

Dr. sc. Jasmina Gržinić

Assistant Professor

Department of Economics and Tourism «Dr. Mijo Mirkovic»

University Jurja Dobrile in Pula

CONCEPTS OF SERVICE QUALITY MEASUREMENT IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

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Summary

The quality of service in hotel industry is an important factor of successful business. The existing trend of complete quality management in hotel industry ensures the achievement of competitive advantage of hotel companies and is therefore the subject of contemporary research into service quality in hotel industry. The concept and the conceptual model of service quality is indispensable if we wish to understand the genesis of service quality and potential gaps in quality. The aim of this paper is to show the importance of service quality in hotel industry from both the conceptual standpoint and that of service quality measurement. The paper describes the most common criteria for measuring service quality, namely the model of internal service quality and the SERVQUAL model. The shown results are those of quantitative and qualitative application of such models in hotels.

Key words: *Quality, Service, Hotel industry, Measurement criteria*

1. INTRODUCTION

The domination of the service sector today is confirmed by the fact that 70% of the world GDP is realized in the service sector. The same sector sees the concentration of 70% of workforce.

In order to ensure and keep the quality expected by today's customer/tourist, we need to differentiate two aspects of quality in general with particular attention to tourism, namely: design quality and the quality of conformity with design.¹

The design quality is a concept implying the presentation of products/services directed to the needs of the clients. The hotel company can satisfy the demands of the client (tourist) only if they are included in its design, i.e. in order to do that, his demands need to be included or "built into" the product/service of the hotel. The hotels do market research in order to determine who their customers are and which of their demands require special attention.

The quality of conformity with the design completes the first aspect because it represents the level to which the product/service meets the demands of the market. The quality represents the satisfaction of the client's needs and in order to achieve it and keep it in time, we not only need a continuous research into the demands of the clients but also of our own capabilities. Such an approach would ensure the pursuing of constant improvements according to the demands of the clients.

The harsh competition on tourist market requires the development of a new approach to management known as TQM – Total Quality Management. When introducing the quality management system, hotel companies use various approaches adapted to their business conditions. The following part of the paper describes the most common service quality measurement criteria, in particular the model of internal service quality and the SERVQUAL model.

The paper presents a detailed analysis of arguments that have contributed to a high positioning of the SERVQUAL model among the various ways to measure service quality.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Service quality is a way to manage business processes in order to ensure total satisfaction to the customer on all levels (internal and external). It is an

¹Oakland, J. S., op. cit., p. 10., in: Tourism and hospitality management, no. 1., Faculty of Tourist and Hospitality Management Opatija, Opatija.

approach that leads to an increase of competitiveness, effectiveness and flexibility of the entire company.²

Benefits arising from a high quality are reflected in a more competitive positioning on the market, but also in a better business result. This statement can be proved by measuring the increase of profitability and market share. The results of a research carried out in the USA on a sample of 2600 companies in the period between 1987 and 2002, show a direct connection between the level of quality of goods and services and their financial performances. As a matter of fact, it was observed that all indicators of success of a company, like market share, return on investments, property turnover coefficient, show significantly more value in companies with a higher level of goods and services.³

The efficiency of the whole system is possible only if we monitor and analyze the demands of the customers, as well as define and control the process and implement constant improvements. Quality is a complex term, made up of several elements and criteria.

All quality elements or criteria are equally important in order to obtain one hundred percent quality. If only one element of quality is missing, the complete quality of product or service is impossible to obtain.

Besides the mentioned general elements of quality, the product or service have to satisfy specific elements of quality, according to the demands of the profession in their pertaining activity. Today quality is the result of growing and increasingly diverse needs of the consumers, along with a highly increasing competition, market globalization and the development of modern technology.

Problems in service quality measurement arise from a lack of clear and measurable parameters for the determination of quality. It is not the case with product quality since products have specific and measurable indicators like durability, number of defective products and similar, which make it relatively easy to determine the level of quality.

² Oakland, J.S., foreword., in: *Tourism and hospitality management*, no. 1., Faculty of Tourist and Hotel Management Opatija, Opatija.

³Grove S.J., and R.P. Fisk, The impact of other customers on service experiences: a critical incident examination of getting along, *Journal of Retailing*, 73, 1997, p. 63-85.

Table 1.

General elements of product and service quality

| Dimension | Definition |
|------------------|--|
| Availability | Product or service is easily available |
| Guarantee | The personnel is polite, kind and educated |
| Communication | Clients receive information on all products and services and their changes in the language they can understand |
| Expertise | The personnel has the necessary knowledge and skills to produce and sell products or provide services |
| Standard | Products and services are up to the standard |
| Behaviour | Kindness, good manners and care of the personnel towards clients |
| Flaw | Each quality that is not defined and affects the satisfaction of the client |
| Duration | Performance, service result or product last longer |
| Engagement | The personnel shows understanding and gives individual attention to each client |
| Humanity | Product or service are provided so as to preserve dignity and self-respect of the client |
| Effects | Product or service produces the expected effect |
| Reliability | Capability to sell products or provide services in a discreet and reliable manner |
| Responsibility | Definite duration of product sale or providing of services |
| Safety | Product or service are provided in the safest possible way, without any kind of risk or danger |

Source: Avelini Holjevac, I., Upravljanje kvalitetom u turizmu i hotelskoj industriji (Quality management in tourism and hotel industry), Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Opatija, 2002, pp. 12-13.

The most important characteristics of services, separating them neatly from products, are the impossibility to separate production from consumption; the impossibility to store services; their non material quality; transience and heterogeneity.

The impossibility to separate production from consumption and the impossibility to store services implicitly includes a simultaneous production and consumption, which is characteristic for most services. Since the services are performances, ideas or concepts rather than objects, they cannot be seen in the same way as products and are, therefore, characterized by their being immaterial. Furthermore, it is impossible to preserve services, which raises the issue of harmonizing offer and demand for services. The same service can be provided by different persons in an institution, and each of them might provide it in their own way so that heterogeneity also counts among characteristics of services that differentiate them from products.

The quality system is based on principles such as commitment of the management, focus on the customers, employees and facts, constant improvement and co-operation of all the participants to the process.

Research carried out in 101 companies in the service provision field (Zemke, Schaff, 1989) show the following results:

- Managers are “obsessed” with listening to the changeable wishes, needs and expectations of their customers, and the wish to respond to them.
- A solidly defined strategy of servicing “inspired by consumers” is created by managers in their companies, and transferred to the staff.
- Managers develop and maintain a *customer-friendly* system of providing services.
- Managers look for, and then inspire and develop staff that is in direct contact with consumers.

Two basic approaches to service quality have been identified in the early nineties of the twentieth century. The first approach is “technical” and product oriented, while the second approach is customer related. These two approaches have been recognized as results of managerial efforts to consider the aspect of quality when providing services from two angles: on one hand, the manager tends to abide by the set standards, while on the other, he wishes to satisfy the customer. The first approach is production oriented and tends to the consistency of service by impeding or minimizing the influence of the personnel directly involved in providing a service.

The service providing process is defined as a standard performance. The role of the staff providing services is reduced to the realization of the defined performance and the staff’s discretion, i.e. its influence on the performance itself is minimized. In that way we can achieve maximum efficiency. Such a “product based” approach to the process of service provision is the result of the managerial view on this process as a series of elements that require a trained coordination and control, while the service itself is strictly standardized. The “product based” approach is contradictory to the aspirations of the consumers to be treated as individual people with marked personal tendencies and expectations. Besides, such an approach, “industrial” and cliché, is in contrast with the wish of the consumer to find warm and friendly manners when *consuming* the service.

The second approach is consumer oriented. Expectations are the basis for satisfaction. After consuming the service, they compare their earlier expectations with experience. Results can range from satisfaction to dissatisfaction. The consumer anticipates the service standards in his expectations. Wilkie claims: “The seed of the consumer’s dissatisfaction is sown in the pre-purchase stage, before reaching the decision to purchase.”⁴ According

⁴Wilkie, 1996

to this, the consumer creates his own, individual *benchmark*, and the rating of his satisfaction is the result of his after purchase state.

Normann, the creator of the concept “moment of truth”⁵, points out that the first generation of researchers in the field of service sector management, had the task to determine the specificities of the services as opposed to other sectors, which paved the way for the second generation of researchers who focused on the relations in the service industry, the behaviour when providing service and service design, with the aim to optimize the “moment of truth”⁶.

On the basis of the above exposed thesis, the understanding of service quality is based on the *paradigm of service*. In that sense, the service sector company manager looks for a “balance between the human factor and technology, between expenses and profit and, after all, between quality and productivity” (Gummesson, 1993).

The organization has to strive for success. When the set goals are achieved, we set other goals, striving for higher levels of product, processes and service efficiency. Accepting the concept of constant improvement means changing the management style. A total quality cannot be a program of changes with a set duration, it is a continuous, constant process. The questions set before the organization are the following: How do you keep up the constant striving for new improvement? What kind of measures and revisions of the business process do you have to use? How do you convince the employees that the business success and survival of the organizations can only occur if all employees accept constant actions to improve all their activities in the organizations?

A successful organization constantly identifies and tackles the causes of problems or potential problems that employees have in doing their jobs. For that reason every employee has to be trained to identify such problems. The management and the employees must work together on implementing suitable corrective and preventive measures.

Each business process is subject to variability. Process variability is considered a normal phenomenon that is usually counted on. Parameter variability in the field of transformation of incoming values into outgoing values of the process affects the variability of the entire business process. For example, a lack of a specific product on the supplies market may require a substitution with another product of similar characteristics. Departure from the usual process (*variability*) can affect the quality of meals as results of a process,

⁵“Moments of truth”, Normann, 1991

⁶The phrase was taken from the title of a book by Carlzon, 1987, in which the author describes his experience as a client of the Scandinavian tour-operator Vingressor and the airline company SAS.

the timing of a process cycle, expenses of process quality, the level of satisfaction of the consumer/user with the process result⁷.

Each episode of variability and a departure from the optimal process does not necessarily have a negative impact on the quality level of the process results. However, if the process is moving away from its optimal course so much as to get close to the acceptable limit or it has surpassed the limit, cost incur due to poor quality. The process becomes too expensive, jeopardizing the quality of the results and thus seriously risking dissatisfaction on the part of the client/consumer, in other words, it becomes irrational.

3. SERVICE QUALITY MEASUREMENT IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

In order to achieve rationality the models of business excellence also, in a way, determine whether the criteria have been met, but the evaluation of business excellence is based not only on the fulfillment of the set criteria but also on the determination of the level up to which the criteria have been fulfilled (systems of points).

When analyzing the quality of service it is desirable to analyze the largest possible number of companies supplying the same type of service. As we already mentioned, if a company carries out a research and finds that the results are negative, it can interpret this information in the wrong way and conclude that it provides services in a totally wrong way. On the other hand, when analyzing a large number of companies, it is possible to compare data and obtain a realistic picture of the position of an individual company compared to others regarding quality.

The upper part of the model (Image 1.) includes phenomena tied to the consumer, while the lower part shows phenomena tied to the supplier of services. The expected service is the function of earlier experiences of the consumer, their personal needs and oral communication. Communication with the market also influences the expected service. Experienced service, here called perceived service, is the result of a series of internal decisions and activities. The management's perceptions of the consumer's expectations is the guiding principle when deciding on the specifications of the quality of service that the company should follow in providing service. If there are differences or discrepancies in the expectations or perceptions between people involved in providing and consuming services, a "service quality gap" can occur, as shown in image 1. Since there is a direct connection between the quality of service and the satisfaction of clients in

⁷Drljača, M. Informacijska osnovica za kontinuirano poboljšanje kvalitete poslovnog procesa (Information basis for a continuous improvement of the business process quality) (kvaliteta.inet.hr/Informacijska%20osnovica)

hotel industry, it is important for the company to spot a gap in the quality of service.

The first possible gap is the knowledge gap. It is the result of the differences in managing knowledge and their real expectations. This gap can lead to other gaps in the process of service quality and is, among other things, caused by:

- incorrect information in market researches and demand analysis;
- incorrect interpretations of information regarding expectations;
- lack of information about any feedback between the company and the consumers directed to the management;
- too many organizational layers that hinder or modify parts of information in their upward movement from those involved in contact with the consumers.

The second possible gap is that of standard. It is the result of differences in managing knowledge of the client's expectations and the process of service provision (delivery).

This gap is the result of:

- mistakes in planning or insufficient planning procedures;
- bad management planning;
- lack of clearly set goals in the organization; and
- insufficient support of the top management to service quality planning.

The management can be right in evaluating the client's expectations and develop business methods to satisfy these expectations, without the employees being correct in providing service. For example, a restaurant can order the waiters to serve the customers in two minutes after they sit at the table. Nevertheless, the waiters can ignore that specification and talk between them on the side.

The fourth possible gap is the communication gap arising when there is a difference between the delivered service and the service that the company promised to the clients via external communications.

The reasons are:

- the planning of communication with the market is not integrated with the services;
- lack or insufficient coordination between traditional marketing and procedures;
- organizational performance not in keeping with the specifications, while the policy of communication with the market abides by the given specifications; and
- tendency to exaggerate in accordance with exaggerated promises.

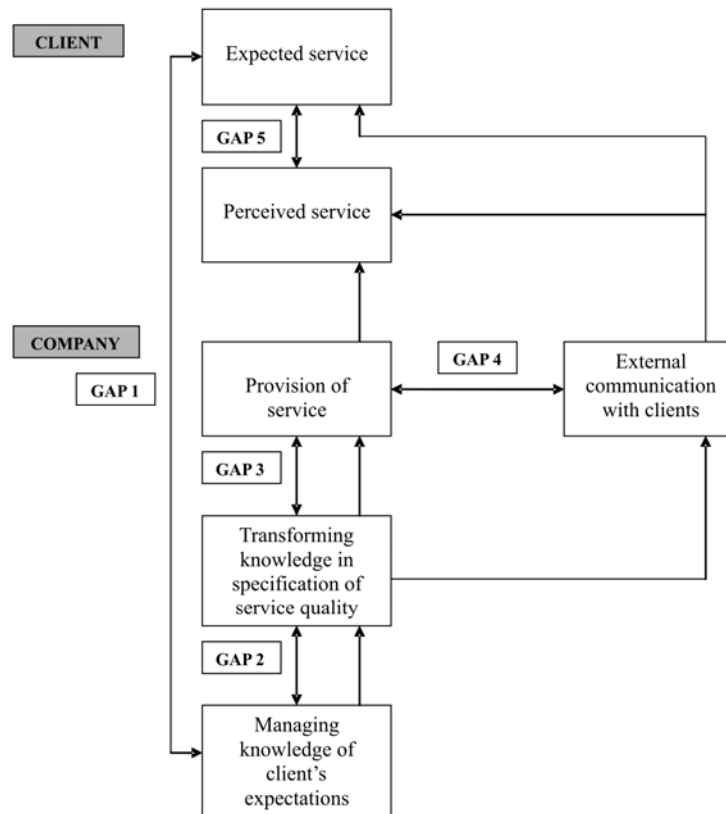


Image 1. Conceptual model of service quality

Source: Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V., Berry, L. L., "A Conceptual Model of Service Quality and Its Implication for Service Quality Research", *Journal of Marketing*, 49, Fall, 1985, p. 44 and Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., Parasuraman, A., "Communication and Control Processes in the Delivery of Service Quality", *Journal of Marketing*, 52, April, 1998, p. 36., in: *Tourism and hospitality management*, no. 1., Faculty for Tourism and Hospitality Management Opatija, Opatija.

Should any of the mentioned gaps arise, the "service gap" will also appear because the real service will not satisfy the client's expectations. Hotel companies try to detect the "service gap" with survey questionnaires. Gap analysis is the fil conducteur for the management to find the causes of problems regarding quality and to find suitable ways to remove such gaps. For this reason the first four gaps are also called organizational or internal gaps.

The conceptual model of service quality presented the frame for the development of a model of internal service quality – INSQPLUS. The authors of INSQPLUS model saw the need to add a 5th gap in the model of internal service quality – the rating gap, because it is necessary to have supervision over control, or better, the evaluation of service delivery before its consumption.

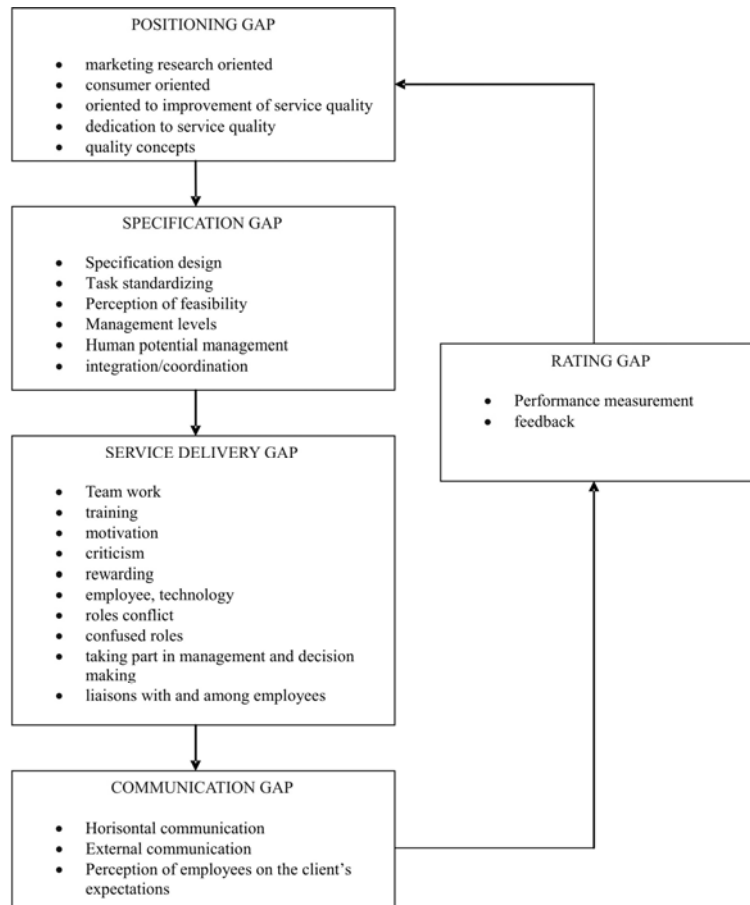


Image 2. Theoretical model of internal service quality

Source: Uran, M. (2004): *Model INSQPLUS – a model for evaluating internal service quality, Tourism and hospitality industry 2004, no. 1, pp. 1019 – 1027.*

Although there are several models (scales) for the measurement of service quality and the satisfaction of customers, they are often too generalized or ad hoc, and as such hard to apply in the hotel industry. As opposed to TQM, which began before all in companies that dealt with products, due to the specificities of services (the basic are: impalpability, inseparability from provider

and receiver of service, impossibility of storage), a specific concept called SERVQUAL (SERVices QUALity Model) was created.⁸

The SERVQUAL model offers a suitable conceptual frame for the research and service quality measurement in the service sector. The model has been developed, tested and adapted during various researches in cooperation with the Marketing Science Institute from Texas and numerous companies operating in the service sector. The model is based on the definition of quality as a comparison of the expected and the obtained as well as a consideration of gaps in the process of service provision. SERVQUAL is based on the client's evaluation of service quality. The described concept is based on the gap between expectations and perception of the clients. Service quality represents a multidimensional construction.

The choice of the most important characteristics was an issue dealt with in various ways. One of these is a logical attempt to work out a list of desirable attributes from the basic needs of the clients. A variant of a scale containing desirable characteristics of services, known as SERVQUAL scale, is currently quite popular in literature. It was developed in marketing circles with the aim to measure service quality (Baković, Lazibat). In the original SERVQUAL instrument, Parasuraman et al. (1985) define service quality through ten dimensions which they sum up in five in 1988:

- 1) Reliability,
- 2) Assurance,
- 3) Tangibles,
- 4) Empathy,
- 5) Responsiveness.

Each of the listed dimensions has different features. Just like dimensions have different influence on the final service quality, so do these features have different influence on the grading of success of a single dimension. Despite its popularity and wide application, SERVQUAL is exposed to numerous criticisms, from both the conceptual and the operational aspect.

Theoretical criticism:

⁸ Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, A. V., Berry, L. L., "A Conceptual Model of Service Quality and Its Implications for Future Research", *Journal of Marketing*, 49, Fall, 1985; Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, A. V., Berry, L. L., "Perceptions of Service Quality", *Journal of Retailing*, 64, Spring, 1988, p. 12-40; Zeithaml, V. A., Parasuraman, A., Berry, L. L., "Delivering Quality Service – Balancing Customer Perceptions and Expectations", The Free Press, New York, 1990; with other used sources, in: *Tourism and hospitality management*, no. 1., Faculty for Tourism and Hospitality Management Opatija.

- pattern objections: SERVQUAL is based rather on an affirmation pattern than on the pattern of understanding; it does not manage to tie in with proved economical, statistical and psychological theories.
- Gap model: there is little evidence that the consumer evaluates service quality in the sense of perception – expectation gaps.
- Direction to the process: SERVQUAL is directed to the process of service delivery and not to the result of service experience.
- Dimensionality: the five dimensions of SERVQUAL are not universal; the number of dimensions that encompass service quality is connected to the context; there is a high degree of inter-correlation between RATER dimensions. RATER is a mnemonic acronym where R = reliability, A = assurance, T = tangibles, E = empathy and R = responsiveness.

Operative criticism:

- Expectations: the term of expectations has multiple meanings; in evaluating services consumers use standards instead of expectations; SERVQUAL cannot measure the absolute expectations of service quality.
- Content of the elements: four out of five elements cannot encompass the variability inside each dimension of service quality.
- Moment of truth: the consumer's rating of the service can vary from one to the next moment of truth.
- Polarity: the reverse polarity of the scale elements causes wrong reactions.
- Scale grading: Likert's scale with 7 ratings is inadequate.
- Dual administration: dual administration of instruments causes boredom and confusion.

The most important criticism of SERVQUAL was the usage of gap analysis results (difference between expectations and perception of the received service) in measuring service quality (Cronin and Taylor, 1992, 1994). Comparing the expectation-perception gaps with perception only, called SERVPERF, Cronin and Taylor concluded that measurement of service quality based only on perception was enough.

4. **SERVQUAL MODEL IN CROATIAN HOTEL INDUSTRY**

The Faculty for Tourist and Hospitality Management in Opatija constructed an empirical model for the measurement of service quality in hotel industry on the model of hospitality on the Opatijska Riviera. Its use shall be simple and effective in hotel practice⁹.

The aims of the research were:

- a) Evaluate expectations and perceptions of hotel guests on the studied sample,
- b) Evaluate and calculate the SERVQUAL gap,
- c) Test the reliability of the SERVQUAL model in hotel industry,
- d) Determine the dimensions of service quality in hotel industry by applying the method of factor analysis.

From a practical point of view, the research intended to test the adapted SERVQUAL model for the measurement of service quality of hotel guests (Marković: 2005). The survey among hotel guests was carried out in 16 hotels on Opatijska Riviera (in Opatija, Lovran and Mošćenička Draga) during Christmas and New Year Holidays 2001/2002, in the period from Dec 28, 2001 to Jan 8, 2002.

The SERVQUAL gap was calculated on the basis of what is shown in image 1. It represents the difference between the average ratings of perceptions and the average expectations ratings. The wider the gap, the greater the difference between expectations and perception.

⁹Marković, S. Kvantitativna primjena SERVQUAL modela u hotelskoj industriji, *Tourism and hospitality management*, br. 1, Fakultet za turistički i hotelski menadžment Opatija, Opatija, str. 179.-191., 2005.

Table 2.

SERVQUAL gap

| Dimensions | Expectation (SERVEXP scale) | Perception (SERVPERC scale) | SERVQUAL gap= Perception-Expectation |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Tangibles | 6,36 | 5,70 | -0,66 |
| Reliability | 6,44 | 6,00 | -0,44 |
| Responsiveness | 6,38 | 5,99 | -0,39 |
| Assurance | 6,38 | 6,00 | -0,39 |
| Empathy | 6,02 | 5,70 | -0,32 |
| Total SERVQUAL gap | 6,32 | 5,88 | -0,44 |

Note: Rating scale from 7 to 1, where 7 represents the highest rating and 1 the lowest. The higher the rating, the greater the expectation and the perception.

Source: Marković, S. (2005): *Quantitative application of SERVQUAL model in hotel industry, Tourism and hospitality management, no. 1, Faculty for Tourism and Hospitality Management, Opatija, pp. 179-191.*

Table 2. shows that the average ratings for expectations are higher than the average perception ratings in all dimensions of service quality. This results in a negative total SERVQUAL gap. The widest gaps are those in the dimensions of “reliability” (-0,44) and “tangibles” (-0,66). Hotel guests are more satisfied with the response of the hotel personnel, therefore the gap in the dimension of “empathy” is the narrowest (-0,32).

The results of the quantitative application of the SERVQUAL model in Croatian hotel industry show that the expectations of hotel guests are higher than their perception. This proves the existence of a negative SERVQUAL gap.

Table 3. shows the results of the expectation of service quality in hotel industry in different countries. It is visible that tourists from Great Britain have the highest total expectations, followed by guests from Australia and USA, while the Japanese tourists have the least expectations.

Research shows that the expectations of hotel guests who spent their holiday on Opatija Riviera in the observed period, were much higher than the results of research shown in table 2. Compared to clients in other services, “reliability” and an “impeccable” service is important to all hotel guests, regardless of their country of origin. Hotel guests prioritize this dimension, and so should hotel managers and personnel.

Table 3.

Expectations in hotel industry according to global research

| Dimensions of service quality | Countries | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------|------|-----------|--------|---------------|
| | UK | Japan | USA | Australia | Taiwan | All countries |
| <i>Sample size</i> | (65) | (75) | (38) | (44) | (31) | (253) |
| Tangibles | 5,51 | 4,64 | 5,62 | 5,62 | 5,83 | 5,44 |
| Reliability | 6,68 | 6,23 | 6,61 | 6,61 | 6,65 | 6,56 |
| Responsiveness | 6,57 | 6,05 | 6,43 | 6,52 | 6,41 | 6,40 |
| Assurance | 6,65 | 6,16 | 6,41 | 6,46 | 6,56 | 6,45 |
| Empathy | 6,39 | 5,58 | 6,35 | 6,26 | 5,83 | 6,08 |
| <i>Arithmetic mean</i> | 6,36 | 5,73 | 6,28 | 6,29 | 6,26 | 6,19 |

Source: MOL, C., Armstrong, R. W., "Expectations for hotel service quality: Do they differ from culture to culture?", *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 4, 4, 1998, p. 387, in: *Tourism and hospitality management*, no. 1, Faculty for Tourism and Hospitality Management Opatija, Opatija.

The need for the application of SERVQUAL model in hotel industry is confirmed by the fact that, in the observed sample, hotel managers do not know the expectations of their guests because the dimensions of service quality they consider most important, do not match those that are most important for the clients, which is confirmed by the total SERVQUAL gap.

5. CONCLUSION

SERVQUAL can be widely applied, not only in science but also in practice in various services. The aim of the scientists is to work out and test useful instruments for managers in order to help them determine those organizational variables (policy, staff, structure, technology, processes) that will guarantee the best service quality with minimal costs. This methodology can assist hotel managers in assessing the position of the hotel regarding its competition and strategic and operative decision-making.

In hotel industry, service quality, as an extremely subjective category, is crucial to the satisfaction of the client. It is therefore imperative for managers in hotel industry to apply the SERVQUAL model for the measurement of service quality in their own hotel company, in order to satisfy the guest's expectations and ensure a position on the growing global tourist market.

The results of the quantitative application of SERVQUAL instrument show that this model can provide managers with useful information for the assessment of expectations and perception of hotel guests, with the aim of learning about gaps in individual service quality dimensions. need for the application of SERVQUAL model in hotel industry is confirmed by the fact that,

in the observed sample, hotel managers do not know the expectations of their guests because the dimensions of service quality they consider most important, do not match those that are most important for the clients, which is confirmed by the total SERVQUAL gap. To sum up, this article tend to clarify the SERVQUAL model as not only provider to the managers with a clear picture of the quality of the provided service, but also helping in discovering the needs, wishes and expectations of the guests. The same is analyzed by determining the characteristics of service quality that are most important for guests. We can say that it helps managers in setting the standards for the provision of services in the hospitality industry.

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Dr. sc. Jasmina Gržinić

Docent

Odjel ekonomije i turizma "Dr. Mijo Mirković"

Sveučilište Jurja Dobrile u Puli

**KONCEPTI MJERENJA KVALITETE USLUGA U
HOTELSKOJ INDUSTRIJI****Sažetak**

Kvaliteta usluge u hotelskoj industriji važan je čimbenik uspješnog poslovanja. Postojeći trend upravljanja potpunom kvalitetom u hotelskoj industriji osigurava postizanje konkurentskih prednosti hotelskih tvrtki te je iz tog razloga predmet suvremenih izučavanja kvalitete usluge u hotelijerstvu. Koncept i konceptualni model kvalitete usluge neophodan je u razumijevanju nastanka kvalitete usluge i mogućih jazova kvalitete. Cilj ovog rada je prikazati važnost kvalitete usluge u hotelskoj industriji i to s konceptualnog stajališta kao i sa stajališta mjerenja kvalitete usluge. SERVQUAL model pruža odgovarajući konceptualni okvir za istraživanje i mjerenje kvalitete usluga u uslužnim djelatnostima. SERVQUAL ima široku primjenu, kako u znanosti, tako i u praksi različitih uslužnih djelatnosti. Cilj rada je dati pregled organizacijskih varijabli (politika, kadrovi, struktura, tehnologija, procesi) koja će garantirati najbolju kvalitetu usluga uz minimalne troškove.

Ključne riječi: kvaliteta, usluga, hotelska industrija, kriteriji mjerenja.

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