Rating hotel quality for corporate business travel departments

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Abstract:

Purpose
The present study aims to suggest a new approach to hotel quality rating, specifically designed for the business travel segment, where the evaluation of surveyed consumers (business travelers) does not necessarily reflect the priority of customers (corporate travel departments [CTDs]).

Design/methodology/approach
Preliminarily, the authors defined key areas (domains), exploring what was done by quality certifiers recognized worldwide. Then, each domain quality was considered as a latent variable measured by a set of observable attributes (sub-domains) surveyed by a professional assessor. A continuous, fine-grained, composite indicator (CI) for quality was finally obtained by a weighted average of the domain (latent) quality measures. Weights were endogenously determined by data envelopment analysis.

Findings
The suggested CI shows both the existence of large quality disparities within the same star rating and a relevant bias in the internet reviews. A "soundproofed" room, a front desk open 24 h with sufficient staff and an adequate urban context are necessary features of any business hotel.

Research limitations/implications
Data came from a professional assessor's database; therefore, the authors could only consider a three-domains measurement model. The database is mainly composed of three- and four-star hotels in Italy; nonetheless, these accommodations are the most widespread in the Italian corporation hotel programs, preserving the practical utility of the results.

Originality/value
This study provides a transparent (replicable) evaluation protocol that is of potential use in the most popular models for quality measurement; any assessor can use it to underline its impartiality to CTD and assessed hotels.