

**Hotel Guest Complaint Behaviors and Their Relationship to Motives, Personality Traits,
and Emotional Intelligence**

by

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Abstract

Since a service provider's response to failures can either reinforce customer relationships or exacerbate the negative effects of the failure, it is imperative to understand how to respond customers' complaints based on interpersonal characteristics. In a service setting, different personality traits and emotions may affect how people express their feelings when they are dissatisfied. This study examines the relationships between hotel guests' complaint motives, complaint behaviors, personality traits, and emotional intelligence. This empirical study applied a quantitative research method to survey a sample of hotel guests in the online environment. Findings in this study indicate that hotel guests with different level of personality traits and emotional intelligence do have different complaint motives and behavior intentions. Theoretical, managerial implications, and recommendations for future research are discussed.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
List of Tables	vii
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Background	1
Statement of Problem	7
Study Objectives	7
Research Questions.....	8
Purpose and Significance of the Study	9
Definition of Terms.....	10
Study Limitations.....	12
Summary.....	13
Chapter 2. Literature Review	14
Introduction.....	14
The Importance of Service Recovery	14
Complaint Motives.....	16
Complaint Behaviors	22
Personality Traits	33
Emotional Intelligence	37

Prior Experience and Future Intention	39
Chapter 3. Research Design and Methodology	41
Introduction.....	41
Research Questions and Hypotheses	41
Research Design.....	45
Sampling and Data Collection Procedures	54
Quantitative Data Analysis Techniques.....	55
Chapter 4. Results	58
Introduction.....	58
Sample Characteristics.....	58
Descriptive Statistics for Key Variables	61
Research Question 1	63
Research Question 2	65
Research Question 3	67
Research Question 4	71
Research Question 5	73
Research Question 6	74
Research Question 7	76
Research Question 8	78

Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusion	80
Introduction.....	80
Research Question 1	80
Research Question 2	82
Research Question 3	83
Research Question 4	85
Research Question 5	86
Research Question 6	88
Research Question 7	88
Research Question 8	89
Implications	90
Limitations and Future Research	93
References	96
Appendix A Online Survey Instrument	112
Appendix B Coding Instructions	124

List of Tables

Table 2.1	19
Table 2.2	28
Table 3.1	48
Table 3.2	50
Table 3.3	51
Table 3.4	53
Table 3.5	53
Table 3.6	57
Table 4.1	60
Table 4.2	61
Table 4.3	62
Table 4.4	63
Table 4.5	64
Table 4.6	66
Table 4.7	69
Table 4.8	70
Table 4.9	72
Table 4.10	75
Table 4.11	77

Table 4.12 79

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Background

Given the competitiveness and complexity of the contemporary service sector, there is a growing interest in understanding how customers evaluate their service experiences. In particular, scholars and marketing practitioners have focused attention on the consequences of negative critical incidents and the related subject of customer complaint behavior (Hocutt et al., 2006; Morrisson and Huppertz, 2010). In 2000, The Economist reported that the number of customer complaints was rising sharply. In 2008, only a fraction of complainants received a response, and more than 70% of complainants were unsatisfied with the way that companies handled problems (Michel and Meuter, 2008). Fortunately, in 2014, based on Ricci's study, for the complainants, 70% of them proposed that, if their complaints were solved effectively, they would continue shopping with that company (Ricci, 2014). Therefore, it makes sense for service providers to spend time and energy on complaint recovery (Lewis and Spyropoulos, 2001). Also, in the hospitality industry, only with full knowledge of different types of complaints, can hoteliers deal with complaints in a better way and minimize the negative impacts.

When actual service quality is below expectation, customers show different complaint behaviors for expressing their dissatisfaction (Namkung et al., 2011). Since the retailers cannot eliminate customer complaints, the only thing they can do is to effectively respond to them. This response, termed service recovery, is defined as the process by which the firm attempts to rectify a service or product related failure (Kelley and Davis, 1994; Tronvoll, 2010).

As customer complaint becomes a hot topic of worldwide concern, some researchers found out that a retailer's response to failures can either reinforce customer relationships (Blodgett, Hill and Tax, 1997; Smith, Bolton and Wagner, 1999; Bowen, and Johnston, 2009) or exacerbate the negative effects of the failure (Berry, 2014; Komunda, 2012; Hoffman, Kelley and Rotalsky, 1995; Kelley, Hoffman and Davis, 1993). In fact, some asserted that it was often the ways retailers handled a failure, rather than the failure itself, that caused dissatisfaction (Komunda, 2012; Hoffman et al., 1995; Kelley et al., 1993). Recoveries are critical because a poor recovery effort may dissolve the buyer-seller relationship and push customers to purchase from elsewhere (Kim 2010; Panther and Farquhar, 2004; Yuksel et al., 2006). Such customer turnover can be costly, especially given that it costs more to win new customers than it does to retain current ones (Chuang, 2012; Heineke and Davis, 2007; Schneider, White and Paul, 1998; Blattberg and Deighton, 1996; Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). In order to make profits and gain future cash flow from the new customers, these costly newcomers should be retained and nurtured in a relatively long term (Liu and McClure, 2001; Verhoef et al., 2013). On the other hand, losing customers not only causes the loss of future cash flow but also harm companies' future reputations in the market (Evanschitzky et al., 2012). Dissatisfied customers are more likely to show negative feelings about their poor consumption experience than satisfied customers (Richins, 1983; Karatepe and Ekiz, 2004; Tronvoll, 2010); over time, the companies will lose more loyal customers and are more difficult to win and retain newcomers.

Customer complaint behavior phenomenon has been conceptualized "as a set of multiple (behavioral and non-behavioral) responses, some or all of which are triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode" (Singh, 1988, p.93) The behavioral responses are the

actions that are intended to show dissatisfaction (Landon Jr, 1980), however, non-behavioral responses means no action is taken. With factor analysis, Singh (1988) classified customers' action complaint behaviors into three categories: voice responses, private responses, and third-party responses. Voice responses occur when the objects of the complaint are external to the customers' social circle and they directly express dissatisfaction (e.g. discussing the problem with manager or other employee of the company). The objects of private responses are not external to the customers' social circle and the responses are not directly related to dissatisfied consumption experience (e.g. negative word-of-mouth communication with friends and relatives). Third-party responses are the responses in which the objects are external to the customers' social circle, but not directly involved in the dissatisfying exchange (e.g. reporting the problem(s) to a consumer agency). Many related studies applied this classification method (e.g. Hirschman, 1970; Maute and Forrester Jr, 1993; Ping Jr, 1993; Oliver, 1997) and found it would be better for a company to encourage their customers to complain through voice responses and avoid private responses and third-party responses (Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1987). Even though these research studies have already categorized complaint forms, there is less research on the hotel guests' complaint behaviors in a hospitality setting. It is still not known whether hotel guests engage in voice responses, private responses, and third-party responses in the same ways as customers in the retail industry when they encounter bad service. Therefore, the first objective of this study is to test hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors in a hospitality setting.

Complaint Motives

Based on Lewis's (1983) and Heung and Lam's (2003) studies, the construct measuring complaint motives was developed. The complaint motive variables include "seeking compensation", "seeking redress", "seeking apology", "requesting corrective action", "asking for

explanation”, and “expressing emotional anger.”

However, the studies focused on complaint motives in hospitality industry are very limited. The hotel guests’ goals and what they really want need to gain more attention of hoteliers and scholars. Hotel managements cannot develop effective policies to handle their guests’ dissatisfaction until they understand what motivates their hotel guests to show their dissatisfaction in different ways (Ngai et al., 2007). Therefore, the second objective of this study is to test the relationship between complaint motives and complaint behaviors.

Complaint Behavior

In the hospitality industry, due to the high level of interaction between service provider and service consumer, the poor quality of the service and followed various complaints cannot be avoided completely (Sánchez-García and Currás-pérez, 2011; Jahandideh, 2014). When service failure occurs, different customers choose to express their dissatisfaction through different ways (Ngai et al., 2007). For example, Western customers prefer to complain directly to the service providers (Sharma et al., 2010), while Asian customers prefer sharing their bad experiences with friends and families (Jahandideh, 2014). Individuals with a dominant independent self-construal are more likely to complain through a direct way, show high likelihood to stop patronizing that company (Wei et al., 2012), and demonstrate different complaint behaviors than their co-consumption others (Laiwani and Shavitt, 2009). The customers who are older, well educated, and have higher incomes tend to complain through private ways (Sujithamrak and Lam, 2005). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that multifarious backgrounds, interpersonal relationships, and situational factors could have impact on complaint behavior.

Personality

Personality traits were thought to have an influence on human behaviors (Weiss and Adler, 1990), the reactions evoked from others, and the tactics used to influence the circumstances (Buss, 1987). The Big Five Personality Inventory is a widely used personality assessment in academic studies comprised of: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness.

Individuals with different personalities may have different ways to express their feelings. For example, in the service literature, the customers who are extraverted and open complain for relieving anger and frustration (Huang and Chuang, 2008), and perceive that they will get a favorable outcome from complaints (Kirkcaldy et al., 1994). The individuals with higher level of extraversion show higher likelihood to complain through action channels instead of delayed channels (Berry, et al., 2014). Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that personality might be one of the factors that affect hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors. In other words, do different personality traits have an effect on hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors? As no prior research study examined these relationships, the third objective of this study is to find out the relationships between hotel guests' personality traits, complaint motives, and complaint behaviors.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotion is a vital factor for making decisions (Gohm and Clore, 2002; Schwarz and Clore, 1996) and interacting with others (Gohm, 2003). Emotion and thought can be combined together as emotional intelligence, which is an individual's ability to identify and control one's emotion (Tsarenko and Tojib, 2012). The emotional intelligence is an important psychological phenomenon that plays a role in how customers make complaints. In the early 1990s, emotional intelligence

appeared as “a term to reflect a type of intelligence that involved the ability to process emotional information” (Kidwell, 2004, p.12). In 1997, Mayer et al. proposed a model and regarded emotional intelligence as a pyramid with four basic skills: ability to “(1) perceive, appraise, and express emotions accurately, (2) access and/or generate feelings that facilitate thought, (3) understand emotions and emotional knowledge, (4) regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer and Salovey, 2001, p.5).

In the context of airline travel, air passengers who have a higher level of emotional intelligence tend to solve the problem through direct ways (Gabbott, 2011). Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that emotional intelligence might also be one of the factors that affect hotel guests’ complaint behaviors and complaint motives in a hospitality setting. However, fewer studies focused on testing the relationships between hotel guests’ emotional intelligence and complaint behaviors and complaint motives. Therefore, in order to fill this gap, the fourth objective of this study is to focus on hotel guests’ complaint behaviors and complaint motives based on the level of their emotional intelligence.

Past Experience

Customers’ prior consumption experiences also have an impact on their expectation and satisfaction (Kim, 2010). Some studies found that the customers who have satisfied prior consumption experience with the service provider are more lenient towards the service failure (Mattila, 2004). However, the loyal customers who had delightful and impressive past consumption experiences may find it easier to perceive losses from the service failure (Bolton, 1998) and might seek revenge for the harm that they experienced (Grégoire and Fisher, 2008). Therefore, the fifth objective of this current study is to find out the relationship between hotel guests’ past complaint experience and their future complaint behavioral intentions.

Statement of Problem

Customer complaint behaviors are currently a significant concern in the service industry. Although many academic and industry articles noted this, major gaps still exist in the literature regarding customers' complaint motives and complaint behaviors, including a lack of research (1) focuses on complaint motives and complaint behaviors in a setting of hospitality setting, (2) tests the relationship between complaint motives and complaint behaviors in the hospitality industry, (3) links the relationship between personality and hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors, (4) combines emotional intelligence with hotel guests' motives to complain and behavioral responses toward the hotel, and (5) examines the relationship between hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and future behavioral intentions.

Study Objectives

In an attempt to address the aforementioned gaps in the literature, the goals and objectives of this study are listed in the following paragraphs.

1. To find out the most common types of complaint motives and complaint behaviors in the hospitality industry.
2. To test the relationships between complaint motives and complaint behaviors in the hospitality industry.
3. To examine the relationships between personality traits and hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors.
4. To determine if significant relationships exist between the level of emotional intelligence and hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors.

5. To assess the relationships between hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and future behavioral intentions.

Research Questions

High quality service has been regarded as the core advantage for service industry (Gabbott, 2010). With the competitiveness and complexity of the contemporary service sector and the challenging economic environment, it is compelling to understanding how hotel guests evaluate the service experience particularly negative critical incidents. It is quite possible that there are personal factors at play that, if better understood, would result in more effective service resolutions. In this study, personal factors such as personality and emotional intelligence are being proposed as having a strong relationship with the manner in which hotel guests complain in a hospitality setting. Therefore, to guide this study, the following research questions were developed:

1. When dissatisfied, what motivates hotel guests to complain?
2. When dissatisfied, what is the most common type of complaint behavior for hotel guests?
3. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors?
4. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' personality traits and complaint motives?
5. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' personality traits and complaint behaviors?
6. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and complaint motives?
7. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence

and complaint behaviors?

8. If there is another bad hotel service experience in the future, what is the relationship between hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and their future complaint behavior intentions?

Purpose and Significance of the Study

Given the increased interest in personal factors and behavioral intentions among customers in service industries (Miller et al., 2009), it is necessary to rely on techniques that can be used for predicting and handling service failure successfully. Better understanding of the reasons and the ways hotel guests complain when they meet poor hotel service would help hotel managers develop effective hotel guests' management guidelines. One may doubt how to detect hotel guests' personality traits and emotional intelligence when serving them; it may be difficult if not impossible, however, hotel employees can record every complaint occurring each day in the historical hotel guest profile, detect psychological traits of customers and differentiate them based on their responses to service failure. For the worldwide chain hotels, the hotel guest profile can be shared with the hotel managers in the same hotel brand all over the world. If a guest stays in any chain hotels that he or she stayed before, according to the hotel guest profile, employees can know more about his or her characteristics and the way to effectively and properly handle service failure in the situation of service failure.

On the other hand, this study has theoretical implications. It highlights the role of hotel guests' intrinsic characteristics, their personality traits and emotional intelligence, in determining their responses and behaviors under the circumstances of service failure. Although previous studies have demonstrated the role of an individual's psychological resources in shaping his or her

behaviors in occupational and recreational situations, limited research focused on the effect of a hotel guest's psychological characteristics on his or her complaint motives and complaint behaviors. This study fills this gap by taking a customer-centric approach and accentuating the effect of hotel guests' personality traits and emotional intelligence on their complaint motives and complaint behaviors toward service failures in a consumption context. In accomplishing this research, more data and literature will be available within the broader scope of willingness to complain, which improves the understanding of this area and encourage further research.

Definition of Terms

Service Failure

Service failures were defined as situations in which customers feel dissatisfied when perceived performance they have received is worse than their expectation (Bell and Zemke, 1987).

Customer Complaint Behavior

Consumer complaint behavior, which involves a negative response on the part of the consumer, is an important issue for marketers (Morganosky and Buckley, 1987). Jacoby and Jaccard (1981) defined consumer complaint behavior as "actions taken by an individual which involves communicating something negative regarding a product or service to either the firm manufacturing or marketing that product or service, or to some third-party organizational entity" (Jacoby and Jaccard, 1981, p.6). In this study, complaint behaviors toward a hotel include three categories, which are (1) voice responses, (2) private responses, and (3) third-party responses.

- **Voice Responses**

Voice responses occur "when the objects of the complaints are external to the customers' social circle and direct express dissatisfaction" (Singh, 1988; Liu and McClure, 2001, p.56).

- **Private Responses**

Private responses “are the responses in which the objects are not external to the customers’ social circle and are not direct express dissatisfaction” (Singh, 1988; Liu and McClure, 2001, p. 56).

- **Third-party Responses**

In third-party responses, “the objects are external to the customers’ social circle but not directly involved in the dissatisfying exchange” (Singh, 1988; Liu and McClure, 2001, p.56).

Complaint Motive

Motive refers to the reasons and goals that cause a series of action (Ryan, 2000). According to previous research, motives to complain in a hotel appear to be of a wide variety (Lewis, 1983; Hueng and Law, 2003). Based on Hueng’s study (2003), the most common types of complaint motives are to “seek corrective actions”, “ask for an explanation”, and “express emotional anger.”

Behavioral Intention

Behavioral intention is the perceived likelihood that an individual will perform a given task in the future (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Behavioral intention reflects how willing a person is to try a task and how great is their determination to accomplish it (Ajzen, 1991).

Personality

Personality “refers to relatively consistent patterns of thinking, feeling, and is behaving” (Jones, Miller, and Lynam, 2011, p.329). It is widely accepted that personality traits have influence on human behaviors (Chen and Kao, 2014; Weiss and Adler, 1990, Correa et al., 2010; Barrick and Mount, 1991), the reactions they evoke from others, and the tactics they use to influence their environment (Buss, 1987). In this study, based on the Big Five Personality assessment, there are

five different personality traits, which are Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness.

Emotional Intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence is relatively new but is a psychological phenomenon that plays an important role in how customers deal with complaints. Emotional intelligence was conceptualized as a pyramid with four basic skills: the ability to “1) perceive, appraise, and express emotions accurately, 2) access and/or generate feelings that facilitate thought, 3) understand emotions and emotional knowledge, 4) regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Salovey, 1997, p.5).

Study Limitations

One limitation of this study was when testing future hotel guests’ complaint behaviors, it was tested by direct questions such as “I would likely,” with Likert Scale response choices to measure the strength of compliant behaviors and motives. However, if another bad hotel service experience happens in the future, the choices they made on the questionnaire may be different than what they actually do. Another limitation to this study is many other factors that may indirectly affect hotel guests’ complaint behaviors. Even though two hotel guests have the similar personality traits and emotional intelligence, it does not mean that they will show their dissatisfaction toward a hotel in an exactly the same way. Also, seven complaint motives were too many for the researcher to run a regression. In order to better understand hotel guests’ complaint motives and complaint behaviors, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and correlation should be applied for classifying these seven complaint motives into some groups. For example, Lewis (1983) suggested that customers

complain because they want monetary compensation (complimentary meal/room) or altruism (warning other consumers stop patronize that company).

Summary

In conclusion, this chapter has provided background information of hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors. Furthermore, it also pointed out that there are personal factors, such as personality traits and emotional intelligence, that have a strong relationship with the manner in which hotel guests complain in a hospitality setting. Specific research questions have been identified, along with the objectives and significance of this study. Definitions of each term and study limitations are also provided at the end of this chapter.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of various sources of literature related to hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors. Additionally, this chapter also reviews relevant literature about the effects personality traits and emotional intelligence, on an individual's behaviors. This chapter first discusses the importance of the service recovery. Next, the chapter reviews the common complaint motive variables and the different patterns of responses to dissatisfaction. Then, it explains how the questionnaire was built based on the items gathered from published literature.

The Importance of Service Recovery

Given that the importance of service quality was recognized recently, the effective handling of poor service attracts more scholars and practitioners (Hocutt et al., 2006; Morrisson and Huppertz, 2010; Komunda and Osarenkhoe, 2012). Service failures were defined as situations in which customers feel dissatisfied when actual performances that they have received are worse than their expectations (Bell and Zemke, 1987). Customer complaints are accompanied by service failures and cannot be avoided completely even in the luxury hospitality organizations (Kim, 2010; Choi and Mattila, 2008). Since customers may feel dissatisfied because of a single failure, even it is just a small mistake, it is necessary for service providers to recover dissatisfied customers through a series of actions that can please them (Chuang et al., 2012).

Prior research pointed out only proper recovery handling can reverse customers' impressions from negative to positive; however, only less than half businesses know how to deal with the problem appropriately (Harris et al., 2006; N'Goala, 2007). Service failure is regarded as one determining factor that influences customers' behaviors, especially complaint behaviors, such as switching service providers, which is the worst-case scenario that businesses do not wish to see (Roos, 1999). In other words, it would seriously harm and threaten seller-buyer relationship in the long-term prospects if service providers fail to manage service recovery properly (Michel and Meuter, 2008; Seawright et al., 2008). However, N'Goala (2007) found out that proper solutions have profound effect on customers and can effectively prevent them from switching services to other service providers.

The effective recovery not only has a significant positive influence on customer satisfaction, customer retention rates, and bottom-line preference, but also can significantly reduce the damage caused by negative word-of-mouth (Morrisson and Huppertz, 2010), although customers were dissatisfied with the services or the products (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2003; Conlon and Murray, 1996). Appropriate recoveries are so important for companies because a good handling may rebuild the relationship between sellers and buyers and therefore companies can maintain customers.

Even though both attracting new customers and retaining current ones are all the core purpose for a good marketing department, when looking at the costly customer turnover, it costs more to win new customers than it does to retain current ones (Chuang, 2012; Hart, Heineke and Davis, 2007). Therefore, it is economically feasible to make more effort on retaining existing customers.

In the hospitality industry, since hotel service staff would engage more deeply and frequently with hotel guests, it is more important for hoteliers to understand hotel guests' complaint motives, complaint behavior, and the effective handling methods. Furthermore, hoteliers can also improve service quality (Jahandideh et al., 2014) and promote customer satisfaction (Chuang, 2012) by taking advantages of the hotel guests' complaints. Based on the results of Chuang's (2012) study, hotel guests will more than satisfied if service providers know how to compensate their lost and handle it properly.

Complaint Motives

From prior academic literature, motive refers to the reasons and goals that cause a series of action (Ryan, 2000). In other words, motives explain behaviors. Based on factor analysis, motives can be classified into two groups, which are intrinsic and extrinsic (Chen and Kao, 2014; Ryan, 2000; Vallerland et al., 1992; Ahuvia, 2002). Intrinsic are derived from human innate predilection to learn, while extrinsic come from self-control or external pressure (Ryan, 2000).

Prior services marketing literature suggested dissatisfaction is the prerequisite to complaining, and it can also determine customers' complaint behaviors. Or, to be more specific, there is a relationship between the extent of disappointment, complaint motives, and complaint behaviors (Voorhees and Brady, 2005; Mittal, Huppertz, and Khare, 2008). When customers feel more disappointed, the tendency to complain grows (Richins, 1983), and they may not just spread negative word-of-mouth, but also take action to harm the business (Funches, et al., 2009). Sometimes customers get angrier because their complaints have not been taken seriously; they fight to make themselves heard (Varela-Neira et al, 2010).

In the pool of hospitality service marketing literature, the studies that focused on customer complaint motives are limited. In 1998, when Sundaram et al., tested different motives on customer's negative word-of-mouth activities, the motives were classified into four groups, which are altruism, anxiety reduction, vengeance, and advice seeking. Altruism is a series of actions that prevents others from experiencing the same problems by showing others their bad service experience (Sundaram et al., 1998).

Similarly, Sparks (2010) pointed out three different kinds of motives, which are venting, altruism, and revenge, in the context of word-of-mouth complaining activities. In 1983, Lewis employed both qualitative and quantitative methods for measuring complaint motives in hospitality context and found out the motives of dissatisfied customers complaining are either they want monetary compensation (refund, complimentary meal/room) or altruism (such as warning other consumers stop patronize for experiencing the same bad consumption experience). Based on all these findings above, Heung and Lam (2003) developed a construct for measuring hotel guests' complaint motives and the results showed the most common complaint motives were: (1) "seek corrective actions," (2) "ask for explanation," (3) "seek apology," (4) "express emotional anger," (5) "seek compensation," and (6) "seek redress" (Heung and Lam, 2003, p.285).

This study built its complaint motive items based on prior findings, which are shown above. The items for examining hotel guests' complaint motives were (1) "get compensation," (2) "get an apology from the hotel," (3) "request corrective action," (4) "ask for an explanation," (5) "express my anger," (6) "seek redress," and (7) "prevent others from experiencing the same problem."

However, it is also important to note that not all the customers are reasonable. Some "illegitimate complaints" occur because of monetary, self-conceit, and destructive motives rather

than actual service failure (Reynolds and Harris, 2006). Table 2.1 summarizes the studies on complaint motives.

Table 2.1 *Summary of the literature Reviewed on Consumer Complaint Motives*

Summary of the literature reviewed on Consumer Complaint Motives							
Author(s)	Paper Title	Main Objectives	Study Variables	Sample	Method	Motives	Results
Sundaram , Mitra, and Webster, 1998	Word-of-Mouth Communications : A Motivational Analysis	To reveal the motives for consumers engaging in both positive and negative word-of-mouth communication and to examine the relationships between motives and consumption experiences	Positive word-of-mouth; Negative word-of-mouth	Random set of respondents from each interviewer's data set	Critical Incident Technique	Positive: altruistic, product involvement, self-enhancement; Negative: altruistic, anxiety reduction, vengeance, and advice seeking	Motives have significant impact on consumption experiences
Sparks et al., (2010)	Complaining in cyberspace: The motives and forms of hotel guests' complaints online.	To test the motives of complaining on the Internet	The severity of the complaint	200 reviews on TripAdvisor.com	Document review method on 200 complaints from TripAdvisor.com	Altruistic, revenge, venting	1. Consumers report lots of complaints online. 2. Motives can be classified into 3 groups, which are venting, altruism, and revenge.

Summary of the literature reviewed on Consumer Complaint Motives							
Author(s)	Paper Title	Main Objectives	Study Variables	Sample	Method	Motives	Results
Lewis, (1983)	When guests Complain	To investigate the motives of complaint in the context of hospitality industry	Demographic	Guests in a well-known national chain hotel	Self-administered questionnaire	Monetary compensation; Altruistic	The motives of dissatisfied hotel guests complaining are either they want monetary compensation
Heung and Lam (2003)	Customer complaint behavior towards hotel restaurant services	To identify complaint patterns and the relationships between customers' demographic backgrounds and complaint behaviors	Demographic	Customers in six hotel restaurants	Self-administered questionnaires	Seeking compensation; Seeking redress; Seeking apology; requesting corrective action; asking for explanation; and expressing emotional anger	1.common complaint motives are requesting corrective action, asking for explanation; 2. Most customers complaint through private ways such as word-of-mouth communication

Summary of the literature reviewed on Consumer Complaint Motives							
Author(s)	Paper Title	Main Objectives	Study Variables	Sample	Method	Motives	Results
Reynolds and Harris, (2006)	Deviant Customer Behavior: An Exploration of Frontline Employee Tactics	To explore how frontline employees deal with poorly behaved customers	Preincident, During the incident, and Postincident	Frontline employees and managers of 21 restaurants	In depth interviews	Monetary, self-conceit, and destructive motives	Uncovered 15 coping tactics that emerge as tactics employed before, during, and after instances of deviant customer behavior.

Complaint Behaviors

According to the consumer complaining behavior theory, the complaint behavior can be grouped into several categories, which are voice responses, third-party complaining, and switching (or exit) (Hirschman, 1970; Day and Landon, 1977; Day et al., 1981). These complaint behaviors are discussed in the following.

In general, “voice” aims at changing the unsatisfied plight by directly and immediately noticing the service provider, senior management, and the public who cares to listen (Hirschman, 1970; Panther and Farquhar, 2004; Naus et al., 2007). “Voice” occurs when service recipients have confidence in the service providers that they can solve the problem successfully (McKee et al., 2006). Voice response is the most direct way service recipients show dissatisfaction to the service organization; and it is the best way for companies to improve service/product quality based on the comments and complaints (Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1987). Voice coping is not only the most powerful way to affect the outcome of the service failure experience, but also provides service providers opportunity to recover the service failures and amend the service management (Ferguson and Phau, 2012). Furthermore, voicing has positive relationship with customer loyalty and it plays an important role in building the buyer-seller relationship (Evanschitzky, Brock, and Blut, 2011).

Generally, third-party complaining is complaining to supervision organizations, industry associations, and consumer community (Singh, 1998). Accompanied with the convenience from the network resources, it is easier and lower-cost for people to express their dissatisfaction by spreading negative word-of-mouth through online platforms or taking legal actions against a brand (Ward and Ostrom, 2006; Grégoire et al., 2009; Sparks and Browning, 2010; Lala and Priluck, 2011). From Singh’s (1989) study, customers tend to complain through third agencies under three circumstances. Firstly, there is no other choice that customers can choose. Secondly, dissatisfied

customers perceived that service provider would not solve their problems successfully. Thirdly, all other complaint behaviors failed.

Switching service provider or exit is the worst outcome that service organizations wish to see, because when a customer chooses to exit and change to another provider, the relationship between this customer and the company ends and is difficult to restore (Panther and Farquhar, 2004; Yuksel et al., 2006). Sometimes, even though customers intend to show their dissatisfaction or aim to prevent from experiencing the second same service failure, they may still stay with the relationship with the companies for high transfer costs or limited choice (Lala and Priluck, 2011; Chebat et al., 2005). However, continuing to do business under these situations does not show truly loyalty and most of the customers are just physically, not psychologically back this relationship (Naus et al., 2007; Rusbult et al., 1988; White and Yanamandram, 2004; Rowley and Dawes, 2000).

In summary, the response that customers choose to employ depends on surroundings, the severity of the problem, and the need to getting compensation (Susskind, 2005). Tronvoll (2007) pointed out that understanding customer complaint behavior is the top priority especially in service industry.

In the context of the hospitality industry, based on Singh's observation, customers' complaint behavior is "a set of multiple (behavioral and non-behavioral) responses, some or all of which are triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode" (Singh's 1988, p.93) Service recipients either show out their dissatisfaction or act nothing (Kim et al., 2010; Bodey and Grace, 2006). Behaviors of dissatisfaction include changing service provider, complaining to the organization (seeking redress) (Heung and Lam, 2003), voicing concerns on public platform (such

as Zagat, TripAdvisor), sharing negative opinions with friends and family (Liu and McClure, 2001; Hart and Coates, 2010), and taking legal action against the company (Lala and Priluck, 2011).

The reasons customers kept quiet and did nothing were also being tested. Firstly, the costs of complaining are too high that customers do not want to pay more for the bad experience and they even do not perceive their complaint can get favorable outcomes (Blodgett et al., 2006). Secondly, the customers know nothing about how to complain or the way to complain (Huppertz, 2007). It means, even though customers prefer doing something to show their dissatisfaction, they know nothing about where to complain and how to complain. Thirdly, customers may also choose to forget about the experience instead of voicing concerns because they feel a sense of guilt and blame themselves, especially under the circumstance of complex service situations (Harris et al., 2006; Anderson et al., 2009; Yuksel et al., 2006; Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). These consumers were called “passives” (Singh, 1990) and were identified as “upset-no action” (Panther and Farquhar, 2004). “No action” was conceptualized as loyalty (Hirschman, 1970; Yuksel et al., 2006), which indicates that in order to remain in the relationship with specific service providers, service recipients find excuses to forgive service failures and have confidence that it will amend and improve in the near future (Naus et al., 2007; Mittal et al., 2008; Evanschitzky, Brock, and Blut, 2011). Loyalty is a tool for service providers to retain customers, even when they meet service failure (Panther and Farquhar, 2004; Naus et al., 2007).

For hoteliers, action responses need more attention compared with non-behavioral responses. Based on hotel guests’ responses and complaint actions, hotel employees can proactively take action to handle the problem and gain trust by appeasing them. Therefore, Singh (1988) focused on hotel guests’ “action behavior” and categorized complaint behaviors into three

distinct groups: voice responses, private responses, and third-party responses, based on a factor analysis of complaining behaviors. These responses are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Voice responses occur when the objects of the complaint are external to the customers' social circle and they directly express dissatisfaction (e.g. discussing the problem with manager or other employee of the company). Voicing is an emotion-based response and customers can express their negative feelings directly (Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004)

The objectives of private responses are not external to the customers' social circle and the responses are not directly related to dissatisfied consumption experience (e.g. negative word-of-mouth communication with friends and relatives). The more a customer feels angry, the more likely he or she is to complain through private ways (Singh, 1990). The customers who gain social benefits from spreading their feeling to their friends and family show positive attitude toward complaining (Kim, 2010).

Third-party responses are the responses in which the objects are external to the customers' social circle, but not directly involved in the dissatisfying exchange (e.g. reporting the problem(s) to a consumer agency). In other words, third-party responses mean customers complain through outside agencies. Along with the popularization of the network, negative impact collected from negative overwhelming online comments can seriously affect a company's brand image and reputation (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), and properly lead to heavy financial losses (Fisher et al., 1999). When it is the first time a customer complains, he or she may choose the third-party responses instead of the voice responses (Harrison-Walker, 2001). Customers prefer sharing their personal consumption experience through public platforms is a common phenomenon especially in hospitality context (Kim, 2010). In order to control the harmful effect of third-party responses,

the hospitality service providers need to effectively monitor and manage online negative comments.

This taxonomy (voice response, private response, and third-party response) has been validated in many related studies, such as Liu and McClure (2001), Oliver (1997), and Mittal et al (2008). Their results showed that, for hotel organizations, it would be better for them to encourage their customers to point out the annoyances for providing an opportunity to recover the problems. In this study, researchers also applied this sorting technique.

Complaint behavior can be affected by different factors. The type and the severity of the service failure, the timeliness and effectiveness of handling the failures, the stability of buyer-seller relationship etc. are all have significant impact on customers' complain behaviors (Mittal et al., 2008; Evanschitzky et al., 2011). Additionally, the different individual characteristics might also have an effect on the ways that customer showing dissatisfaction, intentions to complain (Lala, 2011; Kim, 2011), and the attitudes toward complaining as well (Chebat et al., 2005; Hansen et al., 2011). Table 2.2 summarizes the studies on complaint behaviors.

For customers who have a negative consumption experience, different complaint behaviors are associated with various complaint motives (Wetzer, Zeelenberg, and Peiters, 2007). Sundaram et al (1998) tested the impact of different complaint motives on negative word-of-mouth behaviors and found out (1) a quarter of the customers, who encountered negative consumption experiences, complained by sharing their negative experience with others because this way can help them lighten anger, lose, and anxiety; (2) and more than 36.5% of the customer shared their poor experience through third-party platforms or warning their friends not to patronize with the motive of revenging that service by wiping others thoughts of visiting there. The customers who know nothing about how to complain or the way to complain tend to share their problems with others to

seek advices on solving their problems. Others pointed out that dissatisfied customers who experience emotions of anger, or have strong desire to prevent others encountering the same problem, are more likely to choose spreading negative word-of-mouth with friends and family, writing down the bad service experience on website or other venting and revenge activities (Price, Feik, and Gustskey, 1995; Wetzler, 2007). Additionally, Hart et al., (2005) suggested that the stronger their monetary desire, such as seeking compensation or redress, customers have, the more likely the customers will engage in complaint activities and choose a direct way to show their dissatisfaction such as discussing the problem with a manager or other employee when they are dissatisfied (Chebat et al, 2005). Therefore, based on the findings shown above, three hypotheses were provided:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to express anger and the likelihood to complain through private responses.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to prevent others from experiencing the same problem and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses.

Hypothesis 3a: There is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to request compensation and the likelihood to complain through voice responses.

Hypothesis 3b: There is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to request redress and the likelihood to complain through voice responses.

Table 2.2 *Summary of the Literature Reviewed on Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB)*

Summary of the literature reviewed on Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB)							
Author(s)	Paper Title	Main Objectives	Study Variables	Sample	Method	CCB	Results
Hirschman (1970)	Exit, voice, and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states	To test responses to failure in firms, organizations, and states				Active Nonaction,	
Singh (1988)	Consumer complaint intentions and behavior: definitional and taxonomical issues.	To assess the nature and structure of the CCB phenomenon.	1. Industry 2. Complaint situation	Random sample of households in Southwest Texas	Self-administered questionnaires	1. Action/non-action behavior 2. Voice, private, and third-party responses	CCB is a three-faceted phenomenon consisting of voice, third party, and private actions.
Liu and McClure (2001)	Recognizing cross-cultural differences in consumer complaint behavior and intentions: an empirical examination	To examine cross-cultural differences in consumer complaint intentions and behavior	1. Culture (individualism, collectivism) 2. Prior experience	Random sample from South Korea and United States	Self-administered questionnaires	Voice response Private response Third-party response	Customers in different cultures have different complaint behaviors and intentions.

Summary of the literature reviewed on Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB)							
Author(s)	Paper Title	Main Objectives	Study Variables	Sample	Method	CCB	Results
Kim et al., 2010	The relationship between consumer complaining behavior and service recovery: An integrative review	To integrate the literature related to service failures: CCB and service recovery literature		Studies that are related to CCB and service recovery	Review literature s that are related to CCB and service recovery	1. Inertia 2. Negative WOM 3. Third party complaint 4. Voice	Offer a starting point for broadening the thinking on consumers' complaint handling processes.
Bodey and Grace, 2006	Contrasting “complainers” with “non-complainers” on attitude toward complaining, propensity to complain, and key personality characteristics: A Nomological Look	To examine the influence of four personality characteristics on consumer attitude toward complaining and propensity to complain	Personality characteristics (self-efficacy, Machiavellianism, perceived control, and risk-taking)	200 third-year marketing students enrolled in a large university in southeast Queensland	Self-administered questionnaires	Complainer Non-complainer	There is a difference in the way in which personality characteristics affect attitudes and propensity in the context of complaint behavior.

Summary of the literature reviewed on Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB)							
Author(s)	Paper Title	Main Objectives	Study Variables	Sample	Method	CCB	Results
Heung and Lam, 2003	Customer complaint behavior towards hotel restaurant services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To identify the factors influencing CCB and motivations. 2. To assess the relationship between demographic characteristics and CCB 3. To make recommendations to managers for professionally handling complaints 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Age 2. Gender 3. Education 	Six hotels of different classes in Hong Kong	Self-administered questionnaires	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complain in person 2. Warn families and friends 3. Divert to the mass media 4. Complain to the consumer Council 5. Complain by writing a letter to management 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Female, young, and well-educated customers tend to complain more. 2. The most common compliant motive is “seek corrective actions from management.” 3. The most common compliant behavior is “warn families and friends.” 4. There is no difference between Chinese and western customers.
Lala and Priluck, 2011	When Students Complain: An Antecedent Model of Students’ Intention to Complain	To explore the factors that influence students’ intention to complain	Personal characteristic	Students in a large private university in the United State	Online survey used the critical incident approach	Complain to school/friends/ot hers in person/ using the web	The more dissatisfied students are, the more likely they are to complain to the school and to friends either in person or using the web.

Summary of the literature reviewed on Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB)							
Author(s)	Paper Title	Main Objectives	Study Variables	Sample	Method	CCB	Results
Blodgett et al., 2006	Cross-cultural complaining behavior? An alternative explanation.	To examine cross-cultural differences in comment on the return and exchange policies of retailers in their home-country and to compare these policies with those of retailers in the U.S.	1. Culture 2. Return policies	Individuals who are now living (or have recently lived) in the U.S.	In depth interview	Return or exchange goods	1. Complaint behavior is largely dependent upon the prevailing return policies. 2. Dissatisfied customers in countries in which return policies are moderately or extremely restrictive are more likely to seek redress.
Stephens and Gwinner (1998)	Why don't some people complain? A cognitive-emotive process model of consumer complaint behavior	To propose and test an integrating conceptual framework of the CCB process	Personal factors: commitments, general beliefs Situational factors: Novelty, Predictability, Imminence, Duration, and Ambiguity	Woman ages 60 and older	In depth interview	Action (problem/emotion focused) No-action (avoidance)	Cognitive appraisal and stressful appraisal influence customers' coping strategy.

Summary of the literature reviewed on Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB)							
Author(s)	Paper Title	Main Objectives	Study Variables	Sample	Method	CCB	Results
Ferguson and Phau (2012)	A cross-national investigation of university students' complaining behaviour and attitudes to complaining	To investigate how students from Australia, Indonesia, and Malaysia differ in their propensity to complain and attitudes to complaining	Cultural Complaint Attitude	University students on an Australian university campus	Self-Administered questionnaires	Switch (exit), Voice, Third-party	1. No difference between the nationalities in terms of voicing their concerns to the service provider and other customers. 2. Indonesian or Malaysian students are more likely to take external action than Australian students
Evanschitzky et al., 2011	Will you tolerate this? The impact of affective commitment on complaint intention and postrecovery behavior.	To investigate the impact of affective commitment on complaint intention and purchase behavior	Affective commitment	Undergraduate students of a large university in Germany; Customers from a fast-food delivery service provider	2 x 2 between subjects experimental design; Telephone interview	Switch; Revenge; Exit	Affective commitment has little impact on customers' post-recovery behaviors. Affective commitment customers are willing to help company by voicing dissatisfaction.

Personality Traits

As the pool of behavioristic research grew, a number of studies tested the effect of personality traits on job performance, consumption behavior, living habit and so on (Correa, 2009; Bogg, 2013; Hudson, 2012; Seidman, 2013). The most commonly used personality scale in the literature is the Big-Five personality framework, which “is a hierarchical model of personality traits with five broad factors, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness” (Gosling, 2003, p.506). Based on the results of analysis, most of the individual differences in personality can be classified into these five categories (Gosling, 2003).

In order to measure the Big-Five dimensions, Costa and McCrae (1992) developed the most comprehensive instruments. It is a 240-item NEO Personality Inventory and takes 45 minutes to complete, which is too lengthy for most research (Gosling, 2003). To solve this drawback, many researchers focused more on developing shorter and well-established rating instruments. For example, Costa and McCrae simplified their original instrument to a 60-item Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) in 1992. Six years later, in 1998, John and Strivastava developed a 44-item Big-Five Inventory (BFI). In 2003, Gosling pointed out a 10-item Big-Five Inventory and proved that this short version “can stand as reasonable proxies for longer Big-Five instruments” (Gosling, 2003, p.523). Therefore, in order to save more time on completing the survey and maintain the reliability of the data, this study applied this 10-item Big-Five Inventory.

In the hospitality industry, researchers have tested on the impact of customers’ individual traits on their complaint behaviors. Results showed that, when service failure occurs, individual

characteristics (e.g. personality, demographics) could strongly influence customers' attitudes toward complaint and their coping strategies (Kim, 2010; Stephens and Gwinner, 1998; Huang and Chang, 2008). For example, the customers who are aggressive are more likely to complain, however, interestingly, the extroversive customers might have a lower tendency to show their dissatisfaction, especially through a direct way for fearing of destroying their social bonds (Richins, 1983a; Richins, 1987; Kowalski, 1996). Similarly, agreeable people show less likely to complain and more probably perceive the service meet their expectation (Kowalski, 1996).

Huang and Chang (2008) pointed out there is a relationship between personality, complaint motive, and complaint behavior in the context of online complaint. Their results showed the customers who are more “competitive, irritable, and are work- and achievement-oriented” cannot tolerate the bad consumption experience and are opt to engage in aggressive complaint behaviors (Huang and Chang, 2008, p.1228). The customers who are impatient, “hostile-aggressive”, and have higher level of extraversion and openness believe complaints can help lighten their anger and frustration, and perceive they can get favorable outcomes from complaints (Kirkcaldy, Cooper, and Furnhan, 1994). Furthermore, these customers also insist that the company's service quality can be improved by their complaints (Huang and Chang, 2008). However, the customers who believe “events in their life are a function of luck,” and with higher level of emotional stability and agreeableness show higher tendency to remain silent because they believe they will get into trouble if they complain (Huang and Chang, 2008, p. 1225). Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 4a: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of extraversion and the complaint motive to express anger.

Hypothesis 4b: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of extraversion and the complaint motive to request corrective action.

Hypothesis 4c: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of extraversion and the complaint motive to prevent others from experiencing the same problem.

Hypothesis 5a: when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of openness and the complaint motive to express anger.

Hypothesis 5b: when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of openness and the complaint motive to request corrective action.

Hypothesis 5c: when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of openness and the complaint motive to prevent others from experiencing the same problem.

When focusing on the relationship between personality traits and complaint behaviors, Berry et al., (2014) proved that the customers with a higher level of sociability tend to complain through “active channels” in a restaurant setting. Active channels were defined as complaining directly to the service provider at the time of bad service occurrence, such as discuss the problem with a manager or other employee face-to-face (Singh, 1989; Susskind, 2006; Day and Landon, 1977). The concepts of active channels were very similar to what the researcher termed in this study as voice responses. However, the customers with a lower level of sociability tend to complain through “nonaction, passive, or delayed channels” (Berry et al., 2014, p.8). “Nonaction” means exiting or switching the service provider with no complaining (Hirschman, 1970). Passive channels means complaint happens only when customers are asked (Hirschman, 1970). Dissatisfied customers will continue to visit and maintain loyal relationships with the service provider. Delayed channels were defined as complaint happening after service completes (Berry et al., 2014). Customers complain through social media, such as writing negative review(s) on *yelp* or reporting the problem(s) to a consumer agency (Butelli, 2007). Since extravert individuals are regarded as sociable and gregarious (Barrick and Mount, 1991), the hotel guests with high level of extraversion are identified as the people with high level of sociability. Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 6: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between hotel guests' level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through voice responses.

Hypothesis 7a: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a negative significant relationship between hotel guests' level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through private responses.

Hypothesis 7b: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a negative significant relationship between hotel guests' level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses.

Emotional Intelligence

The level of emotional intelligence is considered as an individual's ability to perceive, understand, control, and take advantage of themselves and others' emotions to solve problems based on surrounding environments (Goleman, 1998; Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Gabbott, 2010). A number of studies have examined the role of emotional intelligence on an individual's behaviors in the management literature, such as work performance (Druskat et al., 2013), leadership and managerial performance (Cavazotte, 2012; Sax et al., 2015), organizational citizen behaviors (Jung et al., 2012) and so on.

Several previous studies have tested the effect of emotional intelligence in the context of service industry (e.g. De Witt, Nguyen, and Mashall, 2008; Gabbott, 2010). The influence of emotional intelligence on customers' consumption behavior was first proposed in 2008 (Kidwell, et al., 2008). However, the potential effect of emotional intelligence and how it works on hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors remain exclusive.

The ability of customers to deal with their negative emotions, such as anger, may affect their feelings toward the bad service experience and the coping strategies employed (Weun, Beatty, and Jones, 2004). The customers with higher emotional intelligence not only can control their negative emotions by maintaining a positive and optimistic attitude towards the bad service experience, but also can relieve others' tensions (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). When service failure occurs, individuals with higher emotional intelligence respond through appropriate ways based on the situations. Gabbott et al., (2010) tested the relationship between customers' emotional intelligence and their coping strategies in the context of airline travel service. The results showed, firstly, customers with higher emotional intelligence were more likely to use "problem-focused coping," such as " I will talk to the Chief Steward to complain about the situation," and "I will express my feelings of displeasure to the cabin crew without reservation"; secondly, there was a positive relationship between customer emotional intelligence and "emotion-focused coping strategy," such as " I will try to keep my feelings to myself," and " I will try to look at this situation as an opportunity to learn something worthwhile" (Gabbott, 2010, p.239). Furthermore, Tsarenko and Tojib (2012) pointed out the emotional intelligence can moderate the relationship between the

severity of the service experience and emotional forgiveness. In other words, the customers with higher emotional intelligence were more likely to express dissatisfaction directly at the time of a bad service experience occurrence, and to forgive after they encounter service failures. Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 8: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply voice responses.

Hypothesis 9a: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a significant relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply private responses.

Hypothesis 9b: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a significant relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply third-party responses.

Prior Experience and Future Intention

There are a number of studies indicating that prior service experiences play as an important role in customers' expectations of service quality and their future behavior intentions (Cadotte, Woodruff, and Jenkins, 1987; Liu and McClure, 2001; Kim, 2010; Chuang 2012). On one hand, the customers with more prior satisfaction show higher likelihood to forgive the service failure in

the future (Mattila, 2004). On the other hand, loyal customers might take revenge action on the service provider if they encountered service failure before (Grégoire and Fisher, 2008). Based on the findings of Westbrook's (1984), Fornell's (1992), and Liu and McClure's (2001) cross-cultural studies, if there is another bad service experience in the future, customers who voiced complaints in the past are more likely to express their intentions privately. Therefore, hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 10: If there is another bad service experience in the future, there is a positive significant relationship between past voice responses and future intention to complain through private responses.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents information regarding the research design, method, target samples, data collection, and data clean procedure. For the purpose of this study, an online survey was used to collect data from a population with different backgrounds for better understanding their complaint motives and complaint behaviors in hotels. The research variables of personal characteristics, composed of personality traits and emotional intelligence, have been explored under a quantitative research method and have implications for future studies.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

As indicated in Chapter 1, five objectives were developed. They were (1) to find out the most common types of complaint motives and complaint behaviors, (2) to test the relationship between complaint motives and complaint behaviors in the hospitality industry; (3) to examine the relationships between hotel guests' personality traits and compliant motives and complaint behaviors; (4) to determine if there are significant relationships exist between the level of hotel

guests' emotional intelligence and motives to complain and behavioral responses; (5) to assess the relationships between hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and future complaint behavioral intentions. To guide this study, the following research questions and hypotheses were developed:

1. When dissatisfied, what motivates hotel guests to complain?
2. When dissatisfied, what is the most common type of complaint behavior for hotel guests?
3. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors?

H1: There is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to express anger and the likelihood to complain through private responses.

H2: There is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to prevent others from experiencing the same problem and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses.

H3a: There is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to request compensation and the likelihood to complain through voice responses.

H3b: There is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to request redress and the likelihood to complain through voice responses.

4. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' personality traits and complaint motives?

H4a: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of extraversion and the complaint motive to express anger.

H4b: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of extraversion and the complaint motive to request corrective action.

H4c: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of extraversion and the complaint motive to prevent others from experiencing the same problem.

H5a: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of openness and the complaint motive to express anger.

H5b: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of openness and the complaint motive to request corrective action.

H5c: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of openness and the complaint motive to prevent others from experiencing the same problem.

5. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' personality traits and complaint behaviors?

H6: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between hotel guests' level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through voice responses.

H7a: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a negative significant relationship between hotel guests' level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through private responses.

H7b: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a negative significant relationship between hotel guests' level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses.

6. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and complaint motives?

7. When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and complaint behaviors?

H8: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply voice responses.

H9a: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a significant relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply private responses.

H9b: When dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a significant relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply third-party responses.

8. If there is another bad hotel service experience in the future, what is the relationship

between hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and their future complaint behavior intentions?

H10: If there is another bad service experience in the future, there is a positive significant relationship between past voice responses and future intention to complain through private responses.

Research Design

In line with previous research, this study employed the quantitative method approach. In order to analyze the relationships among hotel guests' personality, emotional intelligence, complaint motives, and complaint behaviors, this study chose a sample of hotel guests who have stayed at a hotel in the last 12 months. The data was collected from an online survey based on a self-administered questionnaire. The details are discussed below.

Survey Instruments

The questionnaire was developed based on several previous studies. It contained four sections, which were hotel experience, personality scales, emotional intelligence, and demographic questions to characterize the participants. For the questions in each of these four sections are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Hotel Experience

The hotel experience section was divided into three parts. The first part had five questions, which were the descriptive statistics for previous hotel experience. The first question, "Have you

stayed at a hotel in the last 12 months?" (Yes/No), was asked to all the participants. The individuals who chose "No" were led to end the survey and their data was eliminated. For the respondents who had no consumption experience in hotels in the last 12 months, their data was deleted because they may not be able to provide reliable data for they cannot remember how they dealt with poor service experiences. Therefore, in order to provide more accurate information for hoteliers and researchers, the respondents who had stayed at a hotel in the last 12 months were the target population. The second question was "Are you a member of a hotel loyalty or preferred guest program?" (Yes/No). If participants chose "Yes", then they moved to answer the third question, which was "If Yes, how long have you been a member?" (Less than half a year, Half a year to one year, More than one year to three years, More than three years). The third question did not display when participants chose "No" to the second question. The fourth question, "Since your first experience staying at a hotel, how many bad service experiences have you encountered?" (None, 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, More than 9), and the fifth question, "How often do you stay at hotels each year?" (Less than 4 times, 4-6 times, 7-9 times, More than 9 times) were asked to all the participants. The sixth question, "Did you have one or more bad service experience(s) at these hotels in the last 12 months?" (Yes/No) was used to distinguish whether the participants had bad service experience(s). The rest of the questions in section one were used to test participants' past complaint motives, past complaint behaviors, and future behavior intentions. Detailed information is shown in the following paragraphs.

Complaint Motives

The second part of section one was about complaint motives. For assessing hotel guests' complaint motives, due to the limited measurement on hotel guests' complaint motives, the researcher combined the items adapted from Heung and Lam's (2003), Kim's (2010), Sundaram's (1998), and Sparks's (2010) studies. All of these studies provided measurement of complaint motives in the setting of hospitality, restaurants, and service industries. Finally, seven items were chose for testing hotel guests' complaint motives, "I complained because I wanted to (1) get compensation, (2) get an apology from the hotel, (3) request corrective action, (4) ask for an explanation, (5) express my anger, (6) seek redress, and (7) prevent others from experiencing the same problem." All of these items were rated in a Five-Likert Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) to indicate the level of agreement with each statement (See Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 *Items Used to Measure Hotel Guests' Complaint Motives*

I complained because I wanted to	
Items	Sources
Get compensation. Get an apology from the hotel. Request corrective action. Ask for an explanation. Express my anger. Seek redress.	Heung and Lam (2003); Lewis (1983)
Prevent others from experiencing the same problem.	Kim (2010); Sundaram (1998); Sparks (2010)

Complaint Behavior

The third part of section one was about hotel guests' complaint behaviors. Based on Singh's (1988) study, complaint behaviors were classified into three groups, voice responses, private responses, and third-party responses. According to the original measurement, there were only two items to measure voice responses, but four items to measure third-party responses (Singh, 1988). However, according to Liu and McClure's (2001) results, the number of respondents who chose voice responses was much higher than the number of respondents who chose third-party responses. Therefore, on the strength of Heung and Lam's (2003) and Liu and McClure's (2001) modified surveys, this study added more items to voice responses.

The item, "Forget about the bad experience and did nothing," which was in the group of voice responses (Liu and McClure, 2001), was removed. According to Singh's study (1988), when classified behaviors into three categories (voice responses, private responses, and third-party responses), he only focused on "action-behaviors". However, the item shown above was regarded as "non-behavioral action," which cannot be grouped into any of these three categories (Singh,

1988). Additionally, in order to test customers' "non-behavioral actions," researchers put this item into the group called "inertia" but not "voice responses" (e.g. Kim, 2010; Naus et al., 2007).

Finally, a total of 12 items were used to measure hotel guests' voice responses, private responses, and third-party responses, and each category was measured by four items. All of these 12 statements were rated in a Five-Likert Scale. In order to assess hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and their future intentions, the verbs were slightly changed from past to future tense, and the Five-Likert Scale was changed from (*1 = Never, 5 = All of the time*) to (*1= Very Unlikely, 5= Very Likely*) (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 *Items Used to Measure Hotel Guests' Complaint Behaviors*

Based on the number of times you have experienced bad service in a hotel, please indicate the frequency with which you did (imagine that you have another bad hotel service experience in the future, what is the likelihood that you would do) ^a each of the following actions		
	Items	Sources
Voice Responses	Discussed (Discuss) ^a the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel. Asked (Ask) ^a the hotel to take care of the problem. Informed (Inform) ^a the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	Liu and McClure (2001)
	Wrote (Write) ^a a comment card or completed (complete) a guest survey about the problem(s).	Heung and Lam (2003)
Private Responses	Checked (Check) ^a out of the hotel and avoided (avoid) booking the hotel from then on. Booked (Book) ^a services from another hotel the next time. Spoke (Speak) ^a to my friends and relatives about my bad experience. Convinced (Convince) ^a my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	Liu and McClure (2001)
Third-party Responses	Wrote (Write) ^a a negative review on a travel website. Reported (Report) ^a the problem(s) to a consumer agency. Took (Take) ^a legal action against the hotel.	Liu and McClure (2001)
	Wrote (Write) ^a a letter to the mass media about my bad experience	Heung and Lam (2003)

Note: ^a Words in parentheses were used for future intentions

Personality Traits

The second section of this survey was about hotel guests' personality traits. All of the items for measuring hotel guests' personality traits were adopted from Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann's (2003) study. According to Costa and McCrae's study (1992), personality was divided into five traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness. Each personality trait was measured by two items (see Table 3.3). All of the 10 items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (*1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree*). Gosling et al., (2003) examined

the reliability and validity of this 10-item Big-Five Inventory and the results showed all indicators met the requirement ($\alpha=0.72$).

Table 3.3 *Items Used to Measure Hotel Guests' Personality Traits*

I see myself as:		
Personality Traits	Items	Resource
Extraversion	Extraverted, enthusiastic. Reserved, quiet. ^R	Gosling et al., (2010)
Agreeableness	Sympathetic, warm Critical, quarrelsome. ^R	
Conscientiousness	Dependable, self-disciplined. Disorganized, careless. ^R	
Emotional Stability	Calm, emotionally stable. Anxious, easily upset. ^R	
Openness to New Experiences	Open to new experiences, complex. Conventional, uncreative. ^R	

Note: ^R reverse-scored items

Emotional Intelligence

In this study, hotel guests' emotional intelligence was evaluated by the Customer Emotional Intelligence Scale (CEIS), which was adapted from a general scale, developed in the setting of consumption behavior (Mok, Tsarenko, and Gabbott, 2008; Farrelly and Austin, 2007). Two of twenty-one items were removed for they did not meet the statistic criteria, and the rest of nineteen statements showed in the Table 3.4 were used for assessing hotel guests' emotional intelligence in this study. All of these nineteen items were classified into three dimensions, ability to deal with their own emotions, ability to deal with others' emotions, and ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking. The statements were rated on a four-point Likert scale ($1=Strongly Disagree$,

4=*Strongly Agree*) adapted from Gabbott's study in 2010 (see Table 3.4). The reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity had been tested by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Amos 17.0 and all the items met the criteria ($\alpha=0.88$).

Demographic Information

The last section of this survey was about respondents' demographic information. Five questions for all the respondents included gender, age, ethnicity, education, and income level. These demographic questions were used for classifying the participants based on their background information. All the five questions are shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.4 *Items Used to Measure Hotel Guests' Emotional Intelligence*

Items	Resources
Dimension 1: Ability to deal with own emotions	
I am aware of the events that can trigger my positive and or negative emotions. I am aware of my emotional state when I engage in a service. When I am in a service experience I can easily identify the emotions I am feeling. I can appear calm even when I am upset with the service staff. When I am frustrated with the service staff I can overcome my frustration.	Gabbott (2010)
Dimension 2: Ability to deal with others' emotions.	
I can tell when the service staff do not mean what they say. When I talk to the service staff I can gauge their reaction from their facial expression. When I talk to the service staff I can gauge their reaction from their tone of voice. When I talk to the service staff I can gauge their reaction from their body language. If I choose to, I am able to help the service staff see the positive side of negative events. If the service staff are unhappy I am able to cheer them up if I choose to. If the service staff become frustrated I am able to help them overcome this feeling if I choose to. I feel happy when I see service staff being treated well by other customers. I feel upset when I see service staff being taken advantage of by other customers. I feel angry when service staff are treated badly by other customers.	Gabbott (2010)
Dimension 3: Ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking	
I do not let my emotions overcome my thinking when I am problem-solving. I get very enthusiastic when it comes to problem solving. When facing a delicate problem I can generate the right emotion to help me solve it. When facing problems I can adapt my emotional state to suit the task.	Gabbott (2010)

Table 3.5 *Demographic Information*

Items	Choices
Please state your gender.	Male/Female
What is your age?	19-29; 30-39; 40-49; 50-59; above 60
Please identify your ethnicity.	Caucasian; Black or African American; Asian or Asian American; Native American/ Alaskan; Pacific Islander; Mixed; Other
Please state the highest level of education you have earned.	11 th grade or less; High School Diploma; Some College; Associate Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Degree; Other
Income Level.	Under \$20,000; \$20,000-\$35,000; \$35,001-\$50,000; \$50,001-\$65,000; \$65,001-\$80,000; \$80,001- \$95,000; Above \$95,000

Expert Review

In an attempt to make sure every statement in this survey was clear to understand, the questionnaire was submitted to experts for review. Two graduate students working at Auburn University Miller Writing Center reviewed the survey, and minor wording changes were made to clearly express the idea. Additionally, a field expert (an associate professor in Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Management at Auburn University) reviewed the updated version of the survey, and several words were changed based on this expert's suggestions.

Sampling and Data Collection Procedures

Target samples

In this study, hotel guests who had experienced a recent hotel stay in the last 12 months were the target population. The target sample was composed of 600 participants and was divided into two groups. The first group was comprised of the customers who have had one or more bad service experiences at hotels in the last 12 months, while the second group was comprised of the customers who had no bad service experiences at hotels in the last 12 months. For the second group, the scenario survey was developed and all the questions on that survey were focused on future behavior intentions. All of the participants of this project were above 19 years of age and were proficient in English enough to fully understand the consent process. For the quantitative study, a self-administered online questionnaire survey instrument for all the respondents was utilized to collect data.

Data Collection Procedure

Upon obtaining permission from the institutional review boards (IRBs) at Auburn University, the researcher posted a survey information letter that invited the potential participants to complete the survey through the Amazon Mechanical Turk (Mturk) Service, a crowd-sourcing Internet marketplace that enables individuals and businesses to coordinate the use of human intelligence to perform tasks and can be used to obtain high-quality data inexpensively and rapidly. The participants were asked to finish the survey based on their consumption experience at hotels. The data was collected through an online survey. Electronic data did not include the names or other identifiable information of the participants.

Quantitative Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics (e.g. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Frequency) were used to describe the basic features of the data (Green and Salkind, 2008). In this study, descriptive statistics was used to show the sample characteristics (e.g. Age, Gender, Income Level, Education, and Ethnicity) and provided the basic information about some of the key variables (e.g. personality traits and emotional intelligence).

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was developed by Kari Pearson in 1895. It is widely used to test whether a linear correlation exists between two variables in the population. Each individual should have scores on two variables. The value of r is between +1 and -1 inclusive. If the value of r equals to +1/-1, it means there is a total positive/negative correlation between these two variables; however, if the value is 0, it means there is no correlation (Green and Salkind, 2008).

In this study, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was used to test the relationships among hotel guests' personality traits, emotional intelligence, complaint motives, complaint behaviors, and future behavior intentions.

Data Cleaning Procedure

In order to increase the reliability of the data, two questions were used to clean the data set. Since participants were asked to finish the survey based on their own consumption experience at hotels, it would influence the accuracy of the data if the participants had not stayed at a hotel recently. Therefore, if the respondents who choose "No" to the first question, "Have you stayed at a hotel in the last 12 months?," their data was not used for data analysis.

Additionally, 600 respondents completed the survey, 234 of the respondents had stayed at a hotel in the last 12 months but had no bad service experience. 199 respondents had a recent stay at a hotel and had more than one bad service experience. Due to the sample size was reasonable

for this study, the researcher finally chose these 199 responses for data analysis. From these responses, the results can show exactly the ways that the respondents dealt with service failures and the ways they shown dissatisfaction toward hotels. The data gathered from the respondents who did not have bad service experience(s) at hotel(s) was removed and probably will be used for future studies. Therefore, if the respondents chose “No” to the question, “Did you have one or more bad service experience(s) at these hotels in the last 12 months?,” their data was eliminated and not used for data analysis.

Next, in order to get the average completion time, the researcher also invited several professors and graduate students to complete the survey. The surveys completed by these professors and graduate students were removed and not used for data analysis. Since this survey took them around 4 to 10 minutes to finish, the respondents who finished the survey in less than 4 minutes were rejected and their data was deleted. Table 3.6 summarizes and presents the number of responses was eliminated.

Table 3.6 *Number of Responses Eliminated*

Action	# Responses Eliminated
Have you stayed at a hotel in the last 12 months? “No”	0
Did you have one or more bad service experience(s) at these hotels in the last 12 months? “No”	234
The time on completing the survey<4 minutes	167

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis procedures applied to obtain the results of the quantitative methods discussed in Chapter 3. First, descriptive statistics of the sample characteristics are discussed. Then, the key variables (personality traits and emotional intelligence) are detailed. Finally, results answering the research questions are presented.

Sample Characteristics

A total of 600 online respondents were recruited for participation in this study. After data cleaning, 401 of them were removed because either the respondents did not complete the survey, have not stayed at a hotel in the last 12 months, or have had no bad hotel service experience. Finally, a total of 199 useful responses were used for data analysis.

Results of the descriptive statistics for the demographic data are shown in Table 4.1. From Table 4.1, the sample was largely male (55.3%), young in age (74.4% of them were from 19 to 39 years old), Caucasian (60.1%), possessing Bachelor's Degrees (45.5%), and with a low-income level (48.3% of the sample had an income lower than \$35,000). Among the participants, 103 (51.8%) individuals had stayed at hotels more than 4 times a year; 157 (79.3%) respondents

had bad hotel service experiences from one to three times in the last 12 months; 89 (44.7%) participants joined a hotel loyalty program and 32 (36%) respondents had been a member more than three years.

Table 4.1 *Descriptive Statistics of Sample Characteristics*

Variable	Categories	n	%
Gender n=197	Male	110	55.3
	Female	87	43.7
Age n=198	19-29	73	36.7
	30-39	75	37.7
	40-49	26	13.1
	50-59	18	9.0
	60 and above	6	3.0
Ethnicity n=198	Asian or Asian American	57	28.8
	Black or African American	9	4.5
	Caucasian	119	60.1
	Native American/ Alaskan	4	2.0
	Pacific Islander	1	0.5
	Mixed	6	3.0
	Other	2	1.0
Education n=198	High School Diploma	10	5.0
	Some College	39	19.7
	Associate Degree	27	13.6
	Bachelor's Degree	90	45.5
	Graduate Degree	32	16.2
Income n=198	Under \$20,000	49	24.9
	\$20,000-\$35,000	46	23.4
	\$35,001-\$50,000	30	15.2
	\$50,001-\$65,000	31	15.7
	\$65,001-\$80,000	18	9.1
	\$80,001-\$95,000	8	4.1
	Above \$95,000	15	7.6
Membership n=199	Yes	89	44.7
	No	110	55.3
How long been a member n=89	Less than half a year	12	13.5
	Half a year to one year	20	22.5
	More than one year to three years	25	28.1
	More than three years	32	36
# of bad service experiences n=195	1-3	157	79.3
	4-6	32	16.2
	7-9	3	1.5
	More than 9	3	1.5
Hotel Stay Frequency n=199	Less than 4 times	96	48.2
	4-6 times	63	31.7
	7-9 times	15	7.5
	More than 9 times	25	12.6

Descriptive Statistics for Key Variables

Personality Traits

According to Gosling's (2003) 10-item Big-Five Inventory, personality was divided into five groups: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness. Each of these five personality traits was measured by two items (please see Table 3.3). Table 4.2 presents the detailed information about respondents' personality traits. The respondents in this study had higher levels of conscientiousness ($M=8.03$, $SD=1.65$) and agreeableness ($M=7.71$; $SD=1.88$), followed by openness to experience ($M=7.54$, $SD=1.68$), and emotional stability ($M=7.46$, $SD=1.94$). However, the sample had a relatively low mean score and a high variance in extraversion ($M=5.95$, $SD=2.18$).

Table 4.2 *Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Guests' Personality Traits*

Personality Trait	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Conscientiousness	3	10	8.03	1.65
Agreeableness	3	10	7.71	1.88
Openness	3	10	7.54	1.68
Emotional Stability	2	10	7.46	1.94
Extraversion	2	10	5.95	2.18

Emotional Intelligence

According to the Customer Emotional Intelligence Scale (CEIS), emotional intelligence was divided into three dimensions: ability to deal with their own emotions, ability to deal with others' emotions, and ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking. Detailed information about

these three dimensions was in Chapter 3. Table 4.3 presents the means and standard deviations of each of these dimensions. The 199 respondents had higher abilities to deal with their own emotions (M=3.17; SD=.46), followed by the ability to deal with others' emotions (M=3.04, SD=.49), and the ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking (M=3.04, SD=.54). In general, the overall emotional intelligence scores of the respondents fell between 32 and 76 (M=58.29, SD=7.92).

Table 4.3 *Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence*

	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ave_Dimension_1	1.8	4.0	3.17	.46
Ave_Dimension_2	1.2	4.0	3.04	.49
Ave_Dimension_3	1.5	4.0	3.04	.54
Emotional Intelligence	32.0	76.0	58.29	7.92

Note: Ave_Dimension_1: The ability to deal with own emotions; Ave_Dimension_2: The ability to deal with others' emotions; Ave_Dimension_3: The ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking

In this study, the respondents were divided into three groups based on their emotional intelligence scores. A score range from 32 to 46 indicated low emotional intelligence for the sample, while a score above 61 indicated high emotional intelligence. Those with scores between 47 and 61 were regarded as having medium emotional intelligence. According to Table 4.4, the majority (62.8%, n=125) of respondents fell into the category of the medium emotional intelligence score (M=55.14, SD=3.72). On the other hand, 32.2% (n=64) of the respondents had high emotional intelligence, while only 5% (n=10) of the respondents had low emotional intelligence scores.

Table 4.4 *Frequency of Different Level of Emotional Intelligence (EI)*

	n	%
Low Emotional Intelligence: ($32 \leq EI \leq 46$)	10	5.0
Medium Emotional Intelligence: ($47 \leq EI \leq 61$)	125	62.8
High Emotional Intelligence: ($62 \leq EI \leq 76$)	64	32.2
Emotional Intelligence: ($32 \leq EI \leq 76$)	199	100.0

Research Question 1:

In an attempt to answer the RQ 1, “When dissatisfied, what motivates hotel guests to complain?” Table 4.5 shows the results of the hotel guests’ motives for complaining in the past and their complaint motives in the case of another bad service experience in the future. From Table 4.5, the most common motives to complain were: “requesting corrective action” ($M=4.17$, $SD=.963$), in which 86.4% of the sample rated it as the highest motive, followed by “preventing others from experiencing the same problem” ($M=3.85$, $SD=1.143$), “asking for an explanation” ($M=3.52$, $SD=1.302$), “expressing my anger” ($M=3.48$, $SD=1.158$), “seeking redress” ($M=3.22$, $SD=1.233$), and “getting an apology from the hotel” ($M=3.16$, $SD=1.311$). However, hotel guests did not really care about the compensation compared to other motives in this study. The motive to “get compensation” ($M=2.48$, $SD=1.344$) was rated the lowest.

Similarly, based on the last time experiencing poor service in a hotel, if there is another bad hotel service experience in the future, the most common motive to complain was also “request corrective action” ($M=4.34$, $SD=.885$) where 90.9% of the respondents were likely or extremely likely to complain, followed by “prevent others from experiencing the same problem” ($M =4.07$, $SD=1.083$), “ask for an explanation” ($M=3.91$, $SD=1.139$), “get an apology from the hotel”

(M=3.79, SD=1.264), and “express my anger” (M=3.69, SD=1.246). However, the motives “seek redress” (M=3.43, SD=1.293) and “get compensation” (M=3.16, SD=1.357) were relatively low.

Table 4.5 Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Guests’ Complaint Motives

Items	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	% of sample that Agree or Strongly Agree	% of sample that Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Motive 1: Get compensation	199	1	5	2.48	1.344	30.0	54.3
Motive 2: Get an apology from the hotel	199	1	5	3.16	1.311	53.8	35.2
Motive 3: Request corrective action	199	1	5	4.17	.963	86.4	7.5
Motive 4: Ask for an explanation	199	1	5	3.52	1.302	63.8	25.1
Motive 5: Express my anger	199	1	5	3.48	1.158	60.8	22.1
Motive 6: Seek redress	198	1	5	3.22	1.233	49.5	26.3
Motive 7: Prevent others from experiencing the same problem	199	1	5	3.85	1.143	71.9	12.1
FutureMotive_1: Get compensation	199	1	5	3.16	1.357	50.0	32.8
FutureMotive_2: Get an apology from the hotel	199	1	5	3.79	1.264	71.9	19.1
FutureMotive_3: Request corrective action	198	1	5	4.34	.885	90.9	5.6
FutureMotive_4: Ask for an explanation	198	1	5	3.91	1.139	76.2	12.1
FutureMotive_5: Express my anger	197	1	5	3.69	1.246	67.5	19.8
FutureMotive_6: Seek redress	199	1	5	3.43	1.293	56.8	22.6
FutureMotive_7: Prevent others from experiencing the same problem	198	1	5	4.07	1.083	78.3	9.1

Note: Bold indicates the highest mean score

Research Question 2

In order to answer RQ2, “When dissatisfied, what is the most common type of complaint behavior for hotel guests?” Table 4.6 presents the mean scores and standard deviations of the respondents’ past complaint behaviors. From the results, the most common complaint behaviors were: (1) “I asked the hotel to take care of the problem”(M=3.70, SD=1.17), (2) “I informed the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future” (M=3.66, SD=1.28) (3) “I spoke to my friends and relatives about my bad experience” (M=3.63, SD=1.09), and (4) “I booked services from another hotel the next time” (M=3.62, SD=1.24). When the 12 items were grouped into three categories, the most common type of complaint behavior was “voice responses” (M=3.43, SD=1.09), followed by “private responses” (M=3.26, SD=.97).

However, when dissatisfied, hotel guests were not really focused on sharing their bad service experience through third-party ways. The complaint behaviors, “I took legal action against the hotel” (M =1.39, SD=0.93), “I wrote a letter to the mass media about my bad experience” (M =1.45, SD=1.00), “I reported the problem(s) to a consumer agency” (M=1.56, SD= .94), and “I wrote a negative review on a travel website” (M=2.09, SD=1.15) were low compared with other complaint behaviors. Since all of these four behaviors were in the group of third-party responses, these results indicated that when dissatisfied, hotel guests were least likely to choose third-party responses (M=1.62, SD=0.85). Therefore, in order to answer RQ2, based on all the information shown above, hotel guests prefer to show their dissatisfaction through “voice responses.”

Table 4.6 Descriptive Statistic of Hotel Guests' Past Complaint Behaviors

Items	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	% of sample chose Often or All the time	% of sample chose Never or Rarely
Behavior2: I discussed the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel.	1	5	3.60	1.14	55.2	16.6
Behavior6: I asked the hotel to take care of the problem.	1	5	3.70	1.17	62.3	15.6
Behavior9: I wrote a comment card or completed a guest survey about the problem(s).	1	5	2.76	1.50	35.7	45.2
Behavior10: I informed the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	1	5	3.66	1.28	62.9	20.1
Voice Response	1	5	3.43	1.09		
Behavior3: I checked out of the hotel and avoided booking the hotel from then on.	1	5	2.88	1.38	35.7	40.2
Behavior4: I spoke to my friends and relatives about my bad experience.	1	5	3.63	1.09	58.0	12.6
Behavior7: I booked services from another hotel the next time.	1	5	3.62	1.24	57.8	17.1
Behavior8: I convinced my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	1	5	2.93	1.41	39.0	37.1
Private Response	1	5	3.26	.97		
Behavior1: I wrote a negative review on a travel website.	1	5	2.09	1.15	13.6	68.7
Behavior5: I reported the problem(s) to a consumer agency.	1	5	1.56	.94	6.5	85.4
Behavior11: I took legal action against the hotel.	1	5	1.39	.93	7.5	87.9
Behavior12: I wrote a letter to the mass media about my bad experience.	1	5	1.45	1.00	8.0	85.9
Third-party Response	1	5	1.62	.85		

Note: Bold indicates the highest mean score

These phenomena seem more pronounced in the context of hotel guests' future intentions. Table 4.7 summarizes the mean scores and standard deviations of the hotel guests' future complaint behavioral intentions, if there is another bad service experience at a hotel. Based on the results shown in Table 4.7, hotel guests had higher mean scores on voice response intentions, such as "discuss the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel" (M=4.29, SD=.93), "ask the hotel to take care of the problem" (M=4.27, SD=.92), and "inform the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future" (M=4.16, SD=1.02). Table 4.7 shows that "future voice response" (M=4.05, SD=.84) appeared to be critical when compared with other future intentions, followed by "future private response" (M=3.86, SD=.82). However, hotel guests were least likely to complain through third-party responses (M=2.26, SD=.95).

Research Question 3

To address RQ3, "when dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors?," Hypotheses 1, 2, 3a, and 3b were provided. Hypothesis 1 was stated as "there is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to express anger and the likelihood to complain through private responses." Hypothesis 2 was stated as "there is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to prevent others from experiencing the same problem and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses." Hypothesis 3a was provided as "there is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to request compensation and the likelihood to complain through voice

responses.” Lastly, Hypothesis 3b was posed as “there is a positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to request redress and the likelihood to complain through voice responses.”

Table 4.7 Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Guests' Future Complaint Behaviors

Items	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	% of sample Likely or Very Likely	% of sample Unlikely or Very Unlikely
Future Behavior2: Discuss the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel.	1	5	4.29	0.93	88.4	6.6
Future Behavior6: Ask the hotel to take care of the problem.	1	5	4.27	0.92	87.9	5.5
Future Behavior9: Write a comment card or complete a guest survey about the problem(s).	1	5	3.49	1.32	57.6	23.2
Future Behavior10: Inform the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	1	5	4.16	1.02	84.8	9.1
Future Voice Response	1	5	4.05	.84		
Future Behavior3: Check out of the hotel and avoid booking the hotel from then on.	1	5	3.71	1.09	63.3	13.6
Future Behavior4: Speak to my friends and relatives about my bad experience.	1	5	4.08	1.00	81.9	8.5
Future Behavior7: Book services from another hotel the next time	1	5	4.03	1.12	77.8	11.1
Future Behavior8: Convince my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	1	5	3.63	1.17	63.8	18.1
Future Private Response	1	5	3.86	.82		
Future Behavior1: Write a negative review on a travel website	1	5	3.03	1.36	43.2	36.2
Future Behavior5: Report the problem(s) to a consumer agency.	1	5	2.35	1.22	20.6	59.8
Future Behavior11: Take legal action against the hotel.	1	5	1.77	1.14	12.0	78.9
Future Behavior12: Write a letter to the mass media about my bad experience	1	5	1.89	1.20	14.1	71.9
Future Third-party Response	1	5	2.26	.95		

Note: Bold indicates the behaviors that have the highest mean score

Pearson correlations were used to test these three hypotheses. The variables consisted of three complaint behaviors and seven complaint motives. Table 4.8 presents the correlation coefficients of these variables. From Table 4.8, all the relationships, with the exception of the relationship between the motive to request corrective action and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses, were significant. Therefore, hypotheses 1, 2, 3a, and 3b were all supported. However, when considering the magnitude of all these coefficients, several interesting findings were yielded. First, the strongest motive for hotel guests to complain through voice responses was to “request corrective action” ($r=.541, p<.010$), which was the weakest motive for hotel guests who complained through voice responses ($r=.198, p<.010$). For hotel guests who complained through private responses, the motive to prevent others from experiencing the same problem ($r=.386, p<.010$) was strongest. Next, hotel guests who complained through third-party responses cared about “getting compensation” ($r=.338, p<.010$) most.

Table 4.8 *Pearson Correlation Statistics of Hotel Guests’ Complaint Motives and Complaint Behaviors*

	Voice Response	Private Response	Third-party Response
Motive1: Get compensation	.201**	.224**	.338**
Motive2: Get an apology from the hotel	.400**	.273**	.246**
Motive3: Request corrective action	.541**	.198**	-.076
Motive4: Ask for an explanation	.410**	.262**	.248**
Motive5: Express my anger	.285**	.188**	.229**
Motive6: Seek redress	.286**	.238**	.228**
Motive7: Prevent others from experiencing the same problem	.426**	.386**	.197**

Note: ** $p < .010$

Research Question 4

To address RQ4, “When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests’ personality traits and complaint motives?,” Hypotheses 4 (a, b, and c) and 5 (a, b, and c) were provided. Hypothesis 4 was stated as “when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of extraversion and the complaint motive to (a) express anger, (b) request corrective action, and (c) prevent others from experiencing the same problem.” Hypothesis 5 was stated as “when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between the level of openness and the complaint motive to (a) express anger, (b) request corrective action, and (c) prevent others from experiencing the same problem.”

Pearson correlations were used to test *H4* and *H5*. The variables consisted of the five personality traits and the seven different complaint motives. Table 4.9 presents correlation statistics of these variables and shows several statistically significant correlations. Firstly, the positive relationships between Motive3, “request corrective action,” and extraversion ($r=.211$, $p<.010$), agreeableness ($r=.202$, $p<.010$), conscientiousness ($r=.327$, $p<.010$), emotional stability ($r=.221$, $p<.010$) and openness ($r=.169$, $p<.050$) were found to be statistically significant. Secondly, Motive7, “prevent others from experiencing the same problem”, had a significant relationship with the level of extraversion ($r=.225$, $p<.010$), and conscientiousness ($r=.149$, $p<.050$). Thirdly, the correlation between the level of extraversion and the motive to “express my anger,” was also significant ($r=.169$, $p<.050$). Lastly, two significant negative relationships

between Motive1, “get compensation,” ($r=-.231, p<.010$) and the level of agreeableness and conscientiousness ($r=-.159; p<.050$) were found.

All in all, when dissatisfied, hotel guests with a higher level of extraversion were motivated more to request corrective action, express anger, and prevent others from experiencing the same problem. However, for the relationships between openness and each of the motives, only the relationship between the level of openness and complaint motive to request corrective action ($r=.169, p<.050$) was significant. Therefore, Hypotheses 4a, 4b, 4c, and 5b were supported. However, Hypotheses 5a and 5c were not supported.

Table 4.9 *Pearson Correlation Statistics of Hotel Guests’ Personality Traits (PT), Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Complaint Motives*

	PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4	PT5	EI
Motive1: Get Compensation	.096	-.231**	-.159*	-.108	-.011	.014
Motive2: Get an apology from the hotel	.093	-.049	-.023	0	.065	.181*
Motive3: Request corrective action	.211**	.202**	.327**	.221**	.169*	.244**
Motive4: Ask for an explanation	.105	.057	.138	.091	.071	.299**
Motive5: Express my anger	.169*	-.122	.019	-.101	.008	.018
Motive6: Seek redress	.072	-.020	.013	.016	0	.138
Motive7: Prevent others from experiencing the same problem	.225**	.070	.149*	.051	.047	.350**

Note: * $p < .050$, ** $p < .010$

PT1: extraversion, PT2: agreeableness, PT3: conscientiousness, PT4: emotional stability, PT5: openness

Research Question 5

To answer RQ5, “When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests’ personality traits and complaint behaviors?,” Hypotheses 6 and 7 were provided. Hypothesis 6 was stated as “when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between hotel guests’ level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through voice responses.” Pearson correlations were applied to test the relationship between the five personality traits and the three types of complaint behaviors. Each type of complaint behavior score was calculated by averaging scores of all items belonging to that type. According to the correlation coefficients shown in the Table 4.10, in general, the relationships between voice responses and the level of extraversion ($r=.254, p<.010$), openness ($r=.248, p<.010$), conscientiousness ($r=.209, p<.010$), and emotional stability ($r=.184, p<.010$) were all positively significant. These results mean, when dissatisfied, hotel guests with higher level of extraversion, conscientiousness, openness, or emotional stability were more likely to exhibit voice responses in their complaint behaviors. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was supported.

Hypothesis 7a was stated as “when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a negative significant relationship between hotel guests’ level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through private responses.” Hypothesis 7b was stated “when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a negative significant relationship between hotel guests’ level of extraversion and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses.” The relationships between third-party response and agreeableness ($r=-.298, p<.010$), conscientiousness ($r=-.344, p<.010$), and

openness ($r=-.237, p<.010$) were all negative and statistically significant, which supported that hotel guests with lower level of agreeableness, conscientiousness, or openness were more likely to apply third-party responses (Table, 4.10). However, the relationships between private responses and personality traits, with the exception of extraversion, were not statistically significant. Therefore, Hypotheses 7a and 7b were not supported.

Research Question 6

In an attempt to answer the RQ6, “when dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests’ emotional intelligence and complaint motives?,” the researcher tested the correlation coefficients between emotional intelligence and each of the seven complaint motives.

From the results shown in Table 4.9, the relationships between emotional intelligence and Motive2, “get an apology from the hotel” ($r=.181, p<.050$), Motive3, “request corrective action” ($r=.244, p<.010$), Motive4, “ask for an explanation” ($r=.229, p<.010$), and Motive7, “prevent others from experiencing the same problem,” ($r=.350, p<.010$) were all statistically significant. These relationships indicated that the higher the emotional intelligence level, the more likely hotel guests were to complain with the motives to “get an apology,” “request corrective action,” “ask for an explanation,” and “prevent others from experiencing the same problem.”

Table 4.10 *Pearson Correlation Statistics of Hotel Guests' Personality Traits (PT), Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Complaint Behaviors*

	PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4	PT5	EI
Behavior2: I discussed the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel.	.239**	.160*	.229**	.179*	.255**	.293**
Behavior6: I asked the hotel to take care of the problem.	.225**	.178*	.274**	.216**	.271**	.245**
Behavior9: I wrote a comment card or completed a guest survey about the problem(s).	.162*	-.065	-.013	.041	.072	.196**
Behavior10: I informed the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	.206**	.175*	.231**	.183**	.236**	.308**
Voice Response	.254**	.126	.209**	.184**	.248**	.319**
Behavior3: I checked out of the hotel and avoided booking the hotel from then on.	.037	.022	.017	.077	-.089	.168*
Behavior4: I spoke to my friends and relatives about my bad experience.	.163*	.023	.104	.010	.057	.225**
Behavior7: I booked services from another hotel the next time.	.118	.080	.140*	.171*	.005	.167*
Behavior8: I convinced my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	.132	-.109	-.014	-.009	.032	.104
Private Response	.148*	-.070	.083	.086	-.001	.226**
Behavior1: I wrote a negative review on a travel website.	.170*	-.133	-.156*	-.030	-.091	.109
Behavior5: I reported the problem(s) to a consumer agency.	.037	-.315**	-.321**	-.166*	-.191**	.008
Behavior11: I took legal action against the hotel.	.034	-.298**	-.363**	-.185**	-.275**	.011
Behavior12: I wrote a letter to the mass media about my bad experience.	.044	-.272**	-.343**	-.183**	-.256**	-.012
Third-party Response	.091	-.298**	-.344**	-.163*	-.237**	.039

Note: * $p < .050$, ** $p < .010$;

PT1: extraversion, PT2: agreeableness, PT3: conscientiousness, PT4: emotional stability, PT5: openness

Research Question 7

To address the RQ7, “when dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests’ emotional intelligence and complaint behaviors?,” Hypotheses 8 and 9 were provided. Hypothesis 8 was stated as “when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a positive significant relationship between hotel guests’ emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply voice responses.” Hypothesis 9a was stated as “when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a significant relationship between hotel guests’ emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply private responses.” Hypothesis 9b was stated as “when dissatisfied with the service experience, there is a significant relationship between hotel guests’ emotional intelligence and the likelihood to apply third-party responses.” The researcher tested the correlation coefficients between emotional intelligence and three types of complaint behaviors (see Table 4.10). Then, the respondents were divided into three groups based on their emotional intelligence scores. The descriptive statistics of hotel guests with different levels of emotional intelligence and their complaint behaviors were calculated to illustrate how groups differed across the complaint behaviors.

According to the correlation coefficients shown in Table 4.10, the relationships between hotel guests’ emotional intelligence and voice responses ($r=.319, p<.010$) and private responses ($r=.226, p<.010$) were found to be statistically significant. These results revealed that the higher level of emotional intelligence a hotel guest has, the more likely he or she complained through voice responses and private responses. Similarly, Table 4.11 displays the same results by showing

mean scores and standard deviations of each group of respondents' complaint behaviors. After comparing the mean scores of voice responses and private responses in these three groups of respondents, it was evident that the people who had a high level of emotional intelligence were more likely to complain through voice responses ($M=3.77$, $SD=.96$) and private responses ($M=3.57$, $SD=.96$) than the individuals who had low emotional intelligence scores. Furthermore, for the mean scores of third-party responses in different groups of individuals, even though a high proportion of the respondents rarely complained through third-party responses, people with high levels of emotional intelligence had higher mean scores on this type of complaint behavior than the people with low levels of emotional intelligence. Therefore, Hypotheses 8 and 9a were supported. However, Hypothesis 9b was not supported.

Table 4.11 *Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Guests' Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Complaint Behaviors*

	n	Voice Responses		Private Responses		Third-party Responses	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
EM ₁ (32≤EI≤46)	10	2.62	1.04	3.08	1.05	1.47	.60
EM ₂ (47≤EI≤61)	125	3.32	.99	3.11	.87	1.59	.75
EM ₃ (62≤EI≤76)	64	3.77	.96	3.57	.96	1.69	1.03

Note: EM₁: Low Emotional Intelligence; EM₂: Medium Emotional Intelligence; EM₃: High Emotional Intelligence

Research Question 8

To answer RQ8, “If there is another bad hotel service experience in the future, what is the relationship between hotel guests’ past complaint behaviors and their future complaint behavior intentions?,” hypothesis 10, “If there is another bad service experience in the future, there is a positive significant relationship between past voice responses and future intention to complain through private responses,” was provided. The correlation coefficients between past complaint behaviors and future complaint behavior intentions are shown in Table 4.12. The results revealed a positive significant relationship between past voice responses and future intention to complain through private responses ($r=.198, p<.050$), which means hotel guests who complained through voice responses before had a high likelihood to engage in private responses than third-party responses. Therefore, the Hypothesis 10 was supported. However, it is also worth pointing out that for the hotel guests who complained through voice responses before, the likelihood for them to choose voice responses ($r=.510, p<.010$) was quite a bit higher than the likelihood to choose private responses ($r=.198, p<.050$). Similarly, hotel guests who complained through private responses before were more likely to complain through private responses ($r=.532, p<.010$) and voice responses ($r=.356, p<.010$) in the future. The hotel guests who complained through third-party responses were more likely to complain through third-party responses again ($r=.520, p<.050$). Therefore, hotel guests experiencing a second bad experience were more likely to complain through the same way that they chose before.

Table 4.12 *Pearson Correlation Statistics of Hotel Guests' Past Complaint Behaviors and Future*

Complaint Behavior Intentions

	Voice Responses n=144	Private Responses n=132	Third-party Responses n=20
Future Voice Responses Intention	.510**	.356**	.372
Future Private Responses Intention	.198*	.532**	.190
Future Third-party Responses Intention	.063	.093	.520*

*Note: * p < .050, ** p < .010*

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings shown in Chapter 4 in four sections. Section one addresses each research question posed. Section two highlights the implications of this study. Section three presents the limitations of this study and future research opportunities in the field of hospitality. Lastly, section four proposes a brief conclusion to summarize this chapter.

Addressing the Research Questions

Research Question 1: “When dissatisfied, what motivates hotel guests to complain?”

When dissatisfied, the motives to complain were tested by general respondents who had one or more bad hotel service experience in the last 12 months on a Likert type rating scale from 1-5 (*1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree*). In line with Heung and Lam’s (2003) study, the most common complaint motives were to “request corrective action” where 86.4% of the respondents rated it as the highest motive, followed by “prevent others from experiencing the same problem,” “ask for an explanation,” and “express my anger.” Referencing Spark’s (2010) study, the motive to “prevent others from experiencing the same problem” was added as one of the hotel guests’ complaint motive items. This motive was listed as the second highest among all

the seven motives, which consistently matched the results in previous studies (e.g. Varela-Neira et al, 2010; Sundaram, 1998, and Sparks, 2010). Interestingly, this study supported the works of Lewis (1983) Heung and Lam (2003) who found that, compared to other motives, hotel guests paid less attention on getting compensation or redress. In this study, 54.3% of the respondents rated the weakest motive for them to complain was to get compensation.

All in all, when dissatisfied, hotel guests were more likely to focus on emotional needs. For example, people really care about whether their opinions and dissatisfactions are highly valued by hotel employees and whether their complaints improve service quality of the hotel and future consumers' experiences. However, dissatisfied hotel guests care less about material compensation. Therefore, the recommendations for hoteliers are: when faced with dissatisfied customers, (1) listen carefully to the problems that annoyed them, (2) explain and solve the problem efficiently, and (3) record every complaint and ensure that these problems will not happen again.

The current study also examined the hotel guests' complaint motives in the case of a second bad hotel service experience. When faced with another bad experience, requesting corrective action, preventing others from experiencing the same problem, and asking for an explanation were still the top three complaint motives. However, even though monetary desire was the last motive for hotel guests to complain, 50% of the respondents would agree or strongly agree that they would likely complain because of compensation. This finding confirmed Hart's (2005) and Chebat's (2005) studies, which suggested that the stronger monetary desire, the more likely to engage in

complaint. Therefore, when hoteliers are faced with customers who complained before, in order to satisfy them, offering compensation, such as a free breakfast service, still cannot be ignored.

Research Question 2: When dissatisfied, what is the most common type of complaint behavior for hotel guests?

Consistent with previous studies (e.g. McKee et al., 2006; Ferguson and Phau, 2012; Evanschitzky et al., 2011), this current study confirmed that the most common type of complaint behavior was “voice responses” (M=3.43). When dissatisfied, 62.9% and 62.3% of the respondents complained through “informing the hotel about the problem so that the hoteliers will do better in the future” and “asking the hotel to take care of the problem.” These two items were also consistent with the hotel guests’ motives to “seek corrective action” and “prevent others experiencing the same problem.” Among the items in the “private responses” category, 58% and 57.8% of the dissatisfied hotel guests complained through sharing the bad experience with friends and relatives (M=3.63) and booking services from another hotel the next time (M=3.62). Although the current study rated “third-party response” lowest (M=1.62), it has been suggested by several researchers that it is easier and lower-cost for most customers to complain through third-party platforms, such as writing negative review(s) on a travel website (Sparks and Browning, 2010; Lala and Priluck, 2011). Due to the disputed statements, further in depth research is needed.

For most of the hotel guests, as expected, when faced with another bad service experience, they preferred the “voice responses,” such as “discuss the problem directly with a manager or other

employee” (M=4.29) and “ask the hotel to take care of it” (M=4.27) to show their dissatisfaction. One possible reason is, for a second bad hotel service experience, the main goal for hotel guests to complain in order to solve the problem, which can be achieved directly through voice responses (Singh, 1988).

RQ2 filled the gap where only few studies focused on complaint motives in a hospitality setting. This result highlighted the fact that hoteliers need to focus more on voice responses by paying attention to the complaints and solving them in time. This result supported previous studies, which stated that voice response: (1) is the most direct way for customers to express their dissatisfaction (Naus et al., 2007), (2) is the best way for service providers to improve the service quality based on comments and complaints and provides service providers opportunity to recover the service failures and amend their service management (Ferguson and Phau, 2012; Evanschitzky et al., 2011), and (3) plays an important role in building the buyer-seller relationship (Brock, and Blut, 2011).

Research Question 3: When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests’ complaint motives and complaint behaviors?

Consistent with previous studies (Wetzer, Zeelenberg, and Peiters, 2007; Sundaram, 1998; Hart, 2005), different complaint behaviors were associated with different complaint motives. The current study confirmed the results made from existing studies while finding several surprising conclusions. First, a positive relationship existed between private responses and the motive to

“express emotional anger” which supported one of Sundaram’s (1998) observations. Sundaram observed that customers complained through private responses, such as sharing their poor service experience with others and seeking to decrease negative emotions of anger, loss, and anxiety.

Another finding in RQ3 was that there was a positive significant relationship between the complaint motives to prevent others from experiencing the same problem and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses. This result also supported another of Sundaram’s (1998) observations, which stated that the customers who share their bad consumption experience through third-party responses with the strong motive to prevent others from patronizing that service provider. Next, this study found the positive significant relationship between the complaint motive to request compensation and the likelihood to complain through voice responses. This finding supported Chebat’s study (2005), which stated that customers with stronger monetary desire were more likely to engage in voice responses to express their dissatisfaction.

All the relationships, with the exception of the relationship between the motive to request corrective action and the likelihood to complain through third-party responses, were significant. However, it is also worth noticing that several interesting findings were yielded based on the magnitude of the coefficients. First, the hotel guests who complained through voice responses had the strongest motive to “request corrective action,” which was the least preferred motive for the hotel guests who complained through private responses. Second, the hotel guests who engaged in private responses had the strongest motive to “prevent others from experiencing the same problem,” while the hotel guests who complained through third-party responses cared about

“getting compensation” most. Therefore, different service recovery strategies need to be applied based on different complaint behaviors. When faced with voice and private responses, hotel managers should focus more on the problems and take corrective actions immediately; for the hotel guests who complain through third-party responses, offering compensation is an efficient way to satisfy them.

Research Question 4: When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' personality traits and complaint motives?

Four results were received from the Pearson correlation coefficients shown in Table 4.9. Firstly, the Motive3, “request corrective action,” had a significant positive relationship with each of the five personality traits. Since most of the individual differences in personality can be classified into the five categories (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness), this result supported Heung and Lam’s (2003) study, which suggested “request corrective action” was the most common motive for all the customers to complain. Second, extraverted hotel guests were more likely to complain with the motive to express anger. This result supported Kirkcaldy’s observation that extraverts believed complaints can help relieve their anger and frustration (Kirkcaldy et al., 1994). Third, the hotel guests with higher level of extraversion and conscientiousness were more likely to complain with the motive to prevent others from experience the same problem, which confirmed Huang’s finding that extraverted and conscientious customers insisted that the service quality can be improved by their complaints

(Huang and Chang, 2008). Interestingly, hotel guests with higher level of agreeableness and conscientiousness complained with weaker motive to get compensation. One possible explanation to this finding is the individuals with notable traits associated with agreeableness and conscientiousness are generous, responsive, and willing to give up their own interests for the sake of others (Barrick and Mount, 1991).

Research Question 5: When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' personality traits and complaint behaviors?

The findings related to RQ5 were used to determine if significant relationships existed between hotel guests' personality traits and complaint behaviors. Based on the Pearson correlation coefficients shown in Table 4.10, the results showed that hotel guests with higher level of extraversion and openness were more likely to complain through voice responses. This result supported Berry's (2014) study, which stated that extraverts and open individuals were more outgoing and more likely to complain through direct channels, which was defined as complaining directly to the service provider at the time of bad service occurrence. Secondly, the extraversion was the only personality trait had a positive significant relationship with private responses. One possible reason is that extraverted individuals are sociable, talkative, and gregarious (Barrick and Mount, 1991). They seem more likely to share opinions and experience with their friends and relatives. Surprisingly, four of the five personality traits (agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness) had significant negative relationships with third-party

responses. This finding supported Butelli's (2007) observation that, in general, most of the consumers were less likely to complain (i.e. writing negative review(s) on public websites or reporting the problem (s) to a consumer agency) at the end of the service period (Butelli, 2007). However, when combined the relationship between personality traits and complaint motives with the relationship between personality traits and complaint behaviors, the hotel guests who complained through third-party responses with a weaker traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness had a higher likelihood to request compensation. Therefore, when dealing with third-party responses, in order to satisfy these complainants, managers should inquire about offering some tokens, such as free breakfast service as a form of compensation.

Also, previous studies (e.g. Huang and Chang, 2008; Berry et al., 2014) had only tested the relationships between the levels of extraversion and openness and complaint behaviors. This study is the first one that examined the other three personality traits, which are agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability. The statistically significant relationship between these three personality traits and complaint motives and complaint behaviors have contributions to hospitality industry. For example, surprisingly, the individuals with higher level of agreeableness and conscientiousness showed less likely to complain with the motive to get compensation. According to this finding, when dealing with the complainants who have higher level of agreeableness and conscientiousness, hotel employees should pay attention to the problem and provide preventive actions instead of just offering compensation.

Research Question 6: When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and complaint motives?

RQ 6 addressed the links between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and complaint motives, while testing the relationship between these two variables. The results indicated that the hotel guests with higher level of emotional intelligence were more likely to complain with the motives to request corrective action, ask for explanation, and prevent others from experiencing the same problem, no matter whether it is their first time complaining or not. It supported Gabbott's (2010) finding that the individuals with higher emotional intelligence were problem-oriented and aim at solving problems. Also, this study has contributed to future research, because it is the first study to test the relationships between customers' emotional intelligence and complaint motives in hospitality industry.

Research Question 7: When dissatisfied, what is the relationship between hotel guests' emotional intelligence and complaint behaviors?

The current study demonstrated that hotel guests with high level of emotional intelligence were more likely to complain through voice responses. This result supported Tsarenko and Tojib's study in 2012, which stated that customers with higher level of emotional intelligence tend to use voice responses to request corrective action immediately.

Interestingly, the hotel guests with higher level of emotional intelligence were also more likely to apply private responses, such as check-out of the hotel and book service from another

hotel the next time. However, contrary to this finding, previous studies pointed out customers with higher emotional intelligence were more likely to forgive after the service was completed (Tsarenko and Tojib, 2012). Due to the contrasting results, further in depth research is needed.

Research Question 8: If there is another bad hotel service experience in the future, what is the relationship between hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and their future complaint behavior intentions?

RQ 8 examined the relationship between hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and future complaint behavioral intentions. Four results received from Pearson correlation coefficients shown in Table 4.12. First, unsurprisingly, when facing with another bad service experience, hotel guests would more likely to choose the complaint methods that are exactly the same as they chose before. Second, for the hotel guests who complained through voice responses before, they would likely to choose private responses instead of third-party responses. This result supported Liu and McClure's (2001) study, which found that if the same problem occurs again, hotel guests who complained through voice responses before would very likely to engage in private responses. In order to decrease the negative impact of private responses on other potential customers and effectively prevent hotel guests switching to other hotels, hotel managers and employees should pay more attention to the hotel guests who voiced their dissatisfaction to the hotel, such as discuss the problem with the hotel manager and hotel employees.

From the other side of the equation, this study also found that the relationship between past private responses and future voice responses intention was even stronger than the relationship between past voice responses and future private responses intention. Since the second bad service may make the customers even more upset, they might express anger directly to the hotel and ask for corrective actions. This new finding has contributed to future studies by improving the understanding of this area and encourages further research.

Implications

This research study aimed to explore the hotel guests' complaint behaviors, and their relationships to motives, personality traits and emotional intelligence. It also highlighted the importance of past complaint behaviors and hotel guests' personal factors that personality traits and emotional intelligence in the hospitality industry.

Results from this study have implications in the following ways. First, due to high level interaction between employees and customers in hospitality industry, hotel guests' complaints due to service failure cannot be avoided completely (Kim, 2010; Choi and Mattila, 2008). It is necessary for hotels to rely techniques that can be used to handle service failures successfully and efficiently. This study tested the hotel guests' complaint behaviors and pointed out several specific recommendations for hotel managers to solve complaints. The results identified that to request corrective action, prevent others from experiencing the same problem, and ask for an explanation were the top three common complaint motives; however, to get compensation was not a prominent

motive for hotel guests to complain. Among three types of complaint behaviors (voice responses, private responses, and third-party responses), a large proportion of hotel guests complain through voice responses, such as asking and informing the hotel employees to take care of their problems. Voice response is an emotional-based response and the most direct way for hotel guests to show dissatisfaction (Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1987). In order to satisfy and win the trust from the complainants who complained through voice responses, hotel managers and employees should pay attention to the problems, forge corrective actions, and explain the problems immediately. The preventive actions also need to be planned and in place as well. Also, if the front desk person cannot satisfactorily answer all the complaints by a guest that encounters problems, it is important to talk about referring guests to the person in charge who might be able to better handle the problem.

Next, this study contributes to the literature and hospitality industry by linking personality traits and emotional intelligence to hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors. As the pool of behavioristic research grew, a number of studies tested the effect of personal factors on consumption behaviors (e.g. Seidman, 2013; Bogg, 2013). However, a lack of empirical research related to testing hotel guests' personality traits and emotional intelligence on complaint behaviors. The potential relationships among these variables are great discoveries. Results from the study showed that the hotel guests with higher level of extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability openness, and emotional intelligence were more likely to voice their dissatisfaction with the strong motive to get corrective actions. However, the people with lower

level of agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness tendency have a higher likelihood to complain through third-party responses with a strong motive to get compensation. Since hotel guests with different levels of emotional intelligence and personality traits have different ways and motives to complain when they face with service failures, this study recommends hotel managers to create a customer profile to record their customer' personal characteristics.

From a marketing standpoint, there is a cycle graphic segmentation in the hotel market that is segmenting individuals based on customers' interests, opinions, and desires. Future hoteliers can take that cycle graphic profile of customers as step further fully understanding their customers from a more internal personal perspective that are personality traits and emotional intelligence. Hotel marketers can add personality and emotional intelligence questions into the customer satisfaction survey and send it through an email to the hotel guests after they check out. Then, based on this database, different service recovery strategies and employee training on how to deal with different personality traits and emotional intelligence should be provided. This is more beneficial for the hotels with loyalty program, because each person as their stay is documented. The more hotel managers and employees know their customers, the better they can address their complaints in the future.

Finally, findings from this study supported the significant relationships between hotel guests' past complaint behaviors and their future intentions. For the hotel guests who complained through voice responses before, even though they have a strong tendency to complain through

voice response in the future, the likelihood to complain through private responses is higher than the likelihood to complain through third-party responses. In order to decrease the negative impact of private responses on other potential customers, based on the customer profiles, hotel managers should pay attention to the customers who voiced their dissatisfaction before. Through this method, hotel managers and employees have more opportunities to seize the chance to solve their customers' complaints and reduce the negative effects cause from private responses.

Limitations and Future Research

Due to limited time and resources, this study has its limitations. First, like other studies, this research has limitations on the sampling method. The survey was disturbed through Amazon Mechanical Turk Service. The researcher is not fully convinced that the sample can represent all hotel guests in the United States. Future research could address this limitation by collecting the data from the hotel guests who are checking in/out at different hotels.

Second, this study has a limitation on the sample size. Even though the target sample was composed of 600 participants, after cleaned and filtered data, 199 responses were used for analysis. This limitation became fairly obvious when the researcher grouped respondents into three groups based on their emotional intelligence scores. The number of respondents with medium emotional intelligence was 125, while the number of respondents with low emotional intelligence was only 10. Therefore, the results related to emotional intelligence need to be carefully interpreted. In the

future, a large number of respondents with various backgrounds are needed for re-test the relationships stated in this project.

Third, it is important to note that this study has seven complaint motives, which are a little bit more for a research study. With these seven items, it was difficult for the researcher to run regression tests. Therefore, in order to get more clear conclusions, future studies should classified these seven motives into several groups, such as material and emotional needs by applying Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Bivariate Correlation.

Also, many other variables, such as hotel classes and situational factors, may also affect customers' complaint motives and complaint behaviors. With the same personality traits, the hotel guests stay at a luxury hotel or an economy hotel may complain through different ways. Also, hotel guests may complain with different motives when they stay at a hotel alone or with friends. Therefore, future studies can probably add more variables when focusing on hotel guests' complaint motives and complaint behaviors.

Contrary to previous studies, this study rated "third-party response" lowest. However many researchers pointed out that complaining through third-party platforms is an easy and lower-cost way for most customers (Sparks and Browning, 2010; Lala and Priluck, 2011). Future studies should retest hotel guests' attitude towards third-party responses via various research methods. Furthermore, this study suggested that for the hotel guests who complained through third-party responses with the strong motive to request compensation. However, customers complain via third-party platforms probably because their complaints have not been solved effectively and they

want to express their anger by harming the reputation of that company (Grégoire et al., 2009). Through third-party responses, customers may not only focus on get compensation but also on the motives to arouse management attention, get an apology from the company, request corrective action, etc. Future studies can retest the complaint motives for hotel guests who complain through this type of complaint behavior.

Finally, this study only tested the relationships among hotel guests' personality traits, emotional intelligence, complaint motives, and complaint behaviors. In order to fully understand the impact of personal factors on complaint motives and complaint behaviors, various research methods, such as regression, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and one-sample t-test are also needed for future studies.

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APPENDIX A Online Survey Instrument

**COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION, DIETETICS,
AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT**

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

**INFORMATION LETTER
for a Research Study entitled
*“Hotel Guest Complaint Behavior and Its Relationship to Motives, Personality traits,
and Emotional Intelligence”***

Dear participants:

You are invited to participate in a research study to test the effects of personality traits and emotional intelligence on customer complaint behavior in hospitality industry. The study is being conducted by Miao Yu, a graduate student, under the direction of Dr. Alecia Douglas, an associate professor in the Auburn University Department of Hotel and Restaurant Management. **You are invited to participate because you have consumption experiences at a hotel in the last 12 months and are age 19 or older.**

What will be involved if you participate? Your participation is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. Your total time commitment is estimated to be approximately fifteen minutes.

Are there any risks or discomforts? There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study.

Are there any benefits to yourself or others? There are no identified benefits for you as a respondent. However, successful data collection could provide valuable insight for improving the service quality in the hospitality industry.

Will you receive compensation for participation? You will receive \$0.50 for taking this survey through the Amazon Mechanical Turk (Mturk) Service.

Are there any costs? No, participation is totally free. Thank you for your time.

If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time by **closing your browser window**. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Once you've submitted anonymous data, it cannot be withdrawn since it will be unidentifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the Department of hotel and restaurant management.

You responses will be completely anonymous and confidential; no identifying information will be collected. All of the survey responses received will be sent immediately to the survey software web site. The survey software web site then stores the responses in a database accessible only by the researcher. All of the data will be deleted from the database at the conclusion of the study. Information collected through your participation may be used to fulfill an educational requirement and could be submitted for publication in an academic journal.

If you have questions about this study, please contact Miao Yu at mzy0012@auburn.edu or Dr. Alecia Douglas at acd0011@auburn.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or e-mail at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO. THIS LETTER IS YOURS TO KEEP.

<u>Miao Yu</u>	<u>4/15/2015</u>
Investigator	Date

<u>Alecia Douglas</u>	<u>4/15/2015</u>
Faculty Investigator	Date

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from March 27, 2015 to March 26, 2018. Protocol #15-148 EX 1503.

[LINK TO SURVEY](#)

https://auburn.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV_9oxIgP2MvRWU13

If you do not wish to participate in this research study, please decline participation by clicking on the “Disagree” button.

Agree

Disagree

Section A –Hotel Experience

1. Have you stayed at a hotel in the last 12 months?

Yes No (lead to end the survey)

2. Are you a member of a hotel loyalty or preferred guest program?

Yes No

3. If Yes, how long have you been a member?

Less than half a year Half a year to one year More than one year to three years More than three years

4. Since your first experience staying at a hotel, how many bad service experiences have you encountered?

None 1-3 4-6 7-9 more than 9

5. How often do you stay at hotels each year?

Less than 4 times 4-6 times 7-9 times more than 9 times

6. Did you have one or more **bad** service experience(s) at these hotels in the last 12 months? (If YES, please answer questions 7, 8, 9, and 10 and then continue the survey to Section B and C; If NO, please skip questions 7, 8, 9, and 10 and proceed to question 11 and 12).

Yes No

7. Please answer this question only if you answered “YES” to Question 6. Based on the number of times you have experienced bad service in a hotel, please indicate the frequency with which you did each of the following actions (Heung and Lam, 2003).

(1=never, 2=rarely, 3=occasionally or sometimes, 4=often, 5=always)

1. I wrote a negative review on a travel website	1 2 3 4 5
2. I discussed the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
3. I checked out of the hotel and avoided booking the hotel from then on.	1 2 3 4 5
4. I spoke to my friends and relatives about my bad experience.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I reported the problem(s) to a consumer agency.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I asked the hotel to take care of the problem.	1 2 3 4 5
7. I booked services from another hotel the next time	1 2 3 4 5
8. I convinced my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
9. I wrote a comment card or completed a guest survey about the problem(s).	1 2 3 4 5
10. I informed the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	1 2 3 4 5
11. I took legal action against the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
12. I wrote a letter to the mass media about my bad experience	1 2 3 4 5

8. Please answer this question only if you answered “YES” to Question 6. Based on the last time you experienced bad service in a hotel, please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements concerning this failure in service. (Heung and Lam, 2003) (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Neither Agree nor Disagree*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*)

I complained because I wanted to

1. Get compensation.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Get an apology from the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
3. Request corrective action.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Ask for an explanation.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Express my anger.	1 2 3 4 5
6. Seek redress.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Prevent others from experiencing the same problem	1 2 3 4 5

9. Please answer this question only if you answered “YES” to Question 6. Based on the last time you experienced bad service in a hotel, imagine that you have another bad hotel service experience in the future. What is the likelihood that you would do each of the following?
(1 =Extremely unlikely, 2 = Unlikely, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Likely, 5 = Extremely likely)

I would likely....

1. Write a negative review on a travel website	1 2 3 4 5
2. Discuss the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
3. Check out of the hotel and avoid booking the hotel from then on.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Speak to my friends and relatives about my bad experience.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Report the problem(s) to a consumer agency.	1 2 3 4 5
6. Ask the hotel to take care of the problem.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Book services from another hotel the next time	1 2 3 4 5
8. Convince my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
9. Write a comment card or complete a guest survey about the problem(s).	1 2 3 4 5
10. Inform the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	1 2 3 4 5
11. Take legal action against the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
12. Write a letter to the mass media about my bad experience	1 2 3 4 5

10. Please answer this question only if you answered “YES” to Question 6. Based on the last time you experienced bad service in a hotel, imagine that you have another bad hotel service experience in the future. What is the likelihood that you would do each of the following?
(1 =Extremely unlikely, 2 = Unlikely, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Likely, 5 = Extremely likely)

I would likely complain because....

1. I would want to get compensation.	1 2 3 4 5
2. I would want to get an apology from the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
3. I would want to request corrective action.	1 2 3 4 5
4. I would want to ask for an explanation.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I would want to express my anger.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I would want to seek redress.	1 2 3 4 5
7. I would want to prevent others from experiencing the same problem	1 2 3 4 5

11. Please answer this question only if you answered “NO” to Question 6 above. Imagine that in the future you have a bad service experience in a hotel (e.g. waiting too long for check-in, the waitress is so rude, etc.). Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements. (Heung and Lam, 2003)

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

I would

1. Write a negative review on a travel website	1 2 3 4 5
2. Discuss the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
3. Check out of the hotel and avoid booking the hotel from then on.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Speak to my friends and relatives about my bad experience.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Report the problem(s) to a consumer agency.	1 2 3 4 5
6. Ask the hotel to take care of the problem.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Book services from another hotel the next time	1 2 3 4 5
8. Convince my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
9. Write a comment card or complete a guest survey about the problem(s).	1 2 3 4 5
10. Inform the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	1 2 3 4 5
11. Take legal action against the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
12. Write a letter to the mass media about my bad experience	1 2 3 4 5

12. Please answer this question only if you answered “NO” to Question 6 above. Imagine that in the future you complain about a bad service experience in a hotel (e.g. waiting too long for check-in, the waitress is so rude, etc.). Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements. (Heung and Lam, 2003)

(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

I would complain because....

1. I would want to get compensation.	1 2 3 4 5
2. I would want to get an apology from the hotel.	1 2 3 4 5
3. I would want to request corrective action.	1 2 3 4 5
4. I would want to ask for an explanation.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I would want to express my anger.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I would want to seek redress.	1 2 3 4 5
7. I would want to prevent others from experiencing the same problem	1 2 3 4 5

Section B – Personality Scales

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following personality statements.
(Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann, 2003)

(1=Disagree strongly, 2=Disagree moderately, 3=Disagree a little, 4=Neither agree nor disagree, 5=Agree a little, 6=Agree moderately, 7=Agree strongly)

I see myself as:

1. Extraverted, enthusiastic.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Critical, quarrelsome.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Dependable, self-disciplined.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Anxious, easily upset.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Open to new experiences, complex.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Reserved, quiet.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Sympathetic, warm	1	2	3	4	5
8. Disorganized, careless.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Calm, emotionally stable.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Conventional, uncreative	1	2	3	4	5

Section C – Emotional Intelligence

Using a scale of 1 through 4, where 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree, respond to the following statements.

Dimension 1: Ability to deal with own emotions	
I am aware of the events that can trigger my positive and or negative emotions.	1 2 3 4
I am aware of my emotional state when I engage in a service experience.	1 2 3 4
When I am in a service experience I can easily identify the emotions I am feeling.	1 2 3 4
I can appear calm even when I am upset with the service staff.	1 2 3 4
When I am frustrated with the service staff I can overcome my frustration.	1 2 3 4
Dimension 2: Ability to deal with others' emotions.	
I can tell when the service staff do not mean what they say.	1 2 3 4
When I talk to the service staff I can gauge their reaction from their facial expression.	1 2 3 4
When I talk to the service staff I can gauge their reaction from their tone of voice.	1 2 3 4
When I talk to the service staff I can gauge their reaction from their body language.	1 2 3 4
If I choose to, I am able to help the service staff see the positive side of negative events.	1 2 3 4
If the service staff are unhappy I am able to cheer them up if I choose to.	1 2 3 4
If the service staff become frustrated I am able to help them overcome this feeling if I choose to.	1 2 3 4
I feel happy when I see service staff being treated well by other customers.	1 2 3 4
I feel upset when I see service staff being taken advantage of by other customers.	1 2 3 4
I feel angry when service staff are treated badly by other customers.	1 2 3 4
Dimension 3: Ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking	
I do not let my emotions overcome my thinking when I am problem-solving.	1 2 3 4
I get very enthusiastic when it comes to problem solving.	1 2 3 4
When facing a delicate problem I can generate the right emotion to help me solve it.	1 2 3 4
When facing problems I can adapt my emotional state to suit the task.	1 2 3 4

Section D - Background Information

1. Please state your gender

- Male Female

2. What is your age?

- 19-29
 30-39
 40-49
 50-59
 Above 60

3. Please identify your ethnicity

- Asian and Asian American
 Black or African American
 Caucasian
 Native American/Alaskan
 Pacific Islander
 Mixed
 Other (please specify) _____

4. Please state the highest level of education you have earned

- 11th grade or less
 High School Diploma
 Some college
 Associate Degree
 Bachelor's Degree
 Graduate Degree
 Other (please specify) _____

5. Income Level

- Under \$20,000
 \$20,000-\$35,000
 \$35,001-\$50,000
 \$50,001-\$65,000
 \$65,001-\$80,000
 \$80,001-\$95,000
 Above \$95,000

APPENDIX B Coding Instruction

Variable Name (As it appears in SPSS)	Value Labels
ID. Number	Continuous
Member Are you a member of a hotel loyalty or preferred guest program?	1=Yes 2=No
Membership_length If Yes, how long have you been a member?	1=Less than half a year; 2=Half a year to one year; 3=More than one year to three years; 4=More than three years
Bad_experience Number of bad service experiences	1=1-3; 2=4-6; 3=7-9; 4=More than 9 times
Hotel_Stay_Frequency How often do you stay at hotels each year?	1= less than 4 times; 2= 4-6 times; 3= 7-9 times; 4= more than 9 times
Behavior1 I wrote a negative review on a travel website.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior2 I discussed the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior3 I checked out of the hotel and avoided booking the hotel from then on.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior4 I spoke to my friends and relatives about my bad experience.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior5 I reported the problem(s) to a consumer agency.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times

Behavior6 I asked the hotel to take care of the problem.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior7 I booked services from another hotel the next time.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior8 I convinced my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior9 I wrote a comment card or completed a guest survey about the problem(s).	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior10 I informed the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior11 I took legal action against the hotel.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Behavior12 I wrote a letter to the mass media about my bad experience.	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Voive_response Average score of Behavior 2, 6, 9, and 10	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Private_response Average score of Behavior 3, 4, 7, and 8	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times

Thirdparty_response Average score of Behavior 1, 5, 11, and 12	1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes/Occasionally; 4=Often; 5=All of the times
Motive1 Get compensation.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Motive2 Get an apology from the hotel.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Motive3 Request corrective action.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Motive4 Ask for an explanation.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Motive5 Express my anger.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Motive6 Seek redress.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Motive7 Prevent others from experiencing the same problem.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior1 Write a negative review on a travel website.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior2 Discuss the problem with a manager or other employee of the hotel.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree

Future_Behavior3 Check out of the hotel and avoid booking the hotel from then on.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior4 Speak to my friends and relatives about my bad experience.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior5 Report the problem(s) to a consumer agency.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior6 Ask the hotel to take care of the problem.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior7 Book services from another hotel the next time.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior8 Convince my friends and relatives not to stay at that hotel.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior9 Write a comment card or complete a guest survey about the problem(s).	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior10 Inform the hotel about the problem so that they will do better in the future.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior11 Take legal action against the hotel.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree
Future_Behavior12 Write a letter to the mass media about my bad experience.	1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree

Future_Voice Average score of Future Behavior 2, 6, 9, and 10	1= Never; 2= Rarely; 3= Sometimes/Occasionally; 4= Often; 5= All of the times
Future_Private Average score of Future Behavior 3, 4, 7, and 8	1= Never; 2= Rarely; 3= Sometimes/Occasionally; 4= Often; 5= All of the times
Future_Thirdparty Average score of Future Behavior 1, 5, 11, and 12	1= Never; 2= Rarely; 3= Sometimes/Occasionally; 4= Often; 5= All of the times
Future_Motive1 I would want to get compensation.	1= Very Unlikely; 2= Unlikely; 3= Undecided; 4= Likely; 5=Very Likely
Future_Motive2 I would want to get an apology from the hotel.	1= Very Unlikely; 2= Unlikely; 3= Undecided; 4= Likely; 5=Very Likely
Future_Motive3 I would want to request corrective action.	1= Very Unlikely; 2= Unlikely; 3= Undecided; 4= Likely; 5=Very Likely
Future_Motive4 I would want to ask for an explanation.	1= Very Unlikely; 2= Unlikely; 3= Undecided; 4= Likely; 5=Very Likely
Future_Motive5 I would want to express my anger.	1= Very Unlikely; 2= Unlikely; 3= Undecided; 4= Likely; 5=Very Likely
Future_Motive6 I would want to seek redress.	1= Very Unlikely; 2= Unlikely; 3= Undecided; 4= Likely; 5=Very Likely
Future_Motive7 I would want to prevent others from experiencing the same problem.	1= Very Unlikely; 2= Unlikely; 3= Undecided; 4= Likely; 5=Very Likely

Gender	1=Male; 2= Female
Age	1=19-29; 2=30-39; 3=40-49; 4=50-59; 5=60 and Above
Ethnicity	1= Asian or Asian American; 2= Black or African American; 3= Caucasian; 4= Native American/ Alaskan; 5= Pacific Islander; 6= Mixed; 7= Other (please specify)
Education Level	1=11 th grade or less; 2= high school diploma; 3= Some College; 4= Associate Degree; 5= Bachelor's Degree; 6= Graduate Degree; 7=Other (please specify)
Income Level	1= under \$20,000; 2= \$20,000-\$35,000; 3=\$35,001-\$50,000; 4=\$50,001-\$65,000; 5=\$65,001-\$80,000; 6=\$80,001-\$95,000; 7=Above \$95,000