neutral- 3

Agree- 4

Strongly agree –5

Independent variables

Quality of Service

1. Considering my overall experience, I would recommend the services to a friend or a colleague
2. The workers are courteous and friendly
3. The workers are well trained and experienced in the job
4. I am happy and satisfied with the range of services offered by the company

Value

5. The workers made me feel valued as a customer
6. The services provide good value for its prices
7. The services provided by the Spa has impacted my physical and mental health positively
8. The customer service representative are quick in responding to customer queries

Empathy

9. The advises and the information provided by worker are clear and concise
10. The workers of the Spa clearly understand my needs and requirements
11. The workers would always help in solving customer issues
12. The company has a comprehensive way of handling complaints

Safety

- 13. I am happy with payment options available at the company
- 14. I am satisfied with the environment of the spas
- 15. The workers follow safety procedures during sessions appropriately
- 16. I feel safe during the wellness and medical sessions at the Spa

Dependent variable

Customer Satisfaction

- 17. I highly enjoy the customer services provided by the company
- 18. My experience at the Spa was seamless
- 19. Siddhalepa Ayurveda will be my first choice in the needs of health and wellness services
- 20. The services exceeds my expectations

Appendix 2 Thesis Data Management Plan

The thesis writer acknowledged the procedures offered by the data management strategy of HAMK for the thesis. The Commissioning company (Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa in Sri Lanka), the author, researcher and the thesis supervisor from HAMK University of Applied Sciences have all signed and approved the thesis agreement. The Quantitative data for the study was collected by sharing online surveys through google forms where the questionnaires included Likert scale questions shared to 25 customers of Siddhalepa Ayurveda Spa. The researcher informed the participants of getting the permission from participants before attending the survey. The research will take into account regarding the responsibilities and the interest of the participants in taking a part in the study. The anonymity of the participants will be guaranteed by the author and the privacy of the data. The personal information of the participants will be not be retrieved and none of the responses will be separately published in any publications. The researcher plans to handle the participants and behave with the respondents in a polite manner. The data gained from the participants was handled ethically, and will ensure to avoid any skeptics or biasness in presenting the data results of the study. The survey results can be accessed by supervisor, author and the participants if necessary. Moreover, the author maintained a notebook for the research purposes in order to maintain confidentiality of the research activities.