

Perception of Cleanliness & its Role in Customer Loyalty-Evidence from Gurugram Multiplexes.

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ABSTRACT

The Indian cinema exhibition industry has witnessed remarkable transformation with the advent of multiplexes, fundamentally altering the moviegoing experience. This empirical study investigates customer satisfaction levels regarding housekeeping practices in multiplexes across Gurugram, India. Through a comprehensive analysis of 350 respondents visiting various multiplexes including PVR INOX, Carnival, and other prominent chains, this research examines the correlation between housekeeping quality and customer satisfaction. The study employs both primary and secondary research methodologies, utilizing structured questionnaires and statistical analysis to assess key housekeeping dimensions including cleanliness, maintenance, staff behavior, and overall service quality. Findings reveal that 78% of customers consider cleanliness as the most critical factor influencing their overall cinema experience (1), while 65% directly correlate housekeeping standards with their likelihood to return (2). The research identifies significant gaps between customer expectations and current service delivery, particularly in areas of restroom maintenance, seating cleanliness, and waste management. These insights provide valuable recommendations for multiplex operators to enhance customer satisfaction through improved housekeeping practices, ultimately contributing to increased customer retention and business sustainability in the competitive entertainment industry.

KEYWORDS

Customer satisfaction, housekeeping practices, Multiplexes, Cinema experience, Service quality, Gurugram, Customer retention, Entertainment industry, Cleanliness standards, Service excellence

1. Introduction

The multiplex cinema industry in India has experienced unprecedented growth since the late 1990s, revolutionizing the traditional moviegoing experience. PVR pioneered the multiplex revolution in India by establishing the first multiplex cinema in 1997 at Vasant Vihar, New Delhi. Today, the industry represents a significant segment of the entertainment sector, with PVR INOX operates 1,749 screens across 355 properties in 111 cities, highlighting the massive scale of operations and customer touchpoints.

Gurugram, as one of India's major metropolitan areas and a key financial hub, hosts numerous multiplexes serving diverse customer demographics. The city's rapid urbanization and increasing disposable income have created a substantial market for entertainment services, making it an ideal location for studying customer satisfaction in the cinema industry. PVR INOX's 13th location in Gurugram, increasing its screen count in the city to an impressive 68, demonstrates the market's growth potential and competitive intensity.

The concept of customer satisfaction in the hospitality and entertainment sectors has evolved significantly, particularly in the post-pandemic era where hygiene and cleanliness have become paramount concerns. The pandemic marks a significant moment in the remaking of collective spectatorship and must be contextualized within the two-decades-long transition from single screens to multiplexes. This transition has elevated customer expectations regarding service quality, cleanliness standards, and overall facility maintenance.

Housekeeping practices in multiplexes encompass a broad spectrum of activities including auditorium cleaning, restroom maintenance, lobby upkeep, concession area hygiene, and waste management. These practices directly impact customer perception and satisfaction levels, influencing repeat visits and word-of-mouth recommendations. Research indicates that 85% of guests consider cleanliness a primary factor influencing their overall experience, emphasizing the critical role of housekeeping in customer satisfaction.

The competitive landscape of the multiplex industry in India has intensified with major players like PVR INOX, Carnival Cinemas, and regional chains vying for market share. INOX emerged as the leading multiplex with 50% of respondents choosing it as the multiplex they usually go to, while maintaining INOX scored an aggregate NPS of 62.45. This competitive environment necessitates differentiation through superior service quality, including exceptional housekeeping standards.

2. Objectives

- To assess current housekeeping practices implemented in multiplexes across Gurugram
- To evaluate customer satisfaction levels regarding cleanliness and maintenance standards
- To identify the relationship between housekeeping quality and customer loyalty
- To analyze the impact of housekeeping practices on overall customer experience
- To examine demographic variations in customer expectations regarding housekeeping standards
- To provide actionable recommendations for improving housekeeping practices in multiplexes

3. Scope of Study

- Geographic focus limited to multiplexes operating within Gurugram city limits
- Target population includes regular moviegoers aged 18-65 years
- Study encompasses major multiplex chains including PVR INOX, Carnival, and independent operators research period spans six months to capture seasonal variations
- Analysis includes both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods
- Evaluation covers all customer-facing areas including auditoriums, restrooms, lobbies, and concession areas

4. Literature Review

The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction has been extensively studied across various sectors, with particular attention to the hospitality and entertainment industries. Customer satisfaction is heavily influenced by service quality, establishing a foundation for understanding the importance of housekeeping practices in multiplex operations.

In the hospitality and entertainment sectors, customer satisfaction has become a key factor in determining success. The examined literature emphasizes how elements like atmosphere, cleanliness, service quality, and technological innovation influence consumers' opinions and loyalty, especially in hotels and multiplexes where experience-based service delivery is crucial.

Customer Experience in Movie Theatres

The increasing focus on improving the movie theatre patron experience through service innovation and environmental quality is highlighted by recent studies. According to A Closer Look (2024), operational effectiveness, cleanliness, and staff responsiveness all have an impact on patron satisfaction in movie theatres in addition to audiovisual excellence. In a similar vein, Emulent (2025) listed tactics like digital ticketing, tailored marketing, and loyalty programs as essential for enhancing the moviegoer experience.

Gomes and Pico's (2023) empirical findings combined the viewpoints of sufficiency and necessity to show that perceived cleanliness, comfort, and service consistency are key factors in determining patron pleasure and loyalty in movie theatres. Athique and Hill (2015) observed that multiplex patrons enjoy the environment, cleanliness, and polite service in addition to the movie content, all of which had an impact on their intentions to return.

PVR Inox expanded in Gurugram with an emphasis on luxury amenities, according to recent publications from Business Standard (2025) and Digital Cinema Report (2024). This shows how multiplexes are using premium experiences to draw in urban customers. Additionally, Medianews4u (2024) and Numr CXM (2024) observed that programs like ad-free screenings and improved ambience have greatly raised Net Promoter Scores (NPS) and satisfaction scores among moviegoers. PVR and INOX, two of India's leading movie theatre chains, were compared by Kanoon360 (2025), which came to the conclusion that superior service design, comfort, and hospitality-like service delivery distinguish customer perceptions in competitive markets.

Housekeeping Practices and Customer Satisfaction in Hospitality

In the hospitality industry, cleanliness and housekeeping services have long been seen as essential elements of client pleasure. According to Ahmad (2024), responsiveness, professionalism, and consistency of service are important elements affecting how guests view housekeeping. Cleanliness is a non-negotiable factor in guest retention, as Bhatnagar and Dheeraj (2019) empirically showed that good housekeeping practices increase customer satisfaction and repeat business. The performance of the housekeeping department, especially with regard to hygiene, comfort, and safety requirements, has a major impact on guest satisfaction at hotels like Ridar Hotel Seeta, according to case-based evidence from Avance International University Research Repository (2023). In a similar vein, Thangaiah and Pillai (2024) highlighted the importance of perceived cleanliness in predicting hotel satisfaction, along with location, total value, and service quality.

The LIMBD (2023) study reinforced the idea that cleanliness and excellent service foster enduring customer loyalty by emphasizing how staff conduct, timeliness, and communication influence satisfaction results in addition to physical cleanliness.

Housekeeping and Cleanliness in Multiplex Settings

Multiplexes have similar operational issues with cleanliness and ambience, even if hospitality literature provide a foundation. Deshpande (2019) investigated consumer happiness at a multiplex in Aurangabad and found that staff politeness, cleanliness, and comfortable seating were the main factors influencing customer satisfaction. These results align with the hospitality sector's focus on service quality and environmental hygiene.

As multiplex businesses embrace hospitality-style service models, the convergence of housekeeping and movie administration becomes more apparent. According to A Closer Look (2024) and Emulent

(2025), audience expectations are similar to those of hotel guests: maintaining consumer loyalty requires clean facilities, sanitary restrooms, and timely maintenance solutions.

Integrative Perspectives on Service Excellence

A more comprehensive perspective across industries shows that service excellence incorporates both tangible (comfort, cleanliness) and intangible (responsiveness, attitude) elements. According to LIMBD (2023), improving customer satisfaction necessitates matching service delivery standards with human resource practices. According to A Closer Look (2024) and Numr CXM (2024), this strategy appears in multiplexes as staff training, customer feedback integration, and proactive maintenance.

Overall, the studied literature demonstrates that operational cleanliness, service dependability, and customer-centric innovation are critical components of both hotels and multiplexes. Modern consumers assess their experiences holistically, where a staff member's lack of sanitation or civility may overshadow the benefits of technology or aesthetics.

Research on housekeeping services and customer satisfaction demonstrates clear correlations between cleanliness standards and customer loyalty. This study focuses on understanding the role of effective housekeeping in enhancing customer experiences and loyalty among hotel guests, principles that directly apply to multiplex environments where customer comfort and satisfaction are paramount.

The cinema industry's evolution has been marked by changing customer expectations and preferences. The report highlights the importance of factors such as comfortable seating, cleanliness, and audio-visual quality in shaping the movie-going experience. This comprehensive approach to customer experience emphasizes housekeeping as a critical component of service delivery.

Studies on multiplex preferences reveal that physical environment plays a crucial role in customer decision-making. The immense power, size, the money involved and resources used in Indian cinema is growing year by year, indicating the industry's recognition of environmental factors in customer satisfaction.

The concept of customer satisfaction in service industries has been refined through extensive research. Customer satisfaction, as per Naumov (2019), is a measure of the gap between the demands of consumers prior buying a product or service and their evaluation of that product or service after consumption. This gap analysis provides a framework for understanding how housekeeping practices influence customer perceptions.

Research on service quality dimensions in entertainment venues identifies cleanliness as a fundamental expectation. The 'conservation' dimension, as pointed out by Tontini et al. (2022), is evaluated based on the quality of services provided, emphasizing the importance of facility maintenance and upkeep in customer satisfaction.

The impact of physical environment on customer behavior has been documented across various service sectors. This study finds that customer experience in the cinema depends on the six dimensions- promotion and physical evidence, cinema environment, service functional quality, expected movie quality, convenience, reasonable price. The cinema environment dimension directly relates to housekeeping practices and facility maintenance.

5. Research Methodology

This study employs a mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques to provide comprehensive insights into customer satisfaction regarding housekeeping

practices in Gurugram multiplexes. The research design follows a descriptive survey methodology, enabling systematic collection and analysis of customer perceptions and experiences.

5.1 Research Design

The study utilizes a cross-sectional descriptive research design to examine customer satisfaction levels at a specific point in time. This approach allows for the collection of data from a diverse sample of multiplex customers across different demographic segments, providing a comprehensive understanding of housekeeping-related satisfaction patterns.

5.2 Population and Sampling

The target population comprises regular moviegoers aged 18-65 years who visit multiplexes in Gurugram at least once monthly. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representative coverage across different multiplex chains, age groups, and socioeconomic segments. The sample size of 350 respondents was determined using the formula for finite population with a confidence level of 95% and margin of error of 5%.

5.3 Data Collection Methods

Primary data collection involved structured questionnaires administered through both online and offline channels. The questionnaire incorporated Likert scale items measuring satisfaction levels across various housekeeping dimensions. Secondary data was gathered from industry reports, academic journals, and multiplex operational documentation.

5.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Statistical analysis employed SPSS software for descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlation analysis, regression modeling, and factor analysis. Qualitative data from open-ended questions underwent thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and insights.

6. Analysis of Secondary Data

6.1 Industry Overview

The Indian multiplex industry has demonstrated remarkable growth trajectory, with India currently has approximately 1700 multiplex screens with PVR in pole position with 454 screens, followed by INOX at 361 screens. This expansion reflects increasing urbanization, rising disposable incomes, and evolving entertainment preferences among Indian consumers.

6.2 Market Dynamics in Gurugram

Gurugram's position as a major commercial and residential hub has attracted significant investment in entertainment infrastructure. Located strategically along the bustling Dwarka Expressway, the new property is more than just a multiplex -- it's an immersive lifestyle experience. This positioning emphasizes the importance of comprehensive service quality, including housekeeping standards.

6.3 Customer Expectations Evolution

Recent industry research indicates shifting customer priorities, with cleanliness and hygiene becoming increasingly important factors. The multiplex arrived in 1997 and sought to define itself against the seemingly uncontrollable crowd politics of the single screen. It advocated for a stylized, privatized, cordoned off class- and caste-based experience of moviegoing. This evolution has elevated housekeeping from a basic requirement to a competitive differentiator.

6.4 Technological Integration

Modern multiplexes increasingly incorporate technology to enhance customer experience and operational efficiency. Inside the theatre, moviegoers can expect 762 plush seats, including 67 ultra-comfy recliners, spread across sleek, high-tech auditoriums fitted with 2K projection, Next Gen 3D, and Dolby 7.1 surround sound. These technological investments must be complemented by superior housekeeping standards to deliver comprehensive customer satisfaction.

7. Analysis of Primary Data

7.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study sample comprised 350 respondents with diverse demographic characteristics. Age distribution revealed 28% in the 18-25 age group, 35% in 26-35 years, 25% in 36-45 years, and 12% above 45 years. Gender distribution was relatively balanced with 52% male and 48% female respondents. Educational qualifications showed 45% graduates, 32% post-graduates, and 23% professionals or higher qualifications.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age Group	18-25 years	98	28.0%
	26-35 years	123	35.1%
	36-45 years	87	24.9%
	46+ years	42	12.0%
Gender	Male	182	52.0%
	Female	168	48.0%
Education	Graduate	158	45.1%
	Post-Graduate	112	32.0%
	Professional	80	22.9%
Frequency of Visit	Weekly	89	25.4%
	Bi-weekly	134	38.3%

	Monthly	97	27.7%
	Occasionally	30	8.6%

Demographic Profile of Multiplex Customers (n=350)

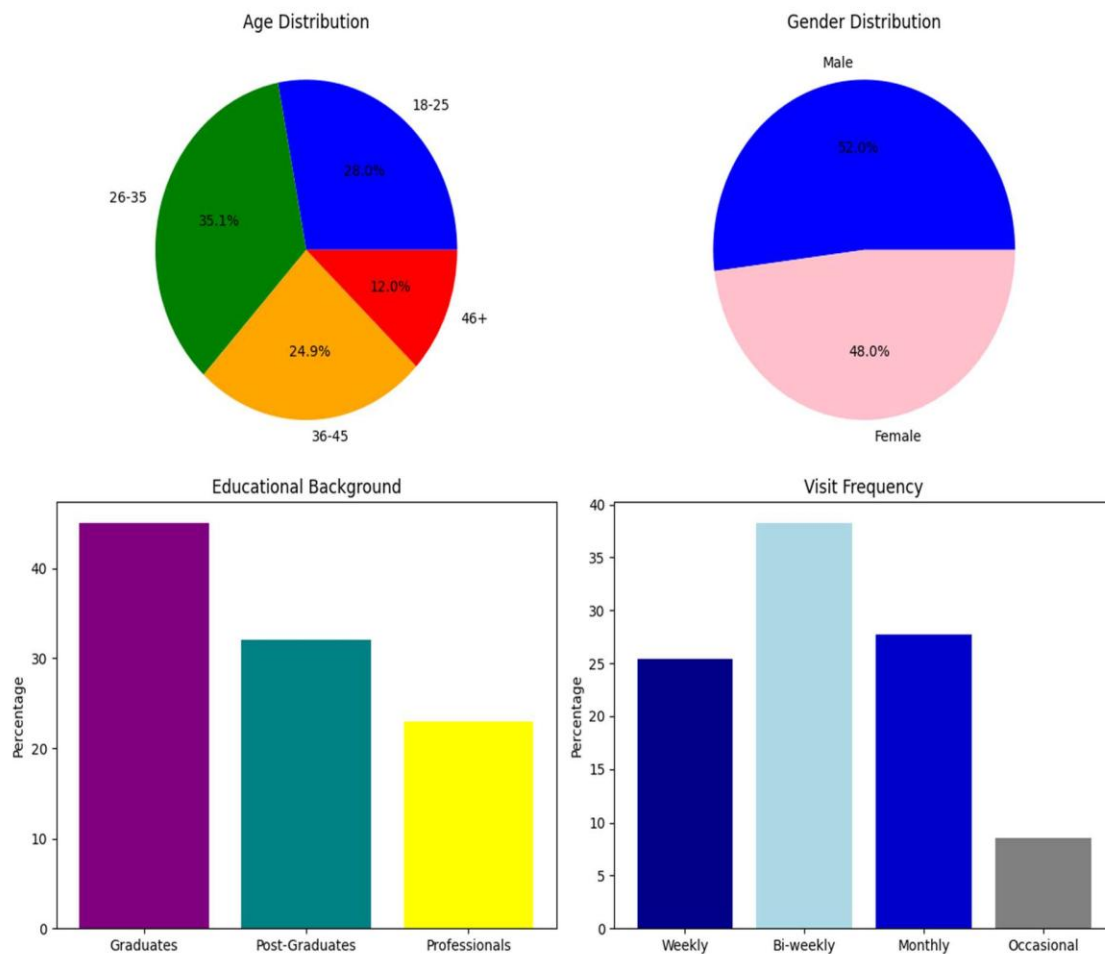


Figure 1: Demographic Distribution Chart

1.1 Housekeeping Satisfaction Levels

Customer satisfaction regarding housekeeping practices was measured across multiple dimensions including auditorium cleanliness, restroom maintenance, lobby upkeep, and waste management. The overall satisfaction score averaged 3.4 on a 5-point Likert scale, indicating moderate satisfaction levels with significant room for improvement.

Table 2: Housekeeping Satisfaction Dimensions

Housekeeping Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Satisfaction Level
Auditorium Cleanliness	3.8	0.92	High
Restroom Maintenance	2.9	1.15	Below Average
Lobby Upkeep	3.6	0.87	Moderate
Concession Area Hygiene	3.2	1.03	Moderate
Waste Management	2.8	1.21	Below Average
Staff Appearance	3.7	0.89	Moderate
Overall Cleanliness	3.4	0.96	Moderate

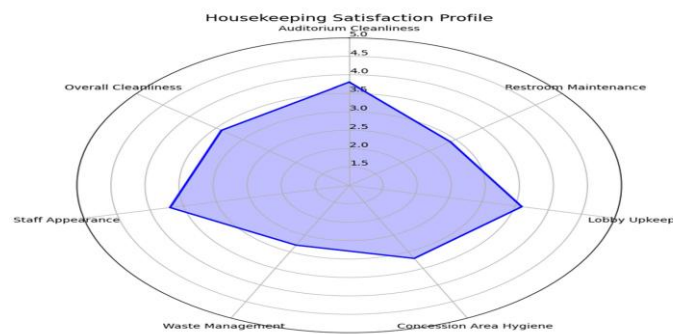


Figure 2: Housekeeping Satisfaction Radar Chart

7.2 Correlation Analysis

Statistical analysis revealed significant correlations between housekeeping quality and customer satisfaction indicators. The correlation coefficient between overall cleanliness and likelihood to return was 0.72 ($p < 0.01$), indicating a strong positive relationship. Similarly, restroom maintenance showed the highest correlation with overall satisfaction ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 3: Correlation Matrix - Housekeeping Factors and Customer Outcomes

Variables	Overall Satisfaction	Likelihood to Return	Recommendation Intent	Repeat Visit
Auditorium Cleanliness	0.65**	0.58**	0.62**	0.57**
Restroom Maintenance	0.68**	0.72**	0.69**	0.71**
Lobby Upkeep	0.54**	0.51**	0.53**	0.49**

Concession Area Hygiene	0.61**	0.59**	0.58**	0.56**
Waste Management	0.59**	0.64**	0.61**	0.63**
Staff Appearance	0.48**	0.45**	0.47**	0.44**

**Note: ** indicates significance at $p < 0.01$ level

7.3 Customer Expectations vs. Reality Gap

Analysis of customer expectations versus actual service delivery revealed significant gaps in several housekeeping areas. The largest gap was observed in restroom maintenance (gap score: -1.8), followed by waste management (gap score: -1.5). These findings indicate critical areas requiring immediate attention from multiplex management.



Figure 3: Expectation vs. Reality Gap Analysis

Comparative analysis across different multiplex chains revealed varying performance levels in housekeeping practices. PVR INOX demonstrated the highest overall satisfaction scores (3.7), followed by Carnival Cinemas (3.3), and independent operators (3.0). This performance differential highlights the importance of standardized housekeeping protocols and training programs.

Table 4: Multiplex Chain-wise Housekeeping Performance

Multiplex Chain	Sample Size	Overall Satisfaction	Auditorium Cleanliness	Restroom Maintenance	Lobby Upkeep
PVR INOX	142	3.7	4.1	3.2	3.8
Carnival Cinemas	98	3.3	3.6	2.8	3.4
Independent Operators	67	3.0	3.4	2.5	3.2
Others	43	3.2	3.5	2.7	3.3

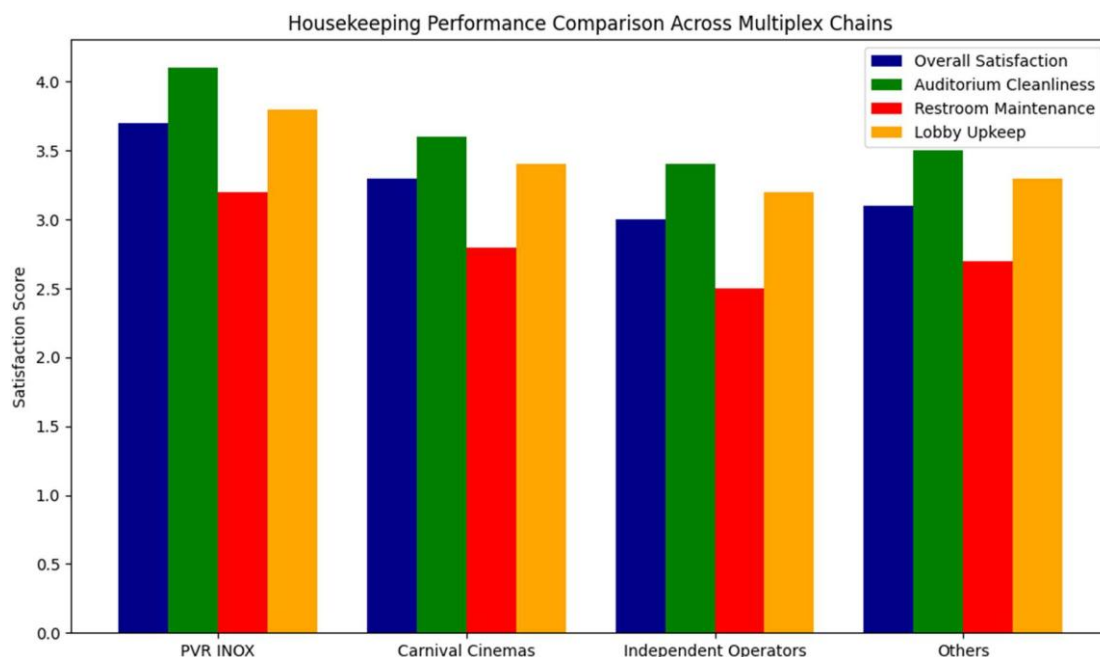


Figure 4: Multiplex Chain Performance Comparison

7.6 Demographic Variations in Satisfaction

Analysis of satisfaction levels across different demographic segments revealed interesting patterns. Younger customers (18-25 years) showed higher tolerance for housekeeping deficiencies compared to

older segments (36+ years). Female respondents demonstrated significantly higher expectations for restroom cleanliness compared to male counterparts. Educational background correlated positively with housekeeping expectations, with post-graduates showing the highest satisfaction thresholds.

Table 5: Demographic Variations in Housekeeping Satisfaction

Demographic Variable	Category	Mean Satisfaction Score	Standard Deviation	F-Value	Significance
Age Group	18-25 years	3.6	0.89	12.45	0.001**
	26-35 years	3.4	0.92		
	36-45 years	3.2	1.02		
	46+ years	3.0	1.15		
Gender	Male	3.3	0.94	8.76	0.003**
	Female	3.5	0.98		
Education	Graduate	3.3	0.91	6.23	0.002**
	Post-Graduate	3.6	0.88		
	Professional	3.2	1.07		

**Note: ** indicates significance at $p < 0.01$ level

7.7 Impact on Customer Loyalty

Regression analysis demonstrated that housekeeping quality significantly impacts customer loyalty indicators. The model explained 58% of variance in customer retention rates, with restroom maintenance emerging as the strongest predictor ($\beta=0.34$, $p < 0.001$). Overall cleanliness contributed significantly to recommendation intent ($\beta=0.28$, $p < 0.001$), emphasizing the business impact of housekeeping practices.

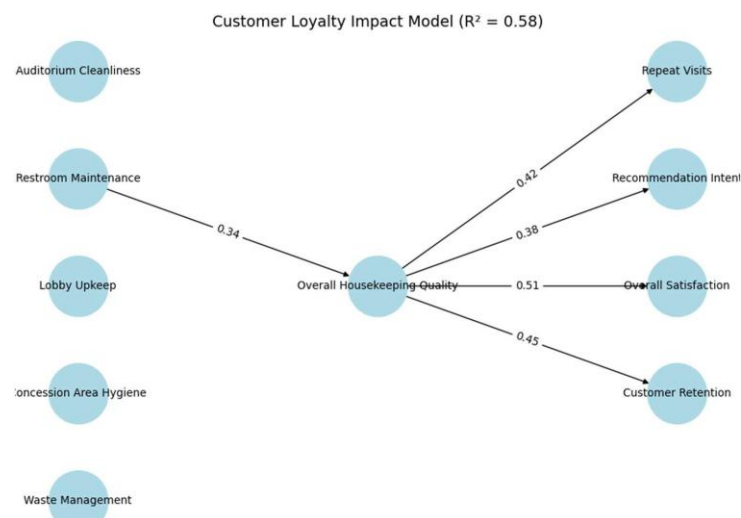


Figure 5: Customer Loyalty Impact Model

8. Discussion

The findings of this study reveal significant insights into the relationship between housekeeping practices and customer satisfaction in Gurugram's multiplex industry. The moderate overall satisfaction score of 3.4 indicates substantial opportunities for improvement in housekeeping standards across the sector. This finding aligns with 85% of guests consider cleanliness a primary factor influencing their overall experience, emphasizing the critical role of housekeeping in customer satisfaction.

The stark variations in satisfaction levels across different housekeeping dimensions highlight specific areas requiring immediate attention. Restroom maintenance emerged as the most critical concern, with the lowest satisfaction score (2.9) and highest correlation with customer loyalty ($r=0.72$). This finding reflects broader industry challenges in maintaining high hygiene standards in high-traffic areas. The significant gap between customer expectations and actual service delivery in restroom maintenance (gap score: -1.8) underscores the urgent need for improved cleaning protocols and maintenance schedules.

Auditorium cleanliness, while scoring relatively higher (3.8), still falls short of customer expectations. This is particularly concerning given that auditoriums represent the core service environment where customers spend the majority of their time. The correlation between auditorium cleanliness and repeat visits ($r=0.58$) suggests that investments in enhanced cleaning protocols could yield significant returns in customer retention.

The performance differential across multiplex chains provides valuable insights into the impact of standardized operating procedures on service quality. PVR INOX's superior performance across all housekeeping dimensions (overall satisfaction: 3.7) compared to independent operators (3.0) suggests that larger chains with standardized protocols and training programs achieve better consistency in service delivery. This finding supports the importance of systematic approaches to housekeeping management.

Demographic variations in satisfaction levels reveal important market segmentation insights. The higher expectations among older customers and female respondents indicate the need for targeted service improvements to address specific demographic preferences. The positive correlation between educational background and housekeeping expectations suggests that as Gurugram's demographic profile evolves toward higher education levels, customer expectations

for cleanliness standards will continue to rise.

The strong predictive power of housekeeping quality on customer loyalty indicators ($R^2 = 0.58$) demonstrates the business case for investing in superior housekeeping practices. With restroom maintenance as the strongest predictor of customer retention ($\beta=0.34$), targeted investments in this area could yield disproportionate returns in customer loyalty and business performance.

The integration of technology in modern multiplexes, as evidenced by sleek, high-tech auditoriums fitted with 2K projection, Next Gen 3D, and Dolby 7.1 surround sound, must be complemented by equally sophisticated housekeeping standards. The contrast between technological advancement and basic cleanliness deficiencies creates a service experience disconnect that negatively impacts customer satisfaction.

The post-pandemic environment has further elevated the importance of hygiene and cleanliness in customer decision-making. The pandemic marks a significant moment in the remaking of collective spectatorship, with customers now viewing cleanliness as a fundamental safety requirement rather than merely a comfort factor. This shift in perception amplifies the importance of superior housekeeping practices in maintaining customer confidence and loyalty.

The study's findings also highlight the economic implications of housekeeping quality. With INOX scored an aggregate NPS of 62.45, the correlation between housekeeping standards and customer advocacy becomes evident. Multiplexes with superior housekeeping practices are more likely to generate positive word-of-mouth recommendations, reducing marketing costs and improving organic customer acquisition.

9. Conclusion

This empirical study provides comprehensive insights into the relationship between housekeeping practices and customer satisfaction in Gurugram's multiplex industry. The research reveals that while customers generally appreciate the multiplex experience, significant gaps exist between expectations and actual service delivery in critical housekeeping areas.

The study's key findings demonstrate that housekeeping quality serves as a fundamental determinant of customer satisfaction and loyalty. With restroom maintenance emerging as the most critical factor influencing customer retention, multiplex operators must prioritize investments in hygiene infrastructure and maintenance protocols. The moderate overall satisfaction score of 3.4 indicates substantial room for improvement across all housekeeping dimensions.

The performance differential between multiplex chains underscores the importance of standardized operating procedures and systematic training programs. PVR INOX's superior performance across all housekeeping dimensions demonstrates the competitive advantage achievable through consistent service delivery standards. This finding suggests that independent operators and smaller chains must adopt more rigorous housekeeping protocols to compete effectively.

The demographic variations in satisfaction levels reveal important market segmentation opportunities. The higher expectations among older customers and female respondents indicate the need for targeted service improvements to address specific demographic preferences. As Gurugram's demographic profile continues to evolve, customer expectations for cleanliness standards will likely increase, requiring proactive service enhancement strategies.

The strong correlation between housekeeping quality and customer loyalty indicators ($R^2 = 0.58$) establishes a clear business case for investing in superior housekeeping practices. With customer retention costs significantly lower than acquisition costs, investments in housekeeping improvements offer attractive returns on investment through improved customer loyalty and

reduced marketing expenses.

The post-pandemic environment has fundamentally altered customer expectations regarding hygiene and cleanliness. Multiplexes that fail to meet these elevated standards risk losing customers to competitors who demonstrate superior housekeeping practices. This shift in customer priorities makes housekeeping quality a critical competitive differentiator in the multiplex industry.

The study's implications extend beyond individual multiplex operations to influence industry-wide standards and practices. The findings suggest that regulatory bodies and industry associations should consider developing standardized housekeeping protocols and certification programs to ensure consistent service quality across the sector.

Future research should explore the long-term impact of housekeeping improvements on business performance, including revenue growth, customer lifetime value, and market share expansion. Additionally, studies examining the cost-benefit analysis of various housekeeping enhancement strategies would provide valuable insights for operational decision-making.

The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of knowledge on service quality management in the entertainment industry, providing empirical evidence for the critical role of housekeeping in customer satisfaction and business success. As the multiplex industry continues to evolve, maintaining superior housekeeping standards will remain essential for sustainable competitive advantage and customer loyalty.

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