A Study of Service Quality in the Hospitality Industry

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Abstract **- Given the increasing arrivals of international tourists to Chennai, the purpose of this research is to employ the SERVQUAL model and the gap theory in assessing the guest hotel service quality in the hospitality industry in Chennai city.   The sample for this study represents two groups which includes 195 hotel guests who have stayed at the hotel for a period of two or more nights and 11management staff from different star hotels belonging to the highest rank.   The required data was gathered using two sets of specially designed questionnaires, one for the guests and the other one for the managers.   The reliability test, using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, indicates that all SERVQUAL dimensions (i.e. Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy) for both guests and managers, scored high which means that items in each dimension are highly correlated and therefore, reliable. Gap analysis (gap 5) indicates customer dissatisfaction with the service quality for 55% of the SERVQUAL attributes (i.e. 12 items out of 22). For such items, customers' perceptions fell short of their expectations. Another gap analysis (gap 1) shows that management is not fully aware of what may satisfy guests. They overestimate guests' expectations in terms of items pertaining to Reliability and Empathy, while underestimating the dimension of Assurance.**

Index Terms— SERVQUAL, guests, hotel, service quality, gaps in service.

Introduction

Given the increasing arrivals of international tourists to Chennai, this research attempts to assess the expectations and perceptions of service quality in Chennai's star hotels by applying the SERVQUAL model and the gap theory. In today's competitive environment examining service quality is considered an important strategy. Service quality is an important determinant of success in attracting repeat business. While the reasons for the initial visit to a hotel may be due to factors partly outside the control of management, the ability to create a satisfactory experience for the customers will rest, to a considerable degree, within the hands of both management and staff of the hotels.

This research intends to investigate service quality in the five-star hotels in Chennai. To measure the service quality the instrument named SERVQUAL is used. Since its inception in 1988 (Parasuraman, Zithmal and Berry, 1985, 1991, 1994), the SERVQUAL has been extensively used in service quality research and has become a popular measure of service quality within the hospitality industry (Luk & Layton, 2004; Nadiri & Hussai, 2005; Johns and Tyas,1996, 1997; Knuston et al., 1991; Lee and Hing 1995; Mels et al., 1997; Saleh & Ryan, 1991). SERVQUAL assumes that service quality is a comparison of expected performance with perceived performance. As a result, SERVQUAL includes 22 items representing expectations and 22 items representing perceptions. The developers of SERVQUAL suggest that analysing the gaps between expectations and perceptions offer diagnostic insights useful in assessing and improving service quality. Furthermore, their research revealed that there are five dimensions of service quality where gaps between expectation and perception may exist, and the narrowing or elimination of these gaps would lead to improved service quality. The five dimensions of service quality identified are *tangibles* which refers to the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials related to the service, *reliability* which refers to the ability of the service to perform the promised service dependably and accurately, *responsiveness* which refers to the willingness of the service providers to help customers and provide prompt service, *assurance* which includes the competence of the service and its security, credibility and courtesy and *empathy* which refers to the ease of access, approachability and effort taken to understand customers' requirements.

Objectives of the Research

The main purpose of this research is to employ the SERVQUAL model and the gap theory, in assessing the quality of service provided at star hotels Chennai City. More specifically, the objectives of the proposed research is to employ the concept of the SERVQUAL model, as originally developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) and especially its modified newer version (1988) and the five dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy; the concept of gaps between expectation and perception of the hotel service package.

The service quality gaps to be measured in this study will be confined to the following two major gaps suggested by Parasuraman et al (1985):

- Gap 1: The Management Perception Gap which relates to the management perception of guests' expectations and guests' actual expectations.
- Gap 2: The perceived service quality gap which relates tothe guests' expectations and guests' perceptions of the service quality.

Literature Review

Service quality is generally understood as the gap between consumers' expectations about a service and their subsequent perception of service performance (Williams, 1999; Gronroos, 1984; Lehtinen & Lehtinen, 1991; Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Most service organisations today realise that delivering excellent service is important to the success of their business, and hotel industry is no exception. Interest in service quality research has been ongoing for more than two decades (Webb, 2000), and has resulted in having a literature rich of various studies dealing with crucial issue from different dimensions (e.g. Briggs et al., 2007; Mohsin, 2007; Park et al., 2006; Pyo, 2005; Tsaur et al., 2004; Parasuraman, Zeithmal, and Berry, 1985, 1988, 1994; Gronroos, 1982, 1984; Cronin & Taylor, 1992, 1994; Donnelly, Hull, and Will, 2000; Saleh & Ryan, 1991).

Indeed, the improvement of product and service quality has been widely discussed in the literature as an appropriate competitive strategy for achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Morgan & Piercy, 1996). This requires management to continuously examine current processes against the demands of customers in the marketplace and then update their operations in line with market requirements (Wilds & Parks, 2004; Ndubisi, 2004; Heskett et al., 1990; Fehy, 1992). The importance of service quality to the success of business is best concluded in this sound statement: "Excellent service is a profit strategy because it results in more new customers, more business with existing customers, fewer lost customers, more insulation from price competition, and fewer mistakes requiring re-performance of services" (Shepherd, 1999).

Service Quality and Hotel Industry

Service quality has become a focus for many hotel industry researchers. (e.g. Yucelt & Marcella, 1996; Enz and Siguaw, 2000; Saleh and Ryan, 1991; Callan, 1998). The combined effect of the worldwide economic recession, technological advancement, and globalisation have increased the competitive pressures on hotel organisations (Harrington & Akehurst, 2000). All these pressures have led the hotels to be more concerned about service quality ethics. On the other hand, how consumers perceive the quality of products and services and how those perceptions influence their buying decisions is a vital issue for marketing managers (Heung et al., 2000). This is because service quality is an influential factor in attracting repeat business for a hotel (Saleh & Ryan, 1991).

A number of researchers have examined the quality of services offered in the hotel industry through the relative importance of various attributes to customers. Such attributes act as determinant factors for hotel selection and preference and for customers' judgment upon service quality (Nadiri & Hussain, 2005; Callan, 1998). This was confirmed by Williams (1999). In her study she stated that 'it has been noted that consumers use a variety of cues to form an overall evaluation of the quality of products and services. These cues used by consumers relate to perceived product/service attributes or features'. The same was assured by Hartline & Jones, (1996); and Ziethmal (1988). Dealing with the same issue, some studies found that even though products and services have many attributes, consumers tend to base their judgment of the quality on few attributes or sometimes on just one (Olshavsky, 1985; Zeithmal, 1988).

Saleh and Ryan's (1992) study found that, for guests, quality is mainly judged through the interior and exterior aesthetics of the hotel, then comes range of facilities provided.

Ananth et al. (1992) found that for mature travelers (median age = 59), the most influential factors of service quality are dietary menus, early dining hours, the availability of medical facilities, and more legible print and signage.

Atkinson's (1988) study revealed a number of influential attributes that were separated into two general groups: those related to employees' efficiency and attitude and those related to guests' perception of hotel ambience and room comfort.

Lewis (1987) conducted a study which measured the gaps between management and guests' expectations and perceptions. Among other findings, that study found a significant correlation ($r = .69$, $p < 0.01$) between satisfaction scores and quality scores.

Studies have also revealed that one of the attributes playing a major role in the customers' perception of service quality is the employee performance (Zhu et al., 2007; Williams, 1999; Bittner, 1990; Gronroos, 1984; Parasuraman et al., 1985). For instance, Lynch (1988) reported that in forming their perception of the service provision, customers relied on attributes related to employee cues such as courtesy, competence, responsiveness and interpersonal skills.

The importance of employee courtesy was also reported by Bolton & Drew (1991) and Enz and Siguaw (2000). These studies and others assume the positive relationship between employee performance and consumer perception of service quality (Briggs et al., 2007; Darden & Babin, 1994; Keaveney, 1995; Zeithmal et al., 1996).

Research Design Considerations

Two main groups were interviewed for the purpose of this study. They represent a sample of 195 hotel guests who have stayed at the hotels under study for a period of two or more nights and a sample of the top management hotel staff numbering 11.

The Survey Instruments

Two distinct sets of questionnaires were used to gather the necessary information. The Hotel Guest Questionnaire set consisted of two different sets of scales - one intended to measure guests' expectation of service quality as pertaining to the five determinants of service quality, namely tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy and the other a scale measuring guests' perception of service delivery. The guest

questionnaire also contained a section with questions pertaining to demographic and behavioural data of the guests participating in the survey.

The Hotel Management Questionnaire was constructed to gauge management views of guest expectations of service quality, as well as their feedback as to the quality delivered or received by the hotel guests. This questionnaire also had three main sections - one related to management expectations of guests' expectation regarding predetermined attributes of service quality, followed by section two, which dealt with management perception of the level of service delivery provided to hotel guests and section three pertaining to the demographics of the managers.

Table 1 - Characteristics of Guests Sample

Gender	%	Purpose of visit	%
Male	77%	Strictly business	22%
Female	23%	Convention/Workshops	12%
Age		Vacation & Business	18%
25-34	42%	Vacation	15%
35-44	34%	Pleasure	33%
45-54	18%	**Reason for choosing**	
55-64	6%	Previous experience	24%
No. of visits		Agent recommendation	17%
First time	17%	Advertisement	8%
2-4	69%	Friends/relatives advice	33%
4-10	14%	Other reasons	18%

Table 2 - Characteristics of Management Sample

Gender	%	Experience in present job	%
Male	82%	< 2 years	10%
Female	18%	2-10 years	18%
Age		>10 years	72%
<35	10%	**Total experience**	
35-44	36%	<5 years	10%
45-54	36%	5-15 years	26%
54-64	18%	>15 years	64%

Total number of management sample was 11 managers, 9 male and 2 female. The majority (46%) of the management sample belong to the middle age group of 45 -54 years. The rest belong to the following age categories: 9% (under 35 years), 36% (35-44 years), and 9% (55-59 years). The length of their service in their present job ranged from 2-20 years. However, their experience in the hospitality industry ranges from 6-30 years.

Data Analysis

In analysing the research data a number of steps were performed. To assess the reliability of the scores obtained from both the guests, as well as the hotel management, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated for each service construct that contains the designated group of questions (items).

To assure the internal consistency of each service dimension (e.g. tangibles), it was necessary to get a targeted Alpha coefficient of 0.5 or more as this is the minimum value of Alpha acceptable as an indication of reliability (Nunally, 1967; Jawaheer & Ross, 2003).

Table 3 - Internal Reliability

Dimensions	No. of Items	Guest responses (sample size = 195) Alpha
Tangibles	4	0.8108
Reliability	5	0.7681
Responsiveness	4	0.8020
Assurance	4	0.6532
Empathy	5	0.7493

A gap analysis was performed on all the items of the questionnaire. From the five gaps suggested by Parasuruman et al (1985), gap 1 (the management perception gap) and gap 5 (the perceived service quality gap) were measured.

Table 4 - Service Quality Gap Between Guests' Perceptions and Expectations (n = 195) (based on Individual Service Attributes)

Dimensions	Perceptions (b) (P) mean	Expectations (b) (E) mean
Having up-to-date equipment	5.85	6.60
Having visually appealing physical facilities (premises)	5.89	6.58
Good appearance of employees	6.25	6.70
Cleanliness and well- maintained physical facilities	5.82	6.78
Abiding by promises by service providers	5.74	6.65
Staff concerned in solving problems	5.76	6.49
Dependability of staff	5.88	6.52
Commitment of staff in delivering services as promised	5.87	6.72
Keeping accurate records by management	5.77	6.54
Taking exact time of performing a service	3.82	3.05
Prompt service by staff	3.03	2.58
Staff willing to help guests	2.48	2.09
Staff ignorance of guest requests	2.57	1.70
Trust worthy hotel staff	5.52	6.32
Feeling safe when dealing with hotel staff	5.88	6.44
Politeness of staff	3.34	3.03
Good performance by staff requires management support	3.18	2.82
Individual attention given by the staff to their guests	3.18	2.82
Personal attention given by the staff to their guests	3.34	3.13
Staff know needs of the guests	3.27	3.02
Staff having guests best interests at their hear	4.52	4.31
Availability of facilities and services to all customers 24 hours	3.87	3.68

A two-tail (t-test) was run on all the differences obtained for the various service attribute gaps on an item-by-item basis to check the statistical significance of the results obtained.

Dimensions	Gap (a) (P-E)	t-value
Having up-to-date service equipment	-.75	12.790 *
Having visually appealing physical facilities (premises)	-.69	11.163 *
Good appearance of employees	-.45	9.352 *
Cleanliness and well- maintained physical facilities	-.96	16.147 *
Abiding by promises by service providers	-.91	12.862 *
Staff concerned in solving problems	-.73	11.019 *
Dependability of staff	-.64	9.820 *
Commitment of staff in delivering services as promised	-.85	13.688 *
Keeping accurate records by management	-.77	11.144 *
Taking exact time of performing a service	.77	6.128 *
Prompt service by staff	.45	4.305 *
Staff willing to help guests	.39	9.148 *
Staff ignorance of guest requests	.88	8.776 *
Trust worthy hotel staff	-.80	6.744 *
Feeling safe when dealing with hotel staff	-.56	12.837 *
Politeness of staff	-.94	2.721 **
Good performance by staff requires management support	.31	3.437 **
Individual attention given by the staff to their guests	.36	2.011 **
Personal attention given by the staff to their guests	.21	2.021 **
Staff know needs of the guests	.25	1.28
Staff having guests best interests at their hear	.21	1.02
Availability of facilities and services to all customers 24 hours	.19	.98

* significant at 99% (P = .01).
** significant at 95% (P = .05)

A negative gap indicates that guests' expectation of service attribute is more than their perception, while a positive gap shows that their perception is exceeding their expectation. Perceptions and expectations scores are measured on a seven-point scale on which higher values mean better perceptions or expectations.

Table 5
Service Quality Gap Between Guests' Perceptions and Expectations (n = 195)
(based on service dimensions)

Dimension	Mean score for Guests' perception (1)	Mean score for Guests' expectation (2)	Difference (1-2)	t-test score
All dimensions	4.721	4.983	-0.262	12.230
Tangibles	5.948	6.663	-0.715	20.106
Reliability	5.799	6.588	-0.789	24.749
Responsiveness	2.976	2.353	0.623	17.517
Assurance	5.818	6.511	-0.693	19.497
Empathy	3.265	2.929	0.336	10.571

Dimension	P	Conclusion
All dimensions	0.000	Significant
Tangibles	0.000	Significant
Reliability	0.000	Significant
Responsiveness	0.000	Significant
Assurance	0.000	Significant
Empathy	0.000	Significant

Table 6
Service Quality Gap Between Management Perception of Guests' Expectations and Recorded Guests' Expectations (based on individual service attributes)

Attributes	Mean of (b) guests' expectations (n = 195) (1)	Means of (b) managers' Perceptions (n = 11) (2)
Having up-to-date equipment	6.60	6.91
Having visually appealing physical facilities (premises)	6.58	6.45
Good appearance of employees	6.70	7.00
Cleanliness and good maintenance	6.78	7.00
Abiding by promises	6.66	6.91
Staff concerned in solving problems	6.49	6.64
Dependability of staff	6.52	6.91
Commitment of staff	6.72	7.00
Keeping accurate records	6.55	7.00
Taking exact time of performing	3.04	2.45
Prompt service by staff	2.58	2.45
Staff willing to help guests	2.09	2.36
Staff ignorance of guest requests	1.70	2.91
Trust worthy hotel staff	6.82	6.32
Feeling of safety	7.00	6.44
Politeness of staff	7.00	6.71
Good performance by staff requires management support	6.45	6.57
Individual attention given by the staff to their guests	2.45	3.02
Personal attention given by the staff to their guests	2.55	2.82
Staff know needs of the guests	2.73	3.14
Staff having guests best interests at their hear	2.09	2.65
Availability of facilities and services to all customers 24 hours	3.45	3.03

Attributes	Gap (a) (1-2)	t-value
Having up-to-date service equipment	-.31	3.122 *
Having visually appealing physical facilities	.13	.599
Good appearance of employees	-.30	8.359 *
Cleanliness and well- maintained facilities	-.22	6.655 *
Abiding by promises by service providers	-.25	2.571 **
Staff concerned in solving problems	-.15	.579
Dependability of staff	-.39	3.816 *
Commitment in delivering as promised	-.28	8.871 *
Keeping accurate records by mgt.	-.45	10.842 *
Taking exact time for performing service	.59	.948
Prompt service by staff	.22	.298
Staff willing to help guests	-.82	.995
Staff ignorance of guest requests	-1.85	2.261 **
Trust worthy hotel staff	.49	3.662 *
Feeling safe when dealing with staff	.56	9.648 *

Politeness of staff	.29	8.556 *
Attributes	**Gap (a) (1-2)**	**t-value**
Good performance by staff requires management support	-.11	.206
Individual attention given by the staff to their guests	-.57	3.792 *
Personal attention given by the staff to their guests	-.27	7.400 *
Staff know needs of the guests	-.41	2.641 **
Staff having guests best interests at their hear	-.56	4.033 **
Availability of facilities and services to all customers 24 hours	.43	.746

* significant at 99% (P = .01).
** significant at 95% (P = .05)

A negative gap indicates that managers' perceptions of guests' expectations of service attribute is more than the guests' expectations (i.e. mangers underestimate guests' expectations), while a positive gap shows that managers' perceptions of guests' expectations is exceeding guests' expectations (i.e. managers overestimate guests' expectations). Perceptions and expectations scores are measured on a seven-point scale on which higher values mean better perceptions or expectations.

Table 7
Service Quality Gap Between Management Perception of Guests' Expectations and Recorded Guests' Expectations (based on individual service attributes)

Dimension	Mean score for Guests' expectations (1)	Mean score for Managers' perceptions (2)	Difference (1-2)
All dimensions	4.990	5.170	-0.180
Tangibles	6.671	6.843	-0.172
Reliability	6.591	6.890	-0.299
Responsiveness	2.352	2.823	-0.471
Assurance	6.829	6.511	0.318
Empathy	2.610	2.929	-0.319
Sample size	195	11	

Dimension	t-test scores	P	Conclusion
All dimensions	1.090	0.259	Not significant
Tangibles	1.543	0.123	Not significant
Reliability	5.167	0.004	Significant
Responsiveness	1.261	0.214	Not significant
Assurance	2.149	0.031	Significant
Empathy	2.414	0.015	Significant

Table 8
The Most Important Five Attributes Determining Customers' Satisfaction

According to Managers	According to Guests
Good appearance of employees	Feeling safe when dealing with staff
Cleanliness of physical facilities	Staff politeness

According to Managers	According to Guests
Staff commitment in service delivery	Trustworthy staff
Keeping accurate records by management	Cleanliness of physical facilities
Staff dependability	Staff commitment in service delivery

Findings

For measuring service quality, Parasuraman et al. (1985) proposed five quality gaps reflecting perceptions and expectations of service recipients (i.e. customers) and service providers (i.e. managers). These five gaps are:

- Gap 1: The management perception gap. Pertains to the management perception of customers' expectations versus customers' expectations.
- Gap 2: The quality specification gap. Relates to the management perception of consumers' expectations and the translations of those perceptions into service quality specifications.
- Gap 3: The service delivery gap. Difference between specifications of service quality and the delivery of those specifications to the customers.
- Gap 4: The market communication gap. The difference between promises given by market communication activities and the service delivered to the customers.
- Gap 5: The perceived service quality gap. The difference between customers' perceptions and expectations of service quality.

The literature indicates that researchers adopt the concept of gap analysis for measuring service quality which may vary in terms of number of gaps as indicators of service quality. For example: Saleh and Ryan (1991) relied on five gaps; Ingram & Daskalkis (1999) analysed three gaps; Juwaheer & Ross (2003) measured two gaps; and Douglas & Connor (2003) measured one gap only.

In this study, the questionnaires completed by the Chennai hotels' guests and managers make it possible to evaluate two major service quality gaps as suggested by Parasuraman et al. (1985), out of the five gaps i.e.: gap 1 and gap 5.

These two gaps represent the controllable service elements. They reflect perceptions and expectations of guests and management in terms of service quality. The analysis and discussion of these two controllable gaps (i.e. gap 1 & gap 5) was made by two methods, the first being an analysis of the 22 statements of the SERVQUAL (as shown on Tables 4 & 6), while the second was on the basis of the five dimensions of SERVQUAL (as shown on Tables 5 & 7).

Gap 5 analysis

This relates to the gap between guests' expectations and their perceived service provision. Table 1 lists the mean scores of the guests' expectations and perceptions for each of the 22 service quality attributes and the mean gap scores. Furthermore, the last column of the table shows the result of the paired t-test through which inference can be made on the significance of mean difference (i.e. gap) between guests' expectations and perceptions of service quality. On the other hand, Table 5 outlines the outcome

based on the five dimensions of the service quality proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1985).

Table 5 indicates that, in general, guests' expectations (mean = 4.983) of service quality in the Hotels exceeding their perceptions (mean = 4.721) and the difference between the two is significant (t = 12.230; P = 0.000). This is not a good sign for the hotels as it may lead to customers' dissatisfaction. Such a finding is more confirmed if we look at Table 1 where for 55% of the attributes (i.e. 12 items out of 22) guests' perceptions fall short of their expectations.

Table 5 indicates that for 3 out 5 dimensions (i.e. Tangibles, Reliability, and Assurance) customers' expectations exceeding their actual perceptions of service attributes. Although this dimension-wise outcome is crucial to know, for decision making, it is also necessary to analyse each problematic dimension to single out the attributes leading to customers' dissatisfaction. Surprisingly, Table 4 indicates that all Tangible items (1-4), all Reliability items (5-9) and 3 out of 4 of Assurance items (14-16) are contributing to the problem. This industry should seriously review its policies in servicing its guests. The hotels should apply strategies to reduce the negative gaps between customers' perceptions and expectations (P-E).

Table 5 however depicts that for the other two dimensions (i.e. Responsiveness and Empathy) the gap is positive, which indicates that what customers perceived in terms of these attributes exceed what they expected. This is a good indicator of satisfaction. Such satisfaction (i.e. perceptions > expectations) can be observed in Table 1 in terms of all elements making up Responsiveness dimension (items 10-13) and those making up Empathy dimension (items 18-22).

Gap 1 analysis

This relates to the gap between management perception of guests' expectations and recorded guests' expectations. As done in analysing gap 5, when we illustrate item-wise and dimension-wise gap details for gap 1 (Tables 6 & 7 respectively) we find that Table 4 shows that, in general, there is no significant difference between guests' expectations and management perceptions of guests' expectations. However, by looking at the outcome dimension-wise, it is noticed that for two dimensions (i.e. Reliability and Empathy), management is overestimating guests' expectations, and for one of the dimensions (i.e. Assurance) they are underestimating guests' expectations. For the other two dimensions (i.e. Responsiveness and Tangibles) the difference between the two responses is not significant. In the rest of this section, let us discuss the three dimensions in which overestimation and underestimation was observed. In such a discussion,

Table 6 is a good source of information. As mentioned earlier, management over estimated guests' expectations in terms of Reliability. As per Table 6, such overestimation is noticed in 4 out of 5 items included in the Reliability dimension. These items, in terms of magnitude of difference, are: (i) keeping accurate records by management, (ii) dependability of staff, (iii) delivering services as promised without delay, and (iv) keeping promises by service providers. The other dimension in

which management overestimated guests' expectations is Empathy. Table 1 shows that in the case of Empathy elements, overestimation is noticed in 4 out of 5 of them. In terms of magnitude of difference such items are : (i) individual attention given by the staff to the guests, (ii) having guests' best interest at heart, (iii) knowing needs of the guests, and (iv) personal attention given to the guests.

On the other hand, for the Assurance dimension, where findings show underestimation by management, Table 7 shows that 3 out of 4 elements of Assurance are recording such underestimation. These elements, in terms of size of difference are: (i) feeling safe when dealing with staff, (ii) trusting the staff, and (iii) politeness of the staff.

Conclusion

This study aimed at measuring the service quality in one of hospitality industry in Chennai city using SERVQUAL model. In measuring the hotel service quality, the study has relied on examining two gaps: one related to customers (gap 5) and the other one related to the management (gap 1). The outcome of gap 5 indicates that customers are dissatisfied with the service quality (i.e. their expectations exceed their perceptions) in 55% of the SERVQUAL service attributes belonging to 3 dimensions: Tangibles, Reliability, and Assurance.

With respect to gap 1, findings indicate that management is overestimating (i.e. their perceptions of guests' expectations exceed guests' expectations) for the dimensions of Reliability and Empathy, while underestimating for the dimension of Assurance. Many managers think they know what their customers want but are mistaken. For instance, in this study, findings show that what managers think the most important five attributes preferred by customers differ from what customers expect, as shown in Table 8.

The outcome related to gap1 and gap 5 is a good base for the hotel decision-makers to analyse, identity problems, and then design strategies for achieving more customer satisfaction.

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