1 HOTEL
362 HOTEL ROOMS
300 EMPLOYEES
99% CHINESE NATIONALITY
1 GOAL
100% GUEST SATISFACTION

GUEST SATISFACTION AT RADISSON BLU HOTEL BEIJING: A STUDY OF CROSS-CULTURAL SERVICE ENCOUNTERS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate guest satisfaction stimulated by cross-cultural service encounters at the front office in the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing. Within a hotel service environment, the frontline employees are of great influence on both perceived quality and value, therefore the performance of frontline employees should be of the greatest concern (Hartline & Jones, 1993)

To conduct this research the various methods were applied in the following order: four managerial interviews, five observations at surrounding competitor hotels, forty-nine valid returned guest questionnaires.

These different research methods applied in the current order provided findings regarding a gap in the recruitment policy and the guest preferences within Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing. It is possible to create improvement regarding motivational factors within this hotel. This stimulated by an increased amount of trainings to stimulated employee development.

KEYWORDS

Guest Satisfaction, Cross-Cultural Service Encounters, Hotel, Front Line Service Employee, Behaviour, Europe, Asia.

RESUMEN

El estudio tiene como objetivo investigar la satisfacción de los clientes estimulada por los encuentros interculturales de servicio en la recepción del Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing.

Dentro del entorno de servicio del hotel, los empleados que están de cara al público tienen una gran influencia en la calidad del servicio y en el valor percibido por el cliente. A su vez, la actuación de los empleados de la recepción debe convertirse en una de las máximas prioridades del hotel.

Para llevar a cabo este estudio, se han aplicado diferentes métodos de investigación en el siguiente orden cuatro entrevistas a directivos, cinco observaciones a hoteles competidores, de los alredededores, y 49 cuestionarios recogidos a los clientes del hotel. Estas metodologías aplicadas ofrecen unos resultados que muestran una diferencia entre las políticas de reclutamiento y las preferencias de los clientes Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing. Es posible crear una mejora aplicando factores de motivación en el hotel acompañado de un incremento de formación para estimular el desarrollo del empleado.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Satisfacción de los clientes, encuentros de servicios interculturales, hotel, empleados de recepción, comportamiento, Europa. Asia.

INTRODUCTION

China is a developing country and is slowly opening its economy for foreign investors to stimulate a free market economy. This policy made it possible for Radisson Blu Hotels to open a property in Beijing, China in 1992. When operating in a foreign country cultural differences will show or as stated by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998; p. 20).

> "A fish only discovers its need for water when it is no longer in it. Our own culture is like water to a fish. It sustains us. *We live and breathe through it".*

The Radisson Blu Hotels have Scandinavian roots and therefore the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing is coping with moreover Scandinavian guests that expect the same service as "at home" whereas the Asian service employees never experienced service that Scandinavian and European guests are expecting. How to establish this level of service delivery? Moreover, the slogan of Radisson Blu hotels is "A home away from home" and a 100% guest satisfaction is guaranteed (Radisson Blu, 2011). These mentioned aspects bring along everyday challenges for Asian service employees to keep up the guest satisfaction. This research focuses on how to optimize the guest satisfaction in cross-cultural service encounters at Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

EXPECTATIONS

Each guest has different needs, objectives and past experiences which influences one's expectations or as Pizam & Ellis (1999;328) point out "*Expectations are mutable internal standards which are based on a multitude of factors including needs, objectives, past personal or vicarious experiences with the same establishment restaurant, with similar establishments, and the availability of alternatives".*

Despite Schein's model (1992) which illustrates the possible gap in expectations among the cultures there are relatively a small number of models that have been developed for a systematic comparison of cultures (De Mooij, 1998). When comparing the east and west it brings out more differences than similarities. Like Riddle (1992) states that service in Asia is more people-oriented in comparison to the west where efficiency is highly valued. In addition Schmitt & Pan (1994) add that in the service culture of Asia guests expect a higher level of services although these services are mostly lower priced. Afar Seyman (2006) is convinced that multinational organisations universally face challenges in aspects like communication, training and discrimination which are factors of establishing quality gaps

SERVICE ENCOUNTERS

The definition of a service encounter contains many different aspects like, guest's interaction with frontline employees, machines, automated systems, physical facilities, and any other service provider visible elements (Massad, Crowston, 2003). In the service industry the core lies in the inter-

action between the frontline employee and the guest.

Service encounters can be explained by the script theory which includes various roles. A role is the behaviour associated with a defined position (Solomon et al. 1985) and role expectations are standards for role behaviour (Biddle, 1986). Well defined roles will create clear views from both sides and will increase the guest satisfaction. Which is important as nowadays multinational corporations are becoming common places caused by the globalisation and an increased the level of mobility between and across continents (Baum, 2006) which increases the challenges related to service encounters. Mobility makes that cultures cross each other, which makes it more likely and urgent to get a greater understanding in cultures.

In the service industry this is an interesting topic, as the intangibility of services increases the role and importance of the persons responsible for delivering them. Winsted (1996) researched cross-cultural service encounters examine the following eight dimensions; authenticity of behaviour, caring, perceived customer control, courtesy, formality, friendliness, personalization and promptness. Within these eight dimensions there are differences between European and Asian cultures and their expectations towards service encounters. Therefore, a sensitive approach towards different cultures is recommended. Moreover, training programs using clear examples to explain service employees these differences in the expectation of the guest. Besides training Bitner, Booms and Tetreault (1990) states that managers should motivate and reward employees that show committed cross-cultural behaviours towards guests.

GUEST SATISFACTION

Guest satisfaction can be evaluated by using a programme, although Naumann (1995) stresses that this approach only shows effect in guest oriented companies were employees show proactive behaviour when it comes down to meet or exceed the expectations from the guest.

Regarding guest satisfaction Ekinci, Dawes and Massey (2008) discuss the following five antecedent variables, actual self-congruence, ideal self- congruence, desires congruence, physical quality and frontline staff behaviour which is all related to guest satisfaction. Regarding the final mentioned aspect "frontline staff behaviour", there are three distinct attributes identified to contribute to guest perceptions regarding interaction quality; employee behaviours, attitudes and expertise (Brady & Cronin Jr., 2001). Beyond research indicated that hotel guests are attracted and tend to be effected by frontline employees with similarities in terms of demographics, culture, personality, attitudes, beliefs and social class (e.g. Hendrik & Page, 1970, Moon, 2002).

BEHAVIOUR OF THE SERVICE EMPLOYEE

The behaviour of service employees is defined as various sequences of actions carried out by employees within the organisation (Hanna et al, 2004). This behaviour, either negative or positive, is correlated to the guests' overall satisfaction regardless the guests' gender, nationality, purpose of visit, number of visits and length of stay (Kattara, Weheba, El-Said, 2008).

Studies show that service employees' displays of emotions, particularly in terms of smiling behaviour, have a positive impact on guest satisfaction (Barger & Grandey, 2006, Soderlund and

Rosengren, 2008). Ignoring, avoiding, rejecting, educating, rewarding, reacting, distracting, over-acting, and exerting physical control over elements of the service are several tactics to handle cross cultural service encounters with guests (Rafaeli, 1989; Shamir, 1980; Weatherly & Tansik, 1992). These behaviours form a essential feature when it comes down to developing relationships with guests, as it forms the connection between the hotel/chain and the guest (Gwinner, Gremler, Bitner, 1998). For this reason, frontline employee development supported by managers, will be transmitted to guests during the encounter and will increase the possibility of success for the hotel. Not to miss out that employee behaviour along with service quality and price are the three most valuable variables when it comes down to guest satisfaction (Saad & Amy, 2007). In the end when the guest is satisfied with the cross cultural service encounter the guest might sustain loyal which saves money and resources.

FIGURE 1. *Conceptual Framework*
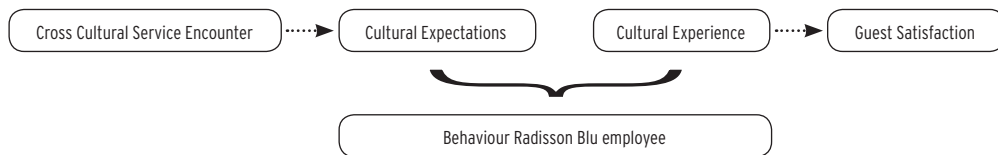
Considering the already given information and the created conceptual framework the problem statement is formulated to conduct this research:

> How might the service employee at the reception increase guest satisfaction in a cross-cultural service encounter at Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing?

The research questions fundamental to this problem are as follow:

1. How are service employees currently coping within the cross cultural environment of Radisson Blu Hotel Beijiing?
2. How do other hotels in Beijing's Chaoyang District cope with cross-cultural service encounters?
3. What is the perspective of Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing guests towards satisfaction established by cross-cultural service encounters in the reception?

METHODOLOGY

To retrieve correct results suitable research methods need to be selected. The researcher chose to apply a qualitative action research, as the researcher is executing a management traineeship in the front office, the place were cross-cultural service encounters take place (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008).

The information collection process was started by executing four managerial interviews within Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing. These interviews were executed to seek new insights and to create a greater understanding upon the current situation regarding recruitment, training, coaching policies and practises within the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing. The willingness to create a multi-cultural team of service employees and what the preferred behaviour of front line service employees is according to the management.

There is chosen to conduct semi-structured interviews in order to gain as much as possible detailed information. As face to face interviews provide social cues of the interviewee and can give the interviewer a lot of extra information that can be added to the verbal answer of the interviewee (Op den Akker, 2006). The pilot study is done by providing two Asian employees and two European employees all the interviews and improvements are requested based personal frame of reference. Once improved the interview is send upfront so the selected manager know what to expect and what to prepare.

Once the interviews are completed and to be able to create detailed guest questionnaires, observations are executed as an in between process. To validate the earlier obtained data in the interviews to hopefully gain new insights usable to create an even better guest questionnaire.

Within this study there two kind of observations applied. There are participant observations executed in the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing, as the researcher is being part of the observation process. Non-participant observations which are also referred to as unobstructive participation observation (Altinay et al, 2008) are applied when visiting hotels in the local surrounding area. There are several four and five star hotels selected all managed by different cultures within the Chaoyang district, Beijing to answer the second research question. To add to that all the observations were established by using the same observation template.

The questionnaire is based on the executed interviews in research question one as well as the observational reports and the expert knowledge presented in the literature review. These various methods and sources shaped the questionnaire to what it is. The researcher created various questions to obtain different types of data. There was aimed for opinions, behaviour and attributes. The researcher created listed, category and ranking questions to obtain data on employee behaviour and attitude. Moreover there were created open questions to obtain opinions from the respondents and the questionnaire was rounded off by asking for attributes. Regarding the validity of the research the `satisfaction with encounter scale´ (Burner, 2009) is applied to several questions. Dolen et al. (2002) reported an alpha of .88 for use of the scale. Finally, questions were created where respondents needed to rank criteria to importance. There where seven criteria's to be in line with likert type scale (Burner, 2009) where 1 is the most important or excellent and seven the least. Moreover another set of questions was created containing eight criteria, these eight criteria's were mentioned earlier by experts in the literature review and in the interviews. Once the researcher created twenty questions, the questionnaire was pilot

tested by 10 randomly selected persons. With the main goal of this study in mind, all persons were enquired to report back ten questions which were most suitable regarding their frame of reference. From this feedback the researcher created an overview and the final questionnaire. The final questionnaire was checked by the general manager and the final feedback was transmitted into actual corrections. Finally the personal assistant of the general manager transformed the questionnaire in Chinese characters. This was done to be able to aim for 50% European and 50% Asian respondents.

FINDINGS

This division will outline findings the researcher retrieved while executing this research, based on conducting various research methods.

CROSS-CULTURAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT

At the moment 99% of all FTE in hotel is Chinese. During Radisson's firsts years in China there was a higher percentage of foreign employees working within the hotel but the SARS epidemic changed this and ever since internal growth is preferred by the HR department. The positions of Finance Controller and General Manager are always filled by the headquarter and therefore foreign employees. The current General Manager is Swedish and there have been many Scandinavian managers before as the headquarter believes in close similarities between the Scandinavian and Chinese culture. Besides these facts, most interviewees state that there is no differentiation between national and international employees.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE OVER THE YEARS.

About ten years ago, working in a hotel was a high-end job, as proper English was required, outstanding personal appearance was needed and the salaries were high. Nowadays education and English are more common. These changes made a job as receptionist decrease from a high-end to a low-end job and the wages have not changed much since then. The HR director mentions that the main motivator for Chinese workers is money. On the other hand, service employees at Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing are motivated in several other ways. Like, the hotel employs its own trade Union to take care of the employee's wellbeing. The interview with the front office manager pointed out that the service worker in the reception motivates his of herself. Last but not least, HR points out annual leave as a motivational factor.

Moreover, some years ago employees were living to work, nowadays the younger (single child) generation works to live. This makes the younger generation less loyal to the company and when this generation is unsatisfied these employees easily resign. Moreover, the hotel does not offer a competitive salary and therefore only inexperienced just graduated employees are hired to work in the reception.

Most of the time this newly graduates are students from language schools. This because the main selecting criteria of the HR Manager is the level of English and the accuracy of speaking and

listening. The second criteria is appearance followed by personality. The Fourth selection criteria is attitude and finally the working experience in other service establishments is taken into consideration. The computed data retrieved from the questionnaires show that guests staying at the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing think attitude of the receptionist is the most important factor whereas the human resource manager placed this factor more towards least important. Secondly ranked are the English skills of the receptionist which is perfectly in line with the policies of the hotel. Finally one remarkable fact is that appearance is not that highly valued by the guest, but it is highly valued by the human resource manager.

Furthermore, while executing the interviews the interviewee mentions that in the front office there is everyday training on the spot. Beyond that there is a once every two weeks training for the new front office staff. Nevertheless, the researcher never noticed a meeting. The researcher was new as well in the front office but there was no invitation to join such a meeting.

An issue that has been created over years is the overstaffed workplaces. Nowadays it is changing little by little but overstaffing in China is still a fact. Due to the great amount of citizens, governmental influence in multiple organizations and in average low salaries it is occurs often that enterprises are overstaffed observed from a European point of view. During the observations there is noticed that everybody is "doing something" in a hotel. Especially the lower the position the more the "doing something" behaviour is being noticed. Sometimes this "doing something" is related to work however moreover it results in playing games, taking personal telephone calls and in order to take this calls at least the sound should be switched on.

ASIAN SERVICE EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOUR

The HR manager needs to have a good feeling with the potential employee as the feeling of the HR manager is a reflection of the guests feeling. As well as other interviewees agree together that attitude and behaviour is something from inside. Smiling behaviour goes along with this. The smiling behaviour of the service employees varies from hotel to hotel. The researcher noticed during the observations that it is not depending on the hotel but on the personality of the service worker itself. This is concluded because of the big differences noticed in every hotel regarding smiling behaviour.

In general it can be stated that the service standards inside and outside of China vary in various aspects. International guests will notice that service employees in some hospitality outlets do not pay attention at all to western guests that try to order or try to ask for the bill. From Chinese perspective this is logical, as Chinese guest are used to literally scream for the attention of the service worker and do not take the peaceful moments of other guest into consideration. When the frame of reference of the Chinese service employee does not reach beyond the Chinese culture and understanding he or she would assume that all guest are supposed to apply this behaviour. This might be the reason for Western guest to assume that Chinese service workers are not as attentive as international guests are used to.

Additionally, when translating the Chinese language literally to English might bring along impolite communication. As noticed during the observation in the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing when guest are being checked-in by Chinese service workers there is asked the following "Passport please" instead of; "Welcome to Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing, Sir, Madame. Did you stay with us before?" Then

in the end there is asked; "May I have your passport please". This is only one example however in all the observed hotels communication barriers were encountered. This is a big issue as from Chinese cultural aspects it is not common among colleagues to correct each other on attitude and behaviour. This task is assigned to the manager, even when the manager mentions there is no hierarchy and open communication.

GUEST PROFILE AT RADISSON BLU HOTEL BEIJING

Nowadays accessibility of Internet made it possible that guest have a greater pre-investigation regarding surrounding and the facilities of the hotel. A few years ago guest only wanted a room to sleep, nowadays guests know what can be requested and are more demanding than ever. The current guest profile staying at the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing is for an average of three days and belongs to the business sector. The remaining rooms are mainly filled by groups. Mr. Hao, assistant Front Office Manager mentioned during the interview that 86 rooms per night out of the total 362 rooms, are occupied by various flight crews. Furthermore, there is a mixture from European and Asian guest but the highest percentage goes to Scandinavian guests as Radisson has Scandinavian heritage. Nevertheless, when observing the lobby it made the researcher assume that the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing has many national guests. However when knowing that e.g. of all guests that visited Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing in the first quarter of 2011, only 20,67% carries Chinese nationality. When noticing this provided the researcher with the feeling that national guest prefer to sit in the lobby and lobby bar area in order to be seen in international and upscale locations. During all the various observations moreover Chinese were seen in the lobby area which makes it explicable that it is assumed that a hotel has many Chinese guest. They can be seen and heard. During all other observations noise was overruling and typical Chinese behavioural aspects were noticed. Like in some hotels Asian guest directly walked up front of the waiting line and started talking/screaming to the receptionist without taking into consideration the task that the receptionist might be handling at that moment.

PREFERRED RECEPTIONIST BEHAVIOUR
AND ATTITUDE FROM GUEST PERSPECTIVE

In section one of the questionnaire the questions focused on attitude and behaviour of receptionists. These questions were created to measure which dimensions of behaviour and attitude may optimize the guest satisfaction in cross-cultural service encounters. Regarding the different attitudes and behaviours, retrieved from literature and expert knowledge, the following outcomes are representing guest opinions at the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing.

TABLE 1: *Valued factors regarding cross-cultural service encounters*

ATTRIBUTES	MEAN	St DEV	MEDIAN	MODE
Smiling	3.73	2.35	4.00	1
Knowledgeable	4.84	1.64	5.00	3[a]
Politeness	4.37	1.76	4.00	6
Effectiveness	3.04	1.86	3.00	4
Openness	4.33	2.23	5.00	7
Willingness	3.41	1.82	4.00	4
Friendliness	3.24	1.90	3.00	3
Open attitude	2.47	2.16	1.00	1
Well groomed	4.39	1.62	5.00	5
Efficient	2.88	1.51	2.00	2
Explains facilities	5.43	1.54	6.00	6
Language skills	3.82	1.97	4.00	2
Polite language	3.80	1.34	3.00	3
Hotel spirit	5.22	1.84	6.00	6[a]

[a.] *Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.*

Some questions contained similar aspects in order to check the validity of the factor. As the outcomes in table one row one show a mean of 3.04 on effectiveness and on efficiency there is a mean of 2,88 which is rather close to each other and an average std. Deviation of 1.7. Smiling behaviour and open attitude both score a mode of 1. Number one indicates the factor that is most important to the guest and therefore these two factors should be highly taken into consideration.

CULTURAL EVALUATION OF SERVICE ENCOUNTERS

There was one question related to the literature in order to seek either similarities or differences with the literature. Mentioned in the literature review the study of Winsted (1996) that examines how guests evaluate service encounter according to culture. The factors that Winsted used in earlier research were re-examined in a questionnaire question. The outcomes on the factors in this study are presented in Table 4.3

TABLE 2: *Cultural evaluation of service encounters*

CONTINENT (FILTER)		AUTHENTICITY OF BEHAVIOUR	PRECEIVED GUEST CONTROL	FORMALITY	PERSONA-LIZATION	CARING	COURTESY	FRIENDLINESS	PROMPTNESS
Europe	Mean	4,92	6,42	6,92	3,75	3,67	4,00	4,92	4,75
	N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Std. Desviation	2,145	1,932	1,349	1,775	1,633	1,865	0,974	2,400
Asia	Mean	4,64	3,84	5,76	6,48	3,48	4,04	3,08	4,84
	N	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
	Std. Desviation	2,481	2,609	1,921	2,084	1,358	1,645	2,080	2,230
Total	**Mean**	4,78	5,10	6,33	5,14	3,57	4,02	2,51	4,80
	N	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
	Std. Desviation	2,303	2,624	1,749	2,363	1,486	1,738	1,721	2,291

When the data was transmitted it showed that Asian guest have preferences for "perceived guest control" which is definitely not in line with the Western guest. Whereas the Western guests share the opinion that "personalization" is important. Moreover, "friendliness" is the most important factor to the Western guest with only a Std. Deviation of .974. Finally, "formality" is slightly more important to Western guest and the outcomes on the other factors

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN HOTEL OPERATIONS

Should the Radisson Blu Hotel take cultural difference into account when operating in different continents was another question which was placed in the questionnaire. According to 63,3% (34,7% Asian, 28,6% European) of the respondents it is necessary to take cultural differences into account.

These two worlds are combined in the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing which is a westernized hotel but misses out consistency. But China is still a developing country and mainly European guest are ignorant for this fact, due to reading books these guests think they know it all. This makes some guests sometimes judgemental as they assume that China is more developed than it actually is. Chinese service employees cope with daily difficulties like, loosing face, a huge language barrier, do not know how to express themselves like when it comes e.g. when looking a foreign guest in the eyes.

DISCUSSION

When reviewing the findings there was noticed minimised training on cultural aspects for front-line service employees. With greater understanding on cultures the service employees might feel more confident in serving the guest. Besides cultural backgrounds, it is also important to involve

behavioural aspects as smiling behaviour and friendliness have positive effects on the guest. When an service employee starts working at the Radisson Blu Hotel there is provided a "Yes, I can" training including the yes I can behaviours. This is a good start. Nevertheless, in general Chinese population learn by rehearsing over and over again. For this reason there is advised to provide smaller trainings and to create quarterly repetition hours. It will increase the knowledge level, and it will becomes one's own. When this knowledge is made own, service employees can feel confident which will hopefully result in a more positive behaviour towards the various guests segments visiting Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing. Guest will feel good and might become loyal which saves costs in the long run. Beyond that it is necessary to keep up or increase the amount of English trainings as it will boost the self-esteem of the service worker. Hopefully it will create openness in the service behaviour of the service employee and make it more easy to acknowledge the guest. The researcher believes that training by observing front of the house operations is not sufficient. Although during the questionnaires it showed that some guests were satisfied with the level of English of the service employees in the entrance area and some other were dissatisfied. These dissatisfied opinions are harmful to the 100% guest satisfaction promise of Radisson Blu Hotels.

Moreover, the main selecting criteria is the level of English and the accuracy of speaking and listening. The second criteria is the appearance followed by the personality. Fourth selection criteria is attitude and finally the working experience in other service establishments is taken into consideration. The computed data shows that guests of the Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing think attitude of the receptionist is the most important factor whereas the human resource manager placed this factor more towards least important. Secondly ranked are the English skills of the receptionist which is perfectly in line with the policies of the HR department. Finally one remarkable feature is that appearance is not that highly valued by the guest, but it is highly valued by the human resource manager. With this data a gap between the hotel and the guest can be minored by taking corrective action which might have positive influence on the overall guest satisfaction.

Furthermore, Asian employees at Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing believe the hotel is understaffed and Western employees believe it is overstaffed. The researcher believes that both parties are right from own frame of reference. Nevertheless, it is a hotel providing services to guests and aiming for a 100% guest satisfaction. The management in Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing should create one solid way to service the guests. The management should highlight the important services and maybe put more service employees working for that specific service and cut the amount of service employees in other departments which means the task division is going to shift and changes will occur. In the process of change the staff should be guided closely as for some employees it more easy to change than for other employees. Especially knowing that some employees are employed since the opening of the hotel many years ago. In this process of change it is advised to involve more different cultures and to increase recruitment from outside the hotel to bring in fresh ideas which can positively stimulate the change. Service employees with various cultural backgrounds have different frames of reference regarding guest services that are provided. These different points of view might lead to synergy which makes it possible to increase guest satisfaction provided in the cross-cultural service encounters in Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing.

Finally, guest satisfaction will bring along loyal guests. Before establishing this the researcher believes that the loyalty of the service employees working at Radisson Blu Hotel should be brought

to a higher level. The researcher is convinced that satisfied service employees provide the guests with a happy feeling and the other way around.

CONCLUSION

Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing is a place where European and Asian cultures encounter. The aim of this study was to investigate possibilities and ways to increase guest satisfaction while taking cross-cultural service encounters highly into consideration. Therefore, the research question stated below was created during the beginning of this research.

> How might the service employee at the reception increase guest satisfaction in a cross-cultural service encounter at Radisson Blu Hotel Beijing?

With the use of various fundamental questions this research problem is answered. The fundamental questions were answered by utilizing various research methods. There was chosen to execute four interviews with managerial employees of Radisson Blu Hotel to answer the first research objective. Towards the second research objective there were observations executed in the near surrounding. Finally, the opinion of the guest is gathered through sixty questionnaires. These questionnaires provided the possibility to test data gathered in the other applied research methods, likewise it provided the insides to research objective number three.

The proposed findings and solutions were presented discussed with the General Manager and the Front Office Manager and Assistant. The researcher showed willingness to execute the solutions into reality. In the end the amount of English lessons and the attendance increased over time which resulted in employees using polite questioning when checking in guests. Revising the Club Carlson Membership requirements and regulations by all Front Office Staff and last but not least a revision of the "yes, I can!" training for all employees over a periods of four days and a managerial "yes, I can!" training for the management and the management trainees.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This whole research was conducted by a European raised researcher that tried to stay objective, although it might be possible some points of view might be biased. Therefore, when applying this research to another hotel it is advised to execute that research with both researched nationalities to increase the relevancy of the outcomes. Moreover, when writing a research in a team that contain both nationalities the communication process might be positively affected.

To generalize this study for the rest of Beijing it is recommended to execute the same study in the different areas within Beijing in multicultural teams, to increase the objectivity as mentioned earlier.

Finally, further research can be in the area of training. The researcher discovered while conducting this research that European and Asian citizens have different learning styles. It might be interesting to create a synergized learning style that will have positive effects on both worlds in order to service the raising amount of multinational organisations.

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