

## **COURTESY MODERATOR ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS SERVICE ETIQUETTE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN HOTELIERS' SERVICE INTENTION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this paper was to improve understanding of the relationships between the business service etiquette, service provider courtesy attitude, and customer satisfaction. Specifically, courtesy attitude was evaluated as a potential moderator of the relationship between the business service etiquette and customer satisfactions. A self-generated survey questionnaire data collection approach was utilized. This study investigated the relation between business etiquette and customer satisfaction of hoteliers' service intention as moderated by courtesy attitude. Subjects were 376 tourists visiting Kuala Lumpur. Hypotheses were tested using an SPSS SEM path diagram. This research extended service theory by examining the relationship between service providers and tourists (customers) in an actual hotel retailing setting. Important theoretical contributions were included, demonstrating that service provider courtesy moderates the relationship between business service etiquette and customer satisfaction perceptions of behavioural intention. Findings have shown that positive courtesy attitude changes in business service etiquette characteristics can amplify positive customer satisfaction.

**Key Words:** business service etiquette, customer satisfaction, courtesy attitude, hotel service providers, tourists.

## INTRODUCTION

Moderation states to a study that three or more variable factors, such as the occurrence of one of those variable changes the relationship between the other two. As such, moderation happens when the connection between two variables is not similar at all levels of a third variable. The relationship between two variables depends on the value of the moderator. The moderator either strengthens or weakens the relationship between the predictor and outcome. “It becomes the intensity up and depressed”.

Findings suggest that service provider evaluations of the business service etiquette improve in the mien of an appropriate ambient scent. Behavioural responses are also enhanced: providers are seen as more courteous and customers more satisfied (Fowler and Bridges, 2012). Possibly the most interesting observation is that provider courtesy, attitude moderates the relationship between the business service etiquette and customer satisfaction perceptions of hoteliers’ service provider behavioural intention.

Results indicate that when the affective nature of the business etiquette and customer satisfaction relationship is positive (e.g., business service etiquette is high or intensity of customer dissatisfaction conflict is low), positive courtesy, attitude adjustment is more likely when the customers (tourists) report less emotional autonomy (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, and De Hoogh, 2013).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There are tremendous theories and principles justifying the influencing force of business service quality, (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Malhotra, 2005); total quality management, (Hoyle, 2007); and customer relationship marketing (Shaw, 1991) upon service providers. It is about customer relationship management which is a business's long-term instruction method, software and internet capabilities to assist companies handle customer relationships in an organized manner (Oliver, 1997). These are the basic cause-effect of business etiquette - customer satisfaction (Nga, and Shamuganathan, 2009; Pang, 2013; Pang & Shamuganathan, 2015; Pang, 2015; Pang, Pang and Shamuganathan, 2016).

The researcher in this empirical work attempts to improve the understanding of the relationships between the business service etiquette, service provider courtesy attitude, and customer satisfaction. Specifically, courtesy attitude is evaluated as a potential moderator of the relationship between the business service etiquette and customer satisfactions.

Moderation states to a situation that causes three or more variable factors, such as the occurrence of one of those variable changes the relationship between the other two. In a causal relationship, if x is the predictor variable and y is an outcome variable, then z is the moderator variable that affects the casual relationship of x and y. Aquino, Galperin, and Bennett (2004), have suggested that a moderating variable is a third variable that affects the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variable in data analysis. The moderator variable if found to be

significant can cause an amplifying or weakening effect between x and y. Flower and Bridges (2012) in their study found that service provider evaluations of the business service etiquette improve in the presence of an appropriate ambient scent. Behavioural responses are also enhanced: providers are viewed as more courteous and customers more satisfied. Perhaps the most interesting observation is that provider courtesy attitude moderates the relationship between the business service etiquette and customer satisfaction perceptions of hoteliers' service provider behavioural intention.

A research survey conducted by Kalshoven et al. (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, and De Hoogh, 2013) indicate that when the affective nature of the business etiquette and customer satisfaction relationship is positive (e.g., business service etiquette is high or intensity of customer dissatisfaction conflict is low), positive courtesy attitude adjustment is more likely when the customers (tourists) report less emotional autonomy.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual explanation, the moderating variable (courtesy) in a schematic diagram of an effectiveness effect of exogenous variables (business etiquette) interacting the endogenous variable (customer satisfaction). Hence,

Null hypothesis,  $H_0$ : Courtesy attitude has no significance moderating effect for business etiquette and customer satisfaction.

Alternative hypothesis,  $H_1$ : Courtesy attitude has significance moderating effect for business etiquette and customer satisfaction

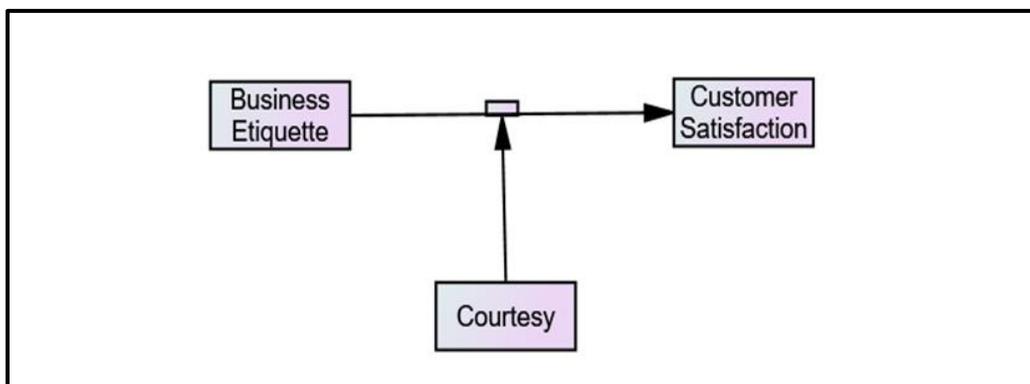


Fig.1: The moderating variable (Courtesy), exogenous variable (business etiquette) interacting the endogenous variable (customer satisfaction).

Gotlieb et al. (Gotlieb, Levy, Grewal, and Lindsey-Mullikin, 2004) in their work design and test a model suggesting that hoteliers' courtesy affects a tourist (customer) satisfaction. The hoteliers' employee courtesy, attitude, the business service etiquette, and client satisfaction are three important elements of patronage, experience that might affect satisfaction perception toward a hotel inspection and repair provider. The paper describes results of two experiments that found

there was an interaction effect between employee courtesy and the physical environment on attitude toward the service firm. That is, the effect of hoteliers' employee courtesy on attitudes is more positive when the environment is evaluated favourably than when it is evaluated unfavourably. Still, there were no interaction effects of locus of causality and courtesy on attitude toward the service firm. In the second survey, there was a main issue of locus of causality on attitude toward the house in that experiment. That is, participants with an inner locus of causality had a more favourable attitude toward the service firm than did participants with an external locus of causality.

Robinson and Callan (2002) in their work conclude that hotel services which require high levels of service etiquette labour that is more complex than in other industries. Granting to the author, the ability of self-emotional courtesy appraisal and other's satisfaction, emotional appraisal become the important factors for in-role cooperative service behaviour and extra-role service behaviour. The practices can regard emotion management as the hint to predict applicant's business service etiquette behaviour, and consider it as a tool to select staff with good service performance.

In another interesting argument noted from Crane and Clarke (2006), that marketing managers take on the feeling that there are more or less controllable and uncontrollable variables in the surroundings that will impact on the consumer's perceptions of their product offering. If vendors can see which criteria are used to evaluate a product, in this case a service provider, and can identify which cues are utilized to assess the criteria, they will be better capable to oversee and influence the consumers' evaluations and perceptions of the oblation. The cue may be considered courtesy attitude to moderate the business service etiquette in achieving customer satisfaction ultimately.

Liang (2012) has identified that both work values and burnout are important predictors for promoting organizational citizenship behaviors. It was found that both work values and burnout are important elements to consider for promoting client satisfaction. In summation, the study also shows that burnout as a moderator can decrease the predictions of the relationship between service values and satisfaction.

In another study, Chen (2009) found that personality traits of courtesy moderate the relationship between perceived etiquette and satisfaction. Ladhari's (2009) research work supported the conceptual model of the relationships among the constructs of "service quality", "emotional satisfaction", and "behavioural intention" in the hospitality industry. The results affirm that service quality exerts both direct and collateral effects (through emotional satisfaction) on behavioural intentions. The research work concluded that future research should concentrate on the role of client satisfaction in service experience in a diversity of contexts.

Though at that place is a nice amount of studies on customer satisfaction in the hotel industry, in that respect is limited literature available on the relationships between the business service etiquette, service provider courtesy attitude, and customer satisfaction. Through this study, the researcher is trying to better the understanding about the same.

Hoteliers' courtesy attitude is acknowledged as an important measurement of customer satisfaction. This report presents and tests a model, suggesting that hoteliers' courtesy affects a tourist (customer) satisfaction. The hoteliers' employee courtesy, attitude, the business service etiquette, and client satisfaction are three important elements of patronage, experience that might affect satisfaction perception toward a hotel inspection and repair provider. The paper describes results of two experiments that found there was an interaction effect between employee courtesy and the physical environment on attitude toward the service firm. That is, the effect of hoteliers' employee courtesy on attitudes is more positive when the environment is evaluated favourably than when it is evaluated unfavourably. Still, there were no interaction effects of locus of causality and courtesy on attitude toward the service firm. In the second survey, there was a main issue of locus of causality on attitude toward the house in that experiment. That is, participants with an inner locus of causality had a more favourable attitude toward the service firm than did participants with an external locus of causality (Gotlieb, Levy, Grewal, and Lindsey-Mullikin, 2004).

## UNDERLYING THEORY

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1988, 1991, 2002) recommends an example about how human action is piloted. It foretells the event of a defined behaviour stipulated that the conduct is knowing. The model is depicted in Figure 2 and symbolizes the three variables which the theory recommends will foresee the intention to accomplish a behaviour. Intentions are the antecedents of behaviour. The varying terms in TPB model reflect emotional paradigms and then they bear a distinct significance in the hypothesis. Here are some concise descriptions of these unique denotations.

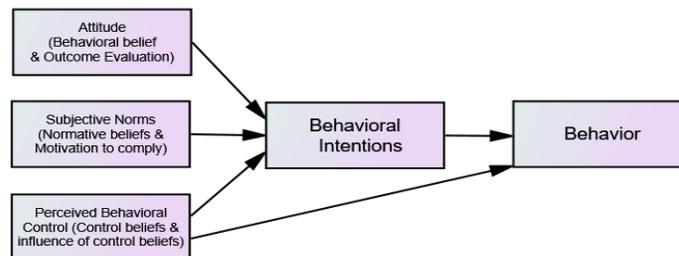


Fig. 2: Underlying Theoretical Framework—Theory of Planned Behaviour

## METHODOLOGY

### Participants

This study used random sampling method towards the Kuala Lumpur tourist population in January 2016. The sample consists of 376 respondents of tourists from all over the globe.

### Process and Instrument

Moderator models are often used to observe when an independent variable (IV) impacts a dependent (DV) variable. That is, moderated mock-ups are used to distinguish elements that change the relationship between predictor (IV) and outcome (DV). To attest, we wanted to find out whether or not the impact of business service etiquette and customer satisfaction depends on courtesy attitude of the avail supplier. That is, only individuals who have courtesy intention can achieve the positive interaction between business service etiquette and customer satisfaction. Part H6 shown in number 3 in the underlying conceptual framework below has depicted the moderator position. The underlying theory in figure 2 derived from Ajzen, (1985), analyzing instrument was adapted from Moss (2016); Aiken, & West, (1991); Ryan and Bonfield (1980); Hill, (1977); Hyman, (1955) and Wright, (1934).

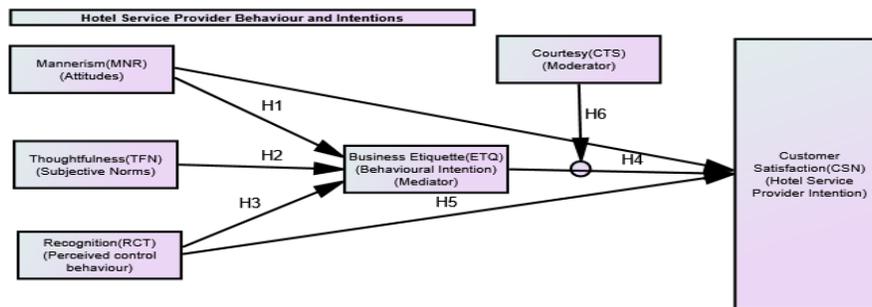


Fig. 3: The moderating variable (courtesy in a schematic diagram of an effectiveness effect of exogenous variable (business etiquette) interacting the endogenous variable (customer satisfaction).

## DATA ANALYSIS

To answer this query, we need to decide whether or not the outcome of business service etiquette (btq) and courtesy (CTs) on customer satisfaction (csn) depends on courtesy attitude. In other language, we require to see whether or not cats moderates or interacts with btq and can achieve competitive advantage of the system. Of course, we could develop and clean our raw data. Alas, this categorization clearly restricts power, because indirect variables in our data are omitted. Rather, we should expose this event inside the context of regression. That is, we should comprehend a variety of regression called moderated regression analysis (Masood et al. 2009, Winsted, 2006; Yoder, et al. 2002).

### *Step 1: Create the Product Terms*

To examine interactions within the context of moderated regression, we created additional columns in our database using ‘transform’ function in the SPSS program. The first column will equal:  $(btq - \text{mean of } btq) \times (cts - \text{mean of } cts)$ .

The second column will equal:  $(csn - \text{mean of } csn) \times (cts - \text{mean of } cts)$ .

Hence, these columns basically equal the product of each condition, after the variables have been addressed, a concept that will be cleared up later. The first product term in reality represents the interaction between btq and cats. The second product term actually represents the interaction between stone and cuts.

To produce these product terms, the mean of the three predictors was determined following the stairs beneath.

1. From the "Analyse Data" menu select "Descriptives" and then click "Descriptives".
2. Transfer the labels that pertain to btq, ctu , and cts into the box labelled "Variables". Press "OK" to generate a table of means.
3. Select "Compute" from the "Transform" menu.
4. In the box labelled "Target variable", enter a name to represent the new column or product term, such as "mnr\_x\_cts, csu\_x\_cts".
5. In the box labelled "Numerical Expression", specify the appropriate formula, such as  $(mnravg - 5.551) * (ctsaveg - 4.70)$  and  $(csnavg - 4.93) * (ctsaveg - 4.70)$ . The respective mean scores are derived from table 1.1 below.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Mean Score

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mnravg	376	1.00	7.00	<b>5.5505</b>	1.29732
Csnavg	376	1.00	7.00	<b>4.9257</b>	1.77551
ctsaveg	376	1.00	7.00	<b>4.7000</b>	1.72205
Valid N (listwise)	376				

In this study, 5.551 is the hypothetical mean score of manners (mnr) and 4.70 is the hypothetical mean score of courtesy (cts). This process was repeated to create the product term that represents the interaction between customer satisfaction (csn) and courtesy (cts).

*Step 2: Undertake Regression Analysis*

Table 2: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	20.235	2.539		7.970	<b>.000</b>
Mnravg	4.903	.456	.539	10.749	<b>.000</b>
Csnavg	1.603	.893	.241	1.795	<b>.073</b>
Ctsavg	-.597	.843	-.087	-.708	<b>.479</b>
mnr_x_cts	-.375	.251	-.078	-1.495	<b>.136</b>
csn_x_cts	.162	.184	.052	.880	<b>.049</b>
<i>Independent Variable : btqscr</i>					

The following footfall is to complete the regression analysis. That is: Select "Regression" and then "Linear" from the "Analyse Data" menu. Designate business service etiquette (btqscr) as the dependent variable. Designate the product terms, as well as all the variables that were utilized to create these interactions, as the independent variables. An excerpt of the output is shown in table 1.2 above.

### *Step 3: Interpretation of Significance*

To construe this output, we examined the column categorized "sig", which denotes the significance or p values that affect to each independent variable. In this illustration, the p value that moves to the mnr\_x\_cts (0.136) term surpasses 0.05 and therefore does not comprehend the meaning. Therefore, the researcher would see that no indication occurs that courtesy moderates or influences the influence of practicing manners on service. On the other hand: The p value that pertains to csn\_x\_cts (0.049) is less than 0.05 and thus achieved significance. Hence, courtesy moderates the effect of practicing customer satisfaction on business service etiquette.

The other standings, called main effects, can also be taken. Exactly, the p value accompanying with customer satisfaction is less than 0.05 and is hence significant. This result suggests that achieving customer satisfaction reduces etiquette intervention. Though, as we discovered previously, courtesy moderates this effect. In specific, this main effect applies when courtesy is average. In other words, customer satisfaction decreases business service etiquette when courtesy is average. The impact of customer satisfaction on business service etiquette at other levels of courtesy will be explored below.

*Step 4: Interpretation of Direction*

To reiterate, the issue of customer satisfaction on business service etiquette is influenced by the courtesy attitude of hoteliers. The nature of this connection, however, has not been found. For example: Customer satisfaction may lessen business service etiquette to a larger extent when courtesy is raised.

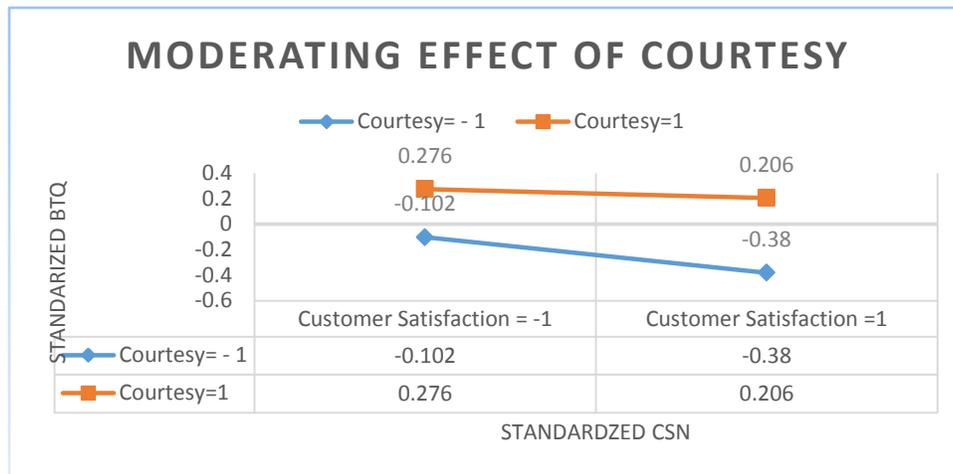


Fig. 4: Moderated Regression between CSN and BTQ

On the other hand, customer satisfaction may reduce business service etiquette to a greater extent when courtesy is reduced. Various processes can be conducted to describe these alternatives. Possibly the most informative procedure involves making a graph. An example is shown in Figure 4.

To produce this graph, the researcher should express equations that embody the relationship between customer relationship and business service etiquette at various points of courtesy attitude. The standardized Beta values, which came along in the third column of the yield (Table 2), are utilized to create these equations. Explicitly, to generate these equations, we have managed the following:

First apply the standardized Beta values to represent the dependent variable-- business service etiquette --as a part of all the other variables. In particular, each standardized Beta value represents the coefficient of each term in this equality.

$$\text{Standardized values of btq} = 0.241 \times \text{csn} - 0.087 \times \text{cts} + 0.052 \times \text{csn\_x\_cts} \quad (1)$$

It has to estimate the dependent variable when both the independent variable and moderator are greater than average. In this instance, we could estimate btq when both cns and cts equal 1.

Recall that all variables have been converted to z scores, and thus a value of 1 exceeds the average. When csn and cts are converted to 1, Equation 1 becomes:

$$\text{Standardized values of btq} = 0.241 \times 1 - 0.087 \times 1 + 0.052 \times 1 \times 1 = 0.206 \quad (2)$$

Repeat this process, except estimate the dependent variable when:

The independent variable equals -1 and the moderator equals 1

The moderator equals 1 and the independent variable equals -1

Both the independent variable and the moderator equals -1

For example, when csn is -1 and cts is 1, Equation (1) becomes:

$$\text{Standardized values of btq} = 0.241 \times -1 - 0.087 \times 1 + 0.052 \times -1 \times 1 = -0.38$$

Likewise, when csn is 1 and cts is -1, Equation (1) becomes:

$$\text{Standardised values of btq} = 0.241 \times 1 - 0.87 \times -1 + 0.052 \times 1 \times -1 = 0.276$$

Furthermore, when csn is -1 and cts is -1, Equation (1) becomes:

$$\text{Standardized values of btq} = 0.241 \times -1 - 0.87 \times -1 + 0.052 \times -1 \times -1 = -0.102$$

*Illustration of the Format Used to Report Moderated Regression.*

Multiple regression analysis was taken to determine whether or not the relationship between practicing manners or customer satisfaction and business service etiquette depends on courtesy attitude. To interpret the interaction between these predictors, the variables were first introduced and then bred together. This analysis uncovered the essence of Customer Satisfaction, but not Manners, on business service etiquette depends on practicing courtesy. The standardised B and t values that came out from this analysis are shown in Table 3.

## RESULTS

Figure 4 presents the relationship between CSN and BTQ at high ( $z=1$ ) and low ( $z=-1$ ) levels of courtesy attitude. These equations were derived from the standardized B values (Table 3). According to this figure, when courtesy attitude is limited, CSN is inversely related to BTQ. This relationship, however, diminishes as courtesy attitude increases.

Table 3: Standardized B

Model	Beta	t
(Constant)		8.0***
Manners	.54	10.75
Customer Satisfaction	.24	1.80

Courtesy	-0.09	-0.71*
Manners x Courtesy	-0.08	-1.50*
Customer Satisfaction x y	.05	0.88

\* p < 0.05, \*\* p < 0.01, \*\*\* p < 0.001

## DISCUSSION

A moderator is a variable that defines conditions under which a given predictor is related to an issue. A moderation effect could be (a) Enhancing, where increasing the moderator would increase the force of the predictor (IV) on the outcome (DV); (b) Buffering, where increasing the moderator would decrease the force of the predictor on the issue; or (c) Antagonistic, where increasing the moderator would reverse the outcome of the predictor on the issue.

In this instance, null hypothesis;  $H_0$ : Business etiquette has no moderating effect on the relationship between business etiquette and customer satisfaction. Thus, we were failing to accept. Nevertheless, we accepted hypothesis  $H_1$ : Courtesy attitude has a positive moderating effect on business etiquette towards customer satisfaction.

## CONCLUSION

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), and Judd and Kenny (1981), the scholarship of the moderation and mediation effect has come through a long account. Mediation is a very popular subject. Mediation and moderation analyses are a central component of what has been called progression analysis, but mediation influence is likely to be more prevailing than moderation analyses. It is proposed that, in the test of multivariate analysis, the moderation fragment of the model is habitually the most remarkable portion of that exemplar.

It is recommended that successful hoteliers are risk takers and opportunity seekers. The restriction of the work was, the opinions were from the sample of tourists. Moreover, the researcher may spawn opinions, not merely from the customers, but likewise from the entrepreneurs. The characteristics of business etiquette services are proposed to link and chain together. We proposed that the service business etiquette, service quality, TQM, quanxi and intelligence quotient are inter-correlated and should be studied in the form of series circle, as “business etiquette service-chain”.

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