Full Length Research Paper

Consumer satisfaction and quality management in the hospitality industry in South-East Europe

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This paper examines consumers' satisfaction and experience as a key segment of the managing of quality system of services in the hospitality industry. The research was conducted in five spas in South-East Europe, in a part of the Balkans, a region that includes Zapadnomoravska spa zone (The Republic of Serbia), from 1 August until the end of September, 2008. Measuring the quality of services was based on the SERVQUAL model. For obtained data analysis, statistical methods of *t*-test of independent samples and analysis of variance ANOVA were used, comparing the mean values of the results and certain statistical significances of their differences.

Key words: Management, service quality, SERVQUAL, spa hotels.

INTRODUCTION

A long tradition of spa tourism, as well as the wealth and quality of healing waters, represent a good basis for the development of health tourism, which makes an important category in Serbian tourism. General view of the condition of spa tourism, given in the first phase report, Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, coincides with a general assessment of the hotel spas in Serbia, and they are: worn-out accommodation facilities, unconformity to contemporary requirements demand, incomplete privatization process, the uniformity of the tourist offer, and a lack of market research focused on customer service requirements. Despite a number of new and renovated hotel facilities, spa tourism in Serbia is characterized by the dominance of domestic over foreign tourism. The lack of foreign demand is caused by primarily focusing on the quality of health services, and much less on the quality of hotel and tourist services. For modern hotel organizations, faced with increasingly refined requirements of consumers and stiff competition in the global market, quality becomes one of the key success factors and the paradigm of competitiveness. Therefore, in the fight for guests, providing quality services

and their continual improvement, has become inevitable.

Hotel companies in transition countries only in recent years have started facing the new business environment caused by globalization of world markets and the increasing use of high technology in the hotel business as well as introducing a series of International standards of quality. Under the pressure of competition, hotels are facing more and more, a new form of market competition – the quality of service. Therefore, the development of measures for the improvement of quality of hotel services is a basic prerequisite for successful business and survival in the market (Blešić et al., 2009).

Researches of scientific and technical publications of foreign authors, as well as key positions of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EOQ), American Association for Quality Control (ASQ) and the Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers, testify, on placing customers, their satisfaction and their retention, in the central focus of management quality, not only in production, but in service delivery as well (Tešanović and Koprivica, 2007). A growing interest in the study of service quality and customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry has been especially noticed, as opposed to local authors, who study this problem very rarely or only its few aspects. This indicates that there is a theoretical and practical justification for the research presented in this paper. The results of the survey can help hotel managers

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in making the necessary corrective measures that represent the difference between planned, the expected quality in the system, and perceived, or actual quality in performance improvements of existing services.

Development of models for measuring service quality

As a result of researches carried out in companies of four service sectors, (banking, telecommunications, insurance companies and repair and maintenance of appliances), Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry have developed SERVQUAL model for measuring service quality consisting of five determinants of quality ("tangibility", "reliability", "responsibility", "assurance" and "empathy") and 22 questions. After the first results of applied SERVQUAL model had been published (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, Berry, 1985), the authors continued developing the model and publishing research results through a series of publications (Parasuraman et al., 1985., 1988., 1991., 1991a., 1994, Zeithaml et al., 1985, 1988, 1990, 1993). The first model to measure the quality of services gave rise to much debate. Many scholars have tried, through their research, to prove or disprove its reliability, while others have tried to develop their own models and methods of measurement.

Although SERVQUAL has become the model with the widest application, it has experienced a number of criticisms, primarily from conceptual and methodological points of view. One of the main complaints is the number and significance of the determinants of quality, or its applicability in various service industries. Gronroos (1984) lists three determinants – "technical", "functional" and "quality reputation". Babakus and Boller (1992) in the study of service quality in public utilities obtain two deter-minants "tangible" and "intangible" elements of service. Jabnoun and Khalifa (2005) in the study of service quality in banking, distinguish four dimensions: "personal skills", "reliability", "image" and "values". Research conducted in the health sector (hospitals) gave nine determinants: "admission service", "tangible accommodation", "tangible food", "tangible privacy", "nursing care", "explanation of treatment", "access and courtesy afforded visitors", "discharge planning" and "patient accounting/billing" (Carman, 1990). Gagliano and Hathcote (1994), in the study of quality services in the sales of clothes department, derived four factors:"personal attention", "reliability", "tangibles" and "convenience". In the research of quality of service in the telecommunication industry in Nigeria, Omotayo and Joachim developed five dimensions model. These are convenience, reliability, features and facilities staffs who deliver the service and tangibles (Omotayo and Joachim, 2008).

When it comes to research quality of service in the tourism and hospitality industry, most authors modify the SERVQUAL model and adapt it to the characteristics of services in these industries. Saleh and Ryan in their study in the hotel industry vary five determinants:

"transparency", "tangible elements", "trust", "avoiding sarcasm" and "empathy" (Saleh and Ryan, 1991). In their study, unlike the SERVQUAL questionnaire, a total of 33 questions are included. Nadiri and Hussain (2005) in the study of service quality in hotels of Northern Cyprus set a two dimensional model: "tangibles" and "intangibles". As a result of a two month investigation of tourists in Mauritius Ramsaran-Fowdar (2007) stands seven determinants of quality. Also, in addition to the components taken from the original SERVQUAL model, the large number of new ones is given, so that the model consists of 59 components of quality in total. The first determinant, tangible elements of service, consists of 15 questions relating to: quality of food and drink, hygiene, comfort and functionality of space, the hotel image. Snoj and Mumel conducted surveys of service quality in the spas in Slovenia in 1991 and 1999. The authors give 23 questions divided into five SERVQUAL determinants models. The first determinant, tangible elements, contains 12 questions (Snoj and Mumel, 2002).

Buttle (1996) points out that SERVQUAL model measures only the process of service delivery, but not the result of the service, adding six new dimensions of quality to the six questions relating to the delivery of services in restaurants. Soriano (2002) conducts the research of restaurants' quality services in Spain, which assesses: "food quality", "service quality", "quality environment" and "price/quality ratio". Qin and Prybutok (2009) by researching the quality of services in fast food restaurants highlight the following factors: "tangibles", "reliability/responsiveness", "recovery", "assurance" and "empathy". Cronin and Taylor in 1992 presented an alternative methodology of measurement that they called SERVPERF (named after service performance). Having in mind that SERVPERF does not measure expectations, it does not formally measure quality of service, but consumers' satisfaction. Measurement, or taking data on perceptions (attitudes) of users in the sample, is done as a one-off, which shortens the process of surveying and then the processing and analysis using statistical techniques, appropriate to such a data set (Wannenburg et al., 2009).

Stevens et al. (1995) on the basis of SERVQUAL model, have developed a model for measuring service quality in restaurants under the name DINSERV, which contains a total of 29 questions arranged in five determinations of quality of SEVQUAL model. The SERVQUAL model was the basis for developing a model that measures the quality of service or satisfaction of tourists to the destination. This model is called HOLSAT (after holiday satisfaction), and it was developed in 1998, by Tribe and Snaith. The questionnaire consists of 56 questions relating to prices, traffic, weather conditions, accessible beaches, quality of service in hotels, bars, restaurants, shops, etc. (Tribe and Snaith, 1998).

The studies mentioned herein prove that the SERVQUAL model does not cover all the determinants of service quality that are important for the hotel guest. A hotel

Table 1. Determinants and issues involved in the research quality of hotel services.

Determinants of quality and issues of scale, the expectation	Model
Tangibility	
1. Hotel should have a convenient location and accessibility.	New
2. Exterior of the hotel and the region should be attractive visually (external appearance of buildings, facades, green areas, terraces, gardens).	New
3. The interior of the hotel should be visually appealing (rearrangement of rooms, appliances and equipment layout, decorations).	SERVQUAL
4. Prospectuses, brochures, menus, wine lists, napkins and bills should be visually appealing.	SERVQUAL
5. Quality of food and drink to satisfy guests needs.	New
6. Range of food and drinks to satisfy guests' needs.	New
7. Premises for serving food and beverages (restaurants, bars, pastry shops, etc.) should be clean and tidy.	New
8. Bedrooms, bathrooms, toilets in the hotel should be clean and tidy.	New
9. Employees at the hotel should operate properly.	SERVQUAL
10. Hotel should provide the possibility of organizing entertainment programs for guests.	New
11. In the hotel, there should be adequate facilities for recreation of guests (pool, gym, sports fields, and the like).	New
12. In the hotel, there should be a professional program designed for health improvement of guests (wellness and spa programs).	New
Reliability	
13. Employees at the hotel should provide services at the promised time.	SERVQUAL
14. Employees at the need to show understanding for the problems of the guests.	SERVQUAL
15. Employees at the hotel should provide scheduled services from initial contact onwards.	SERVQUAL
Responsibility	
16. Employees at the hotel should always be willing to help guests.	SERVQUAL
17. Employees at the hotel should always be accessible and always willing to answer questions of the guests.	SERVQUAL
18. To the demands of guests, employees should respond quickly and without delay.	SERVQUAL
Assurance	
19. Employees at the hotel should always be polite with guests.	SERVQUAL
20. Employees at the hotel should have the knowledge and meet professionally the demands of the guests.	SERVQUAL
21. Hotel guests should feel safe in the hotel (personal and financial security).	SERVQUAL
Empathy	
22. Employees at the hotel should provide individual attention to every guest.	SERVQUAL
23. Employees at the hotel should treat guests sincerely and compassionately.	
24. Employees at the hotel would need to understand the specific needs of its guests.	SERVQUAL

Source: Adjusted survey reviews of the spa hotels on the basis of SERVPERC scale of original SERVQUAL model according to: Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990). Delivering Quality Service: Balancing customer Perceptions and Expectations. The Free Press. New York: 181-183.

A hotel product represents a complex of tangible and intangible elements, which are mutually, spatially and functionally linked in an integral whole which manifests as a range of services arising from the needs, desires, and demands of hotel guests. So, the problem of the quality of hotel product must be viewed as a whole, as well as in the context of its individual components, in each case through the prism of customer satisfaction, which is expressed in the degree of harmony between the expected and actually experienced (Kosar and Raseta, 2005).

METHODOLOGY

Model for measuring service quality in spa hotels used in this study, is the result of detailed analysis of each model, while the base for

Table 2. An overview of the determinants and issues involved in the research.

ZBP research (Zeithaml et al., 1990)		This research	
Determinant	Question	Determinant	Question
Tangibility	1 - 4	Tangibility	1 - 12
Reliability	5 - 9	Reliability	13 - 15
Responsibility	10 - 13	Responsibility	16 - 18
Assurance	14 - 17	Assurance	19 - 21
Empathy	18 - 22	Empathy	22 - 24

Source: Done by authors.

its formation, as in many previous investigations, was the SERVQUAL model. Questionnaire consists of two parts, which include the 24 questions. The first part focuses on the expectations of guests and includes five determinants of quality that are taken from the original SERVQUAL model. The second part of the questionnaire, which contains the same determinants and issues, measures perceptions of service quality by hotel guests (Table 1). Questions from the other part are formulated as follows: First question from the scale expectations: Hotel should have a favorable location and easy accessibility, in the scale of perception reads: "Hotel has a convenient location and good accessibility", second question: Exterior of the hotel and the region should be visually attractive reads as follows: "Exterior of the hotel and the region are visually attractive".

The other issues from the expectations scale are reworded in the same way. The first 12 questions from the questionnaire refer to "tangible" elements through which the service can materialize. The remaining 12 questions relate to the "intangible elements" that constitute a key feature of services and the core of specifics which services have in relation to the physical product. Table 2 gives an overview of the determinants of the quality issues involved in ZPB research (Zeithaml et al. 1990) as well as in this study.

The study includes all 5 dimensions from the original questionnaire SERVQUAL. Unlike the original form, the first dimension has 12 questions, while other dimensions have 3 questions. The survey includes 15 questions taken from the original questionnaire and 9 new questions that are included in the first dimension "tangible elements", or elements of services that may materialize. All questions taken from the original questionnaire are adapted to measure the quality of service in the hotel. The formulated questionnaire was simplified and adapted for interviewing guests in spa hotels. The first 12 questions from the questionnaire are related to the "tangible" elements of the service, while the remaining 12 questions are related to the "intangible elements", or elements that constitute a key feature of services and core specifics that the service has in relation to the physical product. "Tangibles" include the physical determinant of the visible things in the process of service delivery (such as equipment, furnishings and exterior, design of uniforms, appearance of staff, promotional materials). Determinant "reliability" is related to fulfilling the promises without objections, on time, genuine interest in solving the problems of guests and impeccable services. Reliability is a prerequisite for effectiveness of other dimensions. Determinant "responsibility" refers to the identification of problems, needs and desires of guests, a willingness to help and provide prompt services. Determinant "assurance" refers to the ability of hotel staff to create a sense of trust and security for customers.

The fifth determinant refers to "empathy". Compassion or empathy implies readiness and willingness to assisting guests, as well as providing individual attention and understanding the specific needs of each guest. For measuring the attitudes of guests Likert scale of 5 grades has been used, where grade 1 indicates that certain characteristics of services are "totally irrelevant", and grade 5 that they are "very important". The second part of the questionnaire (the part relating to the perception), grade 1 indicates that the guest with the above statement about a particular service, *"totally disagrees"*, whereas grade 5 indicates that the guest *"totally agrees"*.

Description of the sample survey

The study was conducted in five spas of Zapadnomoravska region: Vrnjаćka, Mataruška, Ovćar, Bogutovаćka and Gronja Trepća spa, from 1 August till 30 September, 2008. The fact that in five spas of Zapadno Pomoravlje, in 2008, 147.342 tourists were registered, (Statistical yearbook of Serbia, 2009), which is 40.3% of the total number of tourists in spa resorts of Serbia for that year, confirms that it is the busiest tourist spa region in Serbia. Guests in nine hotels and a natural spa, were surveyed personally or face-to-face and by distributing questionnaires at hotel reception desks. Four investigators participated in the survey. From a total of 1600 questionnaires distributed, 618 were answered correctly.

Although there are studies of service quality based on large samples, such as research conducted by Soriano (2002) in Spanish restaurants (N=3.872), the majority of similar researches, analyzed a sample of about 200 respondents (Fick and Ritchie, 1991; Knutson et al, 1992; Heung and Wong, 1997). Some authors believe the estimates using statistical methods to be good only if the sample contains a minimum of 51 units (Bagozzi, 1981). Taking the above into account, we can conclude that the sample used in this study (N=618) is representative.

The largest number of guests from the sample, even 90.9% includes domestic guests. The total number of foreign tourists in the sample is 56 or 9.1%. Out of 56 foreign guests, 46 come from the former Yugoslav republics and only 1.6% from other European countries. According to the gender structure of respondents, 54.5% women and 45.5% men is represented in the sample. The largest number of respondents belongs to the age group between 41 and 50 (163 or 26.4%), followed by the age group between 31 and 40 (142 or 23%) and the age group between 51 and 60 (134 or 21.7%). This means that 71% of respondents belong to working, active population. Respondents of the group age of 61 and over, participate in the sample with 24.6%, while respondents of the age group under 30 years, account for only 4.4%.

Data collected by surveying of hotel guests are stored in SPSS database and further analysis were carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Science, SPSS, (Statistical Package for social Science), version 13.0.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to calculate the

Table 3. Difference between the expected and the perceived quality of service (SERVQUAL gap).

Determinant of quality	Perception (p)	Expectation (e)	SERVQUAL gap (p-e)
Tangibility	3.8274	4.5746	- 0.7472
Reliability	4.5599	4.7152	- 0.1553
Responsibility	4.5431	4.7686	- 0.2255
Assurance	4.7114	4.8889	- 0.1775
Empathy	4.2260	3.9709	0.2551
Total SERVQUAL gap	4.3736	4.5836	- 0.21

Source: Done by authors based on SPSS data analysis 13.0

average rating for the determinants related to the expectations and perceptions of the quality of hotel services (Table 3). The difference between the perceived and expected quality of service was negative in all determinants of quality, except the determinants of *empathy*, where the positive gap was a result of low expectations (3.9709). Guests had the highest expectations regarding the determinant of *assurance*, followed by the determinants of *responsibility* and *reliability*. Taking into account the small absolute difference between the arithmetic means, we could conclude that the aforementioned determinants were almost equally important for interviewed guests. Guests showed a lot of high expectations for the *tangibility* determinant as well (4.5746).

Ratings of the perception quality were also highest for the determinant of *assurance*, followed by *responsibility* and *reliability*. Absolute difference between the values of arithmetic means was small in the case of these determinants. The lowest score received the determinant of *tangibility* (3.8274), which was realistic and consistent with the material elements of hotel services in these spas (furnishing and appearance of buildings and premises, equipment, additional range of services). The result was the highest negative SERVQUAL gap with the determinants which represented the tangible elements of service. Total SEVQUAL gap was negative and it amounted to -0.21. Above this average was a SERVQUAL gap value for the determinant *tangible elements of service* (-0.7472) and *responsibility* (-0.2255). The value of the gap with other determinants was below the overall average.

The independent *t*-test

"T-test for independent samples" was applied with the aim of comparison of arithmetic means of two groups – male and female respondents, particularly for expectations and perceptions of the determinants of quality (Table 4). By analyzing results, it was concluded that there were statistically significant differences in relation to gender of respondents only with the first determinant of quality expectations on the level of significance p<0.05 (t>1.96). Female respondents expected more from the tangible elements of service than the male.

The results obtained were consistent with the results of the survey conducted by Pullman and Robson (2007), which indicated that women expected more than men when it came to physical characteristics of the hotel services (attractive interior design, decoration and so on).

In the domain of perception there were statistically significant differences in relation to the gender of respondents in all the determinants of service quality according to the level of significance p<0.01 (t>2.58). Men gave higher grades, i.e., estimated that all the determinants of service quality were higher, than it was estimated by women. This difference was particularly pronounced in the first determinant, i.e. the issue related to the interior and hygiene of hotel rooms.

Thus, the tendency of women to complain more often about the quality of hotel services and restaurant services was confirmed by the research conducted in Hong Kong. According to the results of this study, women and the younger population complained more frequently than men and consumers who belong to the age group of over 45. Preference for complaints to the quality of service had 59.5% women, and even 91% of respondents who were younger than 45 years (Heung and Lam, 2003).

Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

ANOVA examined whether between dependent variables (issues of expectations and perceptions) and independent variables (age structure of respondents) there was statistically significant correlation. The results of one-way analysis of variance of the domain expectations, indicated that in relation to level of significance, p<0.01, there were significant differences between age groups in all determinants, except for the determinants of tangibility. If F-test proved that there were statistically significant differences between expectations and perceptions of the quality of hotel guests, for further adoption of conclusions, it was important to determine "between which groups of guests there were statistically significant differences". For this purpose, *post-hoc tests* were used, or techniques for systematically reducing the risk of errors that may occur by increasing the number of comparisons between the two arithmetic means. The software package SPSS offered a number of different post-hoc tests (LSD, Sidak, Duncan, Bonferroni, Dunnett,

Table 4. Differences in expectations and perceptions with regard to gender.

Determinant of quality	Gender	M	σ	t-test	p
Tangibility (expectation)	M	4.5480	0.28793	-2.401	0.017**
	F	4.5967	0.21504		
Reliability (expectation)	M	4.7165	0.45063	0.074	0.941
	F	4.7141	0.33588		
Responsibility (expectation)	M	4.7616	0.34688	-0.472	0.637
	F	4.7745	0.33122		
Assurance (expectation)	M	4.8849	0.23018	-0.415	0.678
	F	4.8922	0.20392		
Empathy (expectation)	M	4.0380	0.72876	0.918	0.359
	F	3.9624	1.20894		
Tangibility (perception)	M	4.0184	0.50627	7.671	0.000*
	F	3.6682	0.60997		
Reliability (perception)	M	4.6856	0.50752	5.185	0.000*
	F	4.4550	0.58421		
Responsibility (perception)	M	4.6477	0.40683	4.917	0.000*
	F	4.4560	0.53772		
Assurance (perception)	M	4.8126	0.33639	5.691	0.000*
	F	4.6271	0.45179		
Empathy (perception)	M	4.3820	0.58993	5.140	0.000*
	F	4.0959	0.76139		

Note: * $p<0.01$, $t>1.96$; ** $p<0.05$, $t>2.58$; M-male sex; F-female sex. Source: done by authors based on SPSS data analysis 13.0.

Scheffe, etc.). In this research Scheffe's post-hoc test was used, as one of the most rigorous and most often applied (Petz, 1981).

The results of post-hoc tests showed that the youngest respondents (up to 30 years of age) had significantly lower *reliability* expectancy, as opposed to other subjects. Also, respondents, aged 41 to 50 years, significantly differed form the respondents of over 60 years of age, in the sense that they had lower expectations than them. In the case of the determinants of *responsibility*, it was shown that the oldest respondents (over 71) had higher expectations, as opposed to respondent belonging to age groups from 41 to 50 and from 51 to 60 years. For the determinant of *assurance*, again, the youngest respondents had significantly lower expectations, as opposed to older respondents belonging to the age categories 31 to 40, 41 to 50 and 61 to 70. In the case of the dimension of *empathy*, those older than 60 years had higher expectations, as opposed to younger respondents. Sensitivity of the elderly to the determinants of quality such as

"responsibility" and "empathy" was illustrated in the survey conducted in 1999, in Australian hotels, which showed, that in the case of "tangible" elements of service, demands of older consumers did not generally differ from the requirements of the younger. However, when it came to special requests, and personal attention, older respondents had significantly higher expectations (Wei et al., 1999).

For the domain of perception (Table 6), there were significant differences for the dimension of *tangibility* in the sense that the youngest respondents and respondents over 60 years of age gave higher marks, unlike the middle-aged respondents. For the dimension of *reliability* there were differences between the respondents of over 60 years of age, and other respondents, except the youngest, in the sense that they gave higher marks to this determinant. In the case of perception of determinants of *responsibility*, the highest rating was given by the oldest respondents, over 71 years, and the lowest rating was given by the respondents between 31 to 40 years.

Table 5. ANOVA analysis of variance according to the age structure of respondents for the domain of expectations.

Determinants of quality	Age group	M	σ	F	p
Tangibility	to 30	4.5123	0.32498	1.661	0.142
	31 - 40	4.6021	0.27512		
	41 - 50	4.5685	0.21929		
	51 - 60	4.6039	0.28143		
	61 - 70	4.5310	0.23266		
	71 and over	4.5507	0.19153		
Reliability	to 30	4.1975	0.86360	16.416	0.000*
	31 - 40	4.6948	0.40775		
	41 - 50	4.6462	0.33476		
	51 - 60	4.7811	0.28644		
	61 - 70	4.8162	0.31162		
	71 and over	4.8694	0.23934		
Responsibility	to 30	4.6543	0.32662	4.950	0.000*
	31 - 40	4.8286	0.32187		
	41 - 50	4.7178	0.37329		
	51 - 60	4.7114	0.35350		
	61 - 70	4.7949	0.33648		
	71 and over	4.8829	0.18655		
Assurance	to 30	4.7284	0.39264	5.866	0.000*
	31 - 40	4.9272	0.19496		
	41 - 50	4.9223	0.19091		
	51 - 60	4.8582	0.23615		
	61 - 70	4.8932	0.18989		
	71 and over	4.8514	0.16682		
Empathy	to 30	3.7901	0.79069	36.686	0.000*
	31 - 40	3.7441	1.56984		
	41 - 50	3.6483	0.75655		
	51 - 60	4.0746	0.66370		
	61 - 70	4.5769	0.59501		
	71 and over	4.5721	0.47947		

Note: *$p < 0.01$; $F > 3.02$; Source: Done by authors based on SPSS data analysis 13.0.

Perception of the determinants of *assurance*, the highest ratings were given by the oldest respondents, unlike the other subjects, except the youngest. Also in the case of the determinants of *empathy*, the oldest respondents gave significantly higher scores, followed by respondents from 61 to 70. From above mentioned it could be concluded that older respondents, especially those over 70 years of age had higher expectation for service quality, but, also gave higher marks for the perception of service quality, as opposed to younger respondents.

Conclusion

Developing measures for improving the management

quality of hotel services is a basic prerequisite for successful business and survival in the market. Service quality is of paramount importance for keeping the guests and critical indicator of future economic activity. Request for better quality of products and services, is one of the most important strategic priorities faced by hotel companies. Hotels which chose to implement the concept of quality as a key factor of success, should achieve increase of customer satisfaction, i.e. to successfully position themselves in the market and thus achieve higher profits.

The results of researches have shown that guests in general are not satisfied with hotel services. Their expectations have been higher than experienced quality of services with all determinants, except for determinants of "empathy", where the positive values of the gap is the

Table 6. Analysis of variance ANOVA according to the age structure of respondents for the domain of perceptions.

Determinants of quality	Age group	M	σ	F	p
Tangibility	to 30	4.1327	0.40711	26.947	0.000*
	31 - 40	3.6995	0.43905		
	41 - 50	3.6431	0.60833		
	51 - 60	3.6841	0.64494		
	61 - 70	4.0855	0.54686		
	71 and over	4.3547	0.30721		
Reliability	to 30	4.6790	0.47575	12.487	0.000*
	31 - 40	4.4531	0.65274		
	41 - 50	4.4090	0.59062		
	51 - 60	4.5373	0.51203		
	61 - 70	4.7094	0.47857		
	71 and over	4.9369	0.16251		
Responsibility	to 30	4.6790	0.55069	17.022	0.000*
	31 - 40	4.3756	0.46781		
	41 - 50	4.4294	0.52211		
	51 - 60	4.5697	0.47638		
	61 - 70	4.6282	0.44940		
	71 and over	4.9279	0.17682		
Assurance	to 30	4.8025	0.32370	10.222	0.000*
	31 - 40	4.6362	0.38878		
	41 - 50	4.6237	0.46870		
	51 - 60	4.6965	0.46149		
	61 - 70	4.7650	0.34444		
	71 and over	4.9865	0.06619		
Empathy	to 30	4.2346	0.74429	21.337	0.000*
	31 - 40	4.0117	0.69606		
	41 - 50	3.9959	0.74718		
	51 - 60	4.2512	0.60413		
	61 - 70	4.5171	0.56764		
	71 and over	4.7883	0.42227		

Note: *$p<0.01$; $F>3.02$. Source: Done by authors based on SPSS data analysis 13.0

result of low expectation. Total SERVQUAL gap is negative and amounts to -0.21. The biggest negative SERVQUAL gap has been made with the first determinant related to the tangible elements of service, (appearance and furnishing, quality of food and beverages and additional facilities). So, the burning issue in providing quality services in spa hotels, represents the inadequate furnishing and equipment and lack of additional hotel facilities (for entertainment and leisure for guests, as well as wellness & spa programs).This problem should be overcome by developing a strategy with short and long-term plans and by stimulating investment in the development of spa tourism. Furnishing and construction of facilities that comply with the requirements of a modern guest, would lead to the extension of the tourist season and attracting wealthier tourists. Identifying groups of consumers that are characterized by common features, which are reflected in their demand for suitable hotel products and services, plays a very important role in the business of hospitality companies. Market segmentation is a starting point in forming the hotel product and the implementation of the concept of development of long term relationships with consumers. Therefore, the results obtained by t-test and ANOVA analysis of variance can be of great assistance to managers of hotels, primarily for the formation of market

segments and improvement in operations by adopting hotel products to the needs of hotel guests.

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