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PERSATUAN PENDIDIK PELANCONGAN MALAYSIA

Standards for Sustainable Hospitality Services in Zanzibar

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Abstract: The concept of satisfying customers is rooted deep in the philosophy of marketing and is key element in most marketing definitions. Academics and practitioners agree that customer satisfaction is a crucial concept. The success of the hospitality industry relies massively on the quality of the service delivered and customer satisfaction. One of the biggest contemporary challenges of management in service industries is providing and maintaining customer satisfaction. The importance of service quality in hospitality industry is stressed by the level of complaints raised by customers. This study is carried out with regard to identifying the factors influencing service quality excellence within the hospitality industry and analyzes many opinions, theories, parameters and conditions with the view of examining customers' perceptions of service quality and thus improving Zanzibar hospitality services which for long time have been receiving negative remarks from stakeholders.The results of the study indicate the rather high expectations of hotel guests regarding service equipment. 'Reliability,' 'responsiveness and assurance of customers' provision of information,' 'empathy' and 'tangibles' are the key factors that best explained customers' expectations of hotel services. The quantitative assessments of perceived service quality provide some insights on how customers rate the service quality of hotels and resorts.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction, service excellence, service performance, service quality, service strategy.

Introduction

In the highly competitive hotel industry, service becomes one of the most important elements for gaining a sustainable competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Consequently, the efforts of service managers and academic researchers are directed towards understanding how customers perceive the quality of service.

The success of the hospitality industry relies massively on the quality of the service delivered and customer satisfaction. The index of the measurement of both, quality service and customer satisfaction, will widely influence on occupancy rates, hence, on the profitability of the company (Holloway, 1998).

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The paper begins by briefly describing the factors which have affected the development of the hospitality industry in terms of customer service quality, customer satisfaction and service delivery.

Particular attention is given to Zanzibar hospitality development as there have been many complaints received from tourists, international and local travellers, whereby stakeholders in tourism travel and hospitality sector have also been debating and sharing bad experiences of poor services rendered in Zanzibar (ZATI, 2008).

Also, this study finds the problems of service quality, its causes and measures some service quality gaps using the SERVQUAL technique approach for hotels and resorts in Zanzibar.

Literature Review and Conceptual Analysis

Service

Service is defined as an intangible offering and does not include the transfer of ownership as products. Kotler & Armstrong (1991) define that a service is an activity or benefit that one party can offer to another party that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Zeithaml et al. (1996) define services as deeds, process and performance.

A service is an activity or series of activities of more or less intangible nature. It normally, but not necessarily, takes place in interactions between customers and service employees and/ or physical resources or goods and/or systems of the service provider (Shahin, 2006). For services, the assessment of quality is made during the service delivery process. Each customer contact is an opportunity to satisfy or dissatisfy the customer.

Conceptual Background

Perceived Service Quality

Numerous definitions of service quality exist in the literature. The most common definition of service quality is the comparison customers make between their expectations and perceptions of the received service (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Grönroos, 1982).

Ukwayi, Eja & Unwanede (2012) narrated service quality in depth and cited Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1986) that propose a formal definition of tourist perception of service quality as "the degree and direction of discrepancy between tourist service perceptions and expectations". Ueltschy et al., (2004) define service quality as the tourist's judgment about the overall excellence or superiority of the service.

The service quality construct is mostly conceptualized in the context of service marketing literature (Lee, Lee & Yoo 2000). Therefore, it deals with the concept of perceived service quality. According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990), perceived service quality is the extent to which a firm successfully serves the purpose of customers.

Furthermore, service quality perceptions are formed during the production, delivery and consumption process. The author concluded that customers' favorable and unfavorable experience, as well as their positive and negative emotions may have an important impact on perceived service quality. Similarly, O'Neill & Palmer, (2003) have reported that customers' perceptions of service quality may, to a large extent, be influenced by the degree of their prior experience with a particular service.

Also, service quality derives from the field of marketing which values the human interaction between a business and its customers (Antony et al., 2004). It incorporates the concept of meeting and exceeding customer expectations and it is generally accepted that better service quality impacts positively on an organisation's performance and competitive positioning (Parasuraman et al., 1986; 1988; Zeithaml et al, 1990).

Hellstrand, (2010) narrated and argued that service quality is what differentiates hospitality establishments. But there is not an agreed definition of what service quality is (Presbury et al., 2005). There are however, a few different suggestions of how to define service quality. One is to divide service into technical, functional and image components; another is that service quality is determined by its fitness for use by internal and external customers. Though no agreed definition exists, it is accepted that service quality is dependent on guest's needs and expectations. One definition of service quality state that quality is simply conformance to specifications, which would mean that positive quality is when a product or service specific quality meet or exceed preset standards or promises (Ekinci et al., 2004). This however, seems like a simplistic view, especially within the hospitality industry. There are therefore other definitions specifically for the hospitality industry which state that service quality must be guest oriented (Ekinci et al., 2004). The alternative definitions read as follows: (a) quality is excellence; (b) quality is value for money; and (c) quality is meeting or exceeding expectations. This appears better aligned with ideas which exist within hospitality management than the first mentioned simplistic approach. It is however, worth noting that some researchers argues that service quality and value are two distinct constructs where service quality is measured by the disconfirmation scale whereas value cannot be measured this way (Ekinci et al., 2004). Considering that both service quality and value are rather difficult to measure, hospitality companies must, therefore, heavily rely on guest's quality perceptions and expectations to get reliable results. This is best achieved by asking guest's questions related to expectations and their perceptions of the service quality, which can effectively be achieved through carefully designed surveys.

Service Quality Measurement

One of the main research instruments for measuring quality in service industries is the SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman, Berry & Zeithaml & Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, (1986; 1988). The model contains 22 items for assessing customer perceptions and expectations regarding the quality of service. A level of agreement or disagreement with a given item is rated on a seven point Likert-type scale. The level of service quality is represented by the gap between perceived and expected service. The SERVQUAL model is based on five service quality dimensions, namely tangibles (physical facilities, equipment and personnel appearance), reliability (ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately), responsiveness (willingness to help customers and provide prompt service), assurance (knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to gain trust and confidence) and empathy (providing individualized attention to the customers). During the last few years a variety of service quality studies have been conducted (Ladhari, 2008). Among others, service quality was measured in: accounting and audit firms, health spas (Snoj & Mumel, 2002; Markovi´c, Horvat & Raspor, 2004), higher education (Russel, 2005; Markovi´c 2006), hotels (Markovi´c 2003, 2004; Juwaheer, 2004;Wang,Wang & Zhao 2007; Raspor 2009), insurance (Tsoukatos,Marwa & Rand 2004), public-transport (Sánchez, 2007), restaurants (Andaleeb

& Conway, 2006), travel agencies and web-sites (Parasuraman, Zethaml & Malhotra, 2005; Nusair & Kandampully, 2008).

Service Quality Measurement in the Hospitality Industry

In the hospitality industry, several studies have examined hotel attributes that guests may find important when evaluating the performed service quality.

In the face of increasing competition, the hotel business is seeking new tools to create competitive advantages. Therefore, it is putting a large amount of effort into selecting the best tools or methods to measure service quality development. In terms of measuring the service quality in the hotel business, SERVQUAL has been applied as a tool for understanding the factors affecting the service quality in the hotel business, including gaps, from the customers' perspective. The outcomes of these studies have delivered contributions in relation to understanding the dimensional structure of service quality in the hotel industry. Numerous studies have postulated that service quality (SERVQUAL) is multi-dimensional in essence for measuring hotel service quality (Knutson, et al., 1992; Armstrong et al., 1997; Choi & Chu, 1998; Ekinci & Riley, 1998; Antilgan et al., 2003; Akbaba, 2006; Maria & Serrat, 2011). For instance, Akbaba, (2006) studied the service quality of hotels in Turkey by analyzing the expectation and actual perception of service quality based on 29 characteristic indicators, which were applied from SERVQUAL, and the most important factor reflecting the overall needs of service quality measurement was tangible services. Wilkins et al., (2007) also studied the service quality of hotels in Australia.

Carrillat et al., (2007) found that SERVQUAL was a well-known instrument, and became a proper measurement tool for the hotel business, one of the service businesses focusing on customer satisfaction. Salazar et al., (2010) also developed a service quality evaluation scale for the hospitality sector. Mohsin & Locker (2010) also assessed the service quality perception of customers of luxury hotels in India. They provided an opportunity to recognize, in ranking order, the features that are considered important by the guests staying in luxury hotels.

Model of Service Quality Gaps and the SERVQUAL approach

There are seven major gaps in the service quality concept, which are illustrated in Figure 1.

The model is the extension of the proposed model of Parasuraman et al., (1986). According to ASI Quality Systems, 1992; Curry, 1999; Luk & Layton, 2002, the three important gaps, which are more associated with the external customers, include Gap1, Gap5 and Gap6. They have a direct relationship with customers.

Gap 1. Customers' expectations versus management perceptions: As a result of the lack of a marketing research orientation, inadequate upward communication and too many layers of management.

Gap 2. Management perceptions versus service specifications: As a result of inadequate commitment to service quality, a perception of unfeasibility, inadequate task standardization and an absence of goal setting.

Gap 3. Service specifications versus service delivery: As a result of role ambiguity and conflict, poor employee-job fit and poor technology-job fit, inappropriate supervisory control systems, lack of perceived control and lack of teamwork.

Gap 4. Service delivery versus external communication: As a result of inadequate horizontal communications and propensity to over-promise.
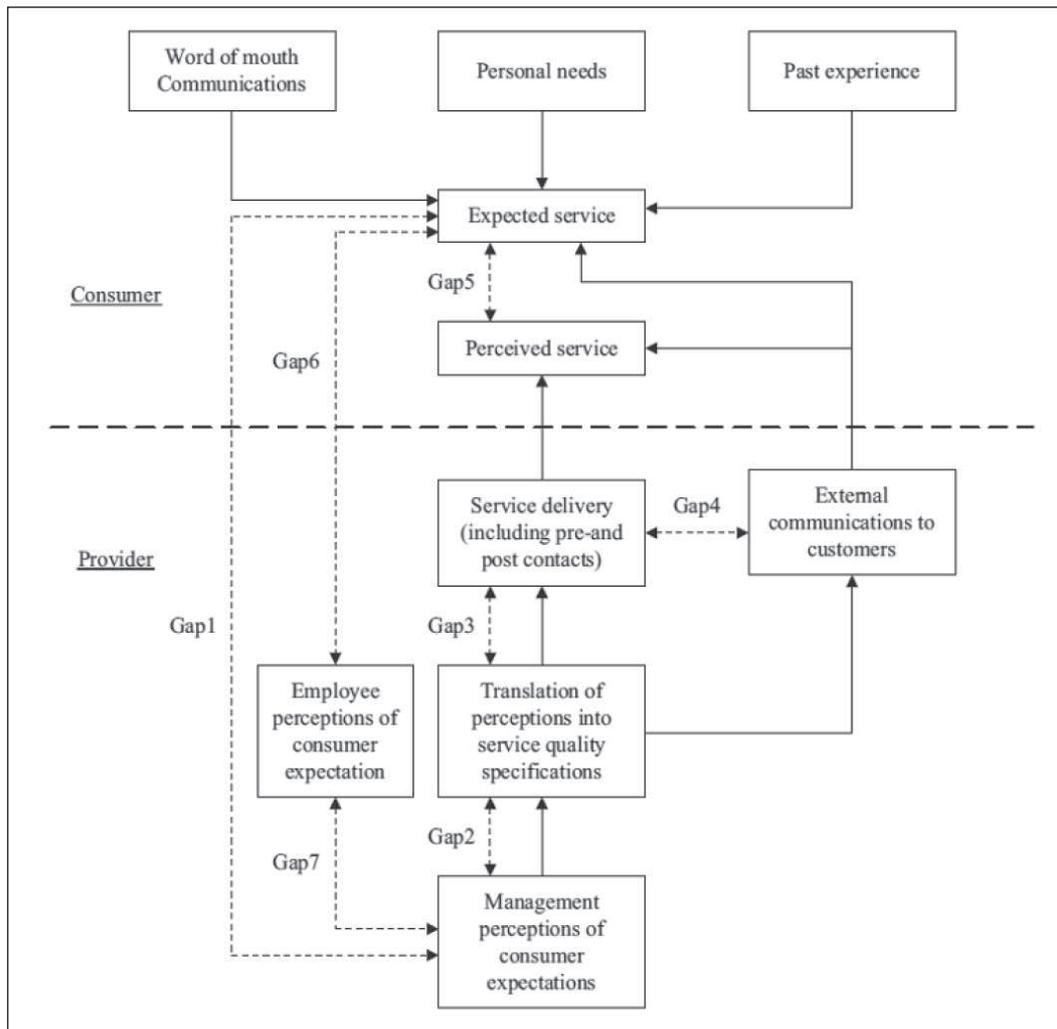
Figure 1. Model of service quality gaps
Source: Parasuraman et al., 1985; Curry, 1999; Luk and Cayton, 2002

Gap 5. The discrepancy between customer expectations and their perceptions of the service delivered: As a result of the influences exerted from the customer side and the shortfalls (gaps) on the part of the service provider. In this case, customer expectations are influenced by the extent of personal needs, word of mouth recommendation and past service experiences.

Gap 6. The discrepancy between customer expectations and employees' perceptions: As a result of the differences in the understanding of customer expectations by front-line service providers.

Gap 7. The discrepancy between employee's perceptions and management perceptions: As a result of the differences in the understanding of customer expectations between managers and service providers.

According to Brown & Bond, (1995), the gap model is one of the best received and most heuristically valuable contributions to the service literature.

Six of the gaps, i.e. Gap 1, Gap 2, Gap 3, Gap 4, Gap 6 and Gap 7 are identified as functions of the way in which service is delivered, whereas Gap 5 pertains to the customer (Shahin, 2010).

The purpose of SERVQUAL is to serve as a diagnostic methodology for uncovering broad areas of a company's service quality shortfalls and strengths, identifying the gaps between what customers expected from an excellent product or service provider and what they perceive the service to be from their suppliers.

It is important to note that without adequate information on both the quality of services expected and perceptions of services received, feedback from customer surveys can be highly misleading.

Service quality gaps are then calculated using the SERVQUAL approach by subtracting customers' perceptions (P)from customers' expectations (E) as $G = E-P$.

The focus on functional quality attributes is referred to as the American perspective of service quality while the European perspective suggests that service quality considers two more components which include functional and technical.

In the SERVQUAL scale, 22 items measure the performance across five dimensions of tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance and empathy. Santhiyavalli, (2011) narrated that the European perspective considers additional aspects other than the process of service delivery. Grönroos (1984) noted that the quality of a service as perceived by customers consists of three dimensions: functional (the process of service delivery to customers), technical (the outcomes generated by the service to the customers), and image (how the customers view the company).

Considering those dimensions, the quality of the service is dependent upon two variables: the expected service and the perceived service. Functional quality of a service is often assessed by measures of customers' attitudes, as in customer satisfaction questionnaires.

Research Methodology

The study was conducted in Zanzibar taking into consideration the importance and contribution of hospitality and tourism industry in Zanzibar's development.

To collect the data required for the purpose of this study, 50 hotels and resorts were selected of which 28 were sampled. Primary and secondary data were used in this research work. The primary collection of data targeted the international and local travelers'/ customers of hotels and resorts and other stakeholders.

Two hundred and fifty (250) copies of questionnaire were administered to tourists/ international travellers, local travellers/hotel/resort customers, and hotel/resort management staff in various hotels and tour operators/travel agents in order to assess their perception on service quality in the hotel industry. Of these, 210 questionnaires were found to be valid for analysis. The response rate was, therefore, 84% from the original sample of 250.

The sample framework includes the tourists/international travellers and local travellers/ hotel/resort customers in a few selected three, four and five star hotels/resorts in Zanzibar. The sampling population was both the foreigners and the locals. The questionnaire was in two main parts:

Part one was designed to examine the quality service perception through five dimensions (tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy). In addition, part one includes one dimension for measuring customer satisfaction.

Part two was designed to get the information regarding the respondents. Also, interviews

were conducted in the various hotels/resorts in order to assess their perception on service quality in the hotel industry. However, the SERVQUAL measurement formulated by Parasuraman, Berry & Zeitham (1988) was adopted to measure the tourist perceptions of service quality which were further subjected to reliability tests.

Two hypotheses were tested in this research:

H1: The reputation for service quality does not influence the standards of the hotel industry in Zanzibar.

H2. The customer perception in the hotel/resort on personal services offered is not influenced by the service quality.

Service quality (SERVQUAL) were measured using Parasuraman, Zeithmal & Berry (1988) dimension which include: tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy and were presented as: y = personal service offered x 1 = tangible x 2 = reliability x 3 = responsiveness x 4 = assurance x 5 = empathy.

Research Findings

Service Failures in Zanzibar Hospitality

Generally, the service performance in the Zanzibar hospitality and tourism sector is regarded satisfactory. However, a survey and interviews on quality of hospitality services made to stake holders, (sixty two international travellers/tourists and fifty five local travellers/hotel/resort customers) has revealed some weaknesses as follows:

(a) Fifty five percent (55%) of the respondents claim that "the staffs in some hotels and resorts are arrogant displays bad 'I don't care' attitude to customers". Twenty seven percent (27%) disagreed and 18% said they don't know.

(b) Sixty two percent (62%) of the respondents said that "the service quality and standard in hotels, resorts is disgraceful and widely considered as one of the threats to sustainable Zanzibar hospitality sector". Eighteen percent (18%) disagreed and 10% said they don't know.

(c) Forty three percent (43%) of the respondents said that international "travellers/ tourists have experienced hotel staff unbecoming behaviour and thus encountered from inappropriate greetings to downright rudeness and refusal to help" while 35% disagreed and 22% said they don't know.

(d) Forty six percent (46%) of the respondents said that "the staff in hospitality sector does not show appreciation to international travellers/tourists that they have chosen to holiday in Zanzibar", 32% disagreed and 22% said they don't know.

(e) Seventy (70%) of the respondents claim that "the tariffs for Zanzibar hotels and resorts are very high not value for money in comparison to the quality of services/products", 23% disagreed and 7% said they don't know.

Measuring Service Quality Gaps of Zanzibar Hotels and Resorts

In order to measure the service quality gaps, a SERVQUAL technique was adopted by using 22 variables grouped under five dimensions: Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy using seven (7) points Lickert scale based on SERVQUAL
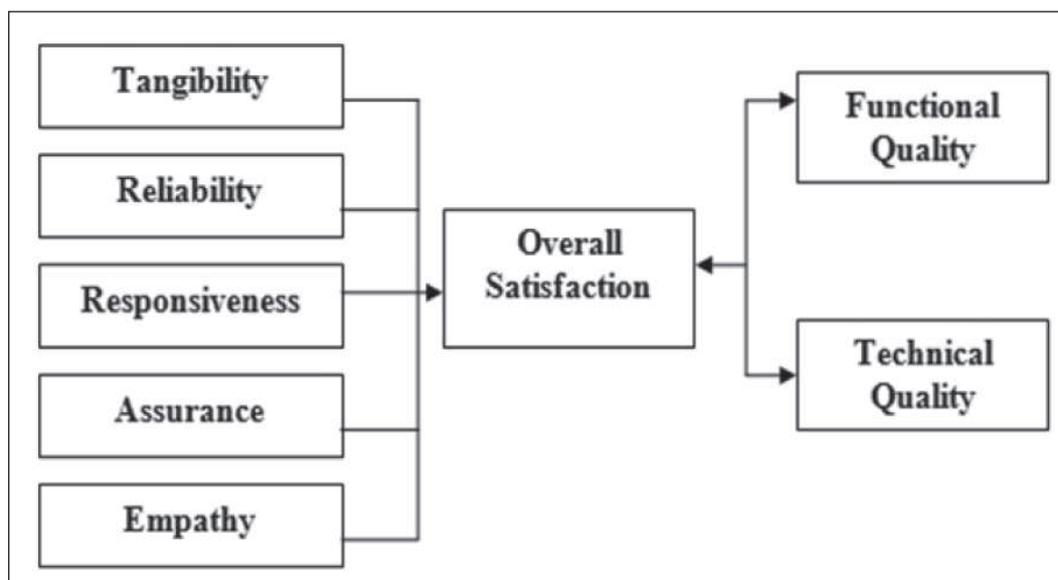
Figure 2. Dimensional aspect of service quality
Source: Santhiyavalli, 2011

Twenty two (22) questions divided into two forms (perceptions and expectations) were asked and additional questions which measure the overall satisfaction. The overall satisfaction values were subtracted from five (maximum satisfaction) and the overall customer dissatisfaction was eventually calculated. Service quality gaps are calculated using the SERVQUAL approach by subtracting customers' perceptions (P) from customers' expectations (E) as G = E-P. The results are presented in Table 1, and Table 4.

Seventy three (73) international travellers/tourists and 58 local travellers/ customers of the hotels and resorts, 54 managerial staff working in hotels and resorts and 25 other stakeholders travel agent/ tour operators in Zanzibar were requested to participate in the study by filling questionnaires. The level of expectation of customers for five dimensions namely, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy are rated between '7' and '5' points (refer to Table 2 & Table 3).

The summary of the results represents the overall average value of the SERVQUAL approach, which is 1.964. As the overall perceived service quality of the agency is higher, the service quality gaps become less. In other words, the higher the gap, the more serious is the service quality shortfall in the eyes of the customer.

A survey which was carried out to analyze the quality of services provided by hotels / resorts in Zanzibar based on customers' expectations and perceptions reveals that:

The levels of perception regarding the five dimensions of service quality fall between '5' and '2' points. This implies that the respondents rated these dimensions between 'agree and disagree' for the service rendered by the hotels and resorts in Zanzibar.

Under the rule of SERVQUAL, the larger the gap score is, the more is the dissatisfaction Assurance relates to how confident the customer feels about doing business with an organization especially when it is for the first time. Customer's worry about the quality of the food, level of guest room cleanliness (accommodation) and the atmosphere value for money.

Table 1. Average gap score of tourist class hotels and resorts in Zanzibar

Expectation		Perception			Gap Score
1. Tangibility	E	1. Tangibility		P	E - P
E.1. Hotels and resorts will have modern technologically relevant equipments.	6.776	P.1. Hotels and resorts have the necessary and basic equipments.		3.515	3.261
E.2. Hotels and resorts will have appealing accommodation facilities (clean, spacious& comfortable guest rooms).	6.342	P.2. Hotels and resorts have accommodation facilities as per international standards.		4.122	2.22
E.3. Hotels and resorts will hire staffs that have professional qualities.	5.987	P.3. The service staffs' working in hotels and resorts have good knowledge and presentable.		4.116	1.871
E.4. The hotels and resorts will make sure that cleanliness in housekeeping is carried out regularly.	5.840	P.4. Hotels and resorts have to improve the level of cleanliness and standards in housekeeping.		4.015	1.825
E.5. Hotels and resorts will make sure that the product offered to customers is a complete experience that fulfils customers' needs and provides corresponding benefits to them.	6.367	P.5. Hotels and resorts have to ensure that physical facilities are in accordance with international standards.		4.503	1.864
Total	31.312			20.271	11.041
Average Gap Score (Total of E-P/5)					2.206
2. Reliability	E	2. Reliability		P	E –P
E.6. Hotels and resorts will ensure that services are provided accurately every time.	5.456	P.6. Service staff working in hotels and resorts have been trained on customer service, knows their job.		4.108	1.348
E.7. Hotels and resorts will ensure that services are provided according to schedule (Opening and closing time, service hours observed).	5.381	P.7. The service staffs working in hotels and resorts have attitude of respect on work schedules.		4.826	0.555
E.8. Hotels and resorts will ensure that all food and beverage orders are served precisely according to order.	5.655	P8. The service staffs in hotels and resorts have the ability to provide services promptly and precisely.		4.154	1.501
E.9. Hotels and resorts will ensure that their customers 'services is sold with certain commitments.	5.108	P.9. Hotels and resorts have reliability in delivering better services to customers.		4.405	0.703
E.10.Hotels and resorts will keep the promise and give assurance of customers' satisfaction.	6.215	P.10.Hotels and resorts have reliability in its pursuit of customer's satisfaction.		3.788	2.427
Total	27.815			21.281	6.534
Average Gap Score (Total of E – P/5)					1.306
3. Responsiveness					

Continued from previous page

E.11. Service staff in hotels and resorts will respond promptly to customers' orders.	6.756	P.11.Hotels and resorts service staffs have the desire of providing customers' service promptly with shorter waiting time.	5.318	1.438	
E.12 Service staff working in hotels and resorts will demonstrate their professionalism by solving customer problems in a systematic and organized way.	6.652	P. 12. Hotels and resorts service staffs are professionals and have responsibilities of solving customers' problems effectively.	3.623	3.029	
E.13. The staff working in hotels and resorts will deliver appropriate and adequate information to customers.	6.486	P. 13. The service staffs in hotels and resorts have adequate information to communicate with customers for all facilities available.	3.729	2.757	
E.14. Hotels and resorts will serve customers with the environments and services to enrich their travel experience.	5.138	P.14. Hotel and resorts have the means and desire of offering the best service to customers for return business.	3.975	1.163	
Total	25.032		16.645	8.387	
Average Gap Score (Total of E – P/4).				2.096	
4. Assurance					
E .15. Customers in hotels and resorts will get advance information about service facilities. (Provision of information).	6.556	P.15. Hotels and resorts have adequate information to provide customers for the services facilities.	3.935	2.621	
E.16. Hotels and resorts will have good reputation for its services, facilities, product and staff.	5.754	P.16. Hotels and resorts have to strive to maintain good reputation by providing good services.	3.872	1.882	
E.17. Hotels and resorts will create a desirable atmosphere to meet customer expectations and show service staff ability to convey trust and confidence to customers.	6.522	P.17. Hotels and resorts service staffs have the knowledge of the products and ability to inspire trust and confidence of customers.	2.658	3.864	
E.18. The behaviour of service staff in hotels and resorts will be politeness, care, helpful and friendly.	6.135	P.18 Service staff have shown exemplary behaviour thus winning customers' confidence and trust.	4.602	1.533	
Total	24.967		15.067	9.9	
Average Gap Score (Total of E – P/4)				2.475	
5.Empathy					
E.19. Hotels and resorts staff will learn and understand customers' special needs. (Ability to understand).	6.542	P.19. Staff in hotels and resorts have the ability to understand and catch customers' special needs and requests.	3.633	2.909	

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E.20. Hotels and resorts service staff will cultivate friendly relationship with customers.	6.381	P.20. Service staffs in hotels and resorts have the duty of providing services with smile and friendship to customers.	3.881	2.5	
E.21.Hotels and resorts service staff will deliver customers orders according to allocated time. (Prompt response and timely service).	6.576	P.21.Hotels and resorts have to ensure that most services are provided in 24 hours service with and assurance of timely delivery.	5.826	0.75	
E.22.Hotels and resorts service staff will provide customers individual attention. (Personalized service).	6.496	P.22. Service in hotels and resorts do provide personal individual attention to customers.	5.707	0.789	
Total	25.955		19.047	6.948	
Average Gap Score (Total E – P/4)				1.737	

Table 2. Un-weighted score

	Categories	Gap Score
1	Average gap score for Tangibles	2.206
2	Average gap score for Reliability	1.306
3	Average gap score for Responsiveness	2.096
4	Average gap score for Assurance	2.475
5	Average gap score for Empathy	1.737
Total		9.62
Un-weighted score (Average Total/5)		1.964

Weights were assigned by the respondents to identify the level of importance given to each dimensions.

Table 3. Assigning weights

	Dimensions	Weights
1	The appearance of the tourist class hotels and resorts facilities, equipments, Service staff, accommodation, security, food and beverages.	20
2	The standard level of services, level of hygiene and cleanliness, timely and accuracy service.	18
3	The service staff behaviour, professional appearance, friendliness and courtesy.	19
4	The service staff ability to understand individual needs and provide personalized service	16
5	The tourist class hotels and resorts reputation on customer service (Security, Comfort, privacy, service/product value for money.	20

The weighted score highlights the area for improvement to satisfy the customers

Table 4. Weighted score

Dimensions	Un- weighted score	Weights	Weighted score
Tangibles	2.206	0.20	0.441
Reliability	1.306	0.18	0.235
Responsiveness	2.096	0.19	0.398
Assurance	2.475	0.16	0.035
Empathy	1.737	0.20	0.345
Total weighted score			1.454

Existing Problems in Zanzibar Hotel Service from the Aspect Of Customer Value

Service quality in Zanzibar hospitality sector has been largely improved in the last three decades. However, there are some problems existing as follows:

(a) Weak consciousness of customer service
"Excellent service of hotel is embodied in the service process of service personnel for their customers". Therefore, the quality of service staff will have direct influence on the service quality of a hotel. Emphasize on operations at the expense of service, which is the internal reason that results in lower service quality. Hotel managers in some hotels and resorts are lax on service management and this has also directly influenced employees, which causes service staff's weak consciousness of customer service. This has a negative effect and lowers the entire service quality levels.

(b) Human resource management
There are some hotels and beach resorts in Zanzibar that, in order to reduce their payroll expenses (thus wishing to increase service efficiency) downsizes its manpower and mobilize a great number of trainees and temporary staff. This action has a negative effect on service quality and performance in general. Qualities of new employees differ a lot, which influences service quality embodied in the following behaviours, namely, bad attitude, staff blame one another, untimely treatment with problems, low service efficiency, slow in action, no one answers phones for a long time, and staff chat during work time, etc. The trainees particularly those from private hotel schools have very low understanding of customer service and service quality. This could be because they have been brought to the hotels and resorts to learn practically from the field without prior service practice and demonstrations. The above mentioned problems are obviously noticed in hotels and resorts of different categories and this severely influence images of Zanzibar hospitality as a country and its hotels and resorts.

(c) Unacceptable customer service behaviours
Service personnel move customer's belongings without permission, enter customer's room without knocking the door, classify rooms as "temporarily out of order" due to laziness, failure to completely meet customer requirements in the restaurants, delay in customer service, failure to supply proper utensils and poor hygiene conditions, no greetings to customers, gloomy and arrogance, etc, which are almost commonly seen in many hotels and this severely influence service quality of hotels and resorts.

Results and Discussion

In order to achieve the study's goals, descriptive analysis, factor analysis, and reliability analysis were performed. The results are presented as follows. First, respondents' demographic profile

and frequency of stay in hotels are provided. Next, the results of descriptive analysis of guests' perceptions are presented. Third, the results of factor and reliability analyses are interpreted. The statistical analysis was conducted on 210 valid questionnaires.

The demographic for the 210 respondents are 73 people (34.8%) of total respondents were tourists/international travelers; 58 people (27.6%) were local hotel customers/local travelers; 54 people (25.7%) were management staff from selected 28 hotels of 3, 4 and 5 star category; and 25 people (11.9%) were tour operators/travel agents respectively. The gender distribution was 155 people (74%) male and 55 people (26%) female.

In terms of age, 48 people (23%) were aged between 25–34 years, 19 people (9%) were aged between 18–24 years, 118 people (56%) were aged between 35–44 years, and 25 people (12%) were 45 years or above. The majority of the respondents were single 166 people (79%). Forty four (44) people (26%) were married.

The question on the educational level of the respondents showed that majority had a degree 97 people (46%), diploma 40 people (19%) and no degree 73 people (35%). Their purposes of stay were traveling/vacation 119 people (57%) and business 38 people (18%) and 53 people (25%) for others. Regarding the respondents' frequency of stay in hotels per annum, 65 people (31%) of the respondents stayed in hotels 4 times, 71 people (34%) stayed 3 times and 74 people (35%) stayed in hotels 2 times.

Descriptive statistical methods were used to investigate the expectations (E), perceptions (P) and gap score (P-E) of customers in hotels/resorts. The means, standard deviations and difference score between perceptions and expectations were computed for each service quality characteristic. The paired-sample t-test for all the service quality characteristics also showed whether they were significantly different presented together with the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of guests' perceptions in the hotel industry in Table 1.

Table 5. Demographic characteristics of tourist in the hotel industry

Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
Male	155	74
Female	55	26
Total	210	100

Age	Number	Percentage (%)
18 - 24	19	9
25 - 34	48	23
35 - 44	118	56
45 – Above	25	12
Total	210	100

Education	Number	Percentage (%)
Degree	97	46
Diploma	40	19
None Degree	73	35
Total	210	100

Status	Number	Percentage (%)
Single	166	79
Married	44	21
Total	210	100

The range of service quality perceptions items was from 1 (very low perceptions) to 7 (very high perceptions). The mean scores of guests' perceptions ranged from 3.515 to 4.826. The lowest perception item was 'offering a modern technologically equipments,' which indicates that hotels and resorts has only necessary and basic equipments for providing service. On the other hand, hotel guests' highest perceptions were regarding the 'hotels and resorts to have modern technologically relevant equipment. Furthermore, guests highly assessed the following hotel attributes: 'prompt respond to customers orders,' 'willingness for helping guests solving problems in a systematic and organized way.' Advance information about service facilities and to meet customer expectations' these indicate that a hotel's staff has one of the crucial roles in providing quality service.

Since the gap score is minimum in reliability it reveals that customers are satisfied with products and services provided in hotels/resorts. The minimum value of gaps for "reliability" also implies that customers on average perceive that hotels/resorts perform "on time service delivery", "meeting service time" and service delivery is satisfactory.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the modified version of the SERVQUAL model is suitable for use by hotel managers in gaining easily interpretable and reliable data on hotel guests' attitudes regarding perceived service quality. In hotel industry, service quality, as an extremely subjective category, is crucial to the satisfaction of the customers. It is therefore imperative for managers in hotel industry to apply the SERVQUAL model for the measurement of service quality in order to satisfy customers' expectations.

Hotel and resorts management in order to succeed should go the extra mile on service quality audit and understand that service quality requires a market focus and well trained employees in a well designed process. Authority needs to be devolved and all employees must have a clear understanding of what service quality is, service standards and commitment means. Staff should strive to ensure performance matches expectations in order to satisfy the customer.

Quality also means giving customers more than they expect and hospitality industry employees should be readily accessible and always available to serve guests. Their service quality strengths should be speed, personal touch, flexibility, innovation friendliness.

To conclude, this study had contributed several important findings to the hospitality industry in Zanzibar, particularly with regard to customer perceptions and expectations. This study emphasise the importance of evaluating service quality perception and customer satisfaction regularly so that more effective strategies could be adopted to improve and make Zanzibar competitive in global hospitality industry.

There are several limitations that need to be acknowledged. The data were collected from a small number of guests in five, four and three star hotels and resorts in Zanzibar. Thus, interpretation of the results should be limited to this group of hospitality stakeholders. It is possible that guests staying in one, two or ungraded star hotels and resorts might have different perceptions of the service quality. Also, the measurement of hotel guests' perceptions was limited to 28 hotel attributes. Even though these attributes were included in other studies as well, there could be other relevant hotel attributes that are likely to influence hotel guests' perceptions. In order to be able to generalize the findings, it is suggested that similar studies be conducted in other Zanzibar and Pemba hotels and resorts as well. Future research may

extend the study scope to cover other types of hotels and resorts namely, those with ranking of one star, two star or ungraded hotels and guest houses.

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