
An Empirical Investigation of the Impact of Service Quality Dimensions on Guests Satisfaction: A Case Study of Dubai Hotels

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Abstract: Customers' satisfaction is one of the most important indicators to identify the hotel sector's service quality level. The study's main purpose was to measure the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in the hotel industry in the United Arab Emirates. In particular, this study examines why service quality is a critical determinant of the hotel sector's organisational performance. The study used quantitative methods to achieve the objectives of the research. A self-administered questionnaire was designed to collect the data using the drop-off technique. The questionnaires were distributed to 5000 in-house customers (domestic and international) at the hotels. In total, 3748 customer questionnaires were used in the study, yielding a 75% response rate. In this study, hypotheses were tested through the multiple regression model using SPSS 25.00. Multiple regression analysis showed that tangibles, responsiveness and empathy have significant positive effects on customer satisfaction ($\beta = .120$, $p < 0.05$; $\beta = .173$, $p < 0.05$; $\beta = .495$, $p < 0.01$, respectively). The study found that service quality helped organisations meet customers' needs and expectations and enhanced satisfaction. Organisations could, therefore, achieve improved financial performance by offering excellent quality services that meet customer needs and expectations. Therefore, improving hotel service quality could result in higher satisfaction levels of hotel customers.

Keywords: Service Quality; Customer Satisfaction; SERVQUAL; Hotel Sector Services Dubai.

INTRODUCTION

End users became more critical in business, especially in the hospitality sector. From the beginning of the consumption era in marketing, the focus fell on the end-users, and it has increased more as the consumption era moved to post-consumption (Aburayya et al., 2020a). Organisations now have to offer more services to their customers in addition to what they provide. In essence, they need to be aware of the service qualities they provide to customers and whether customers are satisfied with these services. According to Al-Ababneh (2017), firms in the hospitality industry must meet customer needs and expectations by providing excellent services to achieve their performance objectives. In essence, several studies have sought to establish how service quality can impact an organisation's financial performance, client satisfaction, and customer loyalty (Al-Dweeri et al., 2017; Aburayya et al., 2020b; Al-Khayyal et al., 2020).

The quality importance has increased in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) service sectors in the last years (Aburayya et al., 2020c). Senior leaders of the country have begun to consider that quality management is the vital key of competition in all businesses, including the hospitality sector. For the organisations, it becomes crucial commencing on the quality road to understand the factors accompanied by the implementation process. By understanding the importance of these factors, companies and firms will better anticipate and solve the problems that might suppress successful service quality implementation. Finally, companies spending lots of time planning to implement a quality program will refine their successful implementation chances (Alshurideh, 2019). UAE Tourism report by BMI Research (2016) argues that Dubai and Abu Dhabi have the highest hotel concentration and dominate the tourism sector and benefit from increasing tourists. However, it is starting to change and other emirates beginning to benefit more from the growing travel sector lately. A report brought by The Hotel Show 2016 found that more than 180 hotels are in the pipeline for the county, adding more than 50,000 hotel rooms. To streamline and clarify the hotel accommodation quality, there is a need to set up a new

hotel classification system that will help clarify the type and quality of hotel rooms and accommodation available across Dubai and services provided. Dubai's ruler suggested this initiative, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum in 2013, together with the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM), to implement this new hotel establishment classification. As the hotel classification system had not been overhauled since 1998, this move was necessary when Dubai's hotel sector was much smaller than today. The UAE government took some initiatives to improve its mid-range hotel offerings across the country, such as a waiver of 10% municipality fee levied on every hotel's room rate for any new three to a four-star hotel 1st October 2013 and 31st December 2017. This move was made as a part of Dubai's aim to attract 20 million visitors by 2020. Also, customers are asking for superior quality services, and employees are asking for additional scientific and managerial services. Therefore, the importance of quality is grown-up to improve hotel services and maintain customer and employee rights. Furthermore, service quality is more significant than before to assure the satisfaction of those who benefit from hotel services since the customers' awareness level and their expectations for a sufficient quality level are increased.

From both a theoretical and a practical perspective in the hotel sector, there exists the need for a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. Several academics, for example, Borgave and Koranne (2012); Aggabao and Fermin (2016); Al-Ababneh (2017); Ahmad et al. (2018); Alketbi et al. (2020), have tried to study the concept of service quality; however, these studies are limited, leaving behind gaps that need to be filled. To fill this gap, this study attempts to provide relevant and comprehensive information on the service quality in the hospitality industry, particularly hotels, and aims to measure the effect of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction. A detailed review of literature on the service quality dimensions in hotels also indicates that there is a shortage of scientific studies and researches on the subject of service quality in hotel services in the Gulf region in general and the UAE in particular (Mohamad et al., 2017; Ahmad et al., 2018; Alketbi et al., 2020). As a result, the researcher conducted a scientific study in service quality to address this need in the UAE. This study explores the relationship between hotel customers' perceptions of service quality and overall customer satisfaction in the UAE hotel industry. Also, this study measures the perceived service quality of a selected hotel located in Dubai. Consequently, the results and recommendations would improve the hotel services' quality management and achieve a higher customer satisfaction level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Service Quality in the Hotel Sector

According to Aburayya et al. (2020d), service quality has become a key source of competitive advantage in the business environment as customers seek services and products that meet their needs and expectations. High-quality services result in increased customer loyalty and improved business performance (Alketbi et al., 2020). Many marketing researchers have, therefore, extensively examined the concept of service quality in the business. According to Mohanty (2012), the increasing importance of service quality in the business environment can be attributed to various factors and argues that a key contributing factor is an intense competition in the service industry. Stiff rivalry in the service sector forces organisations to focus on service quality to gain a competitive advantage in the business environment. Mohanty (2012) also suggests that regulatory measures that seek to protect customers from exploitation by business enterprises have also increased the urgency to ensure high-quality services in the marketplace. Owing to the intangibility of services, service providers face unique challenges. Al-Khayyal et al. (2020) argue that service quality is mainly an issue of perception and that while customers do not see the physical attributes of the intangible product, they can determine its quality based on the extent to which it meets their needs and expectations. Alketbi et al. (2020) also define service quality as the extent to which customers' services meet their needs and expectations. Their assertions are also supported by Al-Dweeri et al. (2017), who argue that service quality is mainly determined by how customers perceive the excellence of services provided. Service quality is, therefore, the perceived difference between the nature of services offered and customer expectations.

Notably, several studies have been conducted to determine the elements that constitute service quality. Grönroos (1984) suggests that service quality is determined by the technical and functional aspects of services. Bitner and Hubbert (1994) also adopt a similar argument to Grönroos (1984) but include the environment as a critical service quality determinant. Parasuraman et al. (1988), on the other hand, suggest five elements of service quality. They identify these elements as reliability, tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy. Organisations in the hospitality industry face a challenging task, meeting customer expectations and enhancing their competitive advantage in the market. According to Al-Ababneh (2017), firms in the hospitality industry must meet customer needs and expectations by providing excellent services to achieve their performance objectives. The hospitality industry's rising importance as a crucial revenue source for many countries has driven many marketing researchers to examine how service quality can be positioned as a source of sustainable competitive advantage in the sector. In essence, intense rivalry in the hospitality industry means that firms must strive to differentiate their competitors' services to gain a competitive advantage. The management of service

sector organisations can only accomplish this when they understand customer needs and expectations (Alshurideh et al., 2017; Aburayya et al., 2020e).

The Service Quality Model, often abbreviated as SERVQUAL, is an essential model for capturing and measuring customers' quality of services. The model was developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) to conduct consumer surveys relating to service quality issues in the service industry. Over the years, it has been refined but remains the essential research tool in service quality research among consumers. In essence, organisations quickly realised that while improving field product quality could give them competitive parity in the market, high-quality services resulted in sustainable competitive advantages. The lack of focus on service quality, especially in the 1980s when Total Quality Management (TQM) was dominant, meant a lack of an effective model for capturing service quality issues among consumers. Service quality measurement was largely abstract and, therefore, not easily quantifiable. Parasuraman et al. (1985) had initially identified ten service quality components. These components were later merged into five service quality dimensions. The dimensions that capture the critical service quality that affects consumer perception regarding the quality of services provided by an organisation are reliability, tangibles, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy. The dimensions capture the critical service quality issues that affect consumer perception regarding the quality of services provided by an organisation.

Services are generally intangible, a characteristic that distinguishes them from goods. However, establishments in the hospitality industry do not provide services in a vacuum. Customers visit physical facilities to access the services offered by firms in the industry El Saghier (2015). Therefore, tangibles as a dimension of service quality include factors such as the establishment's physical appearance, the grooming of staff, and the interior décor (Ezeokoli & Ayodele, 2014). For instance, a hotel with a well-decorated interior is likely to enhance the customer's perception regarding service quality. The tangible dimension of service quality, therefore, plays an important role in determining customer satisfaction. Aburayya et al. (2020d) define reliability as the degree to which staff offers accurate information to consumers.

Employees must be knowledgeable concerning the services and products offered by an organisation. Staff must also handle problems and complaints graciously without creating the impression that customers are a bother. Employees must also be able to perform services correctly the first time that customers request them. Reliability leads to positive perceptions regarding service quality and improves the competitive advantage (Alshurideh et al., 2017; Alketbi et al., 2020). Responsiveness is a service quality dimension that focuses on the type of attention customers receive from service providers (Ezeokoli & Ayodele, 2014). Employees should be available when needed, and customer's complaints must be resolved promptly. Contemporary organisations that do not respond swiftly to customer issues often develop a reputation for poor service quality in the business environment. Assurance is a service quality dimension that focuses on employees' ability to foster customers' confidence by how knowledgeable they are regarding an establishment's services and products (El Saghier, 2015). Assurance is also improved by employee courtesy, respect, and friendliness. Staff should also strive to provide a safe and secure environment for guests to assure them of the quality of services they are likely to receive from an establishment. According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), the services employees deliver to customers should be believable to enhance customer satisfaction. Customers often require individualised attention when they visit hotel establishments. According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), empathy as a service quality dimension refers to the individualised services that staff provide to customers. Employees should strive to understand customers' specific needs to ensure that their expectations are met. Satisfying customer expectations enhance loyalty and result in improved performance of the firm. Notably, the model operationalises service quality by determining the gap between consumer expectations and perceptions and evaluating them based on twenty-two items that represent the identified five service-quality.

Customer Satisfaction

The SERVQUAL model is primarily designed to establish how customer satisfaction can be achieved in the service sector. Highly satisfied customers are an important competitive advantage in the business environment (Liang & Zhang, 2012). Several studies find that service quality is a critical determinant of customer satisfaction (Abdolahian & Foroozandeh, 2011; Liang & Zhang, 2012). According to Liang and Zhang (2012), customer satisfaction is the "evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations and the actual performance of the service." Kim (2011) also adopts a similar definition by suggesting that customer satisfaction is primarily determined by how consumers perceive the quality of services that they have been offered. Therefore, companies seeking to gain a competitive edge in the market must match consumer expectations with the quality of services. Deng et al. (2009) argue that quality as a differentiation strategy is an important source of competitive advantage in a business environment that is extensively characterised by stiff competition. Alshurideh et al. (2017) also argue that customer satisfaction enhances brand loyalty and results in a sustainable competitive advantage. Organisations should, therefore, strive to meet customer expectations and enhance consumer satisfaction to achieve their performance objectives in the service sector. Alketbi et al. (2020) argue that while providing quality services may result in additional costs, the business will still benefit from an

improved bottom line due to increased sales. Organisations that use this strategy can also charge premium prices for their products to offset the additional costs.

Customer satisfaction can be challenging to determine because it is a perception and not tangible (Fatima et al., 2018). According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), business organisations do not readily have information on customer satisfaction because it is intangible and can only be established through the customer's information. They suggest that organisations must place additional efforts in identifying customer satisfaction levels to ensure that their services meet their clients' expectations. Choosing the correct measurement appropriate measurement approach, therefore, depends on how an organisation views customer satisfaction. Various factors affect customer satisfaction in the business environment. Aburayya et al. (2020a) identify some of these factors as professional and friendly staff, billing accuracy, and service timeliness. According to Ünal et al. (2020), business organisations' primary objective is to maximise investment return. Organisations in the hospitality industry are, therefore, mainly driven by profit objectives. Customer satisfaction would result in improved business performance and should be the hospitality industry's primary concern.

Theoretical Model of Hotel Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

Several studies have been conducted to determine how service quality dimensions impact customer satisfaction in the hotel sector. The research undertaken by Fazlic and Fazlovic (2014) identified reliability, empathy, assurance, and tangibility as key factors that influence customer satisfaction in the sector. A study by Godolja and Spaho (2014) also made similar findings. The research outcomes showed that nearly all the independent variables of reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy impact customer satisfaction. The study found a significant relationship between these variables and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. The authors argue that reliability is the most important service quality dimension for guests. However, Hossain (2012) determined that empathy is the strongest determinant of service quality perceptions and customer satisfaction. Karunaratne and Jayawardena (2010) likewise offered more insights into the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel sector by focusing their study on a five-star hotel in Sri Lanka. Five-star hotels mainly use quality as a differentiation strategy and charge premium prices for their services. The research showed that most customers were satisfied with the services they received at the hotel, indicating that service quality can enhance customer satisfaction and achieve a competitive advantage in the market. Other studies that have established a positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry include Panda and Das (2014); Rygloya et al. (2012); Rao and Sahu (2013); Ahmad et al., 2018; Ünal et al., 2020. They identified service quality dimensions in the hotel sector by focusing on other operational and managerial staff. The researchers examined customers' expectations and perceptions regarding the services provided. Their findings showed that service quality dimensions enhanced customer expectations and satisfaction regarding service quality. Based on these studies and literature review, the theoretical model of hotel service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction is developed as illustrated in Figure 1. In essence, this model measures hotel service quality through five distinct dimensions, namely, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These dimensions have also been extensively accepted and applied by many academics and practising managers in various industries. It can be concluded that service quality is an extremely subjective category crucial to the customer's satisfaction. Service quality dimensions are a good indicator for hotel managers to measure service quality and identify the hotel's service gaps, which does not match customer expectations. The hotel managers should look into those gaps and ensure improvements to meet and satisfy customer's expectations for return business. According to literature, several empirical studies found the link between customer satisfaction with Tangibles (Al Khattab & Aldehayyat, 2011), Empathy (Hossain, 2012; Al Khattab & Aldehayyat, 2011), Responsiveness (Karunaratne & Jayawardena, 2010), Assurance (Minh et al., 2015) and Reliability (Markovic & Raspur, 2010). The main aim of this study is to explore the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed:

- ❖ H1: Tangibles of service quality have a positive impact on customer satisfaction.
- ❖ H2: Reliability of service quality has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.
- ❖ H3: Responsiveness of service quality has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.
- ❖ H4: Assurance of service quality has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.
- ❖ H5: Empathy of service quality has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

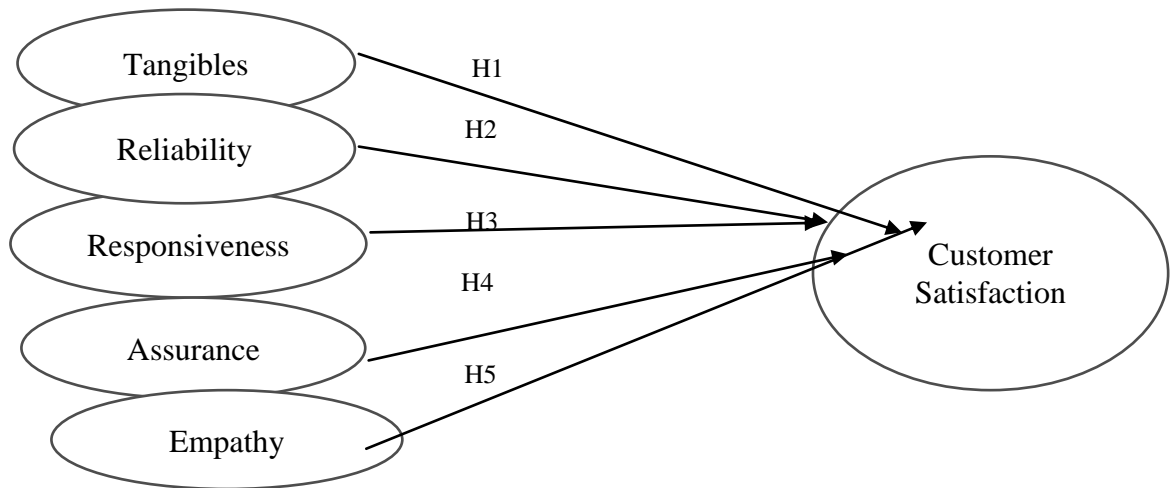


Fig.1:Theoretical Model of Hotel Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quantitative research approach using a survey research design. In essence, this study includes collecting data through the use of a large population to select samples of sufficient size to generalise conclusions and analyse data by statistical tests; this study developed a theoretical framework from literature to measure the effect of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, this study identified the relationship between independent and dependent variables simultaneously and without trying some intervention. Therefore, the survey research design was an appropriate and flexible way to conduct this research using a cross-sectional design. In this study, a structured questionnaire approach as the primary quantitative tool was adopted to gather data through a self-administered strategy using a drop-off technique. Notably, consumer surveys are effective for data collection when the research issue is marketing-related. Service quality and its relationship to consumer satisfaction are at the core of marketing in the hospitality industry. Consumers are the primary source of information, and, therefore, their responses would help provide insights into the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. The target population in this study consists of 16 hotels in Dubai, UAE. The selection of these hotels was directed to five-star properties in key locations of Dubai. These hotels combine both hotel and apartment services, have a primary place for business and shopping, and proximity to the sea. All customers who visited the targeted hotels during the study period were involved in the survey, except those who did not complete their check-in processes and aged below 18. The extent of this research is in Dubai (UAE), and the period of the survey was from 15th October 2018 to 30th November 2018. Due to the inability to get sampling frames in those hotels, non-probability sampling using the convenience sampling technique was applied. Essentially, the current study required a large sample to minimise sample error associated with the non-probability sampling method and improve the accuracy of the sampling outcome and its generalizability. Accordingly, 5,000 surveys were circulated, and 3,748 in-house customers responded. Hence, the response rate was 75%.

The researchers followed the hotel's policies regarding the granting of ethical approval before conducting the survey. Based on their ethical guidelines, the researcher needs to get ethical clearance before carrying out any primary research (interviews, surveys, etc.) through completing the ethics application, consent form, participant information sheets. Therefore, all the above documents were completed, and the targeted hotels' approval letter tells to conduct the study surveys been issued by Hotels CEO Office (HCO). The respondents were informed of the general purpose of the research before they took part in surveys. They were told that the study aimed to investigate the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction and were assured that any information they supplied throughout the research process would be treated as anonymous to protect the respondents' rights. The respondents were informed that participation in to complete survey questionnaire is voluntary, and all information collected will be strictly confidential, and this survey would not attack their privacy. Furthermore, they were informed that any respondent could leave the study any time without giving any reasons, and if the respondents decided to withdraw from this survey, the questionnaire would be damaged. Finally, this survey's researcher objectives have become visible because there is no commercial or financial interest in proposing this research. The respondents were also informed that the findings would be shared if the request for any persons interested.

In this study, the developed instrument assessed customers' quality of services and satisfaction based on guests' perceptions. The SERVQUAL model established by Parasuraman et al. (1988) was applied to gauge the quality of service the guests involved in the study. The SERVQUAL scale contains 22 items comprising five service

quality scales, and each SERVQUAL dimension was computing on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1, indicating "strongly dissatisfaction," to 5, indicating "strongly satisfy." Concerning the guest satisfaction scale, guests were asked to express their satisfaction level at the hotels based on the overall satisfaction scale developed by Scotti et al. (2007). A 5-point Likert scale that extended from "very dissatisfy" to "very satisfy" was used to score guests' responses. In this research paper, Cronbach's alpha allied with factor analysis was used to test the measurement model to determine whether the study's instrument was valid and reliable. The SPSS 25.00 program was employed in this analysis. Indeed, Hair et al. (2004) state that if the Cronbach's alpha value is 0.60 or higher, it is considered acceptable. For factor analysis, if the loadings are equal to or higher than 0.50, the correlation is deemed significant. To examine the theoretical model postulated in this study, which assumed a link between service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel sector, correlation and multiple regression analysis were used. Notably, the hypotheses were tested in this study at two significance levels: $\alpha = .01$ and $\alpha = 0.05$.

Data Analysis

Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 below shows that the customers' characteristics have been broken down into seven main groups, which are gender, age, nationality, marital status, level of education, number of visits, and purpose of stay at the hotel. The sample included both males and females. It shows that 66.4% of guests were males, while 33.6% were female. Its further shows that the age category is presented at four primary levels, (20-30) and (31-40) age groups accounted for over two-thirds of the sample (77.4%). Concerning guests' distribution by nationality, Table 1 shows that UAE and Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) nationalities accounted for over half of the guests.

Furthermore, table 1 shows that 66.7% of hotel guests are married, where 65.9% hold graduate and postgraduate degrees. Concerning the guests' distribution by the number of visits, table 1 shows that most guests, 53%, were visiting the hotel for the first time. Finally, table 1 shows that the customers stayed at the hotel for leisure purposes of 52.9%, business 36.5%, and only 9.9% for meeting and conference purposes.

Table 1 Characteristics of Hotels' Guests

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Male	2489	66.4	66.4	66.4
Female	1259	33.6	33.6	100.0
Age				
20-30	1539	41.1	41.1	41.4
31-40	1359	36.3	36.3	77.4
41-50	476	12.7	12.7	90.1
Over 51	374	9.9	9.9	100.0
Nationality				
UAE	907	24.2	24.2	24.2
GCC	1189	31.7	31.7	55.9
UK	786	21	21	76.9
Russian	535	14.3	14.3	91.2
Chinese	203	5.4	5.4	96.6
Other	128	3.4	3.4	100
Marital Status				
Single	1154	30.8	30.8	30.8
Married	2499	66.7	66.7	97.9
Divorced	67	1.8	1.8	99.3
Widowed	28	.7	.7	100
Educational Level				
School	67	.8	.8	.8
High School	787	20.9	20.9	21.7
Diploma	464	12.4	12.4	34.1
Bachelor Degree	1330	35.5	35.5	69.6
Master Degree	1002	26.7	26.7	96.3
Doctorate Degree	98	3.7	3.7	100
Number of Visits				
First visit	1987	53	53	53
2-5 visits	1276	34	34	87
6-10 visits	327	8.7	8.7	95.7

More than 10 visits	158	4.3	4.3	100.0
Purpose of Stay				
Leisure	1983	52.9	52.9	52.9
Business	1369	36.5	36.5	89.4
Meeting/Conference	373	9.9	9.9	99.3
Other	23	.7	.7	100
Total	99	100.0	100.0	

Measurement Model Analysis

Internal consistency was measured in this study using Cronbach's alpha. There were five scales for measuring the five service quality constructs. For each scale, there were several items to measure it. After all, data were entered into a computer, and the SPSS 25.00 reliability program was performed separately for each scale's items. Table 2 shows that the reliability coefficients ranged from 0.645 to 0.913, indicating that some scales were more reliable than others. Concerning the instrument's validity in this study, Principle Component Analysis (PCA) was performed. Notably, each scale being factor analysed separately. The detailed results are listed in Table 2, which shows that all of the items had high factor loadings greater than 0.50 on all service quality Factors. Accordingly, the instrument developed for measuring service quality constructs was judged to be reliable and valid.

Table 2 PCA & Cronbach's Alpha Analysis

Factors	No. of items	Eigenvalues & (%) of Variance	Factor Loadings					Cronbach's Alpha
			F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	
Tangibles	5	3.732 With (73.875) % of variance.	.828 .875 .848 .881 .872					.862
Reliability	5	4.166 With (78.697) % of variance.		.871 .754 .789 .851 .886				.873
Responsiveness	5	2.618 With (66.449) % of variance.			.868 .932 .526 .906 .875			.874
Assurance	4	3.647 With (89.125) % of variance.				.837 .871 .863 .642		.645

Empathy	3	5.446 (89.987) % of variance	With % of				.934 .964 .952	.913
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The Relationship between Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

The researchers employed Pearson's correlation coefficient to demonstrate the correlation between the independent (SERVQUAL Dimensions) and dependent variable (Customer Satisfaction). Consequently, the results of the multiple linear regressions are introduced for each central hypothesis. That is going to be achieved by using model summary ANOVA and the coefficients model. Table 3 summarises the Pearson correlation among the independent and dependent variables.

Table 3 Correlation between Variables

Correlations		Tangibles	Reliability	Responsiveness	Assurance	Empathy	Customer Satisfaction
Tangibles	Pearson Correlation	1	.752**	.704**	.696**	.659**	.725**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99
Reliability	Pearson Correlation	.752**	1	.848**	.851**	.836**	.850**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99
Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	.704**	.848**	1	.826**	.876**	.873**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99
Assurance	Pearson Correlation	.696**	.851**	.826**	1	.875**	.864**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99
Empathy	Pearson Correlation	.659**	.836**	.876**	.875**	1	.913**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.725**	.850**	.873**	.864**	.913**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows that all correlations were highly positive and statistically significant at the 1% level. The table further shows that the highest correlation of 0.913 was between empathy and customer satisfaction, while the lowest correlation, 0.725, was between tangibles and customer satisfaction. Pearson's correlation matrix shows a very high positive correlation between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction variables. The

results of the regression analysis of service quality dimensions predicting customer satisfaction summarised in Table 4.

Table 4 Multiple Regression Analysis of SERVQUAL Dimensions Predicting Customer Satisfaction

Model Summary						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.937 ^a	.878	.871	.32785	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Empathy, Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	71.660	5	14.332	133.341	.000 ^b
	Residual	9.996	93	.107		
	Total	81.657	98			
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Empathy, Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.728	.213		-3.426	.001
	Tangibles	.150	.071	.120	2.123	.036
	Reliability	.119	.109	.093	1.093	.277
	Responsiveness	.205	.101	.173	2.036	.045
	Assurance	.136	.092	.126	1.479	.143
	Empathy	.561	.104	.495	5.409	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction						

Table 4 shows that the regression model demonstrates a robust fitness at R-value of 0.937 and R-squared of 0.878, which indicating that 87.8% of the variation in customer satisfaction explained by empathy, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance. The table 4 also shows the F-statistic is 133.341 (p-value = 0.000), which indicating that the multiple regression model with independent variables is significant at 1% level in predicting the variability of customer satisfaction. Thus, the regression model is a good fit of the data. Table 4 further shows that the SERVQUAL dimensions that are tangibles, responsiveness and empathy have significant positive effects on customer satisfaction tangibles: $\beta = .120$, $t = 2.123$, $p < 0.05$; responsiveness: $\beta = .173$, $t = 2.036$, $p < 0.05$; empathy: $\beta = .495$, $t = 5.409$, $p < 0.01$), while, reliability and assurance have no more significant effect on customer satisfaction (reliability $\beta = -.093$, $t = 1.093$, $p = 0.277 > 0.05$; assurance: $\beta = .126$, $t = 1.479$, $p = 0.143 > 0.05$).

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed to measure the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in the UAE hotel industry using the SERVQUAL model. The research findings showed that service quality is a key element for customer satisfaction in the UAE hotel sector. The research investigated whether tangibles as a service quality dimension impact customer satisfaction. The findings of the study show that tangibles impact customer satisfaction. The study examined whether customers thought that the hotel was clean. The cleanliness of the hotel is a tangible service quality dimension because customers can see and feel it. The research shows that most customers were delighted with the cleanliness level of the establishment. The study also examined customers' level of satisfaction regarding the use of modern equipment at the facility. The research findings show a high level of satisfaction among customers concerning the hotel's equipment's nature. The study further examined the hotel's physical facilities and established that the level of customer satisfaction concerning service quality was high. The appearance of employees is also a tangible service quality determinant that the study investigates. The research finds that customers were very satisfied with the appearance and grooming of workers. Overall, there was a high level of satisfaction regarding the tangible aspects of service quality. The findings show that the hotel has taken steps to improve service quality at the establishment by improving its tangible aspects. The management of the firm has invested in modern equipment to enhance service quality. Such equipment improves service efficiency and the experiences of clients at the establishment. The management has also focused on the grooming of workers and ensured that its employees' appearance is presentable. The physical

facilities are also designed to enhance service quality. Concerning the relationship between tangibles and customer satisfaction, the study finds that tangibles as a service quality dimension determine customer satisfaction. This result supported the findings of other studies in the hotel sector (Minh et al., 2015; Panda & Das, 2014). Organisations that focus on this aspect of service quality are likely to achieve improved performance in the marketplace due to improved customer satisfaction (Aburayya et al., 2019).

The study also examined reliability as a service quality dimension and its impacts on customer satisfaction. The study focused on services as promised and found a very high customer perception regarding service quality based on this factor. The finding shows that the hotel matches customers' expectations as influenced by explicit and implicit promises. The study also established that the hotel provides services on time. Prompt service is a crucial determinant of customer perception regarding service quality because it mainly demonstrates that the establishment understands that customers have other engagements to attend to. The wait time can also negatively impact service quality perceptions, minimising the time clients wait for before receiving the services they ordered. There was also a very high level of satisfaction regarding how the establishment solves customers' problems and bills services.

Of all the reliability items examined, the study found that error-free billing records were the best-performing hotel. The high level of service quality regarding billing at the establishment could be down to three factors. The hotel might have invested in modern equipment and technology to enhance operational efficiency. Indeed, the investigation into the tangible dimension of service quality shows that customers are delighted with the modern equipment used at the establishment. Modern equipment improves service efficiency by ensuring that there are no billing errors. The finding further shows that there is an interconnection between service quality dimensions. Some items on the tangible dimension impact service quality perception regarding reliability. Organisations should, therefore, not consider service quality determinants in isolation but should regard them as interconnected factors that together determine service quality perceptions and customer satisfaction. Error-free billing may also have been due to the firm's culture and employees' capability to provide efficient and accurate services. The study shows that customers consider employees at the establishment to be highly competent, a factor that may have led to error-free billing at the firm. The study also finds a relationship between reliability as a service quality dimension and customer satisfaction. The research findings show that customers value organisations that provide reliable services instead of unreliable ones. Reliability enhances customer satisfaction and improves the performance of an organisation in the marketplace. However, the relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction is significantly low because it has the fourth-highest correlation factor among the service quality dimensions. The dimension correlates 0.85 and is only higher than tangibles at 0.725. Although the regression analysis in this study indicates that the reliability factor does not significantly affect customer satisfaction, still, the finding shows that there is a significant positive relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction and, therefore, consumer satisfaction means that organisations in the hotel sector should strive to provide reliable services to enhance customer satisfaction. Managers should consider how other aspects of service quality impact reliability to ensure that they offer high-quality services that enhance customer satisfaction.

The study also examines responsiveness as a service quality dimension and its effects on customer satisfaction. The study identifies prompt service as an item that determines an organisation's responsiveness to customer needs and expectations. The research findings show that the hotel's customers are delighted with the speed of service offering. Prompt service indicates responsiveness because it demonstrates that the organisation takes customers' needs seriously and strives to address them within the shortest time possible. Other items that the study considers are services performed, willingness to help, and responding to requests. The research shows an overall very high customer satisfaction level regarding how the establishment responds to customers' needs and expectations. The findings further show that service quality dimensions are correlated. For instance, services on-time influence customer perception regarding an organisation's reliability and service quality. Prompt services also influence customer perception regarding an organisation's responsiveness to customer needs, expectations, and service quality. These items transcend service quality dimensions and influence how customers perceive the quality of services provided by an establishment. Organisations should, therefore, not look at service quality dimensions in isolation but consider how a single item can impact more than one dimension. By improving service delivery concerning one item, a firm can improve customer perceptions regarding service quality across several service quality dimensions. The study finds that there is a correlation between responsiveness as a service quality dimension and customer satisfaction. The dimension has the second-highest correlation to customer satisfaction at 0.873.

Furthermore, the study also finds that responsiveness positively impacts customer satisfaction, which was supported by many studies (Allan 2016; Lin 2005). The finding implies that service sector organisations and especially in the hotel sector must be responsive to customer needs and expectations to enhance customer satisfaction. By responding promptly to customer needs, the organisation demonstrates that it cares about the quality of services that it provides to its customers. Responsiveness also reduces the service wait time, which can have positive implications on service quality perceptions and customer satisfaction. Therefore, the study

shows that organisations in the hotel sector should dedicate their resources and efforts towards ensuring that they are responsive to consumer needs and expectations to enhance customer satisfaction.

The study also examines assurance as a service quality dimension and its effects on customer satisfaction. The items examined are employee confidence, courtesy, and knowledge. The research determines that employee confidence is high, which assures customers regarding the establishment's quality of services. The very high level of satisfaction recorded in the study shows that many customers visiting the establishment are attended to by workers that are self-assured about their ability to provide services that meet customer expectations. Confidence is followed by employee courtesy. The study determines that the hotel's employees are very courteous. As a result, most customers are assured that the hotel's services can meet their needs and expectations. The researcher further shows that customers perceive employees at the hotel to be highly knowledgeable.

Employee knowledge as an assurance item enhances service quality perceptions among customers in the hotel industry. Overall, the study finds that assurance as a service quality dimension is significantly high. The study also examines the relationship between assurance and customer satisfaction. This factor has the third-highest correlation value to customer satisfaction at 0.864. The result implies that while the assurance factor is not positively impacting customer satisfaction, it still determines, to a great extent, the level of customer satisfaction in the hotel sector. The finding also implies that organisations in the sector should build their employees' capacities and ensure that they can assure customers of the establishment's level of service. An employee that lacks confidence or that is not knowledgeable impacts customer satisfaction negatively. However, employees that demonstrate that they understand customer needs and how to satisfy them enhance customer satisfaction. Therefore, firms in the hotel sector should strive to improve the assurance dimension of service quality to enhance customer satisfaction and improve the establishment's performance.

The final service quality dimension that the study investigates is empathy. The research focuses on three key items that constitute empathy as a service quality dimension. The study establishes that customer perception regarding individual attention received while at the establishment is very high. The item ranks the highest above the other three, indicating that employees are keen to provide customers with the services that meet their needs and expectations. Individual attention creates the impression that customers are valued at the establishment. The study also finds that customer perceptions regarding focused services, customer demands, and special customer needs are very positive. The findings imply that employees at the hotel provide focused services that pay attention to clients' various needs and expectations. They also strive to meet the demands of individual customers and attend to their special needs. Overall, customer perception regarding empathy at the hotel is highly positive. The firm has implemented strategies to ensure that employees are empathetic towards clients and meet their needs and expectations. The study also shows that empathy significantly influences customer satisfaction. This result was supported by other hospitality industry studies (Markovic et al., 2010; Fazlic et al., 2014). The service quality dimension has the highest correlation to customer satisfaction, an indication that customers pay more attention to how employees attend to their personal needs and expectations more than anything else. The finding also shows that employees play the most crucial role in determining customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry. Altruistic employees are likely to enhance customer satisfaction because they focus on meeting individual customers' needs and expectations. The finding also implies that organisations in the hotel sector should leverage their staff as a source of competitive advantage because they significantly determine customer satisfaction. How employees relate with customers to a great extent, influences their perception regarding service quality. The finding also shows that friendly staff is a key requirement in the hotel sector. Customers are likely to have positive perceptions regarding service quality at an establishment when they are served by friendly employees that pay attention to their needs and expectations. Additionally, such friendly employees are likely to go out of their way to ensure that customer expectation and their interests are met.

This study's findings will strengthen the body of knowledge and the existing literature on service quality in hotels. More specifically, they will provide a clearer understanding of the implementation of service quality dimensions in Dubai hotels, including the practices of those dimensions that increase the customer's satisfaction level due to implementation. The service quality dimensions identified in this study can evaluate the current level of service quality and help successfully obtain a higher customer satisfaction level in hotels. This study is the only one that systematically measures the effects of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in hotels in Dubai and attempts to provide a set of recommendations to hotel managers for improving the quality of services provided by their hotels to increasing customer satisfaction level. More extension of this study could replicate the study in other service industries such as banking, education, healthcare, etc. The need for such a study arises because there is no case study research in the published literature that examines the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in Dubai hotels. Due to the finite time and resources available like other studies such as Al Kurdi et al. (2021), Capuyan et al. (2021), Salloum et al. (2021), this study was limited to one area in UAE (Dubai city). Further empirical evaluation is needed to replicate the findings in different contexts and surroundings. This study only focused on guests in hotels, while service quality presents a broader meaning to cover all hotel customers. In hospitality, the term of the customer includes

"external" and "internal" customers. External customers are walk-in customers, their friends, and their family. Internal customers cover all employees in all levels of hotels that are: professional staff, technical staff, administrative, and support staff. Accordingly, it is acknowledged that if this study covered all kinds of hotels' customers, it would have been more comprehensive.

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