

Paws and Stay: Understanding Customers' Purchase Intention in Pet-Friendly Hotels

Siddharth Shimpi ^{1*}, Ambuj Sharma ², Shantanu Rai ³

¹Associate Professor, Ram Charan School of Leadership, MIT-WPU, Pune, Maharashtra Pune – 411038

Email ID : siddharth.shimpi@mitwpu.edu.in

²Assistant Professor, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh Prayagraj – 211019

Email ID : ambujsharma@gbpssi.in

³Research Scholar, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh Prayagraj – 211019

Email ID : shantanurai@gbpssi.in

Corresponding Author:

Siddharth Shimpi

ABSTRACT

With the growing trend of pet ownership, the hospitality industry has recognized the need to accommodate pet-friendly services. This research investigates the moderating influence of pet-friendly amenities (PFA), service quality (SQ), hotel pet policies (HPP), customer satisfaction (CS), and purchase intention (PI) with the mediating effect of customers' emotional attachment to pets (CAP). A structured questionnaire was developed based on validated scales, and data were collected from 396 pet owners in Maharashtra who had stayed in pet-friendly hotels at least twice in the last five months. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to analyze relationships among the constructs. It also reveals that the hotel pet policy has the most significant impact on customer satisfaction compared to pet-friendly facilities and service quality. Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between the level of emotional attachment to pets and purchase intention, while customer satisfaction has a positive influence on PI. These findings imply that this research can be useful in determining that well-structured pet policies and improved service quality increase customer satisfaction and, hence, purchase intention. By demonstrating that pet-related services play a part in customer behaviour, this work extends the hospitality and marketing body of knowledge. Managerially, it offers hotel operators a way of understanding how to create policies that will attract pet owners, hence improving brand loyalty and profitability. The current study has some limitations that can be addressed in future research; these include investigating the effects of cultural differences and the part played by digital media on the customers' perceptions of pet-friendly accommodations.

Keywords: Pet-friendly amenities, service quality, hotel pet policies, customer satisfaction, emotional attachment to pets, purchase intention

INTRODUCTION:

The accommodation sector, in particular, has been revolutionised by the growing market for pet-friendly services. Over the years, people have taken to adopting more pets as part of their households, which has made them consider their pets as part of the family, especially while traveling; this has led to an increase in the number of hotels that accommodate pets (Buhalis & Chan, 2023). Pet-friendly tourism is no longer a marginal concept but a phenomenon that has gained popularity due to shifts in consumer perceptions, people's emotional connections with their pets, and the changing role of animals in people's lives (Carr, 2017). Pet accommodation has become common among pet owners, and that has led to the provision of accommodation that is friendly to pets while selecting a hotel (Hidalgo-Fernández et al., 2023). There is a lack of research studies on the factors that may influence customers to choose pet-friendly hotels in spite of the increasing market demand for such hotels. The

current study focuses on the factors that lead to the choice of hotels by consumers and the factors that influence their decision-making, as well as the challenges that they face.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), developed by Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991), is one of the most important theoretical frameworks for studying the purchase intention of pet-friendly hotels. According to TPB, behavioural intention depends on attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Regarding the perceptions made by consumers on pet-friendly hotels, it is a combination of perceived convenience, emotional appeal, and perceived quality of pet-friendly services (Meng et al., 2024). Another important influence that affects the behaviour of the consumers is the perceived norms, which include the influence of other pet owners, other consumer's experience, and pressure. Thus, perceived behavioural control, which entails the ease in booking the availability of cheap and friendly pet policies, also affects the decision of a traveller to book for a pet-friendly hotel.

In this case, there are some factors that limit the demand for pet-friendly accommodations. Some of the difficulties that pet owners encounter include extra expenses, lack of accommodation options that allow pets and pets' stress due to changes in environment (Ying et al., 2021). These issues are addressed, and customer satisfaction is improved in hotels that provide a clear pet policy, separate areas for pets, and specific services for pets (Hidalgo-Fernández et al., 2023). Further, the following constraints are addressed by accommodation through fulfilling the expectations of a traveler by providing pet facilities such as pet beds, grooming services, and parks for play (Meng et al., 2024).

The pet accommodation market is constantly growing as more and more hotels have noticed the economic potential of the pet market (The Business Research Company, 2024a). Most hotel chains and boutique establishments are offering pet-friendly services in their operations to capture loyal customers. According to Carr (Carr, 2017), pet owners are willing to spend more for services that their pets will receive while they are on business or vacations; hence, the commercial opportunities are bright. To meet this demand, there are hotels that have gone ahead to offer luxury pet services, such as gourmet meals for pets, pet spas, and pet concierge services (Buhalis & Chan, 2023).

It reveals that there are changing expectations of consumers in terms of pet-friendly hotel services with a focus on hygiene, security, and access (Hidalgo-Fernández et al., 2023). Most people would want clear pet policies that state the charges, limitations, and other services beyond the pet (Tang et al., 2022). This implies that hotels must ensure that they provide services that suit the expectation of their customers on pet-friendly services in order to avoid being rated low by the customers. Ethical consideration is also an issue in pet tourism since organisations and companies are supposed to act in a responsible and non-discriminative manner that is in accordance with the desire of both the lovers of pets as well as non-pet lovers (Macbeth, 2005).

Since there is a growing trend in the provision of pet-friendly accommodations, it is important to establish the factors influencing customer purchase intention within the pet-friendly accommodation niche market. They include consumer attitude, perceived normative beliefs, and perceived behavioural control to explain consumers' decisions and also discuss the place of service quality, hotel policies, and emerging market trends. Thus, based upon the data derived from the consumer behaviour theories and findings of the hospitality industry, this research intends to offer significant recommendations to the hotel managers seeking to improve their pet-friendly services. The insights will help businesses target pet-friendly travelers, enhance pet-friendly service delivery, and position themselves strategically to capture a share in the expanding market. The interaction between pets and traveling is ever changing, and as a result, the behaviour of consumers in this segment can help business that seek to benefit from this emerging market (The Business Research Company, 2024b).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

2.1 Pet-Friendly Amenities

Pet-friendly amenities have become a crucial factor influencing consumer preferences when choosing accommodations. Modern pet owners expect hotels to provide not only basic pet accommodations but also enhanced services that ensure comfort and convenience for both pets and their owners (Zhang et al., 2024). Pet beds, food bowls, pet-friendly areas, and pet-friendly packages are some of the necessary features that have been found to enhance the experience of guests (Travel Weekly, 2021). Thus, the policies permitting pets in common areas and the provision of pet-friendly exterior areas are beneficial for customers and contribute to their loyalty (Koufodontis & Melissourgou, 2024).

A study shows that customers are willing to spend more for quality pet services, with some of the common services being pet spas, grooming, and custom-made meals for the pet when selecting a hotel (Joo et al., 2024). In addition, the growing pet travel industry also means that more hotels provide pet-friendly services such as pet sitting, veterinary care, and pet concierge services to meet the needs of traveling pets (Dogster, 2025). It can be concluded that the hotels that provide an extensive range of pet-friendly services and facilities will have a competitive advantage and a stable flow of customers.

2.2 Service Quality

The service quality in pet-friendly hotels is very crucial since consumers have high expectations of receiving satisfactory and comfortable experiences for both themselves and their pets. Quality service is not only a human-animal interaction, but it is also ethical and responsible treatment of animals and pet-friendly services that follow humane and ethical standards (Winter, 2020; Cousquer & Allison, 2012). As it was highlighted earlier, pet travelers are likely to encounter service quality issues, including lack of pet-friendly facilities, ambiguous policies, and dearth of pet-friendly spaces, which may affect their travel experience (Hung et al., 2012).

The social interaction of the pet owner together with the pet during travel impacts the perceived service quality. Customers who travel with their pets and hotels that have special services that cater to pets, including play areas, veterinary services, and pet sitting services, improve the satisfaction level of the customer (Wei et al., 2024). In addition, other factors, such as hygiene, health standards, and staff's sensitivity to issues concerning pets, are also considered in determining the service quality of pet-friendly hotels (Indian Holiday, 2021). Travellers want to get services that will make their trip be as stress-free as possible, hence making it mandatory for the hotel to provide quality services.

Because the number of pet owners who seek accommodations for themselves and their pets increases, hotels need to be more ethical, individualised, and clean. Maintaining service quality standards thus contributes to the improvement of brand image, customer loyalty, and the general well-being of pet owners during travel.

2.3 Hotel Pet Policies

Accessibility of hotel pet policies is an important factor that influences customers' decisions to select the hotel of their choice because pet owners require clear information about their pet's stay. Some of the policies of pet include size of the pet, the type of breed, extra charges, areas that allow pets and the services that are provided to the pet within the room (BBC News, 2016). These policies seek to ensure that guests who bring their pets are comfortable while at the same time, other guests as well as the hotel are comfortable.

The existence of pets in hospitality environments affects consumer attitudes and booking decisions. The study also shows that travelers are willing to select lodges with pet policies that they favor, including the size of the pet allowed, the availability of pet-friendly eating places, and extra fees (Zou et al., 2024). Furthermore, hotels that have favourable and understandable policies towards pets can positively influence customers' satisfaction and loyalty. However, the elements that can negatively influence pet owners' decisions are high fees and limited availability of pet-friendly places.

Another factor that affects the expectations people have for pet-friendly accommodations is the psychological connection that is created between a person and his/her pet. According to Keaveney (2008), while choosing a policy for their pets, the pet owners are not only loyal to their pets but also treat them as family members, so they expect to get proper and well-organised policies. Such hotels that recognise this bond by providing pet-oriented services like treats, beds, and play zones for the pet are likely to attract more pet travellers. With increasing customer preferences of owning pets, it will be crucial to adapt this hotel's policies concerning pets to capture the market of such customers.

2.4 Customer Satisfaction

The satisfaction of customers in pet-friendly hotels depends on the quality of services provided, the emotions of the guests and their pets, and hotel experiences. According to Holbrook (2008), pet owners provide their pets with the status of family members, which implies that they expect them to be treated as family when they are in a facility. Hotels that recognise this bond through offering services such as the provision of pet beds, play areas, and other related products enhance customer satisfaction.

According to Dashper (2020), multispecies tourism relates to the interactions between humans and animals in the context of tourism. Holidaymakers with pets look for places that cater to both their requirements and those of the animals. Hotels with pet-friendly amenities like pet-friendly spaces, pet-friendly personnel, and pet-friendly recreation services have a positive impact on the guests, thus improving satisfaction and loyalty.

Also, psychological aspects like perception of mindfulness and connectedness with nature are also important for customer satisfaction in pet-friendly hotels. According to Richter and Hunecke (2022), the attachment to nature and animals makes pet owners more conscious of sustainable and animal welfare-friendly facilities. Such

pet-friendly measures can go further and help increase customer loyalty among hotels that demonstrate environmentally friendly pet policies and encourage responsible pet tourism. This is especially important as pet tourism is becoming more popular, and these factors will help to increase the satisfaction of customers in the hospitality industry.

Based on the literature review, this research aims to test the following three hypotheses to investigate the factors affecting customer satisfaction in pet-friendly hotels. Studies have also pointed out the benefits of pet facilities as key factors that help to improve the comfort of pet owners. According to Zhang et al. (2024), features like beds for pets, pet grooming, and play areas are factors that make the environment more appealing to the customer. Travel Weekly (2021) also points out that the hotels that are offering more services to accommodate pets have gained more customer loyalty. Also, Joo et al. (2024) establish that travelers are willing to pay a premium for extra pet services, which indicates that there is a correlation between services and satisfaction. Thus, the study hypothesizes - **H₁**: Pet-friendly amenities positively influence Customer Satisfaction for Customers traveling with Pets.

Other aspects that have been considered include the roles of amenities and service quality as the determinants of satisfaction. Hung et al. (2012) point out that travellers are limited when it comes to pet carriage during leisure travels, and therefore, attentiveness of the hotel services is critical. Wei, Leung, and Xu (2024) have also stressed the role of human-pet interactions in the process of traveling and, therefore, the importance of quality service. Ethical considerations, such as responsible pet treatment and sustainable practices, also contribute to guest satisfaction (Winter, 2020). These findings lead to the second hypothesis - **H₂**: Service Quality positively influences Customer Satisfaction for Customers traveling with Pets.

Consumer attitudes on pet-friendly service provision are lastly determined by hotel pet policies. According to Zou et al. (2024), it is the policies that are transparent and accommodating that influence the booking decisions; as for Keaveney (2008), it is the psychological connection that pet owners have with their animals that influences their traveling. Some of the ways that pet policies that state fees, restrictions, and specific areas for pets can be effective in decreasing customer's confusion and increasing satisfaction include (BBC News, 2016). Based on this, the third hypothesis is formulated - **H₃**: Hotel Pet Policies positively influence Customer Satisfaction for Customers traveling with Pets.

2.5 Emotional Attachment to Pets

The human's emotional attachment to pets has been identified in numerous studies concerning the psychological aspects of the connection between individuals and pets. Dotson and Hyatt (2008) have stated that pet ownership is not just a social phenomenon as it affects the emotional state and consumer behavior. They discovered that the owners have affection for the pets as they do with members of their family, so they play a significant role in the decisions made when traveling/

lodging. Similar to Ellson (2008) on the life cycle of pets, the authors observe that people form a close attachment with their pets that influences their daily purchasing behaviour and ongoing care of their pets. This is because such an attachment affects the consumers' decisions regarding pet-friendly facilities and services as well.

Emotional attachment to pets is also evident in the marketing and advertisement aspects of society. Lancendorfer, Atkin, and Reece (2008) establish that viewers with high levels of pet attachment show a positive attitude towards the advertisements with pets. According to their finding, the use of animals in advertising creates an emotional connection with the brand and thus should be embraced in marketing campaigns. Further, Zasloff (1996) also explains the difference in the level of bond with different kinds of pets, where they found that dogs create a more profound bond because of the companion animals' attributes and interaction.

In totality, all these studies show that the consumer and pet relationship is a crucial aspect of consumer behaviour, particularly with regards to the hotel industry. Those people who have close feelings towards their pets search for hotels that accept pets, and in the process, this supports the need for the services and the policies on pet-friendly hotels. Therefore, it is important to understand this emotional connection when attempting to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty in pet services.

2.6 Purchase Intention

The pet owners' attitude towards their pets and their perceptions about pet-friendly services influence their purchase intention in pet-friendly hospitality. Holbrook (2008) asserts that pets are considered as family members by the owners, which affects their expenditure, including travel expenditure. This has led to the need to search for places that can host both the owner and the pet without the owner feeling the need to be with the pet. Consumers would like to have the products and services that would make the stay of the pet comfortable, hence the desire to find hotels that allow pets. This study also reveals that for the firms that are seeking consumers with pets, they should adopt policies that permit pets with a view of impacting the consumers' purchase intention and brand loyalty.

Meng et al. (2024) provide a further understanding of the psychological and behavioural intention of the travellers opting for pet-friendly hotels through the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Norm Activation Model (NAM). According to their study, attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and moral obligations affect purchase intentions. Zhang et al. (2024) extend this by pointing out

that certain characteristics of pet-friendly hotels, such as pet-friendly policies, cleanliness, and responsiveness of the staff, are important determinants of consumer choices. Altogether, these works suggest that the business must enhance the pet-related products and services to achieve purchase intention and customer loyalty.

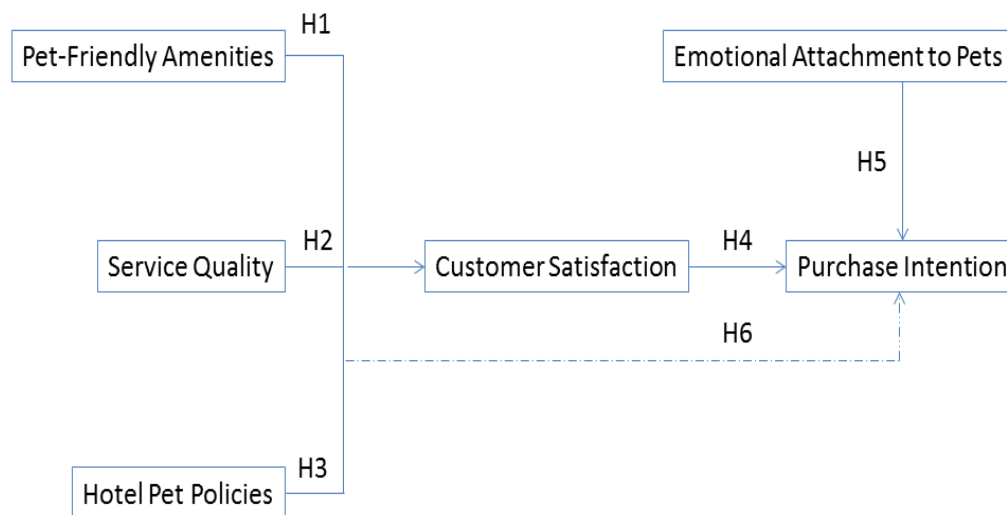
Based on the literature review, the present study formulates two more hypotheses, which state that there is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction, emotional attachment with pets, and purchase intention for the customers who travel with pets.

This study has also found that customer satisfaction is one of the most important factors that influence the purchase intention, especially in the hospitality industry. Meng et al. (2024) also stated that customers who are satisfied with the accommodation are more likely to revisit the pet-friendly hotels and even recommend them to other people. Zhang et al. (2024) also highlight that customers' satisfaction depends on pet facilities and services, quality of services, and pet policies of the hotel, and this determines their likelihood to use the service of the same hotel or firm again. Given this, the study proposes the hypothesis - **H₄**: Customer Satisfaction positively influences Purchase Intention for Customers traveling with Pets.

Also, the role of emotional connection with pets is another important factor that influences consumer behaviour. According to Holbrook (2008), the consumers have a familiar attitude towards their pets, and that is why they consider them to be family members. Dotson and Hyatt (2008) elaborate that pet-human companionship leads to the development of an emotional bond and hence makes the owners willing to access services for the pet. This kind of attachment makes people spend more money on services that cater to their pets, such as accommodation. Thus, the study proposes the hypothesis - **H₅**: Emotional Attachment to Pets positively influences Purchase Intention for Customers traveling with Pets.

Customer satisfaction is an important determinant of purchase intention because it captures the overall experience of customers taking their pets on trips and their willingness to book future trips (Meng et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2024). Therefore, it is hypothesised that satisfaction will act as a moderator that strengthens the relationship between pet amenities/service quality and the policy on pets and purchase intention (BBC News, 2016; Holbrook, 2008). Therefore, the study proposes **H₆**: Customer Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Pet-Friendly Amenities, Service Quality, Hotel Pet Policies, and Purchase Intention for Customers traveling with Pets.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



3. METHODS AND ANALYSIS

3.1 Measures

In this study, a structured questionnaire was used as the main data collection instrument. It included items from the validated scales of Pet-Friendly Amenities (PFA), Service Quality (SQ), Hotel Pet Policies (HPP), Customer Satisfaction (CS), Customer Attachment to pets (CAP), and Purchase Intention (PI) (refer to Appendix A). A preliminary survey was conducted to determine the relevance of the questions to the participants, their interest, and understanding of the questions, as well as the time it took to complete the questions and the standard deviation. In response to the feedback received, some changes were made to improve the clarity and accuracy of the work. The final version enhanced the degree of research objectives and objectives of data reliability and validity.

3.2 Sampling Method

The respondents were selected based on the following criteria: the respondents own pets and have had them for at least five years and have taken their pets to a hotel between the months of August and December 2024. In this study, the target area of the research was Maharashtra. Finally, to facilitate an easy selection of the final sample, the convenient sampling technique was used. To minimise this threat, participants of the study were selected from different socio-economic statuses to increase the generalizability of the results.

3.3 Samples

Out of 800 questionnaires administered in Maharashtra, 396 responses were collected, yielding a response rate of 49.5%. This exceeds the recommended minimum sample size for statistically significant analysis. (Hair et al., 1998). This was evidenced by a high response rate, which is an indication of participant interest and, hence,

increases the validity of the study. This is beneficial in enhancing the validity of the findings because it increases the variations in the sample population. A high level of engagement is also explained by the pertinence of the study topic, which ensures that the findings can be meaningful and generalised.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Content Validity

To ensure content validity, a literature review on pet-friendly hospitality services, customer satisfaction, and purchase intention was conducted. This review was useful in the development of the questionnaire that will be used in the study, in line with the objectives of the study. A pilot study was conducted with a group of subject-matter experts in order to review and further improve the structure, wording, and content of the questionnaire. All the feedback received was incorporated in order to improve the clarity and content of the paper. To ensure the credibility of the instrument, the modified questionnaire was administered to a different set of respondents who were not used in the final study. This step helped in ensuring that the measurement tool was valid, reliable, and well-developed in a way that would capture the experiences of customers who travel with their pets.

4.2 Reliability Statistics

The reliability test shows that Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.947, which is very high, so it can be concluded that the 28 items in the questionnaire are very reliable for measuring the intended constructs. A value of 0.90 or above is regarded as high and shows that the scale items have high inter-correlation and minimal measurement error. This high reliability index substantiates the fact that the instrument is well developed to elicit the actual perception of the respondents. Thus, the instrument is ready for the next data collection without significant changes, but certain adjustments may be made to enhance clarity.

4.3 Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measures of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity

As presented in Table 1, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy is 0.920, which is well above the recommended threshold of 0.60, indicating that the dataset is highly suitable for factor analysis. This suggests that the correlations among variables are strong enough to justify factor extraction.

Additionally, Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity is significant ($\chi^2 = 3243.471$, $df = 378$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix and that there are significant relationships among the variables. The significant result further supports the appropriateness of conducting factor analysis. These findings validate the adequacy of the data for structural equation modeling (SEM) and suggest that meaningful patterns and latent constructs can be identified in the study.

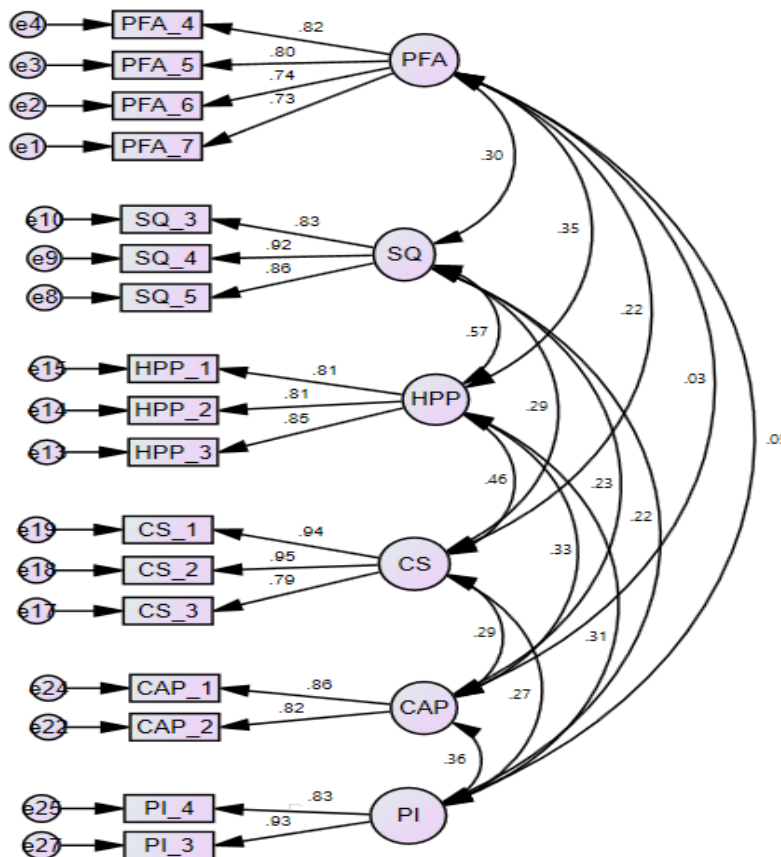
Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.920
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3243.471
	df	378
	Sig.	.000

4.4 Measurement Model and Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The study employed the 'Maximum Likelihood' extraction approach for confirmatory factor analysis, illustrated through a Measurement Model (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Measurement Model



The covariance analysis of latent variables (Table 2) highlights significant relationships between key factors influencing customer satisfaction and purchase intention

for pet-friendly hotels. The strong positive covariance between Pet-Friendly Amenities (PFA) and Service Quality (SQ) (Estimate = 0.658, $p < 0.001$), as well as

PFA and Hotel Pet Policies (HPP) (Estimate = 0.732, $p < 0.001$), suggests that well-maintained pet-friendly amenities enhance overall service perceptions and reinforce the effectiveness of pet policies. Additionally, PFA and Customer Satisfaction (CS) (Estimate = 0.634, $p < 0.001$) indicate that providing pet-friendly services contributes positively to guest satisfaction.

Furthermore, Customer Satisfaction (CS) is strongly associated with Purchase Intention (PI) (Estimate = 0.846, $p < 0.001$), supporting the hypothesis that satisfied pet-owning customers are more likely to book pet-friendly accommodations in the future. The relationship between

Emotional Attachment to Pets (CAP) and Purchase Intention (PI) (Estimate = 0.876, $p < 0.001$) suggests that travelers with strong emotional bonds to their pets are more inclined to choose hotels accommodating their furry companions. Also, Hypothesis 2: Service Quality (SQ) and Hotel Pet Policies (HPP) (Estimate = 1.332, $p < 0.001$) proves that well-formulated and effectively implemented pet policies positively affect the perceived service quality. These results support the need for pet-oriented approaches to be incorporated into the hotel services to increase their appeal to pet owners and to increase their demand.

Table 2: Co-variances of Latent Variables

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
PFA	<-->	SQ	0.658	0.076	8.628	***
PFA	<-->	HPP	0.732	0.082	8.882	***
PFA	<-->	CS	0.634	0.08	7.941	***
PFA	<-->	CAP	0.4	0.073	5.498	***
PI	<-->	PFA	0.375	0.065	5.746	***
SQ	<-->	HPP	1.332	0.114	11.727	***
SQ	<-->	CS	0.995	0.104	9.574	***
SQ	<-->	CAP	0.828	0.109	7.625	***
PI	<-->	SQ	0.732	0.098	7.462	***
HPP	<-->	CS	1.283	0.12	10.66	***
HPP	<-->	CAP	0.98	0.121	8.077	***
PI	<-->	HPP	0.857	0.109	7.851	***
CS	<-->	CAP	0.974	0.125	7.82	***
PI	<-->	CS	0.846	0.111	7.59	***
PI	<-->	CAP	0.876	0.125	7.008	***

Note: PFA: Pet-Friendly Amenities; SQ: Service Quality; HPP: Hotel Pet Policies; CS: Customer Satisfaction; CAP: Emotional Attachment to Pets; PI: Purchase Intention

Table 3: Composite Reliability and AVE

		Factor Loadings	Estimate	C.R.	Composite Reliability	AVE
Pet-Friendly Amenities	PFA_7	0.73	1	_*	0.856	0.598
	PFA_6	0.74	0.983	12.4		
	PFA_5	0.80	1.14	13.284		
	PFA_4	0.82	1.178	13.627		
Service Quality	SQ_5	0.86	1	_*	0.904	0.758
	SQ_4	0.92	1.051	25.635		
	SQ_3	0.83	0.894	19.798		

Hotel Pet Policies	HPP_3	0.85	1	_*	0.863	0.678
	HPP_2	0.81	0.924	20.398		
	HPP_1	0.81	0.952	20.452		
Customer Satisfaction	CS_3	0.79	1	_*	0.803	0.803
	CS_2	0.95	1.08	22.415		
	CS_1	0.94	1.096	22.208		
Emotional Attachment to Pets	CAP_2	0.82	1	_*	0.741	0.706
	CAP_1	0.86	1.136	11.411		
Purchase Intention	PI_4	0.83	1	_*	0.798	0.777
	PI_3	0.93	1.145	11.713		

Note: *_Parameter set equal to 1.0 for identification model.

The findings from Table 3 indicate that all constructs exhibit strong composite reliability (CR) and adequate average variance extracted (AVE), demonstrating the robustness of the measurement model. All the CR values are above the minimum threshold of 0.70, from 0.741 (Emotional Attachment to Pets) to 0.904 (Service Quality). This indicates that all the items developed to measure each construct are valid and reliable. Also, the AVE values are higher than 0.50, indicating that every construct has a good amount of variance from its respective indicators. The AVEs vary from 0.598 (Pet-Friendly Amenities) to 0.803 (Customer Satisfaction), which implies that the measures have convergent validity.

Among all the factors, both Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction have particularly high reliability and variance extraction, which indicates their good measurement properties. Pet-friendly amenities and Emotional Attachment to Pets also have fair reliability and validity to be included in the model. These findings support the constructs' clarity and the items' ability to assess the intended dimensions. Therefore, the measurement model is considered appropriate for conducting other analyses like SEM so as to test the hypothesised relationships between the constructs with regard to customer satisfaction and purchase intention regarding pet-friendly hospitality services.

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

	PFA	SQ	HPP	CS	CAP	PI
PFA	0.773					
SQ	0.302	0.871				
HPP	0.354	0.568	0.823			
CS	0.223	0.290	0.460	0.896		
CAP	0.033	0.233	0.325	0.287	0.840	
PI	0.054	0.224	0.307	0.265	0.360	0.880

Note: PFA: Pet-Friendly Amenities; SQ: Service Quality; HPP: Hotel Pet Policies; CS: Customer Satisfaction; CAP: Emotional Attachment to Pets; PI: Purchase Intention

The findings from Table 4 indicate that discriminant validity is established, as the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values (diagonal elements) are higher than the corresponding inter-construct correlations (off-diagonal elements). As shown in the above table, each construct is distinct from the other construct, therefore confirming the reliability of the measurement model. The AVE values reveal a good construct

convergence as the maximum AVE is for Customer Satisfaction (0.896), followed by Purchase Intention (0.880), and the third one is Service Quality (0.871).

The correlation between the inter-constructs is moderate to low, and the highest correlation is between Service Quality and Hotel Pet Policies, with a correlation coefficient of 0.568. This shows that the two are related but different. Likewise, the coefficient of CAP with Purchase Intention (PI) is equal to 0.360, which means that emotional attachment has a role to play in the purchase process. PFA has the least association with the

other constructs, thus supporting the position of this research in asserting its independent role in the model. These findings support the reliability and the overall discriminant validity of the constructs and their characteristics that make the structural model suitable to examine the relationships between variables regarding customer satisfaction and purchase intention in pet-friendly hospitality services.

Table 5: Measurement Fit Index Model

Model Index	Fit Recommended Value	Structural Model	Remarks
X ² /df	≤ 5	3.484	Accepted Fit
RMSEA	≤ .08	0.079	Accepted Fit
RMR	≤ .90	0.145	Accepted Fit
NFI	> .90	0.927	Accepted Fit
GFI	> .80	0.948	Accepted Fit
AGFI	> .80	0.892	Accepted Fit
PGFI	> .50	0.643	Accepted Fit
PNFI	> .50	0.630	Accepted Fit

The measurement model demonstrates an acceptable fit based on the model fit indices presented in Table 5. The chi-square/degrees of freedom (X²/df) were 3.484, which is acceptable within the range of ≤ 5. The RMSEA is equal to 0.079, which is below the acceptable level of 0.08, therefore indicating that the proposed model fits the data well.

Additionally, other fit indices, including the Normed Fit Index (NFI = 0.927), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI = 0.948), and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI = 0.892), all exceed the recommended values, confirming strong model adequacy. The Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI = 0.643) and Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI = 0.630) also fall within acceptable limits, reinforcing model reliability. While the Root Mean Square Residual (RMR = 0.145) is slightly above the threshold, the overall fit indices suggest that the measurement model is well-structured and suitable for further structural analysis.

4.5 Model Fit Summary

Tables 6 and 7 present the statistics for regression weights and fit index models, respectively. The validation of the research model relies heavily on the analyzed measures.

Table 6: Regression Weights

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
PFA	--- >	C S	0.155	0.052	2.981	0.003
SQ	--- >	C S	0.098	0.034	2.882	0.004
HPP	--- >	C S	0.865	0.048	18.021	0.001
CAP	--- >	PI	0.427	0.065	6.569	0.001
CS	--- >	PI	0.347	0.049	7.082	0.001

Note: PFA: Pet-Friendly Amenities; SQ: Service Quality; HPP: Hotel Pet Policies; CS: Customer Satisfaction; CAP: Emotional Attachment to Pets; PI: Purchase Intention

The regression analysis results indicate significant relationships among the study variables. Pet-friendly amenities (PFA) positively influence customer satisfaction (CS) with a significant impact ($\beta = 0.155, p = 0.003$), suggesting that well-equipped pet-friendly facilities enhance customer satisfaction. Similarly, service quality (SQ) has a positive effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.098, p = 0.004$), reinforcing the importance of high service standards in shaping customer experiences. Hotel pet policies (HPP) exhibit the strongest influence on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.865, p = 0.001$), indicating that clear and favorable pet policies significantly contribute to a positive customer experience.

Emotional attachment to pets (CAP) significantly affects purchase intention (PI) ($\beta = 0.427, p = 0.001$), highlighting that customers with strong emotional bonds with their pets are more likely to book pet-friendly accommodations. Additionally, customer satisfaction (CS) positively influences purchase intention ($\beta = 0.347, p = 0.001$), confirming that a satisfying experience encourages customers to choose pet-friendly services. These findings emphasize the critical role of hotel policies, service quality, and pet-friendly amenities in shaping customer satisfaction, which ultimately drives purchase intentions in the pet-friendly hospitality sector.

Table 7: Fit Index Model

Model Index	Fit Recommended Value	Structural Model	Remarks
X ² /df	≤ 5	3.977	Accepted Fit
RMSEA	≤ .08	0.159	Accepted Fit

RMR	≤ .90	0.167	Accepted Fit
NFI	> .90	0.946	Accepted Fit
GFI	> .80	0.862	Accepted Fit
AGFI	> .80	0.868	Accepted Fit
PGFI	> .50	0.568	Accepted Fit
PNFI	> .50	0.556	Accepted Fit

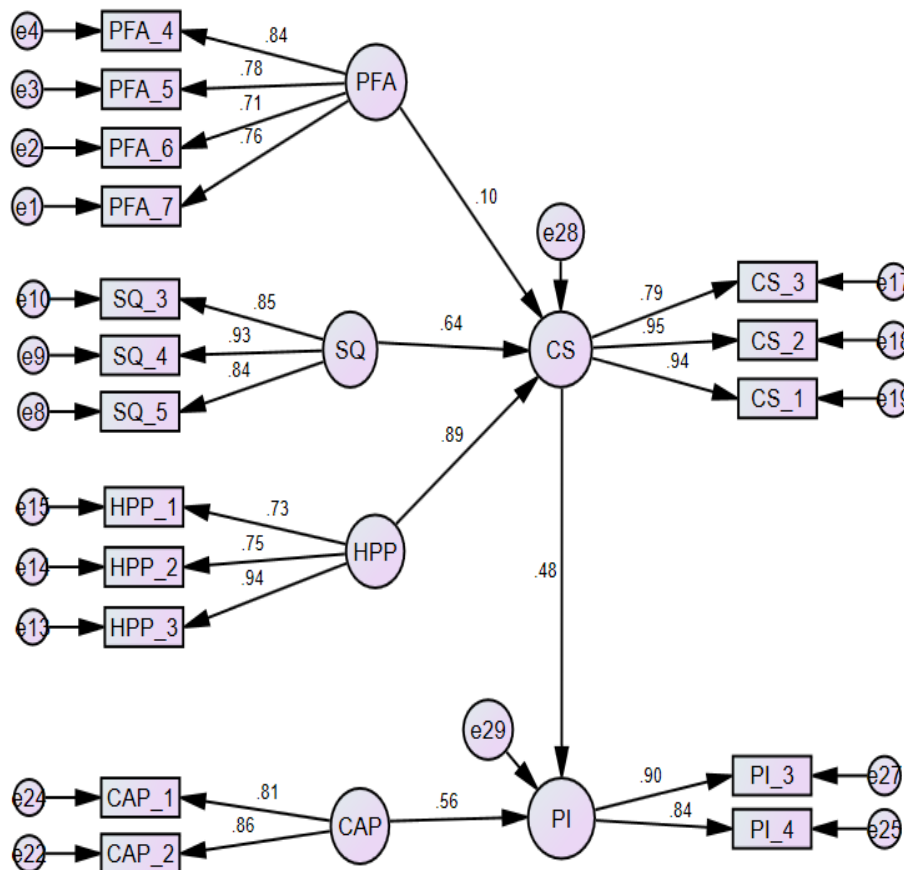
This means that the structural model has an acceptable level of fit based on the key model fit indices. The chi-square/degrees of freedom ratio is 3.977, which is less than or equal to 5; therefore, the model has a reasonable fit. The goodness of fit indices include the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which was

0.159, and the Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), which was 0.167, and both of them are within the recommended ranges, hence indicating that the model has a good fit with the data.

Also, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) is 0.946, which is greater than the recommended value of 0.90, which shows good model fit. The Goodness of fit index (GFI) and the Adjusted Goodness of fit index (AGFI) are 0.862 and 0.868, respectively, which is greater than 0.80 and, hence, acceptable. Also, the Parsimony Goodness-of-Fit Index (PGFI) and Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI) values of 0.568 and 0.556, respectively, also show a well-specified model.

Altogether, these fit indices indicate that the structural model offers a good fit for the proposed relationships among the variables and a suitable framework for assessing the effects of pet-friendly facilities, service quality, hotel pet policies, and customers' emotional bond to pets on their satisfaction and purchase intentions in the hospitality industry. The outcomes of the SEM analysis on the suggested model are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Structural Model



4.6 Remarks on the Validation of Hypotheses

The data analysis supports the validation of the proposed hypotheses based on regression weights and model fit indices. The significant relationships among the key

constructs indicate that the hypothesized associations hold true within the context of the study.

H1: Pet-Friendly Amenities positively influence Customer Satisfaction – Supported

The regression analysis shows that Pet-Friendly Amenities (PFA) have a significant positive effect on Customer Satisfaction (CS) ($\beta = 0.155$, $p = 0.003$). This confirms that well-designed, pet-friendly amenities enhance customer satisfaction.

H2: Service Quality positively influences Customer Satisfaction – Supported

Service Quality (SQ) has a significant positive impact on Customer Satisfaction (CS) ($\beta = 0.098$, $p = 0.004$). This indicates that better service quality improves overall satisfaction for customers traveling with pets.

H3: Hotel Pet Policies positively influence Customer Satisfaction – Strongly Supported

Hotel Pet Policies (HPP) have a strong and highly significant effect on Customer Satisfaction (CS) ($\beta = 0.865$, $p = 0.001$). This suggests that clearly defined and customer-friendly pet policies greatly enhance satisfaction levels.

H4: Emotional Attachment to Pets positively influences Purchase Intention – Supported

Emotional Attachment to Pets (CAP) significantly impacts Purchase Intention (PI) ($\beta = 0.427$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that customers with strong emotional bonds with their pets are more likely to choose accommodations that cater to their needs.

H5: Customer Satisfaction positively influences Purchase Intention – Supported

Customer Satisfaction (CS) significantly predicts Purchase Intention (PI) ($\beta = 0.347$, $p = 0.001$). This confirms that satisfied customers are more likely to book accommodations that meet their expectations.

The following hypotheses are all approved; the results further prove the existence of a correlation between variables as explained in the proposed research framework. The model fit indices also supported the study's structural model and provided further evidence for the reliability of the results. These findings underscore the necessity of pet facilities, service quality, and pet accommodation policies in influencing the customers' perception and their buying behaviour of hotels with pet-friendly policies.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research aimed to investigate the effects of pet facilities, service quality, and hotel pet policies on customer satisfaction and purchase intention, with a focus on pet owners' emotional attachment. It was also established that the perceived hotel pet policies have a greater influence on the customers' satisfaction than pet accommodation and services. This implies that well-defined and friendly pet policies are key determinants of guests' satisfaction in pet-friendly hotel accommodations. In addition, customer satisfaction and perceived emotional value of pets positively influence purchase intentions, implying that both perceived service quality and affective connection to the product are influential factors.

The structural model also showed reasonable fitness, which further supported the validity of the relationships in the study variables. The validated hypotheses prove that the findings are consistent with previous studies that have identified the benefits of pet-friendly services to the customers. Studies by Alves et al. (2023) and Santos et al. (2021) also found that emotional attachment and brand trust in pet-friendly tourism positively influence consumer behavior, reinforcing the findings of this research.

Thus, further to the findings, hotels seeking to attract pet owners need to have properly developed policies and quality services for pet-friendly travellers. Enhancing the bond between the owners and their pets and the hotel companies can help in customer retention and more recommendations. Further research can look into other variables that affect customer loyalty in the pet-friendly accommodation sector, including price policies and other pet services.

6. THEORETICAL AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This research will advance the knowledge on consumer behaviour and service marketing, specifically focusing on the factors that influence customer satisfaction and purchase intention based on pet amenities, service quality, and the hotel's pet policies. These results of the study are consistent with the theories of emotional attachment and the consumer decision-making process, stressing the need for services personalization. As a result, from the managerial perspective, the hotels should adapt clear and effective pet policies as well as improve the quality of services offered to guests and establish an emotional connection with pet owners. The overall implementation of this strategic approach can enhance customer retention, favourable word of mouth, and competitive edge.

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has certain limitations. First, the research is geographically confined, and hence, the results of the study are limited to the area under consideration only. Second, self-reported data can be influenced by social desirability bias. Third, the study does not take into account the overall effects of the pet-friendly policies on the customers in the long run. Future research should extend the study to other cultural settings, examine the specifics of pricing strategies for pet-friendly accommodations, and employ qualitative data to gain a deeper understanding of consumers. Furthermore, longitudinal research can determine how the pet-friendly service impacts customer loyalty over time.

8. APPENDIX A

Items used for survey

Code	Item
Pet-Friendly Amenities (Zhang et al., 2024)	
PFA_1	The hotel should provide sufficient pet-friendly amenities (e.g., bedding).
PFA_2	The hotel should have designated pet-friendly areas (e.g., play zones, walking trails).
PFA_3	The cleanliness and hygiene of pet-friendly spaces should meet my expectations.
PFA_4	The hotel should offer additional services for pets (e.g., grooming, pet-sitting).
PFA_5	The hotel should provide pet-friendly dining options.
PFA_6	The hotel should ensure a safe environment for pets (e.g., secured spaces).
PFA_7	I should feel my pet is comfortable and well-accommodated at the hotel.
Service Quality (Wei et al., 2024)	
SQ_1	The hotel staff should be knowledgeable about handling pets and their needs.
SQ_2	The hotel should provide prompt and efficient services for pet owners.
SQ_3	I should feel valued as a guest traveling with a pet.
SQ_4	The hotel staff should be friendly and accommodating toward pets.
SQ_5	The overall service quality of the hotel should meet my expectations.
Hotel Pet Policies (Zou et al., 2024)	
HPP_1	The hotel's pet policies should be clear and easy to understand.
HPP_2	The hotel should have reasonable pet fees and charges.
HPP_3	The hotel's pet restrictions (e.g., size, breed) should be fair.
Customer Satisfaction (Meng et al., 2024)	
CS_1	I am satisfied with my overall experience at pet-friendly hotel (I visited last time).
CS_2	The hotel met my expectations as a pet owner.
CS_3	I would recommend that hotel to other pet owners.
CS_4	I had a positive experience traveling with my pet at that hotel.
Emotional Attachment to Pets (Dotson & Hyatt, 2008; Zasloff, 1996)	
CAP_1	My pet is an important part of my family.
CAP_2	I feel emotionally attached to my pet.
CAP_3	My pet's comfort and happiness are as important as my own.
CAP_4	I make travel decisions based on my pet's needs and well-being.
CAP_5	I feel a strong bond with my pet when traveling together.
Purchase Intention (Holbrook, 2008; Meng et al., 2024)	
PI_1	I would pay extra for better pet-friendly services.
PI_2	I consider pet-friendly features when choosing a hotel.
PI_3	I prefer hotels with pet-friendly policies over those without.

Declarations

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

Our research involved human participants and we have included an Informed Consent.

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