FROM REDUNDANCY TO DELIGHT: TOWARDS OPTIMIZED ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES

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Abstract

Purpose – This study expresses new insights into various stimuli that shape customers perceptions towards services provided. Further, it expands our understanding of customer delight mediating role between service redundancy and organizational outcomes within the hospitality context.

Methodology/Design/Approach – The data were obtained from 632 residents in five-star branded hotels in Egypt. Further, applying stratified sampling method for hotels selection while using and simple random sampling methods for respondents' selection.

Findings – The results indicated that, service redundancy was negatively related to organizational outcomes, while emotional customers delight mediating the relationship between service redundancy and organizational outcomes.

Originality of the research – This study seeks a pioneering contribution of a model that is based on expectation–disconfirmation theory in relation to the hospitality literature. Further, by focusing on such theory the researchers pursue new insights into various stimuli that shape customers perceptions towards services provided.

Keywords Service Redundancy, Customer Delight, Social Anxiety, Perceived Service Quality, Customer Switching Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Service redundancy in the hotel sector refers to instances in which clients get duplicate services. It can have a detrimental impact on a hotel's image and perceived service quality, increasing client switching behaviour. In the hotel business, incidences of redundancy have been premeditatedly classified, emphasising the significance of recognising and managing service redundancies in order to improve operational efficiency and client satisfaction. Academic and corporate conversations highlight the need of reducing service redundancy for success in today's economy. Yen et al. (2023); Huo et al. (2024) found that service redundancy did not boost customer satisfaction. Instead, they may result in consumer complaints and unfavourable word-of-mouth (Stone, 2012), reducing customer loyalty (Dixon et al., 2010; Aziz et al., 2023; Kayumov et al., 2024). Wu et al. (2021); Yang et al. (2024) found that duplicated services lower consumer satisfaction. Park and Kong (2022) observed that when high-end restaurants received non-hygiene certificates, patrons thought the restaurants' quality was superfluous.

Redundant services frequently include inefficient resource allocation, which can lead to resource waste (Chen, 2014; Goh et al., 2022; Elkhwesky et al., 2024), raising operating expenses and negatively impacting operating performance. Eliminating service redundancy may help organisations gain a competitive edge. To captivate consumers, a hotel must offer unique and unforgettable service (Yen et al., 2023; Van Zyl et al., 2023). Lai (2019) believed that clients consider certain services as redundant or unnecessary. Nguyen and Malik (2022) found that service redundancy affected hotel perception, reduced perceived service quality, and influenced customer switching behaviour. Thus, the current study may be utilised as a resource for hospitality managers to manage service encounters and client interactions, as well as researchers to investigate the correlations between service redundancy and various outcomes (Agnihotri et al., 2022; Troiville, 2024).

Customer delight is a key focus in marketing literature, particularly within the hospitality industry, due to its role in creating exceptional customer experiences (Torres et al., 2020). It is closely associated with positive outcomes such as increased customer loyalty, enhanced perceived service quality, and reduced switching behavior (Ali et al., 2024; Magdy and Hassan, 2024). This concept is intricately linked to marketing outcomes like customer satisfaction, word-of-mouth, and brand reputation. Marketing strategies such as relationship marketing build long-term loyalty through consistent, personalized experiences, while experiential marketing creates memorable interactions that exceed expectations (Urdea et al., 2021; Rane et al., 2023). Research has explored how personalization, service differentiation, emotional engagement, and experience design drive customer delight, highlighting its importance in fostering brand loyalty and ensuring long-term customer retention (Rane et al., 2023).

However, providing idiosyncratic experiences is now a top priority in the modern hotel sector (An & Ozturk, 2022). Further, guest experience as a term was first used in hospitality and tourism research, and experiential marketing and the experience economy were used to shape modern perspectives on consumption experiences (Nguyen & Malik, 2022). Hospitality management and academics began to pay attention to customer delight, particularly as plenty of studies on satisfaction and delight rose. Additionally, its causes and effects were more clearly defined (Aktas-Polat and Polat, 2022). Customer delight differs from customer satisfaction

in particular in terms of the impact on repeat business and witching behavior regarding hospitality enterprises (Kim & Hwang, 2022; Choi et al., 2024). Moreover, satisfaction is more related to cognitive evaluation, whereas customer delight is more related to the emotional part (Kwon and Ahn, 2022; Zhou and Chang, 2024). This is because a body of scientific works supports the idea that satisfaction and delight are distinct ideas (Agnihotri et al., 2023; Magdy and Salem, 2024).

However, hotels can draw and keep consumers by providing distinctive services and amenities, putting in place loyalty programs, and upholding a high standard of service, all of which will ultimately result in enhanced profitability and success in the fiercely competitive hospitality sector (Aktas-Polat and Polat, 2022; Anand and Munjal, 2024). While previous studies have acknowledged the importance of customer delight in the hospitality domain (Magdy, 2024), there remains a significant research gap in understanding the specific impact of service redundancy on customer delight. To the best of our knowledge, only a limited number of studies have explored this particular aspect, highlighting the need for further investigation in this area.

Thus, the current study is trying to get in depth on the existence of service redundancy to show its causes and how it matters to guest perception, which influences organizational outcomes in the end. In order to achieve the study purpose, the researchers adopted a new theoretical model based on expectation–disconfirmation theory. Expectation-disconfirmation theory is a cognitive theory that holds that customers make satisfaction evaluations by comparing their pre-consumption expectations of a product or service to their actual views of its performance after consumption (Stone, 2012). Satisfaction is believed to occur when performance matches or surpasses expectations, resulting in confirmation or positive disconfirmation, respectively (Harkison, 2022). However, because of model intricacy, the researchers used advanced multi-regression analysis by applying SEM for hypothesis testing and analysis.

Fundamentally, discussions concerning service redundancy and customer social anxiety are not well established in the hospitality literature. Especially the concept of service redundancy was first introduced by Yen et al. (2023); consequently, the current study seeks a pioneering contribution of model integration based on expectation–disconfirmation theory, which is not well discussed in the hospitality academic field. Thus, the current study has four distinctive purposes: a) to examine to what extent service redundancy exists in five-star hotels affiliated with chains in Egypt; b) to determine the impact of service redundancy on organizational outcomes, namely perceived service quality and customer switching behavior; c) to examine the moderating role of service anxiety between service redundancy and customer delight; and d) to investigate the mediating role of customer delight between service redundancy and the aforementioned outcomes. The study findings contribute to a better understanding of how service redundancy affects customer perceptions of service quality and their switching behavior regarding hospitality enterprises.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Service redundancy refers to the provision of extra or superfluous services that do not improve consumer perceptions of service quality (Tsaur and Yen, 2019). When service redundancy arises, clients perceive a disparity between the real and expected services, resulting in poor service quality. Perceived service quality is a customer's assessment of the difference between the service they expected and the service they received (Parasuraman et al. 1985). According to Oliver's (1981) expectation-disconfirmation theory, throughout a service encounter, clients compare perceived and expected performance. According to Stone (2012), when services surpass consumers' expectations, customers may view the extra quality to be more than their needs, leading to unfavourable attitudes towards the service. Customers have expectations about service encounters. Disconfirmation arises when people think that service delivery does not meet their expectations (Lee & Kim, 2022; Hassan et al., 2022). Customers may feel uncomfortable and suffer negative disconfirmation if they believe hotel practitioners' services or actions are redundant or unhelpful (Harkison, 2022).

Furthermore, non-excessive staff efforts to please have a considerable and favourable effect on customer loyalty (Torres et al., 2020; Vigolo et al., 2021). Instead, excessive staff effort may result in service duplication, impeding the process of developing loyalty (Tsaur & Yen, 2019). This excessive service delivery may also impair consumer loyalty (Nguyen & Malik, 2022). In the tourist and hospitality industries, over-delighting clients has been linked to worse customer satisfaction and loyalty (Olaoke et al., 2021). Thus, the expectation-disconfirmation theory might explain why certain good scenarios in service encounters are seen as repetitious and unnecessary since they increase client concern. Thus, the current work aims to offer a pioneering contribution to model integration using expectation-disconfirmation theory. Furthermore, by emphasising the impact of such integration on organisational outcomes such as perceived service quality and customer switching intentions (Marinakou et al., 2023).

1.1. Service Redundancy

Scholars have looked at redundancy from a variety of points of view. Redundancy is described as having too much or superfluous information (Gupta and Pandey, 2022; Gupta et al., 2023). The frequent actions in the service were referred to as "redundancy" by other scholars. When there is more information than is necessary for rapid action, consumers think it is superfluous (Yen et al., 2023). People's ability to process information is constrained (Hao and Chon, 2022). When it reaches this threshold, information overload occurs and decision-making is impeded (Harkison, 2022). Consumers could have trouble making decisions, for instance, when businesses overshare information on their websites (Malhotra and Malhotra, 2013). When hotel services are excessive or superfluous, they become redundant (Kim et al., 2023; Yen et al., 2023). Redundant services typically

involve the delivery of information or content that is repeated or extraneous compared to what the consumer needs (Magdy & Elmakkawy, 2024). When staff provide repeated and superfluous information or content that is above and beyond what the client needs, it gives the impression that they are going above and beyond, which is perceived positively by the consumer (Lee & Kim, 2022). When customers feel that personnel are going above and beyond, it is sometimes positive to provide excessive service (Leong et al., 2022). This shows that providing extra service may not improve client satisfaction or the perception of service quality (Li et al., 2023). Such services might be thought of as unnecessary, inconvenient, and unsatisfying (Nguyen & Malik, 2022). Management staff in the hotel industry should think about eliminating redundant services if doing so will save operating expenses and improve service effectiveness (Yen et al., 2023). Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1: Service redundancy negatively influences customer delight.

1.2. Social Anxiety Moderating Role

Swee et al. (2021) considered that social anxiety was one of the dominant signs of employee vulnerability, which appeared due to high pressure and frequent stress. Bigalke and Carter (2021) believed that such anxiety arises because of the customer's own personality, which has a kind of phobic attitude towards facing new situations, which represents a kind of psychological attribute. Other academics suggested that such anxiety could be a main reason for physiological disorders that make them unable to deal with others, which is also supported by practical investigations (Kim et al., 2023). Accordingly, such customers consider service redundancy a kind of unpleasant situation that negatively impacts their satisfaction and delight. One of the main features of those types of customers is their hesitation in asking for help or having face-to-face interactions, which stimulates and exhausts their emotional feelings (Mensah et al., 2023). According to Fredrick and Luebbe (2020), high social anxiety levels could impact customers perceived service quality, delight, and switching intention as well. Notwithstanding the importance of in-depth investigation of such a critical topic, thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Social anxiety is a significant moderator between service redundancy and customer delight.

1.3. Customer Delight Mediating Role

Customer delight has become a central theme in hospitality marketing, recognized for its significant impact on critical outcomes like customer loyalty, perceived service quality, and reduced switching behavior (Anabila et al., 2022; Handarkho et al., 2023). It extends beyond basic satisfaction, aiming to create memorable, emotionally engaging experiences. Marketing strategies like relationship marketing and experiential marketing leverage this concept by delivering personalized, exceptional services that foster strong emotional connections, enhance brand reputation, and encourage positive word-of-mouth (Christou, 2010; Magdy, 2024). Extensive research supports the idea that by exceeding customer expectations through tailored experiences and emotional engagement, hospitality businesses can build long-term customer loyalty and maintain a competitive edge (Rane et al., 2023; Giannoukou, 2024)

Essential elements of a service that enhance an idiosyncratic experience have been identified as key drivers of client delight (Barnes et al., 2021). These elements have a significant impact on client appraisal and behavior, including perceived service quality and customer switching behavior (Handarkho et al., 2023). Exploring these major factors is strategically important since assessments of different experience components can have surprisingly diverse effects on the overall assessment (Yen et al., 2023). One underwhelming aspect of the hotel experience might not be the deciding factor in a guest's mind (Sorrentino et al., 2022; Sunaryo et al., 2023). Instead, if the deemed critical sections do not function adequately, the entire experience may be ruined (Rodríguez-López et al., 2023). Notwithstanding the link between joy drivers and customer experience, there hasn't been much research specifically devoted to experimentally exploring this issue, and to the authors' knowledge, none has done so in a hotel environment (Yen et al., 2023; Elkhwesky et al., 2023). Regardless of the needs of the consumer, it has been demonstrated that self-centered enjoyable service makes people uncomfortable, and overly diligent employee effort appears to be ineffective (Rodríguez-López et al., 2023). Yen et al. (2023) believed that satisfied customers are more loyal.

The panorama of joy research has therefore recently included the mediating function of customer delight (Lang et al., 2022). For instance, Agnihotri et al. (2023) discovered that the relationship between service redundancy and perceived service quality also, between service redundancy and customer switching behavior was partially mediated by customer delight. Further, when a guest has a pleasant experience from a confirmation perspective, the experience goes beyond contentment and is said to be customer joy (Li et al., 2023). In order to switch from one service to another, a customer must have the intention to do so (Hassan et al., 2024). According to Wardi et al. (2022), people develop roughly distinctive perspectives regarding their experiences that lead to emotional reactions. Customers' expectations are not met by redundant behavior or services in hotels, which causes them to feel resentment toward the source of those services and results in behavior switching (Xiong et al., 2022). Consumer discontent and switch-over behavior are related (Zhang et al., 2023). Redundant services cause clients to become confused and unsatisfied, which in turn results in switching behaviors (Zhao et al., 2023).

One prominent theory that supports the role of delight in customer behavior is the affective events theory (Svotwa et al., 2023). According to the affective events theory, customer experiences are infused with affective responses that shape their perceptions and subsequent behaviors (Rodríguez-López et al., 2023). Delight, as an intense positive emotion, is recognized as a powerful affective state that can significantly influence customers' cognitive appraisals and evaluations of service encounters (Yen et al., 2023). The affective events theory suggests that these affective appraisals play a vital role in shaping overall customer satisfaction and subsequent loyalty (Agnihotri et al., 2023). Empirical studies have consistently found strong associations between customer

delight and various customer-related outcomes (Handarkho et al., 2023; Wardi et al., 2022). For example, Oliver et al. (1997) conducted a comprehensive review of the literature and found that customer delight has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction. Similarly, Kim & Park (2019) demonstrated that customer delight positively influences customer loyalty and retention.

Regarding the proposed causal mechanism, we posit that service redundancy creates opportunities for exceptional service experiences, which, in turn, evoke feelings of delight in customers. When customers encounter exceptional service, they experience a heightened level of satisfaction and positive emotions, leading to customer delight (Zhang et al., 2023). This process aligns with the "surprise and delight" paradigm, which suggests that unexpected positive experiences generate stronger emotional responses and customer satisfaction (Hao and Chon, 2022). Moreover, customer delight acts as a mediator by influencing customers' perceptions, satisfaction, and loyalty. Delighted customers develop a more positive perception of the service quality provided by the service provider. This positive perception is based on the attribution theory, which suggests that customers attribute exceptional experiences to the competency and effectiveness of the service provider. Empirical evidence further supports the mediating role of customer delight. For instance, Verhoef et al. (2009) conducted a study in the retail industry and found that customer delight mediates the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. Similarly, Lai (2019) examined the airline industry and found that customer delight mediates the relationship between service recovery and customer loyalty. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3a: customer delight is a significant mediator between service redundancy and perceived service quality.

H3b: customer delight is a significant mediator between service redundancy and switching behavior.

Figure1: **Hypothetical Model**
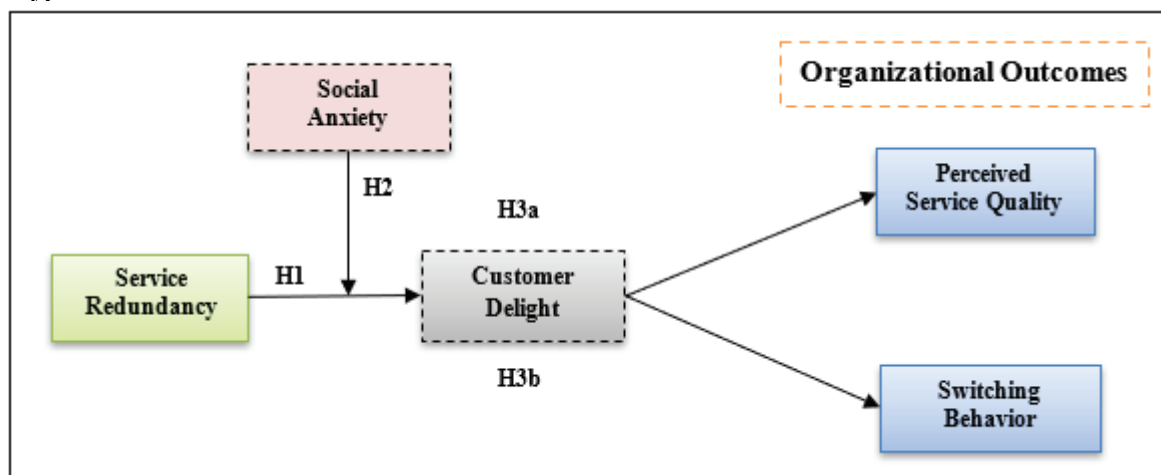
2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Procedure and Sampling

A web-based questionnaire targeting guests of various five-star hotel chains located in popular tourist locations in Egypt was used to gather quantitative data. It is helpful to use questionnaires to collect data in order to minimize bias, obtain good response rates, obtain high-quality, usable data, obtain more candid and open responses, and produce quantitative data. (Bartram, 2019). Van gelder et al. (2015) confirmed that the use of web-based surveys for data collection is a very efficient and effective method due to the speed at which data processing and analysis can be completed, as well as the elimination of the need for costly and time-consuming forms to be sent, tracked, and entered. In addition, prior researchers employed virtual techniques to gather information because of Egypt's COVID-19 limitations and the requirement for social distancing. (e.g., Salem et al., 2021).

The existing research asked a sample of 14 academic specialists in hospitality and management to address any issues with the questionnaire after it had been created. The validity of the measurement items and substance, as well as the questionnaire's clarity, was requested by the authors from specialists. A few changes to the questionnaire's structure were made in response to their helpful recommendations. The survey's findings were supported by every specialist. Subsequently, after collecting the final data, a pilot study was given to 50 hotel patrons to ensure the content, minimize measurement error, evaluate the translated Arabic version of the questionnaire, and verify the validity of the instrument. This procedure helps the authors make slight changes to the measurement items. A sample of 46 five-star hotels from various locations in Egypt was chosen using stratified random sampling, accounting for 30% of the total population of 154 hotels (EHA, 2022). Then, simple random sampling was used to choose the participants.

All of the final data was gathered from January 2023 until April 2023. First, we acquired the email addresses of every human resources manager working in Egyptian hotels by consulting the Egyptian Hotel Association (2022). Second, the researchers sent the managers an email outlining the purpose of the study and requested that they send the questionnaire, along with an

attached URL hyperlink, to each of their hotels. Finally, in an effort to boost the directors' response rate, two follow-up emails were sent to them before the survey ended. To obtain the necessary data, the authors used a non-probability convenience sample (San Martín and Herrero, 2012), especially since the population is very large (Salem et al., 2021) and the Egyptian context is difficult (Elbaz et al., 2020). Convenience sampling was a method previously employed by researchers in the tourism and hospitality fields (Bartram, 2019). Non-probability sampling has the potential to yield reliable data and high-caliber outcomes with a high participation rate (Coviello & Jones, 2004).

2.2. Measures

Service redundancy is measured via fifteen items adapted from Yen et al. (2023) as a first scale that gauges service redundancy in a clear way. In order to measure service behaviours, service regulations, and service environments, further, customer delight was measured using four items from Torres and Ronzoni (2018) and Torres et al. (2020). Moreover, perceived service quality was measured using three items from Lai (2019). Eventually, five items adapted from Malhotra and Malhotra (2013) were used to operationalize customer switching behavior. Also, nine items were utilised to assess the level of customers' social anxiety (Kupper and Denollet, 2012). However, answers on five-point rating scales, from 1 for strongly disagreeing to 5 for strongly agreeing,

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

3.1. Sample Characteristics

Following data screening, a detailed account of the profiles of the respondents was provided in order to explain the background against which this study was conducted. The majority of respondents' age (76%) was in the category ranging from 18 to 45 years old. Otherwise, respondents whose age is more than 45 years represented only 24%; this may have an influence on the results. Also, a higher percentage (69.9%) of respondents had bachelor's degrees. Furthermore, the highest percentages of respondents (30.1%) were students or recently graduated. Moreover, the majority of respondents, based on their marital status, were married (579.9%). In sum, the overall characteristics of the sample are that they are young, married, recently graduated, highly educated, and of different nationalities.

3.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Measurement Model

Liu et al. (2020) state that one method for evaluating the psychometric properties of the designated items in each study dimension is confirmatory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis, according to Jung, Jung and Yoon (2021), is a kind of statistical and mathematical study that lets researchers assesses the reliability of the measured items. Thus, the researchers first showed a confirmatory factor analysis on the following dimensions in order to evaluate the validity of the measured items: SRD (service redundancy), CDL (customer delight), PSQ (perceived service quality), SNX (social anxiety), and CSB (customer switching behavior). The results demonstrated that the model fit the data well. Also, internal consistency was demonstrated by Cronbach's alpha (≥ 0.90) as shown in table 1. Convergent validity and discriminant validity were the two categories used to assess the validity of the assessed items, as shown in figure 2.

Table 1: **Reliability and convergent validity**

| Variable	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha	AVE	VIF
Service Behaviors	0.893	0.711	0.633	1.359
Service Regulations	0.899	0.833	0.794	1.948
Service Environments	0.919	0.869	0.809	1.471
Customer Delight	0.933	0.916	0.679	1.889
Perceived Service Quality	0.976	0.945	0.699	2.338
Customer Switching Behavior	0.987	0.723	0.727	2.731
Social Anxiety	0.856	0.799	0.662	1.447

Figure 2: **The measurement model**
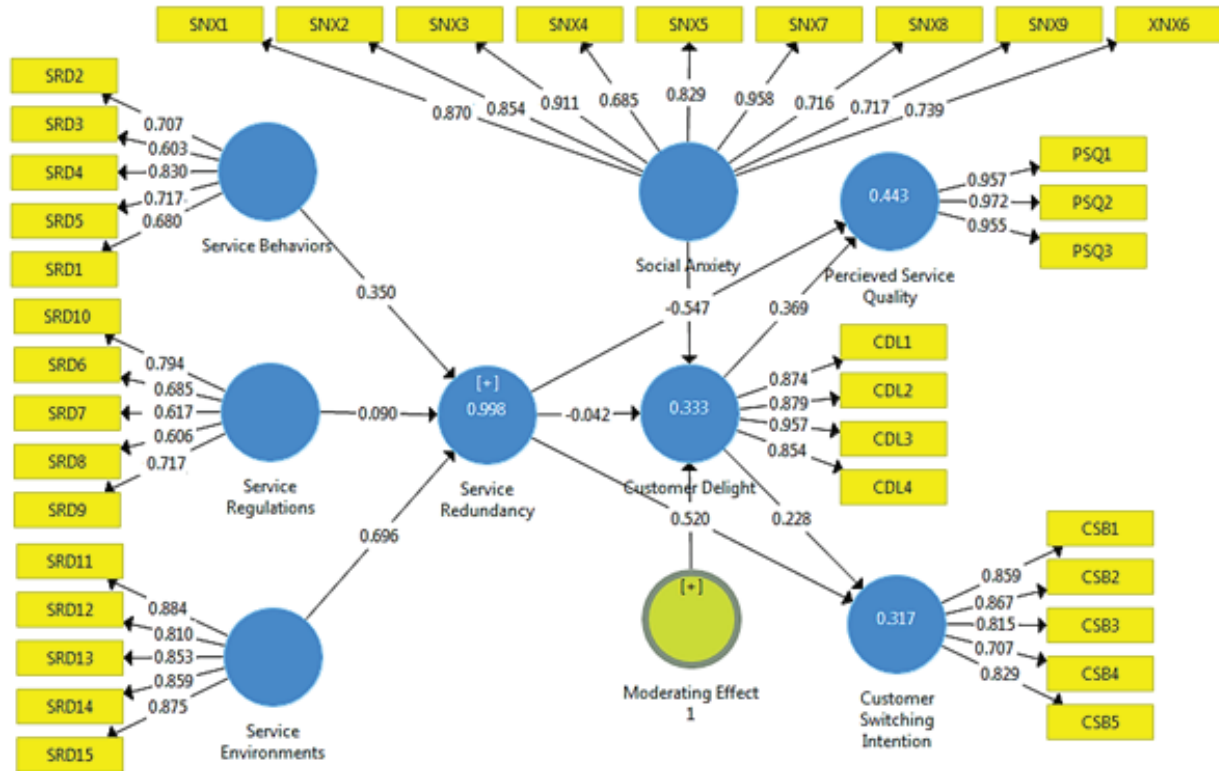
Table 2 shows how well the measures describe certain other variables in a discriminant manner. A recent assessment of the measures created by Fornell and Larcker (1981) indicates, according to Henseler et al. (2015), that it is unlikely that they would reveal a discriminant validity defect in typical study populations. Therefore, Henseler et al. (2015) developed a unique technique to evaluate discriminant validity based on the multitrait-multimethod matrix: the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations. However, discriminant validity was confirmed by the use of this unique approach; the results are displayed in table 3. Discriminant validity issues arise when the heterotrait-monotrait value is more than 0.85 (Kock, 2022). Also table (4) shows that normalcy of data by expressing the skewness and kurtosis as well.

Table 2: **Discriminant validity - Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)**

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Service Behaviors	**(0.781)**						
2. Service Regulations	0.568	**(0.889)**					
3. Service Environments	0.356	0.561	**(0.902)**				
4. Customer Delight	0.376	0.595	0.657	**(0.822)**			
5. Perceived Service Quality	0.310	0.567	0.743	0.664	**(0.834)**		
6. Customer Switching Behavior	0.519	0.597	0.791	0.642	0.833	**(0.843)**	
7. Social Anxiety	0.313	0.551	0.575	0.571	0.406	0.644	**(0.874)**

Note. HTMT ratios are good if < 0.90, best if < 0.85.

Note. Values on the diagonal (bold) are square root of the average variance extracted.

Table 3: **Fornell-Larcker criterion**

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Service Behaviors	0.692						
2. Service Regulations	0.368	0.570					
3. Service Environments	0.397	0.588	0.902				
4. Customer Delight	0.387	0.612	0.596	0.823			
5. Perceived Service Quality	0.323	0.596	0.674	0.811	0.835		
6. Customer Switching Behavior	0.486	0.585	0.667	0.558	0.559	0.843	
7. Social Anxiety	0.338	0.567	0.841	0.512	0.632	0.648	0.874

Table 4: **Confirmatory factor analysis**

Construct	Mean	SD	Loadings	P-value	Skewness	Kurtosis
Service Redundancy (SRD)						
Service Behaviors						
SRD1.Service providers provide unnecessary lengthy explanations.	3.899	1.081	0.816	<0.001	-1.119	0.905
SRD2.Service providers expend an unnecessary amount of effort.	3.902	0.991	0.859	<0.001	-0.964	0.770
SRD3.The service department offers an excessive number of options.	4.170	0.931	0.853	<0.001	-1.322	1.846
Service Regulations						
SRD6.Service providers frequently ask customers about their needs.	3.143	1.396	0.735	<0.001	-0.270	-1.195
SRD7.Service providers offer an excessive number of reminders.	3.205	1.344	0.789	<0.001	-0.313	-1.057
SRD8.Service providers provide an excessive amount of information.	3.792	1.074	0.946	<0.001	-0.808	0.212
SRD9.Service providers repeatedly ask for customers' personal information.	3.753	1.203	0.847	<0.001	-0.864	-0.073
SRD10.Service providers frequently promote goods or services.	3.753	1.203	0.847	<0.001	-0.864	-0.073
Service Environments						
SRD11.The landscaping and decorations are excessively complicated.	3.893	1.086	0.876	<0.001	-1.075	0.797
SRD12.Service providers offer outdated services or equipment.	3.926	1.037	0.898	<0.001	-0.961	0.530
SRD13.Service providers offer services or equipment that is infrequently used.	3.753	1.203	0.847	<0.001	-0.864	-0.073
SRD14.Service providers offer an unnecessary number of technologies	3.753	1.203	0.847	<0.001	-0.864	-0.073
SRD15.The circulation design is excessively complicated.	3.753	1.203	0.847	<0.001	-0.864	-0.073
Customer Delight (CDL)						
CDL1.This hotel made me feel delighted	3.911	1.098	0.902	<0.001	-1.068	0.667
CDL2.This hotel made me feel special	3.932	1.093	0.903	<0.001	-1.072	0.680
CDL3.This hotel made me feel comfortable	4.027	0.971	0.902	<0.001	-1.132	1.231
CDL4.This hotel made me feel valuable	3.142	0.071	0.801	<0.001	-1.152	1.093
Perceived Service Quality (PSQ)						

PSQ1.This hotel delivered excellent service	3.896	1.031	0.820	<0.001	-0.951	0.595
PSQ2.The service of this hotel is high quality	4.080	0.930	0.914	<0.001	-1.185	1.619
PSQ3.This hotel provided superior service in every way	4.065	0.924	0.911	<0.001	-1.133	1.453
Customer Switching Behavior (CSB)						
CSB1.I have often considered changing my current hotel	3.973	1.056	0.927	<0.001	-1.149	0.996
CSB2.I am likely to switch from my current hotel to one that offers better services	4.006	1.086	0.938	<0.001	-1.175	0.914
CSB3.It would be hard switching to another hotel.	3.753	1.203	0.847	<0.001	-0.864	-0.073
CSB4.I feel a connection to this hotel	3.753	1.203	0.847	<0.001	-0.864	-0.073
CSB5.If I switch to a new hotel, I would miss some of the benefits from this hotel	3.753	1.203	0.847	<0.001	-0.864	-0.073
Social Anxiety (SNX)						
SNX1.I am worried people will think my behavior abnormal	3.807	1.064	0.711	<0.001	-1.007	0.576
SNX2.I feel self-conscious if I must enter a room	3.920	0.965	0.742	<0.001	-0.976	1.004
SNX3.I get nervous if I must speak with someone in authority	3.899	0.971	0.738	<0.001	-0.934	0.788
SNX4.I have difficulty talking to members of the opposite sex	3.235	1.275	0.864	<0.001	-0.387	-0.889
SNX5.I won't know what to say in social situations	3.110	1.326	0.839	<0.001	-0.150	-1.160
SNX6.I fear I may blush when I am with others	3.699	1.135	0.801	<0.001	-0.826	-0.024
SNX7.I have difficulty making eye contact with others	3.994	0.957	0.800	<0.001	-1.214	1.674
SNX8.I become tense if I must talk about myself or my feelings	4.077	0.916	0.750	<0.001	-0.971	0.795
SNX9.I worry I'll lose control of myself in front of other people	3.967	0.995	0.704	<0.001	-1.063	1.032

3.3. Hypotheses Testing and Discussion

Using SmartPLS, the researchers employed a structural equation modeling approach. As shown in table 5, regarding the first hypothesis, The findings rejected the acceptance of this hypothesis as it recorded that there was no relationship between service redundancy and customer delight as proposed through H1 is rejected (β = -.38 ; sig > 0.01), Hence, As a result, there was no influence of service redundancy on customer delight. The results confirmed that offering additional services might not enhance client happiness or the sense of service quality (Lin et al., 2023). Furthermore, Awasthi and Kumar (2022) and Yen et al. (2023) recommend that management staff in the hotel business consider cutting out duplicate services if doing so will reduce operating costs and increase service efficacy. According to Lang et al. (2022); Kim et al. (2022) ;Kim et al. (2023) customers usually see excessive treatment as unexpected, improper, and unnecessary. In addition, decision-making is also hampered when it crosses this threshold due to information overload (Harkison, 2022). According to Nguyen and Malik (2022), such services may be viewed as superfluous and disappointing.

Contrarily, Handarkho et al. (2023) and Yen et al. (2023) noted that when many administrative departments provide the same service, duplicate service delivery in administrative management arises, wasting administrative resources. In addition, customers are more likely to view staff members favorably when they appear to be going above and beyond by providing repeated and unnecessary information or content that is above and beyond what the client requires (Lee & Kim, 2022). It can be advantageous to provide excessive service when clients perceive staff members as going above and beyond (Leong et al., 2022). According to Wu et al. (2021), gaining customer satisfaction may not be enough; instead, "customer delight" must be attained. Moreover, restaurant owners need to provide high-quality services that go above and beyond what patrons expect in order to delight those (Azadegan et al., 2021). Kim et al. (2022) made the argument that lowering consumers' effort—the amount of labor they have to put in to get their problems solved is what fosters customer loyalty. In addition, taking purposeful action based on this information can contribute to better customer service, lower customer service costs, and lower customer attrition (Azadegan et al., 2021).

Table 5: **Hypothesis-testing summary**

| NO | Hypothesis | Beta | t | P-value | Decision | f² | Confidence intervals | |
							2.5%	97.5%
H1	SRD → CDL	-0.380	3.249	0.200	Rejected	0.318	-0.004	0.183
H2	SRD * SNX → CDL	0.164	3.791	0.104	Rejected	0.421	0.061	0.249

* Moderation interaction, *P*<0.001, SRD= service redundancy, CDL= customer delight, SNX= social anxiety

Regarding the second hypothesis (the moderator analysis), the researchers used the product indicator approach by adding the interaction terms to the equation (Table 5). The findings rejected the acceptance of this hypothesis as it recorded that there was no influence for (Social anxiety as a moderator) in relationship between service redundancy and customer delight as proposed through H2 is rejected (β = .16 ; sig > 0.001), Hence, the results confirmed that Social anxiety had not influence on the relationship between service redundancy and customer delight

Moreover, the researchers suggest negative exchanges lead a customer switching (Lambe et al., 2001), ultimately increasing commitment to the customer participation behavior (Hakansson et al., 1982). However, if an alternative partner can provide greater benefits, the disadvantaged partner will terminate the relationship and switch to a new partner. These outcomes address to Bigalke and Carter (2021), this type of anxiety is caused by the customer's personality, which has a phobic attitude towards trying new things and is a psychological trait. Kim et al. (2023) mentioned that anxiety of this kind may be the primary cause of physiological illnesses that impair an individual's ability to interact with others. High levels of social anxiety may also affect how satisfied and inclined customers are to switch, according to Fredrick and Luebbe (2020). Furthermore, Redundancy in services causes customers to become confused and dissatisfied, which in turn results in switching behavior (Tsaur and Yen, 2019). This result is also consistent with Yen et al. (2023), who believed that service redundancy negatively influences customer delight.

Regarding the third hypothesis, the researchers used the mediator analysis; there is a strong positive correlation between service redundancy, perceived service quality, and customer switching behavior. This link is mediated by customer delight (Table 6). The customer delight is a significant mediator between service redundancy and perceived service quality, as proposed through H3a (β =.54, sig < 0.001). Hence, the results confirmed that the customer delight is a significant mediator between service redundancy and perceived service quality. The mediating role of customer delight in the suggested mediating effect was examined using a computational tool evaluating mediation simultaneously in order to verify the mediation (Hayes, 2018). Through the mediator and at various moderator values, mediation infers the significance of the indirect influence between the predictor and outcome components (Hayes, 2018). Zero indicates that the result is significant because it does not lie between the two numbers. The researchers also used mediator analysis. This indicated that the indirect effect of service redundancy on perceived service quality via customer delight was also found to be significant. This important side effect was calculated with Synopsis of mediation test. (Indirect effect 0.166, direct effect 0.163, total effect 0.329, p < 0.001), thus supporting Hypothesis H3a. This report reported that in the context of a service redundancy, the indirect effect of service redundancy and perceived quality, with customer delight mediating the effect, is higher than the direct effect of service redundancy and perceived service quality.

Table 6: **Synopsis of mediation results**

| NO | Hypothesis | Direct Effect | Indirect Effect | t | P-value | Decision | f² | Confidence intervals | | Outcome |
								2.5%	97.5%	
H3a	SRD → CDL → PSQ	0.163	0.166	4.721	0.000	Supported	0.060	0.103	0.339	Partial mediation
H3b	SRD → CDL → CSB	0.597	0.287	6.720	0.000	Supported	0.179	0.208	0.376	Partial mediation

SRD= service redundancy, CDL = customer delight, CSB = customer switching behavior

As shown by H3b, customer delight serves as a key mediator between service redundancy and consumer switching behavior (β = .52, sig < 0.001) (Table 6). Hence, the findings verified that a significant mediator between service redundancy and customer switching behavior is customer delight. An analysis of the mediating effect of customer delight in the predicted mediating effect was done using Synopsis of mediation test (Hayes, 2018). Mediation infers the significance of the indirect influence between the predictor and outcome components through the mediator at different moderator levels (Hayes, 2018). Zero not falling between the two values demonstrates the significance of the result. In addition, the researchers used the mediator analysis. The results indicated that the indirect effect of service redundancy on customer switching behavior via customer delight was also found to be significant. This important side effect was calculated with Synopsis of mediation test (indirect effect -0.287, direct effect -0.597, total effect .884, p < 0.001), thus supporting Hypothesis H3b. According to this study, there is a lower indirect relationship between service redundancy and customer switching behavior in the setting of a service redundancy than there is a direct relationship between service redundancy and customer switching behavior. This relationship is mediated by customer delight.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to find out how customer delight mediated the relationship between service redundancy and organizational outcomes such as customer switching behavior and perceived service quality. To attain this goal, questionnaires from five-star hotels in Egypt were used to collect data for the study. This study presents the causes, effects, and mediation role of customer delight on organizational outcomes of service redundancy. In this investigation, three hypotheses in all were put forth. Partially supported hypotheses are based on empirical facts. The results of this study show that while service redundancy positively promotes customer switching intention, it negatively influences perceived service quality.

Theoretical Implications

The study examined the impact of service redundancy on organizational outcomes, including customer switching behavior and perceived service quality (Lin et al., 2023). It found a significant relationship between organizational outcomes and service redundancy, with customer delight acting as a mediator (Harkison, 2022). However, service redundancy did not affect customer delight (Lang et al., 2022). The study suggests that offering additional services may not improve client satisfaction or service quality. It also suggests that management should consider cutting out duplicate services to reduce costs and improve service efficacy. The study also suggests that excessive treatment can be perceived as unnecessary and superfluous (Yen et al., 2023).

The results of this research confirm that service redundancy positively influences customer switching intentions. Hence, the service redundancy caused or favorably influenced customer switching behavior while lowering perceived service quality. Also, customers eventually transfer to other service providers as a result of service redundancy, which decreases customer loyalty. Customers experience redundant behavior and services in hotels that fall short of their expectations, which results in their negative perception of the service provider (Lazarus, 1991) and causes them to switch behaviors (Kim and park, 2019). According to Mosavi et al. (2018), client switching behavior and customer happiness are connected. Redundancy in services causes customers to become confused and dissatisfied, which in turn results in switching behavior (Tsaur and Yen, 2019). In addition, there was no influence for (Social anxiety as a moderator) in relationship between service redundancy and customer delight. This form of anxiety, according to Bigalke and Carter (2021), is brought on by the client's psychological feature of having a fear of trying new things. According to Fredrick and Luebbe (2020), high levels of social anxiety may also have an impact on how satisfied and likely customers are to switch. Moreover, redundancy in services leads to customer confusion and dissatisfaction, which encourages customers to switch providers (Tsaur and Yen, 2019).

Customer switching intention is defined as the confirmed possibility of switching to a new service provider from your current one. This result is also consistent with Padela (2023) who documented that service redundancy suggests positive consequences for customer switching intentions. Customer switching behavior was heavily influenced by service redundancy. Switching behavior is also an important idea in business marketing since organizations may use it to re-evaluate their strengths and flaws, as well as to attract new clients (Njite et al., 2008).

Managerial Implications

The study's findings indicate that hotel management should pay particular attention to personnel service redundancy. To improve customer satisfaction, managers should apply tactics that reduce redundancy, such as optimising staff allocation, educating employees to coordinate their activities efficiently, and leveraging technology to speed customer service procedures. Despite the surprising discovery that social anxiety does not modify the association between service redundancy and customer happiness, hotel managers should continue to focus on employee service redundancy. They should be willing to monitor and collect feedback on a continuous basis, as well as alter policies and procedures to meet client demands and expectations. The study confirms the significance of customer delight in shaping perceived service quality and customer switching behaviour. As a result, management should prioritise providing enjoyable experiences for clients. This can be accomplished by personalising encounters, anticipating client needs, and exceeding expectations. Hotels that focus on customer happiness can improve consumers' perceptions of service quality and increase loyalty, lowering customer switching behaviour.

The study shows that customer delight has a direct impact on perceived service quality. As a result, hotel management can invest in customer-centric training programmes, empower personnel to go above and beyond, and create feedback mechanisms to constantly evaluate and improve service quality. Hotels may improve client satisfaction and their reputation by constantly providing high-quality service. Furthermore, hotel management should prioritise increasing staff engagement. Employees that are engaged are more likely to deliver customised and attentive service, which improves customer satisfaction. Managers should also engage in training programmes that improve employees' interpersonal skills, provide possibilities for advancement and recognition, and create a positive work atmosphere. Hotels may foster employee engagement to establish a positive service culture that adds to client satisfaction and perceived service quality.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study recognized a number of limitations, one of which was the use of a cross-sectional research methodology to collect data during the study period at a single point in time. As a result, it's possible that this will miss developmental problems and/or causal relationships between relevant variables. A long-term investigation might be beneficial. Furthermore, the demographic questioned is restricted to customers of five-star hotels. The research was ultimately restricted to Egypt's 5-star hotels that belonged to chains. Other hotel categories weren't included in this analysis. The mediating role of customer delight and moderating role of social anxiety were investigated in this study by the researchers. Therefore, additional studies utilizing other mediators and moderators, such as customer loyalty, customer happiness, and organizational support, could be carried out. These diverse mediators or moderators may yield distinct outcomes while also underscoring the crucial function of each one of them. Additionally, since the researchers examined the mediating role of customer delight in this study, additional research involving other mediators, such as organizational reassurance and customer personality, might be undertaken.

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