

Predicting customer engagement behaviour: the mediating role of hotel functional quality in the Vietnamese hotel industry

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Abstract: The study's purpose is to examine the relationships between customer-to-employee interaction (CEI), customer involvement (CI), optimal distinctiveness (OD), functional quality (FQ) and customer engagement behaviour (CEB) in the Vietnamese hotel industry. The research conducted a quantitative survey, which targeted hotel customers and had managed to yield 389 valid responses. The research applied structural equation modelling-partial least square (SEM-PLS) to justify the validity of the model following Smart PLS-3. The findings of the study have shown that CEI, CI, and OD significantly impact FQ. CEI, CI, and OD also significantly impact CEB through FQ. Finally, FQ significantly impacts on CEB. This study acknowledges the value of customers, which affirms the regional need for skilled employee to achieve hotel goal. These research findings strongly argued for more engagement programs in the departments, since the persistent lack of the appropriate skills mix poses challenges and has serious implication for hotel managers.

Keywords: customer involvement; functional quality; hospitality; customer engagement behaviour; CEB.

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1 Introduction

Vietnam is an eastern coastal country of the Peninsula of Indochina. Vietnam possesses along coastline (3,260 km), and a population of 90.7 million people. National summary, it is a success story on growth. As a result of the economic and political reforms of 1986, the nation transformed from one of the poorest economies in the world to one of the fastest growing emerging economies in South-East Asia. Vietnam's GDP shows faster growth than neighbouring countries in the region, according to the World Bank. Hospitality has been an attractive and popular sector in the last few years due to the consistent growth. Vietnam is in the good position to capture the growth and prosperity of hospitality industry. Tourism contributed 4.6% directly to the country's GDP in 2014, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council; the growth is projected to continue at 6.6% annually from 2015 to 2025. Vietnam has climbed from 80th position in 2013 to 75th spot on the Tourism Competitiveness Index in 2015 (out of 141 economies). The most recent Socio-economic Development Plan (2011–2020) establishes key goals for Vietnam to achieve its transformation to an industrial and modern economy by 2020. This can be outlined as economic stabilisation, the creation of world-class infrastructure, the production of skilled workers and the strengthening of market institutions (Trung and Khalifa, 2019).

The services of the hotel industry also become possessions (Abou-Shouk and Khalifa, 2017; O'Neill and Mattila, 2010) as discrepancy between the services offered by hotels. For instance, guests are rapidly moving in different hotels at a time for advance technology (Khalifa and Mewad, 2017), features and facilities. For the competitive

market, if hotels want to gain more market advantages, they must switch the new marketing strategy from the ancient concept to modern relationship marketing approach (Abdulla et al., 2019; Donaldson and O'toole, 2007). Focus of the marketing approaches has been changed from transaction to connections (Khalifa, 2020a, 2015; Rowley, 2005). Moreover, customer engagement behaviour (CEB) go further than purchases and can be clearly defined "as behavioral manifestations of a customer that concentrate on the hotel, beyond purchasing, resulting from motivational drivers." It is measured even in the form of marketing research (e.g., <http://www.peoplemetrics.com>), although there is little empirical exposure to customer interaction as a separate construct. According to Soanes (2005), the verb 'to engage' has several different meanings.

Relevant meanings include: recruiting or employing, keeping strong, contract-binding, wrestling and participating. All of these meanings suggest a conduct attention. Malthouse and Calder (2018) explored the idea of customer interaction, which focuses on the psychological experience of customers when consuming services. Engagement is a secondary source of experience outside the hedonic source of experience that arises from a key driver to make things happen or not (Higgins, 2006). Malthouse and Calder (2018) differentiated engagement from simple interaction, which means that engagement is more customers friendly and as if alone. Rather than transactions, behavioural consequences can be both positive (i.e., publishing a constructive corporate message on a blog) and negative (i.e., organising public actions against an organisation). It should also be noted that although engagement are aimed at a much wider range of actors along with other existing and potential customers, suppliers, media, regulators and staff. Customer engagement requires even co-creation of customers. According to Fernandes and Remelhe (2016), co-creation of customers requires participation (customer) in the creation of the centre that offers itself. It can happen via shared inventiveness, co-design or the exchange of related products (Binnawas et al., 2019; Alareefi et al., 2019; Alkathiri et al., 2019a, 2019b; Alharthi et al., 2019). Co-creation therefore occurs when the consumer engages in spontaneous, adaptive activities that tailor the user-to-brand experience uniquely (beyond the option of pre-set choices as in co-production).

Obviously, activities such as promoting user interface, motivating and informing service providers and motivating other users to purchase more are all facets of co-creation and customer interaction. The consumer engagement also encapsulates the classic Hirschman (1970) model's exit and voice components. In this model, consumers may choose to exercise their voice (communication patterns designed to pass on their experience) or escape (conduct designed to curtail or prolong their brand relationship) (Hirschman, 1970). The spectrum of conducts can mean pure voice (complaint conduct, positive or negative advice, positive or negative word of mouth) to pure exit (decrease in usage, non-contract renewal) and many behaviours among them (Abd-Elaziz et al., 2015). In particular, certain activities such as involvement in hotel groups, blogging and voluntarily recommending changes in the design of a product can mean both voice and exit (or non-exit by strengthening relationships). As stated later, client participation in such activities can be a function of various backgrounds.

In addition, Medberg and Grönroos (2020) argued that technical quality is the 'basic' requirement for a positive view of total quality, but that practical quality provides competitive edge. In fact, in the marketing partnership, the rise in the value of functional quality (FQ) compared with technological quality is a strategic one (Medberg and Grönroos, 2020). Grönroos noted that the quality of a service as perceived by the

consumer has two dimensions: a functional dimension (or process) and a technical dimension (or result) (Myo et al., 2019). FQ focuses on 'how' and addresses issues such as customer-contact employee behaviour and service speed while technical quality reflects on 'what' and addresses issues such as service delivery outcome (Khalifa, 2020b).

In addition, the previously stated FQ of the first customer department that guests encounter with any questions or problems at the first call for many guests. This is an act as the public face of the hotel, initially by welcoming hotel patrons and checking guest welfare during their stay, by taking care of their lodging, meals and drinks, accounts and transactions (Horcas et al., 2018; Khalifa, 2018; Khalifa and Abou-Shouk, 2014). It also includes all management maintenance, job assessment, workforce development, customer support feedback, customer relationship and agent service, booking, director, fitness and recreation centre and business centre (Gumaste et al., 2015). Hotels particularly have different departments and their operations in the hospitality industry (Hossain et al., 2019). FQ is one of the mechanisms important for investigating quality characteristics to ensure an appropriate excellent performance with the level of engagement between the customers (Binnawas et al., 2020). Customer engagement chooses to purchase or buy with emotion and action which gives the hotel confidence. Due to the standard of the services and the organisational behaviour, guests have to visit the hotel again, which inspires confidence (Hossain et al., 2019). This was checked via the articulation of various structures in different contexts (Foxall and Pallister, 2017; Jay and Michael, 2015). Within this study, customer engagement explains the associated FQ to meet the needs of better purchasing conditions.

Furthermore, optimal distinctiveness (OD) also can be explained CEB in the sense of expected services of the hotels (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). It is an ideal balance between the embrace and core qualities of a person who insists on individual singularity (Brewer, 2003; Sheldon and Bettencourt, 2002). For instance, impressive emotions indicate the CEB in order to build relationship and learning continuity for the guest and employees that emotional evolve for hotels in reliable service. It is understood that impressive emotional experiences are fundamental to human nature and contribute greatly to the quality of life (Black et al., 2017; Hou and Fan, 2011; Leonardelli et al., 2010; Zuckerman, 2016). Accordingly, customer-to-employee interaction (CEI) defined as the interaction of people over in extended period of time by maintaining the relationship of the guest and employee during service in the organisation (Wang and Lang, 2019). Interactions always believes in constitution such as closed relation between husband and wife or other family and friend interactions, but notions of the guest and employees relation is in repeat encounter (Alharthi and Khalifa, 2019; Gremler et al., 2001).

These construct direct influence on FQ in order to indicate the gap of this relation in the theoretical concept which has insufficient considering in the literature. The indirect or mediating effect of the hotel in format of FQ between influencing factors of FQ in the hotel industry has not considered in terms of impact of both relationships. To the best of the authors' knowledge, there is no previous research has been found that investigated of these aspects. The justification of influencing factors of FQ theoretically placed for contribution in relation of FQ and relationship-based gaps are addressed as unique contribution in this study.

This present study assesses to influence influencing factors of FQ on CEB to gaining a competitive edge. Therefore, there is an important question to ask how FQ and its

influencing factor may stimulate CEB. In order to examine the inter-relationships of the influencing factors with FQ and CEB, a model depicting the expected connections between the constructs and their respective connotation needs to be built. The links of the factors constructs are set of hypotheses that research must be established, whether hypotheses are supported or rejected.

2 A review of the literature

2.1 The direct and indirect relationships of customer involvement

Customer involvement (CI) is correlated with the degree of concern or involvement in the buying process that emerges from the buying obligation (Kahle and Homer, 1988). This was presented in the marketing and service sense and typically displays a self-concept that involves an individual's values in an idea (Cheung and To, 2011). Effective levels of financial anxiety are linked by greater involvement in purchases. Similarly, ambiguous behavioural conditions make guests becoming more anxious by preventing adverse effects. The hospitality industry has incorporated features and functionality to boost guest search experience in its stations (Sigala, 2012). Participation can be viewed as the greatest incentive for visitors to join the online communities (Tung et al., 2017). In specific, hotel guests are characterised into level of purchase involvement that will be engaged in relatively extensive destination selection (Sudigdo and Khalifa, 2020; Widjaja et al., 2020). Pre-decided guests are looking for additional information as target-oriented events such as pre-purchase deliberations via active external information (Alkatheeri et al., 2020; Sanchez-Franco and Rondan-Cataluña, 2010). Therefore, organisational activities inspired guest and sometimes instant solution in the service stations which involve to purchase a product in the hotel (Mohamed et al., 2018; Suhartanto et al., 2018). This also applies to the perceived personal importance and customer connection to specific types of services and goods (Alshamsi et al., 2019; Foxall and Pallister, 2017).

Consequently, an individual and an internal stage are motivating assets that were evoked by buying participation in specific circumstances (Drossos et al., 2014). For example, the concern of the guest brings with it a purchasing decision challenge that conceptualises its brand from competing brands by specific customer minds (Khalifa and Hewedi, 2016). As a model of customer service, it plays a role in the FQ of the hotel, which is amplified through the creation of a partnership. It therefore makes separate sense that the guest purchase decision or routine check-in activity transforms the operating rules and structure into a new entity or a new era of quality. Nonetheless, to the best authors' knowledge, purchasing involvement has never been examined in the literature in order to achieve FQ against CEB. The mediating rule of FQ indicates to make connection between CI and CEB.

H1a CI positively influences hotel FQ.

H1b FQ mediates the relationship between CI and CEB.

2.2 Direct and indirect effects of CEI

In the consumer service, different definitions of CEI by several researchers found for involving the interaction in the service area or the part of service orientation (Thusyanthy

and Senthilnathan, 2011). It is a crucial and vital weapon for the success of functions and hotel structural development. Thus, interaction is feeling of care friendliness and communication between the guest and hotel service provider (Zhang and Zhou, 2014). In detail, service provider plays role of hotels with multidimensional functions based on guest service communication (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010). Although, it would be in different places, but the common target or goals are to develop the relationship with guests and bring FQ to relate functional responsibilities in the hotel. In addition, the service orientation can be neutral but the behaviour of the provider may have impact of their feelings (Durvasula et al., 2010). In this study researcher believe, interaction will be enjoyable when the contact would be helpful, experienced and pleasant service provide by employee. Accordingly, guests will get quality of functions in specifically appear to hotel retain their relationships and popularity by interaction information, reputation, features and facilities (Al-Shibami et al., 2019; Huang and Hsu, 2010).

The comparison between employee and guest interaction is mutual understanding of corporate relation in order to understand function and facilities. Therefore, exchanging information provides familiarity and relate to the guest in terms of essential survival and profit (Deng et al., 2010; Mende et al., 2013). Hereafter, hotels need to provide policies for the guest gratitude for long-term interaction with the functional engagement (Huang, 2015). Thus, the interactive relationship between guest, hotel and service employees is important to evaluate their experiences after using services.

On the other side, behaviours of the employees are the key determinates of quality of the hotels and progressive enhancement (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006; Wu et al., 2015). Personal and physical interaction meets positively influence guest experiential value by approaching behaviour, appearance and perceptions of other guests (Baker et al., 2002). Furthermore, observing the behaviour of the guests indicates to the guest's perception because CEI can influence to the FQ (Brocato and Kleiser, 2005).

The meaningful understanding of the main effect of interaction on FQ support to get easy directions during service procedures (Keh et al., 2013). The mediating role of FQ consists of a place to interact between hotel and its guests. Therefore, the investigation was unique for contributing direct and indirect influence on FQ toward CEB. Interaction makes indispensable easy relation with guest which assists to improve functional demonstration of the hotel.

H2a CEI has direct impact on FQ.

H2b FQ mediates the relationship between CEI and CEB.

2.3 *The direct and indirect effects of OD*

OD "is a social psychological theory that looking differentiate in-group and out-group for asserting individuals expectation to attain an optimal balance of presence and distinctiveness within and between social clusters and circumstances" (Zhao et al., 2017). Zuckerman (2016) defined as "an integrative framework for understanding the stability between differentiation and conformity in individuals or organization identity." In the meantime, distinctiveness refers to the significance of the manner in which guests view their hotel as separate from other hotels or entities (Gioia et al., 2013). Because of paradoxical stress, it also penetrates the parallels between an entity and its peer group, aims to find identities that are established or created at opposing extremes (Foreman et al., 2012). Consequently, organisational functions internally resolve the dilemma of

sameness with difference identity also perceived legitimacy within the organisational environment (Navis and Glynn, 2010). There is combination of hotels identity to describe the role of identity domains and management salient cognitive impressions of the market (Livengood and Reger, 2010). Inter-group communication leads to build up frequency and develop interaction across racial with ethnic boundaries (Pettigrew, 2008). More precisely, if social cooperation, identification and intergroup is mostly essential for human survival, then there should be psychological mechanism at the individual level of motives and sustain in-group differentiation and identification (Hogg and Mullin, 1999). Empirical analysis argued that managerial prospects of a business system play a role in fostering intolerance and lack of innovation to achieve its global level (Porac et al., 2011).

Moreover, organisational identity literary indicated that the people make sense of their organisation and decision making by the environmental effectiveness (Smidts et al., 2001). The competition can viewed as the cultural metaphor and way of people talk and think about the competition structure, organisational process and social connectivity (Busco, 2009). The construct of service-based attributes OD obtaining positive outcomes and positive feelings towards achieving goals against negative feelings in future (Grant and Higgins, 2003; Rasmussen et al., 2006). Therefore, it relates to the hotel FQ in order to achieve guest's positive expectation with ordinary service and generate functional cooperation. To the best knowledge of authors, OD never investigated in relationship of hotel FQ to confirm guest positive feelings within the hotel. The mediation effect or indirect relationship of FQ between OD and CEB indicate that the FQ of made a place to fill-up guest expectation to connect CEB.

H3a OD has direct impact on FQ.

H3b OD has positive effect on CEB through FQ.

2.4 Relationship between FQ and CEB

Hotel businesses concern the requirement to adjust their strategy in order to market changes to stay competitive in the global market (Ferreira et al., 2015). Competitive market has been changing for competitive advantage through economic range to produce quality for needs and demands (Abdulla et al., 2020; Pineda et al., 2010). Hence, various consents have been demonstrated to increase the productivity and improvement of the hotel business. One of the most important and significant wide used techniques that has been illustrated is FQ (Kang, 2006). It is a structural appearance that includes guest's requirements in the service and product development in order to exceed customer engagement. Value was pursued in the implementation of new systems and goods or services by finding errors and misalignments of the current company to customer demand (Alghfeli et al., 2019; Huber and Mazur, 2002). Lim and Tang (2000) have investigated the functions concentrated on the service quality inside the organisation. Similarly, focuses outside of the organisation including guest expectations and needs target improvement as well.

The basic concept of FQ is to improve the production and service process faster while lowering the cost compared to the competitors (Wang et al., 2007). Thus, the quality functions that people stated to realise the significance to decorate quality into the service and overall management progression (Akao and Mazur, 2003). According to Orpen

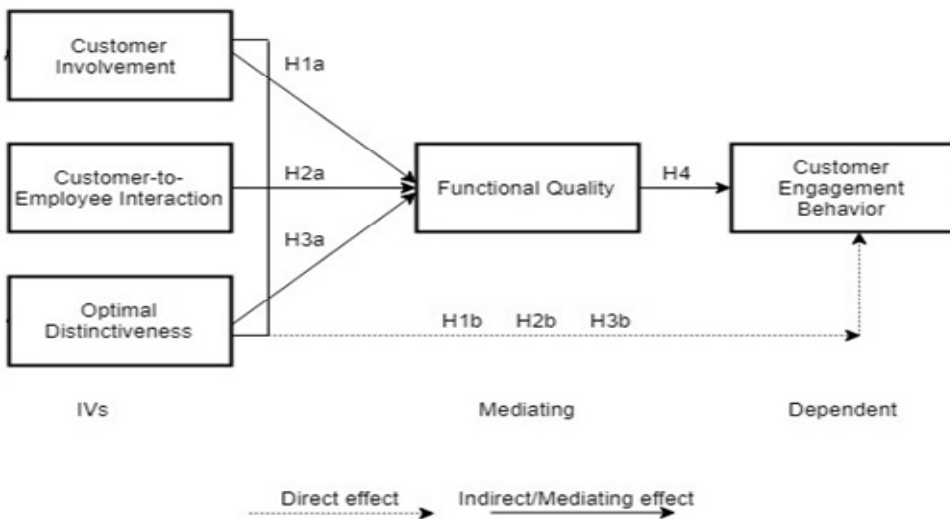
(1997), recognised that workers are the most significant, yet their work performance and development can be driven by specific ergonomic work with visitors.

For example, healthy organisational shape can be defined as functional success with physically, psychologically healthy workers, managing a satisfactory work environment and culture through market turbulence and changes (Day et al., 2014; Robertson and Cooper, 2010). Besides, management confirmed the principles of efficiency, ergonomic design and anthropometry as importance of benefits and reducing stress in the workforce (Marshall et al., 1997). In this study, FQ proposed according to improve service and overall productive designation.

FQ has never been investigated in the literature regarding CEB. The unique contribution in this relationship will suggest for managerial implication in the learning progress. This is obviously a huge area of need for development in the dynamic hotel industry for a better long-term outlook. Mostly, functions approach their duties through efficient hotel environments, interfaces between staff and guests, human attributes and the working method (Gill and Mosen, 1995). The professional team must exercise roles and obligations to supervise and perform its own work (Alkheyi et al., 2020; Gharama et al., 2020a, 2020b; Juristo and Vegas, 2003).

H4 FQ has direct influence on CEB.

Figure 1 The conceptual research framework



3 Methods

The paradigm of the research was followed positivism that indicates the real measure. This study objective established a quantitative research approach as a research design. The quantitative approach sets out methodological procedures for collecting data to use statistical analysis (Brannen, 2017; Kleinbaum et al., 1982). The methodology follows a survey-based approach for collecting data with several benefits that are mainly important for this analysis. Mertler (2002) clarified that survey-based techniques provide

advantages in simultaneously collecting a tremendous volume of data from an individual participant and in the flexibility of data collection. Accordingly, survey-based approaches can easily and effectively collect data samples through quantitative research (Hair et al., 2017b). This study therefore requires a self-administrative questionnaire to take responsibility for the reading of employees and to answer the question. This self-administrated questionnaire was distributed in different respondents for the different places by following the field of study.

This study used a questionnaire comprising mainly of two parts, first, demographic profiles (respondent background) including (gender, age group, monthly income, nationality, categories of hotels, spoken language, etc.). Section 2 has described variables measurements that were collected for the previous literature from different contexts and empirical research. Measurements have given in Table 1.

Table 1 Variables, authors' dimensions and items

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Items</i>
Customer involvement	Cheung and To (2011)	6
Customer-employee interaction	Homburg et al. (2009)	6
Optimal distinctiveness	Brewer and Roccas (2001)	6
Functional quality	Bernardo et al. (2012)	6
Customer engagement behaviour	van Doorn et al. (2010)	8

3.1 *Sampling and procedures*

The sampling technique of the present study is directed at ensuring representativeness. It was important that the sample mirrors the population of the study in order to remain objective (Creswell, 2009). This study was conducted in the hotel industry context to examine the constructs to achieve CEB after getting experience of the customers. A convenience sample was employed to collect data from respondents during checkout time. The object of the sampling cannot be imagined without population subjects, where understanding is what the population does in the research and understands the value of sampling. Population aggregates the researcher's interest which generalises or encompasses a whole set of entities of interest to the researcher (Hair et al., 2017a). There is no question how big a sample size is in the population to be targeted (Chuan and Penyelidikan, 2006; Krejcie and Morgan, 1970; Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The sample size of the study is calculated taking into account the following research relation. Flynn and Percy (2001) claimed that a reasonable sample size without a simple and conclusive rule is an appropriate sample size that is the subject of significant research debate. Study ratios for performing the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis of items to answer from 1:4–1:10 (Hinkin, 1995), as indicated by research requiring sample size from 176 to 420. In the other side, the ratios of free parameters esteemed to response 1:5–1:10 that is required and the sample size between 375 and 750 would be considered as enough. Testing the study model utilising PLS requires a large sample, which is less reliable to estimate, some researchers assume that PLS can be used for sample sizes as small as 50 and as high as 5,000 (Hair et al., 2017b). Hoelter (1983) suggested that a critical sample size of 200 cases should be used to test PLS model for results. In order to decide to use PLS as a sample size, researchers will consider the method of data distribution, model

complexity, estimation methodology, missing data and the average number of error covariance (Hair et al., 2017a). With this consideration, the sample size (150 to 400) is required if the estimate is based on maximum likelihood. For this case, more complex models need a large sample size, on the basis of which the sample size of this study has been set at 500 as necessary.

4 Data analysis and results

4.1 Descriptive analysis

The data of the respondents were presented using simple descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages to summarise the data gathered. This indicates there were more females than males (51.6%) (48.4%). The majority of visitors were between the ages of 40 and 49, which accounted for 52.2% of respondents followed by an age range of 30 to 39 years at 29% of overall respondents. Nearly 34.2% of the tourists are in business and most of the remaining 32.9% are in private employment. Only 18.5% were holding governmental job, and 14.3% are students. Hotel categories show that, close to 37.8% of the tourist are staying in five star hotels and most of the remaining 36.2% are staying on four star hotels. For nationality, 75.6% are foreigners, and 24.4% are Vietnamese. Table 2 displays key demographics.

Table 2 Outline of respondents

		<i>Frq.</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender	Male	189	48.6
	Female	200	51.4
Age	Less than 30	2	0.5
	30 to 39	113	29
	40 to 49	203	52.2
	50 to 59	53	13.6
	60 and above	18	4.6
Occupation	Business	133	34.2
	Government job	72	18.5
	Private Job	128	32.9
	Student	56	14.3
Hotel categories	5-star	147	37.8
	4-star	141	36.2
	3-star	72	18.5
	Others	29	7.5
Nationality	Foreigners	294	75.6
	Vietnamese	95	24.4
Total		389	

4.2 Model measurements

The research used modelling of structural equations utilising Smart PLS-3. The study has tested the construct's reliability and validity to evaluate the model measurers (Hair et al., 2017b). Tests suggested that all Cronbach alpha values are above the suggested value of 0.7 (Kannana and Tan, 2005). The findings also show that all the values for composite reliability are above 0.7 (Kline, 2010). Constructing reliability is met as a result of the above (Table 3). Additionally, reliability metrics are achieved. Therefore, loading for all the items reached the minimum value of 0.5. The average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs is greater than the suggested value 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017a).

Table 3 Reliability, composite reliability and AVE measures

	$\alpha > 0.7$	CR > 0.7	AVE > 0.5
CEB	0.915	0.931	0.628
CEI	0.916	0.936	0.713
CI	0.888	0.920	0.699
FQ	0.901	0.924	0.670
OD	0.885	0.912	0.634

Note: CI: Customer involvement, CEI: customer-to-employee interaction, OD: optimal distinctiveness, FQ: functional quality and CEB: CEB.

The discriminating validity of the measurement models has been checked using three main criteria: cross-loading, Fornell-Larcker and heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Cross-loads are typically the first approach to assessing the discriminating validity of the indicators, according to Hair et al. (2017b). The cross-loading criteria meet the condition according to Table 4, since the outer loads on an indicator construct is greater than all its cross-loads with other variables (*italic values*).

Table 4 Discriminating validity outcomes by cross-loading

		CEB	CEI	CI	FQ	OD
Customer engagement behaviour (CRB)	CEB1	<i>0.611</i>	0.371	0.417	0.596	0.394
	CEB2	<i>0.789</i>	0.494	0.419	0.493	0.392
	CEB3	<i>0.820</i>	0.492	0.466	0.490	0.446
	CEB4	<i>0.846</i>	0.467	0.421	0.450	0.429
	CEB5	<i>0.848</i>	0.474	0.391	0.405	0.415
	CEB6	<i>0.825</i>	0.456	0.411	0.430	0.419
	CEB7	<i>0.811</i>	0.436	0.390	0.432	0.364
	CEB8	<i>0.766</i>	0.479	0.446	0.483	0.437
Customer-to-employee interaction (CEI)	CEI1	0.479	<i>0.877</i>	0.478	0.363	0.505
	CEI2	0.488	<i>0.851</i>	0.480	0.363	0.508
	CEI3	0.525	<i>0.895</i>	0.548	0.401	0.560
	CEI4	0.526	<i>0.901</i>	0.533	0.403	0.573
	CEI5	0.497	<i>0.877</i>	0.532	0.361	0.569
	CEI6	0.425	<i>0.633</i>	0.612	0.356	0.585

Table 4 Discriminating validity outcomes by cross-loading (continued)

		<i>CEB</i>	<i>CEI</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>FQ</i>	<i>OD</i>
Customer involvement (CI)	CI1	0.413	0.499	<i>0.872</i>	0.404	0.538
	CI2	0.463	0.544	<i>0.902</i>	0.431	0.592
	CI3	0.453	0.511	<i>0.853</i>	0.391	0.557
	CI4	0.441	0.523	<i>0.869</i>	0.432	0.552
	CI5	0.486	0.563	<i>0.661</i>	0.402	0.582
Functional quality (FQ)	FQ1	0.515	0.344	0.389	<i>0.850</i>	0.361
	FQ2	0.475	0.358	0.466	<i>0.841</i>	0.396
	FQ3	0.525	0.368	0.393	<i>0.819</i>	0.364
	FQ4	0.496	0.337	0.384	<i>0.824</i>	0.369
	FQ5	0.573	0.404	0.407	<i>0.824</i>	0.391
	FQ6	0.562	0.371	0.391	<i>0.749</i>	0.375
Optimal distinctiveness (OD)	OD1	0.414	0.518	0.543	0.333	<i>0.822</i>
	OD2	0.368	0.471	0.500	0.334	<i>0.784</i>
	OD3	0.409	0.515	0.539	0.313	<i>0.806</i>
	OD4	0.435	0.480	0.535	0.371	<i>0.821</i>
	OD5	0.424	0.591	0.584	0.396	<i>0.757</i>
	OD6	0.458	0.607	0.621	0.423	<i>0.786</i>

Table 5 Discriminant validity results (see online version for colours)

<i>Fornell-Larcker criterion</i>					
	<i>CEB</i>	<i>CEI</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>FQ</i>	<i>OD</i>
CEB	<i>0.793</i>				
CEI	0.584	<i>0.844</i>			
CI	0.542	0.634	<i>0.836</i>		
FQ	0.643	0.446	0.496	<i>0.818</i>	
OD	0.529	0.673	0.701	0.460	<i>0.796</i>
<i>HTMT criterion</i>					
	<i>CEB</i>	<i>CEI</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>FQ</i>	<i>OD</i>
CEB					
CEI	0.633				
CI	0.590	0.706			
FQ	0.673	0.490	0.554		
OD	0.574	0.742	0.785	0.508	

Note: CI: customer involvement, CEI: customer-to-employee interaction, OD: optimal distinctiveness, FQ: functional quality and CEB: customer engagement behaviour.

Table 5 illustrates the discriminating criterion for validity of Fornell-Larcker greater than the correlation among variables (corresponding row and column values), where the square root of the AVEs shown by the italic values on the diagonals. It suggests that the

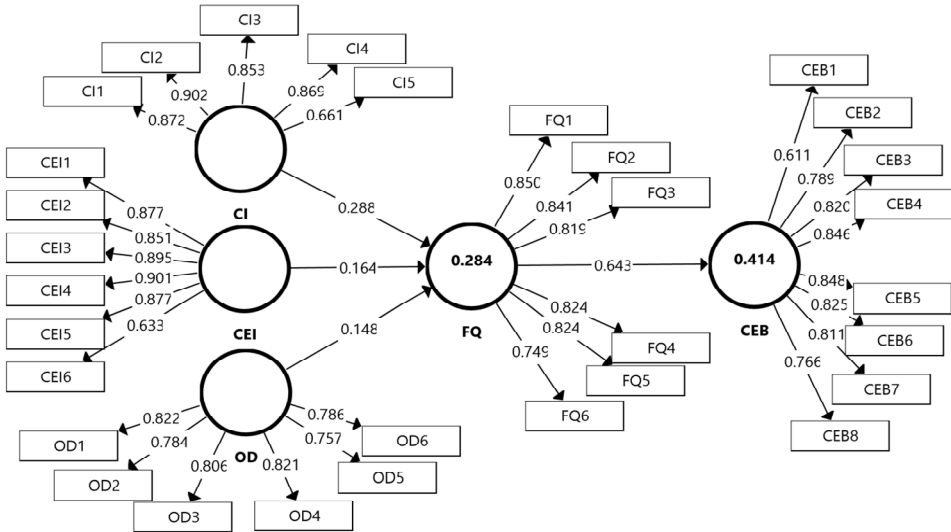
variables are closely related to their values relative to other model variables (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Consequently, all variables fulfil the discriminating validity.

Recently, there have been criticisms of the Fornell-Larcker criteria, Henseler et al. (2015) reported that the lack of discriminatory validity is not adequately disclosed in different research contexts. They suggested an alternative strategy focused on the multitrait-multimethod matrix, which is the HTMT ratio of correlations. This research tests the validity of discriminants by HTMT. Consequently, the discriminating validity of HTMT is met by values below the prescribed value 0.85 (Table 5).

4.3 Hypotheses tests

The structure model evaluation in Figure 2 and Table 6 indicates the test hypotheses. CI, CEI, and OD significantly predict FQ. Hence, H1a, H2a, and H3a are supported with ($\beta = 0.288$, $t = 4.451$, $P < 0.000$), ($\beta = 0.164$, $t = 2.928$, $P < 0.01$) and ($\beta = 0.148$, $t = 2.078$, $P < 0.05$), respectively. Likewise, FQ significantly predicts CEB. H4 is accordingly approved with ($\beta = 0.643$, $t = 20.015$, $P < 0.001$). Standardised path coefficient values indicate the strengths of the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables, therefore, as can be seen from the path coefficient values, the direct effects of CI on FQ are much greater than other variables. Yet FQ’s direct impact on CEB is substantially greater than other relationships.

Figure 2 PLS algorithm results



Note: CI: customer involvement, CEI: customer-to-employee interaction, OD: optimal distinctiveness, FQ: functional quality and CEB: customer engagement behaviour.

The research used the parallel multiple mediation approach (Preacher and Hayes, 2008) to check the impact of mediation by bootstrapping with a 5,000 resample. The reason for selecting this strategy is to decrease the possibility of bias in parameters due to a lack of variables and track inter-correlated ability among model intermediaries. Table 6 results showed that the relationship between CI, CEI, OD, and CEB is mediated by the FQ.

Hence, it supports H1b, H2b and H3b ($\beta = 0.185, t = 4.248, P < 0.01$), ($\beta = 0.105, t = 2.825, P < 0.01$) and ($\beta = 0.095, t = 2.046, P < 0.05$), accordingly.

Table 6 Tests check hypothesis

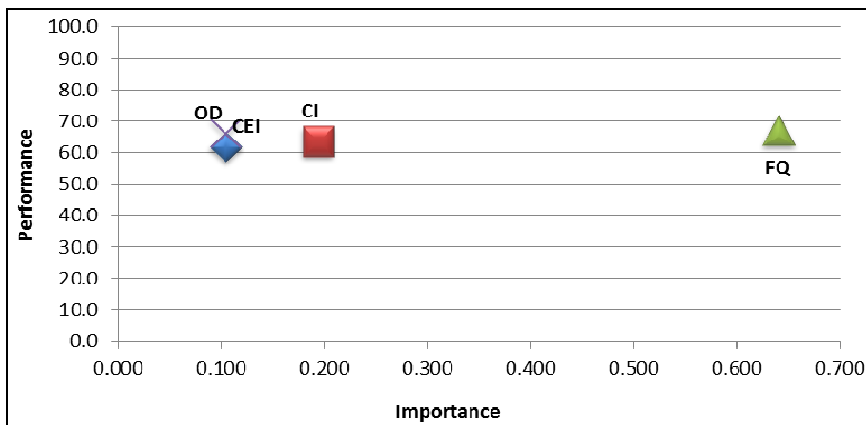
Hypo.	Relationship	Std. beta	Std. error	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1a	CI -> FQ	0.288	0.065	4.451	0.000	Supported
H2a	CEI -> FQ	0.164	0.056	2.928	0.004	Supported
H3a	OD -> FQ	0.148	0.071	2.078	0.038	Supported
H4	FQ -> CEB	0.643	0.032	20.015	0.000	Supported
H1b	CI -> FQ -> CEB	0.185	0.044	4.248	0.000	Supported
H2b	CEI -> FQ -> CEB	0.105	0.037	2.825	0.005	Supported
H3b	OD -> FQ -> CEB	0.095	0.047	2.046	0.041	Supported

Note: CI: customer involvement, CEI: customer-to-employee interaction, OD: optimal distinctiveness, FQ: functional quality and CEB: customer engagement behaviour.

4.3.1 Importance-performance map analysis

This study performed importance-performance map analysis (IPMA) as a post-hoc method in PLS utilising CEB as the outcome variable. The IPMA estimates the total effects reflect the importance of the predecessor constructs in the formation of the target construct (CEB), While their average latent variable scores reflect their results, index values (performance scores) were calculated by rescaling the latent construct scores to a scale of 100 (highest performance) to 0 (lowest output) (Hair et al., 2017b). IPMA strengthens the outcomes of the PLS analysis, rather than evaluating the path coefficients (i.e., the element of importance) (Ringle and Sarstedt, 2016), It also considers the average latent variables and their measures (i.e., the performance dimension). Figure 3 illustrates the IPMA results in terms of total effects (importance) and index values (performance).

Figure 3 IPMA for CEB (see online version for colours)



Note: CI: customer involvement, CEI: customer-to-employee interaction, OD: optimal distinctiveness, FQ: functional quality and CEB: customer engagement behaviour.

The results showed that, FQ's effects scores are high, these scores reflect FQ as an important factor in the decision of the CEB due to its comparatively higher values compared to other variables in the model. CI is the CEB's second strong determinant element. Furthermore, the performance of this significant factor (FQ) is higher than other antecedents factors (CEI, CI and OD).

IPMA's goal is to consider predecessors with significantly higher importance but also relatively low performance for the target variable (Hair et al., 2017b). The underlying characteristics of these variables are possible areas for improvement and should attract significant attention. Though variables such as OD have ranked reasonably high in results, the CEB effect is of little relevance. In short, the management activities will concentrate on improving the FQ and CI in order to boost the CEB.

5 Discussion

These findings contribute to the conduct of customer engagement by examining the impact of customer engagement, customer-to-employee contact, optimal differentiation and functional efficiency in the hotel industry in Vietnam. The results of the study revealed substantial validity and reliability of each construct and supported accordingly. The current research provided empirical evidence for the creation of variable hypotheses and relationships. This research has shown that CI has a direct impact on FQ. The impact of CI suggests that it improves the efficiency of the hospitality business. Lundkvist and Yakhlef (2004) investigated the effect of CI on the development of functional hotel services. From a marketing perspective, Melander (2019) also reported that CI improves new service in order to increase FQ. CI shows the service delivery and the underlying experience of service delivery (Anning-Dorson et al., 2018). In addition, the results explored the indirect and meaningful effects of CI on CEB through FQ. FQ's mediating role indicates that CI archives the conduct of customer engagement in hotel functional delivery which is directly related to customer. Ali et al. (2017) concluded that the FQ increases customer satisfaction and service delivery engagement. FQ enhances consumer behaviour, while FQ is among the service quality dimensions (Bernardo et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the findings have revealed that CEI has significant effect on FQ. The interaction between employee and customer can influence the evaluation of goods and service and the provision of the service according to the objective of achieving FQ (Wieseke et al., 2012). The empirical test and above results have shown that CEI provide co-creation value which is different from the customer satisfaction or other facilitating dimensions. At the other hand, the results showed that CEI was positive and influenced CEB significantly through FQ. The FQ mediation effect indicates that interaction can occur during functional activities within the hotel. Kang and James (2004) also clarified that FQ refers to how to do something or know how to proceed. According to co-creation (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004) and co-production (Chathoth et al., 2013) concepts both are interaction between customers' definitely enhance CEB or participation willingness. Interactions always believe in constitution such as closed relation such as notions of the customer-employees relation is in repeat encounter (Gremler et al., 2001). Understanding the structure and enhancing relationship between employee and customer is a cornerstone of service marketing scholars. During the hotel service encounter CEI with each other where employee behaviours are paramount in shaping customer perceived FQ (Grönroos and Voima, 2013).

In addition, the findings have shown that OD affects FQ significantly. Zuckerman (2016) has explained that OD indicates self-esteem and desire of better. Zhao et al. (2017) have correlated with the management and strategies related to the organisational functional activities. Moreover, the results showed that OD effects on CEB through FQ have been significant. Kang (2006) examined the service industry FQ as a process of device delivery to the customer. The construct was identified for the dimensions of service quality, including reliability, assurance, responsiveness, tangibility and empathy with regard to service quality. Consequently, FQ also enhances the encounter of customer exchange knowledge among each other. The engagement with functionalities seeks challenges that provide them with service opportunities (Ames and Archer, 1988).

Ultimately, the findings showed that FQ significantly influences CEB. FQ concerns with consumer and organisation or the process of their service provision. Arnott et al. (2007) studied to what extent deliverables meet and even surpass their quality requirements. When customers find FQ favourably, they would have more confidence in determinants and outcome providers, that will improve their business offer efficiently inside the service provider (Khalifa, 2020b; Medberg and Grönroos, 2020). This FQ factor is often called technical or 'hard' consistency, and is similar to the 'service reliability' measured instrument. In the case of FQ and technical quality in particular, customers should objectively evaluate the end results for what Mittal (1999) calls 'projected reliability' and how well the service fulfils its promise (Foxall and Pallister, 2017). Hotel FQ indicates the service encounter during service delivery in the service station (Abou-Shouk and Khalifa, 2017). Customer desires the expected service by the hotel operation. On the other hand, CEB denotes the customer participation to the hotel service and functions. CIB in which customers make voluntary, hotel-focused contributions to services that go beyond what is intrinsic to transactions, interact with the focal object or other actors and are the product of motivational drivers (Brodie et al., 2013; Harrigan et al., 2018).

6 Implications

6.1 Theoretical implications

Research participation has been divided into two sections, such as management implications and theoretical implications. The theoretical implications of the study have formulated the study's probable or possible findings. The theoretical implications in this study show the effects of the current research described from model builds relationship-based contributions. There is an enormous range of theoretical rationales to sustain the possibility that administrative structures would provide a more competitive atmosphere for influencing FQ factors. Influencing variables of FQ indicates the impact of customer engagement actions to endorse findings. This relationship theory supported the results of the hypothesis described. Furthermore, CI has a significant influence on the FQ which was reported from the results obtained. Generally, this relationship was regarded in multi-cluster comparative research to revalue the standard of service in the hotel sense (Lam et al., 2004). Moreover, customer-employee interaction significantly influence on FQ that shows the positive relationship in terms of make the organisational service transaction with hotel. Morgan and Hunt (1994) found the CEI with FQ to be the

hotel service transaction. On the other hand, OD influences on FQ toward CEB which makes a unique mediation in the literature.

The theoretical consequence is to demonstrate the future outcome of the relationship-based findings. The findings of this study set the stage for the efficacy of FQ factors in promoting CEB. Results supported the statement that business needs to feel motivated to act on the motivating relationships. Thus, whereas the present study confirms the proposition that influencing factors of FQ may enhance CEB. Harrigan et al. (2018) have considered that CI is associated with CEB in terms of the organisational service operation. The current epic is based on the service-based economy in which service quality in service context is the backbone of the management in the organisational context, especially for mutual relationship (Hossain et al., 2020). Furthermore, FQ influences on CEB (Mura et al., 2013). The findings of this study suggest that FQ can be instrumental in increasing the conduct of customer engagement.

6.2 Practical implications

The importance of theoretical implication of the current study, the findings have managerial implications for hotel customer in Vietnam. The findings indicate that the influencing factors of FQ play a critical role in enhancing CEB at the service encounter. The hotel employee indicated that they perceived a greater participation of customers when they have a good customer engagement activity in their company that helps them establish a higher-level persuasion with the concepts. First of all, in latest years, many scholars have devoted much attention to the study of customer interaction behaviour and have become widely studied topics in the field of operations in various sectors (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014; Molinillo et al., 2020; van Doorn et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2017). In a hotel industry, where human capital is substantially the key source of competitive advantage, CEB has now become more important (Kumar et al., 2019; Wei et al., 2013). Increasing identifiable customer engagement activity in various industries is imminently realistic for the introduction of corporate (Fernandes and Remelhe, 2016). Improving the involvement of consumers will also be much less costly and complicated than growing CEB (Sheng, 2019). Service managers who provide assistance to their clients usually seem to be excellent at hotel service. For example, managers should ask staff frequently, whether they can assist them to carry out their duties effectively and display direct interest. In particular, the CEI guideline will include supportive ways to take workgroup actions and will also require adjustments to rules to assist workers in their positions in exceptional circumstances. The definition of customer-to-worker interaction can also be extended in the hospitality business for the purpose of providing theoretical realistic workplace with a more leading performance which can be efficient.

Secondly, this result underlines the importance of influencing factors of FQ idea of being increase FQ. Previous work presented that positive service factors can be trained (Braun et al., 2013). The current study recommends that organisations should measure FQ through questionnaire methods when the organisation finds some planners have less supportive behaviours, they should introduce business approaches in order to provide necessary knowledge and skills. Therefore, FQ theorised the perspective to increase CEB in order to implement to the Vietnam hotel industry. It may less concentration to the organisation in terms of FQ approaches for the future goal than only managers be able to implement this concept to increase the CEB. In the beginning, the hotel should pay attention to build FQ in the relationship within organisational contract with consultant.

Furthermore, it is vital to know that FQ positively impact on CEB. Particularly, hotels oversee boosting a helping and supportive environment, an open climate of discussion, feedback and exchange (Khalifa, 2019). For instance, through continuous individual reflection, organisation should also be aware of the drawbacks to their influence since perceptions of breach can have detrimental effects on their progress in their workplace. Importantly, the position in separately, FQ directly influences on CEB that supported according to the above results which can suggest implementing to the reorganisation for future. Consequently, influencing factors indirectly influence on CEB that suggests utilising the complimentary for the future implication and it would be helpful for the achieving common goal.

7 Limitations and future research

This analysis is not without drawbacks to be taken into account when evaluating the findings. As this is one of the first studies to measure the effect of influencing factors (CI, CEI and optimal distinctive actions) on customer engagement through multi-mediators such as functional efficiency, researchers are encouraged to further validate and broaden the current model.

Potential research seems to benefit from paying attention to the following areas: firstly, Vietnam's hotel industry has constrained this analysis from a private perspective. In future studies, the researcher recommends testing the research hypothesis in other geographic areas and that the sample will include both the public and private sectors in order to improve generalisation. FQ as a mediating variable has also restricted the analysis. The researcher suggests that other researchers will examine other consumer engagement behaviours in comparative frameworks in future studies, because they highly correlated with other variables.

The current study has some limitations in short, which provide an agenda for future studies. Since we were limited to quantitative approaches, a large-scale follow-up survey would be useful to find out which of the existing clients and hotels has the proposed connection with CEB. We find a broad range of influencing factors in FQ practices that have a role to play, but other forms of transactional trust are not yet clear. It seems unlikely that all activities can be viewed as atomic ingredients which have an additive enhancing impact on the actions of customers. Perhaps some supervisory assistance can be found in other sectors (De Jong and Den Hartog, 2007). While some participants were answered when they used to be such a client, additional respondents with employees should have more detailed and appropriate information. The above mentioned customer as well as the hotel plays a role in developing a supportive environment and giving employees the ability to have external working contacts. Such examples demonstrate that leaders also control individual inventions indirectly by the way they organise the work environment. Therefore, future research should also aim to explore how CEB adapts to and even influences the environmental and organisational settings in such a way that the context optimally promotes success. While we agree that the current sample was sufficient to test our model, we also encourage potential researchers to use other samples to test the same model.

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