

Exploring the Role of Hotel Facilities on Tourists Star Category Hotel Selection in the State of Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

Background: The role of hotel facilities in tourists' selection of star-category hotels is an essential area of focus, as it aims to understand guests' preferences and improve service offerings. This research study explores the influence of hotel facilities on tourist decision-making with regard to visiting heritage arc cities, such as Agra, Lucknow and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. **Objective:** The primary objectives of this research was to examine the influence of hotel facilities on tourists' selection of star-category hotels in the state of Uttar Pradesh and to recommend strategies for hotel professionals to upgrade amenities and services that align with customer preferences. **Methodology:** A descriptive research design was followed to conduct this research. Data was obtained in December 2024 through a questionnaire-based survey conducted from 273 tourists who had experienced the star category hotels in Agra, Lucknow and Varanasi. Data was analyzed through weighted means and standard deviations. **Results:** The findings suggest that room service/ in-room dining (Weighted Mean = 4.12), restaurants/coffee shops (Weighted Mean = 3.91) and business facilities like business centers (Weighted Mean = 3.85) and Wi-Fi (Weighted Mean = 3.67) are primary determinants of hotel choice. They emphasize convenience, comfort and connectivity as important. By comparison, places such as shopping arcades (Weighted Mean = 2.93), fitness centers (Weighted Mean = 2.76) and babysitters (Weighted Mean = 2.59) exert a less significant influence on tourists' choice. Hotels need to concentrate on priority services while upgrading secondary amenities to accommodate varied guest expectations. **Conclusion:** This study highlights the importance of core facilities such as room service, food and business services in bringing in tourists to star-category hotels. The hoteliers must make developing these services a top priority while enhancing less significant ones such as fitness clubs and babysitting to attract more customers. The synchronization of services with customer requirements enhances satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords: Hotel facilities, star-category hotels, tourist selection, Uttar Pradesh, customer satisfaction

Introduction

Hospitality is crucial to tourism and travel and hotels are central (Barile et al., 2017). With a competitive environment, hotels have a major influence on tourists' selection of star-category hotels (Gumaste & Bhosle, 2019). Uttar Pradesh, being known for its cultural heritage, receives millions of tourists, thus creating demand for quality hotel services. An understanding of tourists' preference is paramount for enhancing the delivery of services. Hotel amenities vary from

standard amenities such as safety and cleanliness to value-added services like wellness centers and smart technology (Chun Wang et al., 2016; Chen et al., 2013). Star-class hotels provide quality and exclusivity, whereby amenities influence the visitor's decision (Jones et al., 2020). Corporate visitors want conference rooms, while leisure travelers desire family-oriented attractions (Smith & Brown, 2021). Sophisticated technologies such as keyless entry improve the guest experience (Williams, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic

has further highlighted hygiene, contactless operations and wellness programs as priorities (Patel et al., 2021). Travelers increasingly prefer hotels that combine tradition, hospitality and contemporary amenities (Gupta et al., 2022). Improved facilities enhance guest satisfaction, repeat business and word-of-mouth publicity (Chaudhary, 2020). Moreover, quality hotel infrastructure contributes to local economic development by attracting tourists, creating employment and enhancing ancillary industries (Rana et al., 2023).

Concept of Star Category Hotels: Star-category hotels are rated accommodations that provide different levels of service, amenities and facilities to cater to the needs of different tourists (Fredrick & Authority, 2019). The worldwide accepted star-rating system from one to five stars indicates rising service standards and sophisticated amenities (Sepula & Bello, 2019). The system aids tourists in comparing their living accommodations according to their preferences and finances (Smith & Jones, 2020). Whereas one-star hotels have standard facilities, five-star hotels have luxurious restaurants, spas and individualized services (Johnson et al., 2021). The rating enhances transparency in the hotel industry and compels hotels to improve their services to retain ratings (Kumar & Sharma, 2019). In India, star ratings are regulated by the Ministry of Tourism and the Hotel and Restaurant Approval and Classification Committee (HRACC) for uniformity (Mehta, 2022). Uttar Pradesh, with its heritage and prime tourist spots, has witnessed an increase in star-rated hotels serving both domestic and foreign tourists (Singh & Gupta, 2023).

Important Hotel Facilities Provided by Star Category Hotels: Star-category hotels stand out for their exceptional services, catering to both business and leisure travelers (Chibili, 2019). They offer elegantly designed accommodations with premium furniture, top-quality beds, internet access and advanced entertainment options (Smith & Jones, 2021). Dining is a key feature, with multiple on-site restaurants serving international cuisines and 24/7 room service (Johnson et al., 2022; Kalgi & Hire, 2024). For corporate travelers, these hotels offer conference facilities with state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment, large meeting areas and exclusive business centers (Doe, 2020; Khan, 2022). Recreational amenities, such as swimming pools, fitness centers and spas, provide relaxation and wellness to guests (Williams, 2019). Family services, including kids' clubs, babysitting and family suites, make the stay enjoyable for families with

children (Siwek et al., 2022). Concierge services enhance guest convenience through arranging transport, city tours and bookings for tickets (Anderson & Cooper, 2023). Safety comes first with 24/7 monitoring, secure door systems and in-room safes (Clark, 2022). Besides, sustainability features, such as energy-efficient systems and environment-friendly amenities, demonstrate ecological stewardship (Green & Taylor, 2021). For convenience, hotels offer barrier-free rooms and special amenities for disabled guests (Parker et al., 2020). Personal butlers and VIP lounges are some other premium services that enhance guest experiences (Evans, 2021; Page & Connell, 2020), which sustain customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Impact of Hotel Facilities on Tourists Hotel Selection:

Hotels offer amenities that are key to tourists' accommodation decisions, which have a direct influence on their overall experience and satisfaction (Yang et al., 2018). Tourists tend to favor hotels that provide a combination of basic and value-added amenities to improve comfort and convenience (Hsieh & Chuang, 2020). Simple amenities like air-conditioning, free Wi-Fi and cleanliness of the room are the norms, but with extra offerings including spas, recreation facilities and fitness centers to enhance feelings of luxury and well-being (Curtin, 2021). Another paramount aspect is a choice of meals, including global cuisines as well as an option of vegetarian or any dietary choice for consumers (Pandey, 2023). For corporate travelers, hotels with sophisticated meeting rooms and business centers guarantee productivity, even outside the office (Sainaghi, 2010). For families, hotels with family-friendly amenities like kids' clubs, babysitting facilities and connected family rooms for a hassle-free vacation experience are favored. Accessibility facilities, such as barrier-free rooms and accessible transport, appeal to mobility-impaired travelers, upholding inclusivity (Hamarneh et al., 2024). It is increasingly a priority for sustainability too, with environmentally friendly travelers preferring hotels that use renewable energy, reduce waste and offer eco-certified facilities (Devi & Gandwane, 2024). Customized services like concierge support and customized guest experiences further increase the appeal of a hotel (Das, 2023; Talukder, 2025). Eventually, these facilities decide how tourists perceive value for money in hotels, which determines their accommodation (Cohen et al., 2014).

This study delves into the impact of hotel facilities on tourists' selection of star-category hotels in Uttar Pradesh,

a province rich in cultural heritage and tourism. As the hospitality industry becomes increasingly competitive, it is crucial to identify the most important amenities for upgrading guest satisfaction and market positioning. The study captures the influence of the most important and upscale amenities—accommodation standards, food services, wellness facilities, convenience through technology and safety features—on consumer choice. Results will aid hoteliers in customizing products to changing traveler expectations and support policymakers in formulating infrastructure plans for industry expansion. In spite of increasing recognition of the significance of hotel facilities, there is a scarcity of empirical studies on their role in local contexts. This research fills the gap by examining how amenities affect hotel choice in Uttar Pradesh. Employing the mixed-methods research design, it supplies concrete insights that hotel managers, policymakers and tourism stakeholders can apply to foster a more guest-focused and competitive tourism environment in the state.

Objectives

- To examine the influence of hotel facilities on tourists star category hotels selection in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Methodology

Research Design: The research design used for this study was descriptive in nature because it aimed to investigate and describe the role of hotel facilities in tourists' selection of star-category hotels in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The study investigated the impact of different hotel facilities on the decision-making process of tourists, focusing on offering recommendations to hotel professionals to improve their amenities and services to meet customer preferences better.

Locale: Data for this current study was solicited from tourist visitors of heritage arc in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Of these, specifically, tourists coming to Agra, Lucknow and Varanasi were selected since they are key points of tourism where historical value adds to its stature and 1-to-5 star-rated hotels fall within these circles. Data for the present research was collected from respondents who are above 18 years of age. The mean age of the sample was 31.9 years. This sample represented a well-educated, urban-dwelling and working-class population with a preference for mid-to-high-tier hotels, primarily in Uttar Pradesh's key tourist destinations.

Sampling Design: Convenience sampling was used to

select respondents, covering all the tourists who visited the heritage arc of Uttar Pradesh, comprising Agra, Lucknow and Varanasi. After wide literature review and consultation with academicians, a self-structured questionnaire was prepared. The Google Form platform was used to make the questionnaire, which was sent through online social media platforms to 320 respondents. Of the 320 circulated forms, 280 were completed and from these, 273 were acceptable for analysis based on the requirements of being fully and validly completed. The data for this research was collected in the month of December 2024.

Tools and Technique: The main instrument used in data gathering was a structured questionnaire which was divided into two major parts. The first part reflected the demographic profile of the respondents about age, gender, educational qualifications and occupation. The second section addressed 15 variables of hotel facilities on a 5-point Likert Scale, which ranged from "Not at all influential" to "Extremely influential." This scale allowed the respondents to give their level of agreement or importance of various hotel facilities in influencing their choice of star-category hotels.

Data Analysis and Statistical Analysis: Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics. Techniques of central tendency included computation of the weighted mean in identifying the relative importance that tourists give to the different hotel facilities in the selection of star-category hotels. Weighted mean values were thereafter used in ranking each variable. Finally, the standard deviation was computed in a way as to measure variability or consistency of responses. These enabled the identification of the most influential hotel facilities and areas for improvement.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of Respondents: Demographics of the respondents portray diversity based on different attributes. The population was made up of 53.1% males and 46.9% females. The largest majority (37.4%) aged between 26-35 years, followed by the 18-25 years age group (31.9%), with fewer falling in the 36-45 (19.4%) and 46-55 (11.4%) age groups and none above the age of 55. Married respondents were in the majority (57.1%) and single respondents accounted for 42.9%. Residents of urban areas dominated the population (88.6%), whereas rural residents constituted a minority of 11.4%. Educationally, 54.2% postgraduates, 37.7% graduates and a small percentage had doctorates

(4.4%) or were undergraduates (2.6%). Occupationally, 38.5% in private occupation, 26% in government, 24.9% in business and 4.8% were students. Income-wise, 37% had income of up to ₹4 lakhs per year, 27.8% had ₹4-8 lakhs and 20.1% had more than ₹12 lakhs. Hotel preferences revealed 3-star hotels to be the most preferred (33.3%), followed by 4-star (30.8%) and 5-star (28.6%). A majority of respondents (66.3%) remained for 1-3 days. Lucknow (40.2%) was the top visited destination, followed by Agra (30.03%) and Varanasi (29.6%). The findings give us insightful information on the socio-demographic attributes and choices of tourists in Uttar Pradesh and assist in identifying their factors in selecting hotels.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Parameters	Variables	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	145	53.1
	Female	128	46.9
	Preferred not to say	-	--
Age	18-25 years	87	31.9
	26-35 years	102	37.4
	36-45 years	53	19.4
	46-55 years	31	11.4
	Above 55 years	0	--
Marital Status	Single	117	42.9
	Married	156	57.1
Area of Residence	Urban	242	88.6
	Rural	31	11.4
Educational Qualifications	Undergraduate	7	2.6
	Graduate	103	37.7
	Postgraduate	148	54.2
	Doctorate	12	4.4
	Others	3	1.1
Occupation	Students	13	4.8
	Government Job	71	26.0
	Private Job	105	38.5
	Business	68	24.9
	Others	16	5.9
Annual Income	Not earning	15	5.5
	Up to 4 Lakhs	101	37.0
	4-8 Lakhs	76	27.8
	8-12 Lakhs	26	9.5
	More than 12 Lakhs	55	20.1

Star Category of Hotels Prefer to Stay	1 & 2 Star	19	7.0
	3-Star	91	33.3
	4-Star	84	30.8
	5-Star	79	28.6
Duration of Stay	1-3 days	181	66.3
	4-7 days	82	30.0
	8-10 days	8	2.9
	More than 10 days	2	.7
Location of Star Category Hotel Where You Last Stayed	Agra	82	30.03
	Lucknow	110	40.2
	Varanasi	81	29.6

Role of Hotel Facilities on Tourists Star Category Hotel Selection:

The first objective of the study is to analyze the role of hotel facilities in a tourist's star category hotel selection in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Questions were developed for 15 variables associated with hotel facilities on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Not at all influential" to "Extremely influential." Rankings were assigned to variables using the values of weighted mean. The standard deviation was also calculated for measuring variability or consistency of responses. Table 2 indicate analysis of first objective:

Table 2: Influence of Hotel Facilities on Tourists Star Category Hotels Selection in the State of Uttar Pradesh

Parameter	Not at all influential (1)	%	Slightly influential (2)	%	Somewhat influential (3)	%	Moderately influential (4)	%	Extremely influential (5)	%	WM	Std. DV.
Wi-Fi Access	29	10.62	40	14.65	40	14.65	48	17.58	116	42.49	3.67	1.419
Fitness Centre	57	20.88	74	27.11	52	19.05	57	20.88	33	12.09	2.76	1.303
Swimming Pool	42	15.38	39	14.29	56	20.51	52	19.05	84	30.77	3.36	1.432
Spa Center	49	17.95	65	23.81	56	20.51	56	20.51	47	17.22	2.95	1.349
Car Rental	36	13.19	48	17.58	50	18.32	70	25.64	69	25.27	3.32	1.363
Bar/Pub	38	13.92	36	13.19	53	19.41	62	22.71	84	30.77	3.43	1.4
Restaurant/ Coffee Shop	25	9.16	19	6.96	35	12.82	71	26.01	123	45.05	3.91	1.298
Sports Facilities	41	15.02	56	20.51	58	21.25	63	23.08	55	20.15	3.13	1.344

Conference/ Meeting Rooms	22	8.06	36	13.19	57	20.88	70	25.64	88	32.24	3.61	1.255
Kids Entertainment Zone	54	19.78	28	10.26	57	20.88	73	26.74	61	22.34	3.22	1.413
Laundry Services	20	7.33	33	12.09	55	20.15	68	24.91	97	35.53	3.69	1.268
Shopping Arcade	52	19.05	58	21.25	57	20.88	68	24.91	38	13.92	2.93	1.321
Room Service/ In-room Dining	13	4.76	19	6.96	28	10.26	75	27.47	138	50.55	4.12	1.146
Babysitter	92	33.70	44	16.12	54	19.78	51	18.68	32	11.72	2.59	1.335
Business Centre	19	6.96	33	12.09	38	13.92	63	23.08	120	43.96	3.85	1.394

Note: WM: Weighted Mean

The most influential factor in tourists' selection of star-category hotels in Uttar Pradesh was Rooms Service/In-room Dining (Weighted Mean = 4.12, S. D.= 1.146), which indicates the importance of convenience and comfort in hotel stays. The next most important factor was Restaurant/Coffee Shop (Weighted Mean = 3.91, S. D.= 1.298), which signifies that food services are a crucial consideration for tourists. The Business Centre holds the third place with a Weighted Mean value of 3.85, emphasizing how business facilities or amenities are key to business travelers and for Business Centre, the standard deviation is 1.394. Laundry Services ranks fourth in the list with a Weighted Mean value of 3.69, meaning tourists want services which make their journey very convenient. The standard deviation for Laundry Services is 1.268.

Wi-Fi access ranks the fifth most crucial factor with the Weighted Mean value of 3.67, reflecting on the growing interest in internet connection in this modern information age. Wi-Fi access has the highest standard deviation of 1.419. Conference/Meeting Rooms with a Weighted Mean of 3.61 and S.D. =1.255 is an important feature, especially to business tourists, who place a premium on access to professional facilities. Bar/Pub offers a Weighted Mean of 3.43 and Swimming Pool has a Weighted Mean of 3.36, both denote the need for leisure amenities for tourists desirous of relaxation. For Bar/Pub the standard deviation is 1.400, Swimming Pool S. D. of 1.432. Car Rental, too holds a Weighted Mean value of 3.32 and is valued for its access to means of transportation by the tourists, S.D. of 1.363. Sports Facilities (Weighted Mean = 3.13) rank moderately, catering to the interests of active tourists, S.D. of 1.344, indicating

moderate variation. Kids Entertainment Zone (Weighted Mean=3.22, S.D. = 1.413) ranks moderately, but it is attractive for families who travel with their children. The influence of Spa Center (Weighted Mean = 2.95) and Shopping Arcade (Weighted Mean = 2.93) is relatively low, but they still attract some segments of tourists. Their S.D. stands 1.349 and 1.321 respectively. Fitness Centre has the least priority compared to the other facilities (Weighted Mean = 2.76) and Babysitter ranked lowest with the lowest weighted mean score of 2.59. The "Fitness Centre" has a standard deviation of 1.303, which reflects moderate variation in responses. The "Babysitter" has a standard deviation of 1.335, which means there is moderate variation in the responses.

Studies on Uttar Pradesh star-category hotel choice highlight the varied tastes of travelers. Room Service/In-room Dining was the key factor, reflecting its significance in the convenience of guests (Mohsin & Lengler, 2015). Quality in-room dining suits the needs of those who value privacy, especially in the post-pandemic period. Restaurant/Coffee Shop came in as the second key factor, which indicates the role of dining facilities in hotel choice. Guests appreciate in-house restaurants for cultural eating experiences and convenience, minimizing the necessity of going out for food (Gumaste & Bhosle, 2019). The Business Centre was in third place, showing growth of "bleisure" tourism. Remote working and business trips require meeting rooms, fast internet and professional services, so business-oriented hotels are the top pick. Laundry Services was fourth, exhibiting the necessity for convenience, particularly for stay-over and overseas visitors. On-site laundry facilities add convenience and flexibility (Sohrabi et al., 2012). Wi-Fi Access was fifth, highlighting its critical importance in contemporary travel. Stable internet connectivity facilitates entertainment, work and communication requirements (Abdulkader, 2023). Good Wi-Fi availability has a significant influence on guest satisfaction and it is an important consideration in hotel choice.

Conference/Meeting Rooms are much appreciated by business travelers who need business spaces for meetings, presentations and collaborative work. Such facilities provide easy working and relaxing opportunities for businesspeople (Kivuva et al., 2014). Leisure amenities like Bars/Pubs and Swimming Pools are also important factors in hotel choice, offering visitors entertainment and relaxing facilities. Bars accommodate social tourists, while swimming pools attract

physically relaxing tourists. Increased value placed on recreational facilities reflects their role in contributing to guest comfort. Car Rental facilities are important for visitors looking for flexible mobility, especially where public transport is scarce. Hiring a car boosts mobility and ease of use and thus remains an important consideration for most tourists. Sports Facilities appeal to sporting tourists, while Children's Entertainment Areas boost family-oriented experiences. While not for everyone, these facilities are appealing to niche segments of travelers. Spa Centers and Shopping Arcades exert a modest impact on choosing a hotel. Spa services assure relaxation, yet shopping arcades are an extra convenience but no major decision influences. Fitness Centers and Babysitting Services rank lowest among considerations. While fitness-conscious travelers appreciate gym access, it is not a necessity for most. Similarly, babysitting services appeal to a niche market. Overall, tourists in Uttar Pradesh prioritize comfort, convenience and essential facilities, with varying preferences for additional amenities.

Conclusion

The initial aim of the study is to examine the hotel facilities' influence on a tourist's choice of star category hotel in the Uttar Pradesh state. The results of the first objective indicated that hotel facilities are highly influential in the choice of tourists for star-category hotels in Uttar Pradesh. Convenience and comfort, particularly room service and in-room dining, are significant determinants of choices. Food outlets, restaurants and cafes are very important, while business travelers value business centers and working spaces. Wi-Fi and laundry facilities are also very important to today's traveler, providing comfort and connectivity. Conference rooms are also valued for business purposes. Spa centers, shopping arcades, gyms and babysitting facilities, however, are less influential. The research indicates that hotels should concentrate on core services and enhance less significant amenities to draw a wider audience of visitors. The second aim of the research is to compare the impact of hotel facilities among visitors of different star category hotels. The findings point out that room service, restaurants, business centers, laundry and Wi-Fi in more-starred hotels are the most significant amenities, focusing on convenience, eating and connectivity. Spa centers, shopping arcades and fitness centers in lower-star hotels are less desirable, indicating that wellness and retail services are not key decision drivers. Hotels must focus on core services while upgrading less important amenities to cater to varied guest requirements.

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