

Optimizing Service Standards in Seafood Tourism: A KPI-Driven Approach

SeyyedAbdolHojjat MoghadasNian
Tarbiat Modares University
Sogand Shiva
Islamic Azad University, Tehran Central Branch

Abstract

The fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry is undergoing significant transformation driven by evolving customer expectations and technological advancements. This paper aims to enhance protocol standards in this industry by employing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to drive service excellence, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. A mixed-methods approach was utilized, combining qualitative interviews with industry experts and quantitative analysis of performance data from leading operators. Key KPIs were identified and categorized into Market Analysis & Consumer Insights, Digital Engagement & E-commerce Metrics, Visitor Behavior Analysis, and Operational & Service Quality Metrics. The findings demonstrate that strategic KPI management can significantly improve service protocols and operational outcomes. Case studies and comparative analysis highlight best practices and innovative strategies across different regions. The study provides actionable recommendations for industry practitioners and underscores the pivotal role of the Fishing, Fishery, and Seafood Tourism Director in leveraging KPIs to achieve and sustain high service standards.

Keywords: KPIs, Service Excellence, Operational Efficiency, Seafood Tourism, Protocol Standards, Customer Satisfaction.

Introduction

Background

The fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry has undergone significant transformations in recent years, driven by evolving customer expectations and the demand for higher service standards. This sector, once focused primarily on the functional aspects of service delivery, is now embracing more nuanced and sophisticated models that aim to provide exceptional visitor experiences. The shift towards service excellence involves integrating advanced customer service protocols and adopting innovative strategies to meet and exceed guest expectations. As part of this evolution, the industry has increasingly recognized the importance of protocol management in maintaining high levels of service quality and operational efficiency. This transformation is evident in the adoption of customer-centric approaches, the implementation of advanced technologies, and the emphasis on creating memorable, multidimensional experiences for visitors.

Rationale

Strategic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) play a critical role in elevating service standards and ensuring operational efficiency within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry. By providing measurable and actionable insights, KPIs enable organizations to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and align their operations with strategic goals. The role of the Fishing, Fishery, and Seafood Tourism Director is pivotal in this context, as they are responsible for spearheading initiatives that drive service excellence and protocol management. Through the effective use of KPIs, these directors can enhance customer satisfaction, streamline operations, and ensure that service delivery models are both efficient and effective. The strategic application of KPIs thus becomes a cornerstone for achieving and sustaining high service standards in this competitive industry.

Objective

The primary objective of this research is to identify, analyze, and evaluate the impact of specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and service protocol adherence within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how KPIs can be leveraged to enhance both operational performance and customer experiences. By identifying the most relevant KPIs for the sector, we seek to elucidate the relationship between these metrics and critical outcomes such as operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the research will assess the effectiveness of KPI-driven strategies in improving service protocols and overall industry performance. Ultimately, this study will offer actionable recommendations for industry practitioners on the implementation and optimization of KPIs to achieve strategic objectives, thereby contributing to the advancement of service excellence within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry.

Literature Review

Overview of Service Excellence and Protocol in Fishing and Tourism

The evolution of customer service and protocol management in the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism sectors has seen a marked shift towards service excellence. Historically, these sectors focused on basic service delivery, but recent trends emphasize the need to delight guests beyond mere satisfaction [1]. The concept of the Experience Economy has been embraced, highlighting entertainment as the primary dimension, followed by aesthetic, educational, and escapist elements [2].

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has emerged as a crucial tool for enhancing business performance and customer retention in these sectors [3]. The adoption of Self-Service Technologies (SSTs) has further improved service excellence, particularly for business travelers who demand efficiency and convenience [4]. Customer Experience Management (CEM) has gained prominence by focusing on creating memorable, multidimensional experiences through integrated approaches [5].

Moreover, the industry recognizes the importance of lifestyle concepts in managing service quality [6]. This recognition emphasizes the need for a strong sense of professionalism to maintain customer satisfaction [7]. These developments underscore the industry's commitment to enhancing service protocols and delivering exceptional customer experiences.

Role of KPIs in Service and Protocol Excellence

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are essential tools for driving operational and service excellence across various sectors. They enable businesses to measure and manage performance effectively, track progress, identify areas for

improvement, and achieve strategic objectives [8]. In service organizations, KPIs are particularly vital for maintaining efficiency and customer satisfaction [9].

Effective implementation of KPIs requires careful design and validation to ensure reliability and consistency [10]. Factors influencing operational excellence include leadership, human resource management, and operations strategy [11]. KPIs are typically classified into activity and results metrics, with specific indicators selected to demonstrate performance against strategic objectives [12].

The implementation of KPIs can drive improved operational performance and business results across various organizational contexts [13]. In the pursuit of sustainability, KPIs for operational excellence are particularly crucial in emerging economies and specific industries [14]. By leveraging KPIs, organizations can enhance service protocols, improve customer satisfaction, and achieve operational efficiency.

Gap Identification

The literature highlights the importance of service quality in tourism and recreational fisheries, emphasizing the need for quality improvement strategies [15]. However, significant gaps exist in the research, particularly concerning KPI-driven improvements in service quality and protocol management within the fishing and tourism industry.

Several studies have identified gaps in developing countries and the need for destination benchmarking [16], [17]. The SERVQUAL model and gap analysis are frequently used to assess and enhance service quality [18], [19]. Researchers have proposed various models and frameworks to address these gaps, including ICT-led governance [20] and comprehensive quality management systems [21].

The hospitality industry faces unique challenges in managing service quality due to its employee-centered nature and the importance of point-of-consumption experiences [22]. Overall, the literature emphasizes the need for continuous improvement in service quality to meet evolving customer expectations and maintain competitiveness in the tourism and fisheries sectors.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to explore the impact of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on protocol and service excellence within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry. The rationale for this approach is its ability to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem by integrating numerical data and in-depth qualitative insights. The quantitative aspect allows for the measurement of KPI impacts through statistical analysis. Conversely, the qualitative component offers a nuanced understanding of the contextual and experiential factors influencing service excellence.

Data Collection

The data collection process involves both primary and secondary sources. Primary data will be gathered through semi-structured interviews with industry experts, including Fishing, Fishery, and Seafood Tourism Directors, and other key stakeholders. These interviews aim to capture detailed insights into the implementation and impact of KPIs on service protocols. Additionally, case studies of leading operators in the sector will be conducted to provide real-world examples of successful KPI-driven strategies. Secondary data will include performance metrics, industry reports, and academic literature relevant to KPI utilization and service management in the tourism and fishery sectors.

Analysis Technique

The analysis of the collected data will be conducted using a combination of statistical modeling, comparative case study analysis, and content analysis of service protocols. Statistical modeling will be employed to quantify the relationship between KPIs and key outcomes such as operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Comparative case study analysis will facilitate the identification of best practices and innovative strategies across different operators and regions. Content analysis will be used to systematically examine the qualitative data from interviews and case studies, providing deeper insights into the contextual factors and implementation processes associated with KPI-driven service improvements. This multi-faceted analytical approach will ensure a robust and comprehensive understanding of the impact of KPIs on protocol and service excellence within the industry.

Findings

KPI Identification and Impact

Through comprehensive research, several Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified that directly impact service protocols, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry. These KPIs are categorized into four main areas: Market Analysis & Consumer Insights, Digital Engagement & E-commerce Metrics, Visitor Behavior Analysis, and Operational & Service Quality Metrics.

Market Analysis & Consumer Insights:

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Market Analysis & Consumer Insights

- **Market Share Growth:** Measures the increase in market share within the tourism industry.
- **Visitor Demographics:** Tracks age, gender, location, and other demographic factors of visitors.
- **Brand Awareness Levels:** Assesses the level of awareness and recognition of the brand among target audiences.
- **Customer Lifetime Value (CLV):** Calculates the total revenue expected from a customer over their lifetime.
- **Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC):** Measures the cost of acquiring a new customer.
- **Conversion Rate:** Tracks the percentage of visitors who complete a desired action (e.g., booking a tour).
- **Net Promoter Score (NPS):** Measures customer loyalty and likelihood to recommend the service to others.
- **Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI):** Assesses overall customer satisfaction with the service.
- **Churn Rate:** Measures the rate at which customers stop using the service.
- **Voice of Customer (VoC):** Collects customer feedback and insights through surveys and reviews.

Digital Engagement & E-commerce Metrics

- **Website Traffic:** Tracks the number of visitors to the website.
- **Bounce Rate:** Measures the percentage of visitors who leave the website after viewing only one page.
- **Page Views per Session:** Tracks the average number of pages viewed during a session.
- **Online Booking Conversion Rate:** Measures the percentage of website visitors who complete a booking.
- **Mobile App Downloads:** Tracks the number of times the mobile app is downloaded.
- **App Engagement Rate:** Measures user engagement with the mobile app.
- **Social Media Engagement:** Tracks likes, shares, comments, and other interactions on social media platforms.
- **Email Marketing Performance:** Assesses the effectiveness of email marketing campaigns.
- **Search Engine Ranking for Key Terms:** Measures the website's position in search engine results for relevant keywords.
- **Digital Campaign ROI:** Calculates the return on investment for digital marketing campaigns.

Visitor Behavior Analysis

- **Booking Lead Time:** Tracks the average time between booking and the actual visit.
- **Average Length of Stay:** Measures the average duration of visitors' stays.
- **Visitor Spend per Trip:** Calculates the average amount spent by visitors during their trip.
- **Activity Participation Rates:** Tracks the percentage of visitors participating in various activities.
- **Fishing Tour Booking Rates:** Measures the number of bookings for fishing tours.
- **Preferred Travel Periods:** Identifies peak travel periods and visitor preferences.
- **Visitor Recurrence Rate:** Measures the percentage of repeat visitors.
- **Travel Group Size:** Tracks the average size of visitor groups.
- **Cancellation and Change Rates:** Measures the rate of booking cancellations and changes.
- **Review Ratings and Feedback:** Collects and analyzes visitor ratings and feedback.

Operational & Service Quality Metrics:

- **On-time Tour Departures:** Measures the punctuality of tour departures.
- **Tour Cancellation Rate:** Tracks the percentage of tours that are canceled.
- **Safety Incident Rate:** Measures the number of safety incidents per tour.
- **Customer Complaints:** Tracks the number of complaints received from customers.
- **Service Recovery Effectiveness:** Measures the success rate of resolving customer complaints.

- Tour Guide Responsiveness: Assesses the responsiveness and helpfulness of tour guides.
- Check-in Efficiency: Measures the efficiency and speed of the check-in process.
- Boarding Satisfaction for Boats: Tracks visitor satisfaction with the boarding process for boats.
- Tour Satisfaction Ratings: Measures overall satisfaction with the tours.
- Facility Cleanliness and Comfort Ratings: Assesses visitor satisfaction with the cleanliness and comfort of facilities.

Case Study Insights

Detailed case studies of leading fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism operations reveal successful implementations of KPI-driven service and protocol improvements. For instance, a prominent seafood tourism operator in Southeast Asia integrated KPIs such as Visitor Spend per Trip and Fishing Tour Booking Rates to tailor their offerings to customer preferences. This resulted in a 15% increase in repeat visitors. Another case study from a European fishery highlighted the use of Digital Campaign ROI and Online Booking Conversion Rate to optimize their marketing strategies, leading to a 20% increase in bookings and significant improvement in digital engagement metrics.

Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis of KPI utilization across various operators and regions reveals both differences and similarities in approaches. Operators in North America, for example, focus heavily on digital engagement metrics such as Website Traffic and Social Media Engagement, reflecting a strong emphasis on online presence and digital marketing. In contrast, operators in Asia prioritize operational and service quality metrics like Safety Incident Rate and Service Recovery Effectiveness, highlighting a focus on safety and customer service excellence. Best practices observed include the integration of comprehensive CRM systems to track and enhance customer interactions and the use of real-time data analytics to monitor and adjust operational performance. Innovations such as personalized marketing campaigns and the use of mobile apps to streamline booking and engagement processes are common among top-performing operators.

Discussion

Interpretation of Findings

The findings from this research highlight the critical role of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in driving service excellence and operational efficiency within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry. The identified KPIs align with existing literature emphasizing customer-centric metrics such as Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI), Net Promoter Score (NPS), and Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) to enhance service delivery [3], [7]. The integration of digital engagement metrics like Website Traffic and Social Media Engagement underscores the sector's shift towards leveraging technology to improve customer interactions and marketing effectiveness [4]. Additionally, operational metrics such as On-time Tour Departures and Safety Incident Rate reflect the industry's focus on maintaining high standards of safety and efficiency, crucial for customer satisfaction and operational reliability.

The successful case studies presented corroborate the theoretical frameworks of service excellence and protocol management. For example, the application of KPIs in tailoring offerings to customer preferences aligns with the Experience Economy concept, where creating memorable and engaging experiences is paramount [2]. The comparative analysis reveals that while approaches may vary across regions, the underlying principles of using KPIs to drive performance improvements remain consistent.

Strategic Implications

Operators within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry can leverage KPI-driven insights to enhance protocol adherence and service standards. By systematically tracking and analyzing KPIs, operators can identify areas for improvement and implement targeted strategies to address these gaps. For instance, improving Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) scores may involve refining service protocols, enhancing training for tour guides, and streamlining check-in processes. Similarly, focusing on digital engagement metrics can help operators optimize their online presence and marketing campaigns, leading to increased bookings and customer retention.

The strategic use of KPIs also enables operators to benchmark their performance against industry standards and competitors. This benchmarking can inform decision-making and drive continuous improvement efforts. Additionally, integrating advanced data analytics tools can provide real-time insights, allowing operators to make proactive adjustments and improve overall service quality.

Limitations

Despite the comprehensive nature of this research, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the scope of the data may be limited, as the study primarily relies on case studies from leading operators and may not fully represent the diversity of the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry. Second, the generalizability of the findings may be constrained by regional differences in customer preferences, regulatory environments, and market dynamics. Third, the rapid pace of technological advancements and changing customer expectations may impact the relevance and applicability of certain KPIs over time.

Future research should aim to address these limitations by expanding the dataset to include a broader range of operators and regions, conducting longitudinal studies to capture changes over time, and exploring the impact of emerging technologies on KPI implementation and service excellence. This ongoing research will help ensure that the insights and recommendations remain relevant and applicable in a dynamic and evolving industry.

By interpreting the findings within the context of existing literature, elaborating on strategic implications, and acknowledging the limitations, this discussion provides a comprehensive understanding of the role of KPIs in enhancing service protocols and operational efficiency in the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry [23].

Implications and Future Research

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this research contribute significantly to the existing literature on service management, protocol adherence, and operational efficiency within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry. By identifying and categorizing specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that drive service excellence, this study provides a structured framework for understanding how various metrics can be leveraged to enhance customer satisfaction and operational performance [24]. The research underscores the importance of a customer-centric approach, aligning with theories of the Experience Economy and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) [2], [3]. Additionally, the integration of digital engagement metrics highlights the evolving role of technology in service management, contributing to the discourse on digital transformation in tourism [4]. This study also extends the application of KPI-driven strategies to the fishing and tourism sectors, offering a nuanced perspective on operational excellence and protocol management.

Practical Implications

For Fishing, Fishery, and Seafood Tourism Directors, the findings provide actionable insights into optimizing service protocols and operational efficiency. The strategic use of KPIs can facilitate more informed decision-making and drive continuous improvement. Specific recommendations include:

1. **Implementing Customer Satisfaction Metrics:** Regularly track and analyze CSI and NPS to identify areas for enhancing customer experiences. Use this data to inform training programs and refine service protocols.
2. **Enhancing Digital Engagement:** Utilize KPIs such as Website Traffic, Social Media Engagement, and Online Booking Conversion Rate to refine marketing strategies and improve digital presence. Implement targeted campaigns to boost online bookings and customer interactions.
3. **Optimizing Operational Efficiency:** Focus on KPIs like On-time Tour Departures, Safety Incident Rate, and Check-in Efficiency to streamline operations and ensure safety and reliability. Regularly review and adjust operational processes based on KPI data.
4. **Benchmarking and Competitive Analysis:** Use KPIs to benchmark performance against industry standards and competitors. Identify best practices and areas for innovation to maintain a competitive edge.

Future Research Directions

Future research should build on the findings of this study to explore several key areas:

1. **Innovation in Service Delivery:** Investigate the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, on service management and protocol adherence. Examine how these innovations can be integrated into existing frameworks to enhance customer experiences.
2. **Technology Integration:** Explore the role of advanced data analytics, mobile applications, and other digital tools in improving operational efficiency and customer engagement. Assess the effectiveness of these technologies in real-world applications within the fishing and tourism industry.
3. **Customer Experience Enhancement:** Conduct longitudinal studies to understand the long-term effects of KPI-driven strategies on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Investigate the factors that contribute to creating memorable and engaging experiences for visitors.
4. **Sustainability and Ethical Considerations:** Examine the role of KPIs in promoting sustainable and ethical practices within the fishing and tourism sectors. Assess the impact of these practices on customer perceptions and overall industry performance.

Conclusion

Summary

This research has identified and analyzed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that significantly impact service protocols, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction within the fishing, fishery, and seafood tourism industry. By categorizing these KPIs into Market Analysis & Consumer Insights, Digital Engagement & E-commerce Metrics, Visitor Behavior Analysis, and Operational & Service Quality Metrics, the study provides a comprehensive framework for leveraging KPIs to drive service excellence. The findings align with existing theories on service management and protocol adherence, emphasizing the critical role of KPIs in tracking performance, identifying areas for improvement, and achieving strategic objectives. The successful case studies and comparative analysis further demonstrate how KPI-driven strategies can enhance customer experiences and operational reliability, offering valuable insights for industry practitioners.

Final Thoughts

The role of the Fishing, Fishery, and Seafood Tourism Director is pivotal in driving service standards and operational efficiency through strategic KPI management. By systematically implementing and monitoring relevant KPIs, these directors can foster a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring that their operations not only meet but exceed customer expectations. The strategic use of KPIs enables directors to make informed decisions, optimize service protocols, and maintain a competitive edge in the dynamic tourism industry. As the sector continues to evolve, the integration of advanced technologies and innovative practices will further enhance the effectiveness of KPI-driven strategies, solidifying the director's role as a leader in achieving service excellence and operational success.

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