Full Length Research Paper

Service quality at selected hotels in Pretoria, South Africa

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In today's volatile business environment, hotels are competing for a larger share in the market and customer-driven quality management is becoming the preferred method for improving their performance. To ensure success, a hotel needs to measure the quality of service it renders to its guests in order to identify areas that may require improvement. This fact prompted the researcher to apply the Servqual model to assess the customers' perceptions and their expectations of service quality provided by hotels. The study was quantitative in nature and conducted in the form of a self-administered survey. The findings revealed that the average ratings for expectations were higher than the average perception ratings in all five dimensions of service quality (reliability, empathy, assurance, responsiveness and tangibles). This resulted in a negative total Servqual gap. Tangibles had the largest gap score (-0.59333) when compared with the other gap scores. This implied that guests attached high expectations to the tangible elements of the hotel. In contrast, reliability had the lowest gap score (-0.166) when compared with the other gap scores.

Key words: Service quality, expectation, perception, gap scores, hospitality industry.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decades, the tourism industry has become one of the most important players in the growth of economies worldwide. This important industry has considerable infrastructure with service institutions among which the most prominent feature is the hotel industry. Tourism plays a major role in the economy of South Africa as it currently contributes more than 8% to the country's gross domestic product (GCIS, 2010). In 2003, the tourism industry in South Africa was viewed as the fastest growing in the world (Keppler, 2003). The hospitality industry has also grown at a rapid rate since 2001. Demand from business and leisure tourists has provided the impetus (Kloppers, 2005). The growing number of tourists to South Africa, and the money that they spend, is creating investment opportunities for organizations – both in tourism and its related industries (Saayman and Olivier, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to assess the expectations and perceptions of service quality dimensions delivered by the hospitality sector in Pretoria, from the hotel guests' perspective. Pretoria, as the capital city of South Africa, is a prime business and leisure area. Similar to hotels in other countries, many hotels in Pretoria have experienced low occupancy rates during the past few years. Therefore, Pretoria hotels need to provide the quality of service that exceeds the expectations of the guest. The Servqual instrument has emerged as the most reliable standardized questionnaire to measure service quality (Akbaba, 2006). The instrument suggested service quality as the gap between customers' expectations and their perception of the service provider's performance. Identifying the specific expectations of customers, the dimensions of service quality, and their relative importance to customers for each specific segment of hotel industry will definitely help managers to address the challenge of improving service quality (Akbaba, 2006).

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SERVICE QUALITY IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Service quality is an aspect that has aroused considerable interest and sparked debate in current research literature, because of the difficulties in both defining and measuring it with no consensus emerging on either issue (Wisniewski, 2001). Service quality is defined as the consumer's rating of the overall excellence or superiority of the service offered (Ueltschy et al., 2004). The perceived relative service quality is crucial to the success of any service organization. Since customers participate in delivery and consumption of services, they interact closely with various service aspects in organizations. This knowledge gives them the opportunity to assess critically the services provided by organizations. Customers assess service quality by comparing the level of service they receive with their desired level of service. Hence, excellent service quality plays a critical role in adding value to the overall service experience (Shahin and Debestani., 2010).

Service quality is an attitude towards or a global judgment on the provision of superior service. To be globally competitive service industries need to offer a quality of service that exceeds customers' expectations. Service quality determines an organizations success or failure (Abang and Rozario., 2009). These authors further state that service quality is influenced by expectations, process quality and output quality. In other words, the standard of service is dependent on the customers who have experienced such service and who use their experience and feelings to make a judgment.

Avelini-Holjevac (2002) provides an interesting definition of service quality in the hotel industry: "Quality means achievement of estimated standards and their constant maintenance, that is, an ongoing process. High-class hotels render the highest standards and highest quality products and service, with the most extensive scope of expensive hotel service. Economy class hotels offer products and service of lower quality, with a limited scope of less expensive service".

Hotel guests usually formulate their expectations of service quality before visiting any hotel by referring to the star-rating of the establishment. As they expect high-quality service from those hotels with more stars, they will be extremely disappointed if their expectations are not met.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN HOTEL INDUSTRY

The hotel industry forms by far the largest component of the tourism and hospitality sector. There is very limited international ownership of hotels as most of the hotel chains are owned by South African conglomerates (Phillips and Govender., 2001). Over the last decade, the hotel industry in South Africa has been dominated by large groups such as Southern Sun, Sun International, Protea Hotels, City Lodge Group, Legacy Hotels and Resorts and Accor Hotels. All these industry players have opened new facilities in the country over the past few years and a number of international hotel groups have also invested in South Africa, including the Rezidor Hotel Group, Hyatt, Hilton and Sheraton. There are many new entrants to the market including the boutique hotels that have opened in Cape Town and Johannesburg (Forster, 2011).

A large range of accommodation is available to tourists in South Africa. As far as hotels are concerned, the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) asserts that more than three-quarters of the available accommodation establishments have been graded (TGCSA, 2005). The star-grading criteria of the TGCSA relate to the functional and physical characteristics of the establishment as well as the range and level of service that the establishment provides for its guests (Caras, 2007). The grading system ranges from one star (the lowest and cheapest) to five stars (the highest and most expensive).

Over the years, the number of hotels in key locations, such as Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Durban, has increased to accommodate a growing number of travellers, and, in recent years, the growth in occupancy rates and average room rates has been robust. However, since the 2010 World Cup's perceived demand for increased infrastructure supply, the accommodation sector has been faced with reduced occupancy rates. Similarly, other developments, such as the property boom after South Africa's selection as host of the 2010 World Cup have led to a significant increase in demand for electricity, resulting in power shortages and increased tariffs (Department of Tourism, 2011).

Holiday travel requires destinations that appeal to visitors. South Africa offers beautiful beaches, luxury game lodges with a variety of wild life, world-class casinos and resorts, shopping malls and extensive sports and recreational facilities. However, South Africa faces certain challenges which may adversely influence international tourism. These include negative perceptions of the crime situation as well as the remoteness of South Africa from the European and North American markets, coupled with rising oil prices and subsequent increased cost of air travel. Nevertheless, recent strengthening of the Rand has marked South Africa as a "value-for-money" destination. On balance, South Africa does has much to offer foreign and domestic travellers and international events such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup have helped to attract visitors and promote the country globally as a tourist destination (Forster, 2011).

Although holiday travel is significantly influenced by the economy, from a consumer's perspective, rising disposable income allows for increased spending on discretionary purchases such as vacations. When disposable income remains static or falls, consumers cut

back on discretionary purchases or change to a cheaper accommodation or vacation option. While the domestic economy affects domestic holiday travel, the global economy impacts on international travel to South Africa (Forster, 2011).

Demes (2011) maintains that one of the key issues facing the industry is 'cost-push'-related inflation that in turns affects utility and transport costs. The sustained abnormal increase in electricity tariffs coupled with the substantial increase in water, gas and property costs present a serious challenge to hotel operators. These increased costs have been consistently above the official inflation rate, while the current market dynamics repress room rates and the ability to yield profits. Fuel price increases impose a further 'cost-push' pressure on operating costs. As a result, turnarounds are reduced by these uncontrollable factors and the prevailing market dynamics which are driven by increased inventory and discount regimes.

Looking ahead, the South African hotel industry faces a difficult period of two to three years. While 2012 is at best expected to reflect a marginal recovery on the 2010/11 period, the level of inventory dilution remains considerable and demand needs to improve substantially to pre-2009 levels for a reasonable impact to be evident in the absorption of increased inventory. The years 2013 and 2014 are expected to reflect marked improvement, albeit still strongly dependent on the local and global economic conditions. With gateway cities existing in South Africa, international and regional hotel operators will find it much easier to expand operations in a number of southern and West African countries (Demes, 2011).

DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE QUALITY MODELS FOR MEASURING SERVICE QUALITY

Studies show that the perceived relative quality of a product or service is the single most important factor in determining its long-run market share and profitability. The Strategic Planning Institute reports that businesses that rate poorly on service quality lose market share at the rate of 2% a year while earing on average only 1% on sales. Companies that score high on service quality gain market share at 6% a year while averaging a 12% return on sales (Doyle, 2002). To survive and have long-term relationships with customers, understanding them, meeting their expectations and distinguishing themselves from rivals are important. Hence, customer expectations and perceptions currently receive considerable attention both from researchers and practitioners (Atilgan et al., 2008).

The Servqual model

Parasuraman et al. (1988) designed the SERVQUAL instrument to identify and measure the gaps between

customers' expectations and perceptions of service quality (Mey et al., 2006). This is supported by Cant et al. (2006) who maintain that the SERVQUAL scale was developed to measure the gaps between customers' expectations of service performance and their assessment of actual performance.

Initially, 21 service attributes were identified. These were condensed to five service quality dimensions that are applicable in most service delivery situations (Theron and Strydom ., 2009). These dimensions are listed by Lewis and Chambers., (2000) as follows:

Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
Assurance: Employees' knowledge and courtesy and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
Empathy: Caring, individualized attention given to customers.
Tangibles: Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and written materials.

These five service dimensions (developed from the perspective of customers) serve a dual purpose, namely as the service standards that the organization should meet and as evaluation criteria to determine whether these standards have indeed been met (Theron and Strydom., 2009).

Uses and application of Servqual model

The Servqual is popularly used by many studies on service quality. It is a multiple-item scale developed to measure service quality by computing the differences between consumers' desired expectations and their actual perceptions of a firm's performance. The instrument has been designed to be applicable across a broad spectrum of services (Mey et al., 2006).

Its design is based on two principles:

1. Customers' ratings of service quality are made by comparing perceptions with expectations.
2. These ratings are based on five identified quality dimensions of reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness (Little and Marandi., 2003).

Shahin (2006) explains that respondents are asked to indicate their degree of agreement with certain statements on a seven-point Likert-type scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree"). For each item, a "gap score" (G) is then calculated as the difference between the raw "perception-of-performance" score (P) and the raw "expectations score" (E). The "gap score" is calculated as $G = P - E$. The largest negative gaps, combined with assessment of where expectations are highest, facilitate prioritisation of performance

improvement. Low service quality is represented by a wider gap between customer expectations of service quality (what the customer expects of a service prior to experiencing the service), and the perception of the quality of service actually delivered (post-consumption judgment). Hence, hospitality managers who want to close the service quality gap and improve customer satisfaction need to measure the actual service delivery against customer expectations with reference to the gaps (Mola and Jusoh ., 2011).

It is significant for each service provider to know how customer expectations develop. Having knowledge about customers' expectations helps service providers to be conversant with the appropriate definition of service quality employed by their customers. It is common knowledge that, most of the time, customers who choose a service provider, have certain expectations. Guests without prior experience may have general expectations. First-time guests at a hotel expect attractive beds, comfortable mattresses, clean surroundings, satisfactory meals and a reasonable tariff. But, experienced guests have more specific expectations based on past experience (Mola and Jusoh., 2011).

Limitations of the model

Nasution and Mavondol., (2005) postulate that the underlying theory of service quality defined by Parasuraman et al. (1988) can be open to question as it is not well supported by theoretical and empirical evidence on the relevance of the expectations-performance gap. Toy et al. (2002) in their assessment of the SERVQUAL model take Parasuraman et al. (1988) to task for failing to explain the variability of the outcomes of the SERVQUAL model. They have suggested a contingency model approach.

METHODS

The original Servqual instrument was developed to be applicable across a wide spectrum of services. This was adapted to suit the South African hotel environment. A modified version of the Servqual instrument, based on an analysis of previous applications of the instrument in the hotel sector has been developed. The 22 standard questions of the Sevrqual model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) have been translated and adapted to suit the context of the local hotel environment. The result is a self-administered questionnaire with 23 closed questions. A 7-point Likert scale is used in this questionnaire, which comprises three sections. In the first section, demographic information and travelling characteristics of the respondents are collected. The second section is intended to measure the respondents' expectations regarding service quality in the hotel industry in a selected area in Pretoria by using the five SERVQUAL service quality dimensions. The third section reveals the respondents' perceptions of service quality actually provided by the hotel that they stayed at in Pretoria.

Target population

In this study, 50 hotels in Pretoria listed in the Hotel Register,

available online, which is a comprehensive list of hotels in Pretoria, were included in the target population (Hotels Combined, 2009). These hotels range from small hotels to 5-star hotels. To conduct the survey, a letter requesting permission to conduct the survey at the hotel, together with a letter of consent from the supervisor of this study, was sent by e-mail to each of the 50 hotels in Pretoria. Follow-up calls to the management of the hotels were made. Unfortunately, most of the requests were rejected. Among the possible reasons for being unable to participate in the study were that company policy forbade research studies by external parties, and the issues related to privacy and security of the guests. This is consistent with the findings of Taylor et al. (1998) quoted in Mey et al. (2006), who note that not all organizations welcome surveys. Eventually, only 7 hotels agreed to participate, of which two withdrew from the survey at a later stage. The 5 hotels from which data were finally collected are Court Classique Suite Hotel, Cullinan Premier Hotel, Hotel 224, Premier Hotel Pretoria and the Villas Luxury Suite Hotel.

In this study, the target sample survey included hotel customers who had stayed at the selected hotels in Pretoria between November 2010 and March 2011. A hotel customer is defined in this study as an individual who is a temporary visitor, stays overnight at the hotel, and is involved in an exchange of money for services rendered. Both local and international customers are included.

The sampling method

Non-probability sampling methods, namely quota sampling and convenience sampling were used. For quota sampling the researcher chooses sample members on the basis of meeting pre-specified criteria thought to be applicable to the population. In this case, only customers who had stayed overnight at the hotel were selected. Convenience sampling that was used later included those guests who had stayed overnight. They were usually asked to complete the questionnaires when they checked out. However, some questionnaires were placed in hotel rooms to give the guests, who so desired, enough time to complete them. Each participating hotel received 40 questionnaires. Out of 200 questionnaires only 94 were returned, with 13 not fully completed, so the 81 remaining questionnaires were used in the study.

Data analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire were analysed. Descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages were calculated to try to determine the respondents' demographic profile. Descriptive statistics of means and standard deviations were used, followed by gap analysis and a paired t test to compare the means between the expectations scores and perceptions scores of the respondents. A gap analysis was carried out to find out whether any service quality gaps existed. The paired t test was carried out to compare the means of expectations and perceptions. The differences between the values of these two means were computed and tested to find out whether the mean differences were significant. The chi-square test was carried out to identify significant associations between biographical variables and the five dimensions.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Demographic profile of the hotel guests

Respondents were more or less equally distributed bet-

ween males (50.62%) and females (49.38%). The majority of the respondents were young with 75% of the respondents below the age of 44. It was revealed that 54% of the respondents had travelled to Pretoria on business, 27% for leisure and 19% of the respondents combined both business and leisure. The level of education of most respondents was high, as 85% of them had diplomas or higher qualifications. The majority (63%) of respondents was local, other African countries represented 13% and the rest (14%) were from other countries.

Data reliability

Cronbach's alpha reliability test was run on the data collected to determine the reliability of the data. The high Cronbach alpha value (0.941) indicates that there is strong intercorrelation among items. The items do measure the dimension that each is required to measure. The value is well above the minimum value of 0.60, which is considered acceptable as an indication of scale reliability (Hair et al., 2006).

Comparison of factor mean scores between expectation and perception

Only factor mean scores are discussed as they reflect the selected dimensions under each factor. The summary of the results is presented in Table 1. As shown in Table 1, the average expectation mean scores ranged from 6.286 to 6.60333 and the average perception mean scores ranged from 5.91 to 6.2. The highest average expectation mean score (6.60333) was for factor 3 (assurance) while the lowest expectation mean score (6.286) was for factor 1 (reliability). This compares favourably with the findings of Blešić et al. (2010) who indicate that guests have the highest expectations regarding assurance.

The average mean score (M = 6.2) for factor 3 (assurance) for the level of perception of guests was higher than the other perceptions' mean scores. Therefore, the level of perception (assurance) of guests was higher than on other levels of perception of guests (reliability, empathy, responsiveness and tangibles). This is also in line with Blešić et al. (2010) whose research findings indicate that the highest rating for the level of perception was for assurance. In contrast, the average mean score (M = 5.91) of factor 5 (tangibles) of the level of the perception of the guests was lower than the other perceptions' mean scores. Therefore, the level of perception (tangibles) of guests was lower than on any other levels of perception of guests (reliability, empathy, responsiveness, and assurance).

Table 1 also 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. Factor 5 (tangibles) has the largest gap (-0.59333) compared with the other gap scores. This means that guests attach a high expectation to the tangible elements of the hotel, while the actual perceptions fall far below their expectations.

Significant relationships from paired *t* tests

The descriptive, correlation and paired-sample t-test using the SPSS program was conducted to compare the mean dimension scores for expectation and perception. Table 1 indicates that p-values are below 0.05 for most of the items, with the exception of the first four items under the reliability dimension. These values indicate that a significant difference exists between perceived and expected values, and that the results are not due to chance. The significant differences between expectation and perception in these factors indicate that hoteliers need to pay particular attention to these factors if they wish to improve the quality of service offered to guests. Empathy, assurance, responsiveness and tangibles are the factors which display significant differences. The fact that guests' high expectations are not fully met is an indication of shortcomings in the quality of service provided to guests.

Chi-square test results for associations between biographical variables and dimensions

The chi-square test reveals that there is no significant association between gender and any of the dimensions (p > 0.05) when expectations are tested. The same holds true for age and purpose of travel in relation to any of the expected dimensions (p > 0.05). There is a significant association between the country of origin and the expectations expressed in the reliability dimension (p = 0.027). South African guests have a higher expectation of the quality of service when compared to that of guests from beyond South African borders.

No significant associations in the perception statements exist in relation to gender, age or whether they visited the hotel for business or leisure. Significant associations were found to exist between the country of origin and some of the perceptions in the tangible dimension, such as up-to-date equipment (p = 0.044), visually appealing facilities (p = 0.093) and adequate security provisions (p = 0.009). In all these categories, South Africans had higher perceptions when compared to those of foreigners.

DISCUSSION

The study provides information on the level of service quality offered by hotels in Pretoria. The aim and

Table 1. Expectation and perception mean scores.

Items	Component		
	Expectations (mean)	Perceptions (mean)	Gap scores (mean)
Reliability	6.286	6.17	-0.116
Empathy	6.46333	6.0267	-0.43667
Assurance	6.60333	6.2	-0.40333
Responsiveness	6.48667	6.0733	-0.41333
Tangibles	6.50333	5.91	-0.59333

objectives were to measure the current level of service quality offered by the hotels, to identify any shortcomings with regard to service quality and to highlight areas on which hotels need to focus to ensure quality service. In order to achieve the aim and the objectives of the study, the evaluation of service quality was based on the five Servqual dimensions namely, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy. This is the first study of its kind in Pretoria and contributes to similar previous studies conducted in other cities and countries. The Pretoria hotel industry has not been studied adequately and extensively.

The empirical findings of this study reveal that guests' perceptions are lower than their expectations in 22 of the 23 statements. This means that hotel guests have higher service expectations. Perceptions exceed expectations in the section on reliability, because guests are happy with the way the hotels keep records of transactions. Conclusions and recommendations for this study are presented to provide possible guidance to hotel managers who are serious about meeting expectations on the quality of service delivery.

The tangibles dimension exhibited the largest average gap (-0.59333) when compared to the other four dimensions of the Servqual model. It is also the dimension with the highest number of attributes (questions) which means that it is a very important indicator of service quality. Zeithaml and Bitner., (2003) state that the tangible aspects of service are always cited by customers when evaluating quality of service. The dimension of tangibility includes a wide variety of items ranging from carpeting, desks, lighting, wall colours, brochures, daily correspondence and the appearance of staff (Hoffman and Bateson., 2006).

The high negative gap in the tangibles dimension should be a concern for the hotel management as this is the dimension in which guests attach a high expectation, but their actual perceptions are much lower than their expectations. Hotel managers should be mindful of the tangible elements of services because guests are always aware of these aspects and make objective judgments. Guests should be informed meaningfully of the existence of certain facilities and services at their disposal. Employees of the hotel establishments should be tasked with informing guests on how to access certain facilities such as sauna and health clubs. These might be available but guests are often not aware of the proper channels to follow to gain access to these facilities. Hotel managers should be aware of those tangible elements that are perceived to be associated with the accommodation. Those tangible elements that have high expectation value such as appearance of staff, up-to-date equipment, adequate fire-fighting equipment as well as clean comfortable rooms should be prioritised. This is in line with studies conducted by Shahin et al. (2010) who maintain that when considering the correlation of the gap of tangibles with other gaps, hotel managers should invest in hotel decorating that includes appearance of facilities, tools and equipment used to provide quality service and physical facilities.

Empathy is also another important aspect hotel managers should pay attention to as it revealed the second largest gap. Hotel management should compile policies and procedures that spell out clearly that they have their customers' best interests at heart. If customers experience problems or frustrations during their stay, these should be thoroughly investigated and appropriate measures taken to assure guests that the establishment has their best interests at heart. This is supported in a study by Karatepe and Ekiz., (2004). These authors propound that upon service failure in hotels, management should ensure that an efficient service recovery plan is implemented to apologise and atone. Promptness, facilitation, explanation, attentiveness, effort, satisfaction and loyalty should be part of this plan.

Responsiveness had the third largest gap. This indicates that hotels in Pretoria are still found wanting when it comes to responding to customer requests. This dimension is represented by three attributes which focus on the promptness of service delivered, how ready hotel staff are to respond to customer requests and their willingness to help customers. Mangers of hotels should conduct regular employee-workload inspections to ensure that employees are not tired and under stress, and that they have sufficient time to interact with guests.

Hotel management needs to have set service standards which should always be adhered to by employees. These service standards should address issues such as waiting time before receiving service, problem-solving procedures and mechanisms to deal with queries promptly and efficiently. Hotels should have well-staffed knowledgeable customer service departments,

with responsive, courteous front-line staff in all contact positions in front offices and restaurants.

To address the assurance gap, hotels should maintain open, effective communication with guests concerning their accounts and any other aspects which constitute transparency. Guests should be made aware of security features to avoid any uncertainty which may arise as a result of crime. Management should ensure that employees who deal with guests are trained to treat customers with respect and are able to make customers feel that they can trust the hotel management. Thorough training should be provided to ensure that employees are in possession of correct and relevant information to answer customers' queries. Copies of price lists, menus, tariffs and any other information should be made available to employees who deal with customer enquiries to ensure that everyone gives out the same information.

The differences between expectation and perceptions of hotel guests on reliability appeared to be less significant. This however, does not mean that hotel managers should not pay more attention to this aspect. Continued satisfaction of customers guarantees repeat business and positive word-of-mouth feedback on the hotel.

It was interesting to note that in all the dimensions which had significant associations, South Africans guests had higher expectations when compared to those of foreign visitors. This emphasise the importance of good service to all guests. Hotel staff often put in more effort when they serve international guests rather than to local guests. While local guests had higher expectations, they also had higher perceptions after they had stayed in the hotel. South African guests had higher perceptions on aspects in the tangible dimension. The practical suggestions based on this study should be a priority. The results of the study should be communicated to the hotels in Pretoria to empower them to upgrade their service to satisfy customer expectations.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major constraint in the choice of hotels was that the study was subject to the approval of the management of the various hotels. Of the 50 hotels contacted only 5 were willing to have the survey conducted at their establishments. This had a major impact on the validity of the target population. Reluctancy of the hospitality industry to take part in research is a common problem in South African studies. A small sample size of 81 guests was gathered. This is too small a number to generalise the results to other hotels in South Africa. Since a self-administered questionnaire was used, the response rate was very poor, though some effort was made to ensure that a larger number of guests completed the questionnaire. Some questionnaires were placed in the hotel rooms to give the guests more time to complete them.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study considered hotel services in general. It would be interesting to conduct a more focused study of the various aspects of the hotel service areas such as housekeeping, reception, restaurants, room service, lobby, etc, and possibly compare the performance of each function. Further studies could include questions to determine if guests had visited the same hotels before. Open-ended questions could aid in understanding the guests' expectations and perceptions better. Similar studies could be conducted in other countries to compare the expectations and perceptions in the global hotel industry.

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