A GAP ANALYSIS ON TOURIST RECEIVED SERVICE QUALITY IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN TRINCOMALEE DISTRICT

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Abstract

This study aims at measuring and evaluating the service quality of hotels in the tourism industry in the Trincomalee District by using SERVQUAL Model. This study also addresses the extent to which these hotels cover model dimensions. Moreover, it aims at figuring out the main gaps between expectations and perceptions to provide ways of solutions to develop the level of quality at hotels operating in the Trincomalee District. The sample of the study is a random sampling which is the complete list of random including hotel's customers and guests, consisting of 200 participants from 25 top hotels in the Trincomalee District. The Univeriate analysis is employed to analyse the data. The findings derived from the data analysis suggested the followings: First, there are gaps between expectation and perception by varying percentages. Second, there is considerable and significant weakness regarding the administrative and operational side which led to the existence of such gaps. The SERVQUAL model is used to measure service quality for hoteliers and their customers satisfaction with service quality by finding out what dimensions bring satisfaction with customer service levels in Trincomalee district. As a result of this gap, it is clear that consumers are not satisfied. Evaluating the perceptions and expectations of consumers, it is recommended to develop a quality control unit inside hotel institutions in Trincomalee to monitor and evaluate the provided quality or allocate a qualified person to be responsible for quality control. And activating the role of the Ministry of Tourism in establishing and developing rules and regulations to maintain and monitor the level of quality at the hotels operating in Trincomalee.

Keywords: Service Quality, Expectations, Perceptions, Hotel and tourism industry, SERVQUAL model, Trincomalee District.

1. Introduction

Service Quality and Sri Lanka Tourism

Quality means all of the activities in which a business engages in, to ensure that the product meets customer needs and a product meets customer needs leading to customer satisfaction Juran (1992). Services are the type of economic activity that is intangible, not stored, and does not affect ownership. An industry with a high level of

service quality is likely capable of meeting customer needs while also remaining economically competitive in their particular industry. Successful businesses that remain competitive and relevant in the marketplace can ensure they are meeting their customers' needs by working proactively to obtain information from their current or potential customer base. The quality of service can be defined as the difference between the expectation of the customer for service results before the experience with the service and their interpretation of the service received. Service quality reveals the degree to which the delivered level of service matches customer expectations (Lewis and Booms, 1983). Parasuraman et al.,(1985), identified 10 determinants used in evaluating service quality; reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding the customer, and tangibles. Any of these service quality determinants enable the user to have some expertise to judge their level of service quality, ranging from optimal quality to totally unreasonable quality. The preference of the customer serves as a basis for measuring the level of service and quality is high when performance exceeds expectations and quality is poor when performance does not meet their expectations. Service quality is one of the essential tasks of service companies. Quality means the degree of service efficiency excellence. By witnessing the consumption process and by contrasting the experience with their expectations, customers interpret the quality of service. Service organizations must be accountable, in an appropriate strategic process, for quality results. The hotel industry is a large and highly diverse industry that includes a wide range of property styles, uses, and qualities. For any organization, including hotels, evaluating the level of service is seen as the fundamental aspect of performance.

The previous researchers defined the definition for "hotel", the hotel industry is a wide and highly competitive industry with a high degree of diversity. The vast number of researchers who carried out their study is related to measuring service quality in their industries using the SERVQUAL model. This study using the SERVQUAL model to analyze the service quality in the hotel and tourist industry. This Model was established to measure the quality of services by Parasuraman et al.,(1985). Oliver (2014), argued that previous service experience is used as a function of consumer service expectations, according to customer understanding and that subsequent experience is a feature of customer assessment of the level of actual service delivered.

There is a relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. According to Sureshchandar et al.,(2002), customer satisfaction can be treated as a multi-dimensional construct, insofar as service quality means that it can exist in an enterprise at various levels and that can be operationalized according to the same variables on which service quality is operationalized. Parasuraman et al.,(1985) proposed that it can contribute to improved customer satisfaction when the perceived level of service is high. Fen and Lian,(2005) found that both service quality and customer satisfaction have a positive impact on the intentions of customer re-patronage, illustrating that both service quality and customer satisfaction play a key role in the growth and longevity of any company in the competitive market. This research proved to be a strong correlation between the quality of service and customer satisfaction.When we talk about evaluating the service quality in the hotel and tourism industry they using the SERVQUAL MODEL there are some thesis suggest to develop this study also, the main model of the researcher is Parasuraman et al.,(1985).

Akbaba (2006), analyzed the service quality requirements of the customers of business hotels and examines whether the quality dimensions used in the SERVQUAL model are relevant in an international context, looks for any additional dimensions that should be included in the quality of service build, and measures the value of each particular dimension to business hotel customers. The results of this analysis have confirmed SERVQUAL's five-dimensional structure. The five dimensions of service quality described in this study were called "tangibles", "sufficiency in the supply of services", "understanding and caring", "assurance", and "convenience". The results showed that business travelers had the highest expectations for the "convenience" dimension, followed by "assurance", "tangibles", adequacy in the availability of services, "and" understanding and care. Parasuraman et

al.,(1988) measure customer views on service quality, a multi-item instrument called SERVQUAL was developed. It is a 22 - item method that discusses several service quality elements split into 5 dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The provision of physical buildings, equipment, and workers is discussed by the tangible elements. Reliability is the service provider's ability to efficiently and correctly conduct a service. Responsiveness concerns the service provider's ability to assist clients and provide timely services. Assurance means that consumers can place their faith in employees of service providers and empathy is individualized treatment and attention received from service delivery by consumers (Parasuraman et al.,1988).

SERVQUAL Model is one of the very famous models to analyze the service quality in the industries. Patricio et al.,(2006) found that SERVQUAL is the most popular instrument to ascertain service quality. Also, there is no consensus on the model's incorporation of consumer preferences. The purpose of the research presented in this paper is to address the applicability of SERVQUAL to restaurant services and to examine the inclusion in this context of customer expectations. For the hotel's survival for a long duration, the measurement of service quality is very useful. A significant precursor to attracting and retaining visitors and thus ensuring the survival of hotels in the development of a measure of hotel service quality.

Tourism is the third-largest foreign exchange earner for the country in 2019, preceded by worker's remittance and textiles and garments, significantly contributing to the Sri Lankan economy. Foreign exchange earnings from the tourism sector decreased to 13.7% compared to 15.9% recorded in the previous year (SLTD & Authority, 2019). The official tourist receipts for 2019 were estimated as Rs.646, 362 million as compared to Rs. 711,961 million in 2018, with a decline of 9.2 % (SLTD and Authority, 2019). Since the accommodating industry plays a major role as one of the supporting services to the inbound tourism, the hotel industry that provides accommodation for international visitors to Sri Lanka becomes vital. This accommodation industry can be divided into three broad categories: tourist hotels, supplementary establishments, and other establishments. At the end of the year 2019, the total number of establishments in the registered list of accommodation at SLTDA amounted to 2,619 with 40,365 rooms. The total capacity consisted of 474 tourist hotels and 2,145 supplementary establishments (SLTD & Authority, 2019). Therefore, the service quality of this accommodating industry is vital to have tourism sustainability.

Tourism and Hotel Industries in Trincomalee District

When the research area that the Trincomalee is focused on which is known as a port city in Sri Lanka's in the east coast, taken as a model trourism destination Sri Lanka. The destination in Trincomalee is full of natural beauty and also has some historical importance for the Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists. The Trincomalee District attracts around 224,000 guests per annum representing foreign (71%) and domestic (29%) sectors. The foreign demand for the accommodation sector during the peak season on average is around 13,200 guest nights per month. Both direct and indirect employment generated from the tourism and hospitality sector in Trincomalee District is estimated to be around 5900 and 6700 respectively. The key tourist attractions of the Trincomalee District includes Koneswaram Temple, War Cemetery (1939-45), Marble Beach, Sri Pathirakali Amman Temple, Fort Fredrick, Seruwila Mangala RajaMaha Viharaya, Valgam Viharaya, Saint Mary's Cathedral, Hoods Tower Museum, Kinniya Hot Springs and Lanka Patuna. The guests also have the opportunity for Dolphin and Whale watching and Scuba and Snorkeling At present, there are 17 Board of Investment (BOI) projects in Trincomalee, of which 7 are linked to tourism. The project includes Anilana Hotels and Properties Ltd, Jungle Beach Resort (Pvt) Ltd, Lotus Park Hotel (Pvt) Ltd., River View Palm Hotel (Pvt) Ltd., Sea Lotus Park Hotel (Pvt) Ltd., Trinco Holiday Resorts (Pvt) Ltd, and Trinco Beach Hotel (Pvt) Ltd.

In Trincomalee, numerous hotels and resorts are available for tourists which are under the different service quality of Five stars, Four stars, Three stars, Two-star, and One-star hotels service facilities providing to the customer who is involving to the tourism. The examples are Trinco blu by Cinnamon five star hotel with airy quarters in an upmarket hotel offering direct beach access, an outdoor pool, and a spa. Amaranthe Bay Resort is a four-star hotel with Simon Barnesple rooms and airy suites in a laid-back resort with waterfront dining, a poolside bar, and a spa. JKAB part hotel is a three-star hotel with simple rooms in a laid-back hotel offering an outdoor pool, a restaurant, and free breakfast. Aqua Hotel Trincomalee is a three-star hotel, quick cave capsules, and rooms in a property offering a lively beachfront bar, a pool, and smoking. Sea lotus park one of the three-star hotel which included modest rooms in an informal beach hotel offering a bar, a buffet restaurant, and an outdoor pool. Welcome Hotel is a two-star hotel with relaxed rooms in a laid-back hotel with a restaurant and outdoor pool, plus an ocean-view deck. Cheapest and minimum comfort facilities in a one-star hotel in Trincomalee which is included normal rooms and the lowest facilities providing to the tourists. Examples are Dutch bay beach cottages, N Joy Inn, Sasvi Holiday Inn.

Since Sri Lanka tour packages helps the visitor to visit different tourist places in comfort in Sri Lanka, the Hotel industry has to provide a service with significant quality serving as a one of pulling factors of inbound tourism. There is a various number of hotels are available in Trincomalee, from that each and every hotel providing different type of service quality and facility maintenances for the tourist people. Therefore, this study is mainly derived to focus on to investigate the gap analysis on tourist received service quality in the hotel industry in Trincomalee district.

2.0 Literature Review

There is several discussions in terms of the model of SERVQUAL available in the literature. Oliver (2014), argued that previous service experience is used as a function of consumer service expectations, according to customer understanding and that subsequent experience is a feature of customer assessment of the level of actual service delivered. Also, Oliver sees consumers formulating their service pattern based on experience, which means that this new trend adapts to the degree of quality reached by customers dealing with the organization and it is not contrasting the anticipated and perceived service or actual service results. Service quality reveals the degree to which the delivered level of service matches customer expectations (Lewis and Booms, 1983). Service quality is one of the essential tasks of service companies. Quality means the degree of service efficiency excellence, by witnessing the quality reveals the degree to which the delivered level of service matches customer expectations (Lewis and Booms, 1983).

According to Sutanto (2009), the interviews used to survey and preference data collection to develop the customer satisfaction model. To gather data and assess the validity and also reliability, they used a standardized questionnaire. His results about the customer satisfaction regression model were primarily affected by the quality of service dimension (e.g. technological or result dimension, functional or process-related dimension, corporate image). However, according to Sureshchandar et al. (2002), customer satisfaction can be treated as a multi-dimensional construct, insofar as service quality means that it can exist in an enterprise at various levels and that can be operationalized according to the same variables on which service quality is operationalized. SERVQUAL Model is one of the very famous models to analyze the service quality in the industries. Patricio et al. (2006) found that SERVQUAL is the most popular instrument to ascertain service quality. Also, there is no consensus on the model's incorporation of consumer preferences. The purpose of the research presented in this paper is to address the applicability of SERVQUAL to restaurant services and to examine the inclusion in this context of customer expectations. However, Ramsaran-Fowdar (2007), the assessment of customer satisfaction is a primary objective

for any service provider that would like to succeed in this highly competitive environment. It is even more critical for the Mauritian tourism industry to keep visitors happy and pleased, given that the destination faces fierce competition abroad. Chand (2010), using the SERVQUAL measurement instrument to assess tourism facilities at ten Indian tourist destinations visited by international visitors, the SERVQUAL measurement instrument offers proof of the need for specific service improvements to increase the competitiveness of the destinations. Finally this study identified the presence of differences between customer expectations and perceptions of the services provided. The presence of these differences is argued to be a source of dissatisfaction with services rendered. Not at all over the industries have they developed their service standards to attract the customers by their services.

3.0 Research Methodology

Conceptualization and operationalization

Conceptual frame work

The conceptual framework is the researcher understands of how the particular variables in the study are connected (Regoniel, 2015). The conceptual frame work given below shows the relationships among the dependent and independent variables of the study, setting up based on the research problem and the objectives. This framework consists of five types of variables used to illustrate the existing gaps in the service quality
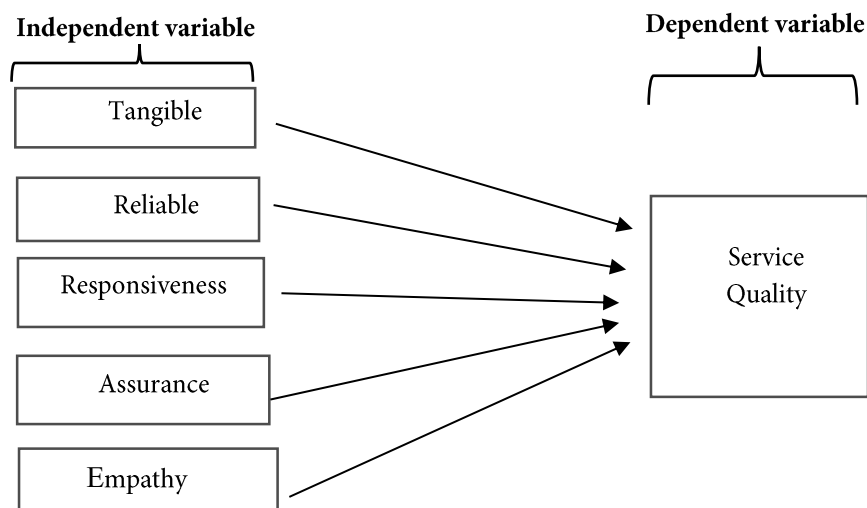
Conceptual frame work

Figure 1: Source Parasuraman et al., (1985)

The figure 3.1 shows the dimensions for conceptual model of service quality, which was introduced in Parasuraman et al., (1985). This conceptual model is applied in this study to evaluate service quality in the hotel and tourism industry. The Service quality level of hotel and tourism industries determine by tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy factors and each includes some other dimensions as follows.

1. Tangibles: Physical facilities, equipment, an appearance of personnel.
2. Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
3. Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

4.   Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.

5.   Empathy: Caring, individualized attention the firm provide its customers.

4.0 Development of Hypothesis

There is a significant difference between services quality expectations and perceptions in hotel industry in Trincomalee District. The main hypothesis divided into five sub-hypotheses based on the dimensions as follows.
Sub- Hypothesis

1.   There are any significant differences between expectations and perceptions about Tangible in hotel service quality.

2.   There is any significant difference between expectations and perceptions about Reliability in hotel service quality.

3.   There is any significant difference between expectations and perceptions about Responsiveness in hotel service quality.

4.   There is any significant difference between expectations and perceptions about Assurance in hotel service quality.

5.   There is any significant difference between expectations and perceptions about Empathy in hotel service quality.

In 1985, A.Parasuraman, Valarie Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry first suggested the GAP Model. The GAP of Service Quality Model encourages the organization to consider customer satisfaction. In-Service Industry, the GAP Model is widely used to understand the various deviations that are occurring in the process of service delivery to potential customers. The GAP model creates a roadmap for the entire method of service delivery and defines the gap between the systems so that the full model performs accurately and efficiently.

The Service quality GAP Model aims to define the gaps between the service perceived and the service expected. Five Gaps occur in the Service Delivery Process. They are:

1.   The gap between customer expectation and management perception.

2.   The gap between service quality specification and management perception.

3.   The gap between service quality specification and service delivery.

4.   The gap between service delivery and external communication.

5.   The gap between the expected service and experienced service.

However, service quality is often measured using SERVQUAL instrument, developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985; 1988). It consists of 22 items which measure five service quality dimensions, namely, tangibles (physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of employees), reliability (ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately), responsiveness (willingness to help customers and provide prompt service), assurance (knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence), and empathy (caring and individualized attention the firm provides its customers).
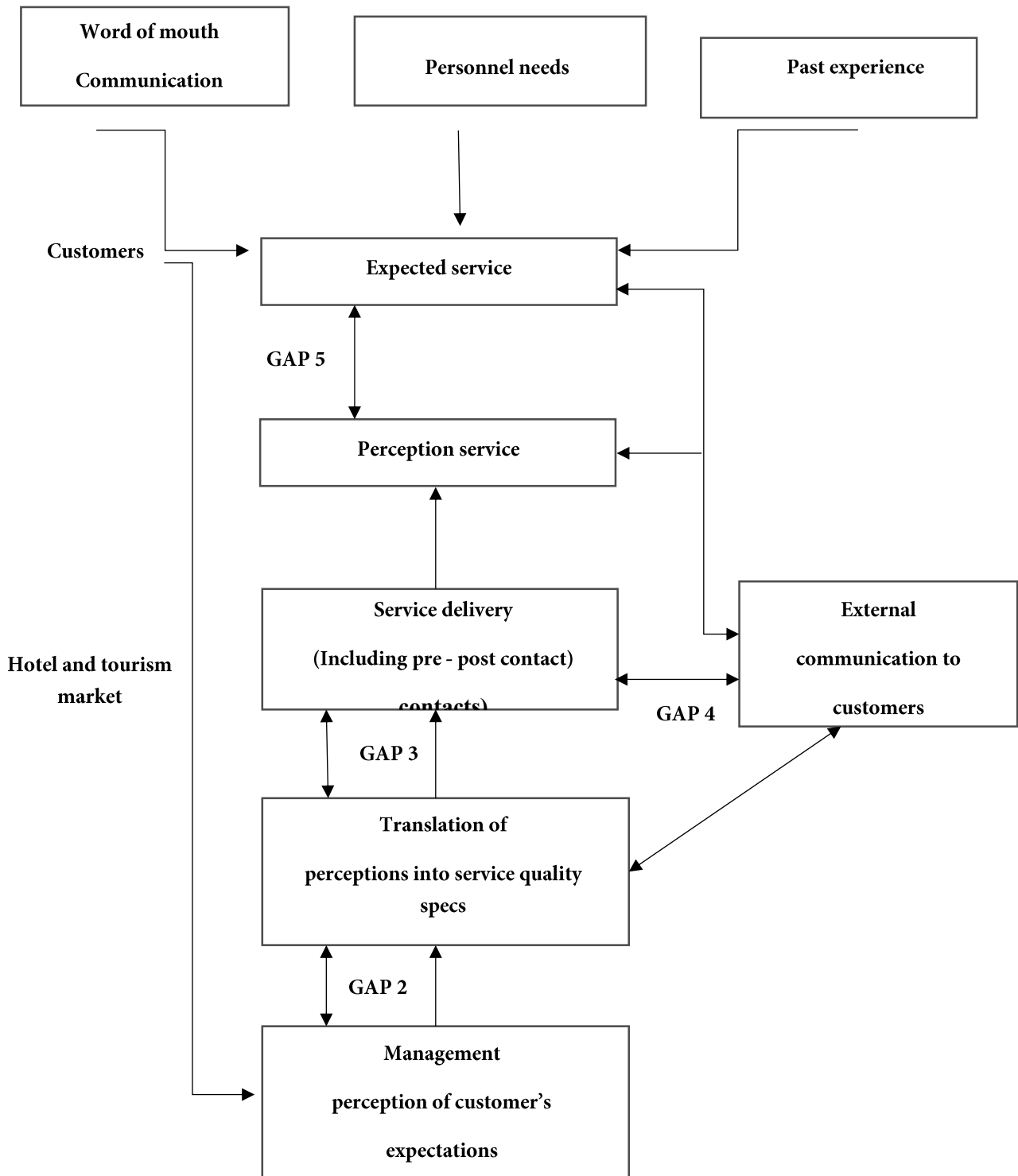
Gaps Diagram

Figure 2 : Gaps Diagram

Source: Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1985)

Data and Sample

In this study, primary and secondary data were collected for data analysis. The primary data were collected from a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed and administered to the research population as a tool to collect the actual data. The secondary data were extracted from reports, and documents related to the research topics. The sample size was 200 tourists from 25 hotels which were randomly selected, out of 65 hotels that are located in Tricomalee District. 154 questionnaires were recovered from 200 distributed questionnaires.

Method of data analysis

Cronbach Alpha, Spearman-Brown Coefficient, Pearson Correlation Coefficient are employed to estimate the reliability of the data collected from structured questionnaire. Measures of mean value is to identify to what extent the responses for items in terms of the indicators and respective variables. Paired Samples T-test and Analysis of Variance-ANOVA are employed to investigate the presence of statistically significant differences between hotels services quality expectations and perceptions.

5.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

Cronbach Alpha

In this study, the Cronbach's Alpha test is used for analyzing the reliability and internal consistency of the instrument. Cronbach's Alpha is used here to measure the reliability of the questionnaire for each dimension. The normal range of Cronbach's Alpha value is between (0-1). The closer the Alpha is to one, the greater the internal consistency of items in the instrument is assumed. George and Mallery (2003), and Sekaran (1992) indicate attributes for data reliability as Table (2) shows the values of Cronbach's Alpha for the dimensions of the research.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for Reliability.

Range	Decision Attributes
CAC ≥ 0.9	Excellent
0.9 > CAC ≥ 0.8	Good
0.8 > CAC ≥ 0.7	Acceptable
0.7 > CAC ≥ 0.6	Questionable
0.6 > CAC ≥ 0.5	Poor
CAC < 0.5	Unacceptable

(Source: George & Mallery, 2003)

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for Reliability

Constructs	No. of items	Cronbach Alpha coefficient	
		Expectation	Perception

Tangible	12	0.814	0.837
Reliability	10	0.815	0.852
Responsiveness	10	0.803	0.858
Assurance	12	0.797	0.849
Empathy	11	0.808	0.886
All dimensions	95	0.938	0.955

Cronbach's Alpha value for expectation parts ranged between (0.797) for "Assurance" and (0.808) for "Empathy". For perception parts, Cronbach's Alpha value ranged between (0.837) for "Tangible" and (0.849) for "Assurance". In addition, for the entire questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha equals (0.938) for expectation constructs and (0.955) for perception constructs. The questionnaire is considered reliable, and ready for distribution for the intended sample.

Split half

Reliability is measured by using the Split Half method. This method depends on splitting the paragraphs into two halves. The first half includes odd items and the second half includes even items. The correlation coefficient is then calculated between the two halves (Abu Hashem Hasan, 2006). Finally, the correlation coefficient is adjusted by the Spearman-Brown equation.

The adjusted correlation coefficient using the Spearman-Brown equation for expectation parts ranged between (0.700) for "Assurance" and (0.754) for "Reliability". For perception parts, the adjusted correlation coefficient using the Spearman-Brown equation ranged between (0.779) for "Tangible" and (0.707) for "Assurance". In addition, for the entire questionnaire, the adjusted correlation coefficient using Spearman-Brown equation equals (0.856) for expectation parts and (0.835) for perception parts, which shows that the questionnaire is reliable and can be used for this research.

Table 4: Split Half Method for Reliability

Constructs	No. of items	Expectation		Perception	
		Correlation coefficient	Spearman Brown coefficient	Correlation coefficient	Spearman Brown coefficient
Tangible	12	0.640	0.781	0.638	0.779
Reliability	10	0.605	0.754	0.645	0.785
Responsiveness	10	0.538	0.700	0.670	0.802
Assurance	12	0.538	0.700	0.547	0.707
Empathy	11	0.502	0.669	0.714	0.833
All dimensions	55	0.748	0.856	0.716	0.835

Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Polit & Hungler, 1989). Validity has several different aspects and assessment approaches. Statistical validity is used to evaluate instrument validity, which includes criterion-related validity and construct validity. Validity can be explained as the ability to measure what you actually intended to measure (Eriksson and Widersheim-Paul, 1999). Validity is about data and the methods used and how the data can be considered exact, true, and accurate (Denscombe, 1998). There are many methods for measuring validity; the researcher used Content validity, internal consistency.

Content Validity

The questionnaire was examined by several arbitrators who have wide experience in the field of the research. The researcher has modified, deleted, and added the necessary parts to the questionnaire in the response to the arbitrator's suggestions.

Internal consistency

The internal validity of the questionnaire is the first statistical test used to test the validity of the questionnaire. Internal validity is measured through the correlation coefficients between each item in the construct and its total.
1.   Internal consistency for "Tangible"
Table 5 shows that all the correlation coefficients for the items of "Tangible" are significant at the 0.05 level. The correlation coefficients for the expectation part ranged between (0.513) for "Hotel has a good location and be approachable" (TAN 12) and (0.590) for "Hotel management is keen on improving and develop equipment continuously" (TAN 11). For the perception part, the correlation coefficients ranged between (0.560) for "Hotel has a good location and be approachable" (TAN 12) and (0.546) "The hotel has visually appealing facilities" (TAN 4) and (0.607) "The hotel uses modern technological means to serve customers" (TAN 8).

Table 5: Correlation Coefficient for "Tangible"

Items	Expectation		Perception	
	Corr.	P-value	Corr.	P-value
TAN 1	0.605	0.000	0.576	0.000
TAN 2	0.676	0.000	0.605	0.000
TAN 3	0.668	0.000	0.625	0.000
TAN 4	0.631	0.000	0.546	0.000
TAN 5	0.476	0.000	0.662	0.000
TAN 6	0.500	0.000	0.511	0.000
TAN 7	0.474	0.000	0.594	0.000
TAN 8	0.634	0.000	0.607	0.000
TAN 9	0.575	0.000	0.600	0.000
TAN 10	0.528	0.000	0.669	0.000
TAN 11	0.590	0.000	0.626	0.000

| TAN 12 | 0.513 | 0.000 | 0.560 | 0.000 |

2. Internal consistency for "Reliability"

Table 6 shows that all the correlation coefficients for the items of "Reliability" are significant at the 0.05 level. The correlation coefficients for the expectation part ranged between (0.538) for "Hotel is characterized by accuracy and clearness in billing" (REL 10) and (0.551) for "Hotel has a well-trained and professional staff" (REL 8). For the perception part, the correlation coefficients ranged between (0.626) for "Hotel is characterized by accuracy and clearness in billing" (REL 10) and (0.637) "If you have a problem, the hotel enthusiastically shows the willingness to solve it right away" (REL 3).

Table 6: Correlation Coefficient for "Reliability"

Items	Expectation		Perception	
	Corr.	P-value	Corr.	P-value
REL 1	0.678	0.000	0.696	0.000
REL 2	0.662	0.000	0.707	0.000
REL 3	0.602	0.000	0.637	0.000
REL 4	0.536	0.000	0.474	0.000
REL 5	0.701	0.000	0.714	0.000
REL 6	0.597	0.000	0.649	0.000
REL 7	0.641	0.000	0.631	0.000
REL 8	0.551	0.000	0.690	0.000
REL 9	0.621	0.000	0.714	0.000
REL 10	0.538	0.000	0.626	0.000

3. Internal consistency for "Responsiveness"

Table 7 shows that all the correlation coefficients for the items of "Responsiveness" are significant at the 0.05 level. The correlation coefficients for the expectation part ranged between (0.544) for "Hotel employees can tell you exactly when services will be performed" (RESS 1) and (0.644) for "Hotel always checks guest satisfaction" (RESS 5). For the perception part, the correlation coefficients ranged between (0.743) for "Hotel employees can tell you exactly when services will be performed" (RESS 1) and (0.698) "The hotel serves are consistent quality services" (RESS 7).

Table 7: Correlation Coefficient for "Responsibility"

Items	Expectation		Perception	
	Corr.	P-value	Corr.	P-value
RESS 1	0.544	0.000	0.743	0.000
RESS 2	0.534	0.000	0.536	0.000

RESS 3	0.576	0.000	0.522	0.000
RESS 4	0.509	0.000	0.596	0.000
RESS 5	0.644	0.000	0.635	0.000
RESS 6	0.634	0.000	0.744	0.000
RESS 7	0.666	0.000	0.698	0.000
RESS 8	0.582	0.000	0.732	0.000
RESS 9	0.718	0.000	0.670	0.000
RESS 10	0.593	0.000	0.745	0.000

4.   Internal consistency for "Assurance"

Table 8 shows that all the correlation coefficients for the items of "Assurance" are significant at the 0.05 level. The correlation coefficients for the expectation part ranged between (0.572) for "Hotel management policy rejects personal conversation with customers" (ASS 9) and (0.645) for "Hotel has the required security and safety standards" (ASS 7). For the perception part, the correlation coefficients ranged between (0.668) for "Hotel management adopts non-discrimination policy in serving customers" (ASS 6) and (0.640) "You feel safe in your dealing with hotel employees" (ASS 2).

Table 8: Correlation coefficient for "Assurance"

Items	Expectation		Perception	
	Corr.	P-value	Corr.	P-value
ASS 1	0.503	0.000	0.682	0.000
ASS 2	0.504	0.000	0.640	0.000
ASS 3	0.614	0.000	0.595	0.000
ASS 4	0.572	0.000	0.651	0.000
ASS 5	0.505	0.000	0.475	0.000
ASS 6	0.613	0.000	0.668	0.000
ASS 7	0.645	0.000	0.736	0.000
ASS 8	0.511	0.000	0.631	0.000
ASS 9	0.572	0.000	0.503	0.000
ASS 10	0.615	0.000	0.558	0.000
ASS 11	0.519	0.000	0.556	0.000
ASS 12	0.498	0.000	0.667	0.000

5.   Internal consistency for "Empathy"

Table 9 shows that all the correlation coefficients for the items of "Empathy" are significant at the 0.05 level. The correlation coefficients for the expectation part ranged between (0.583) for "The hotel has operating hours convenient to you" (EMP 5) and (0.545) for "The hotel has your best interests at heart" (EMP 4). For the perception part, the correlation coefficients ranged between (0.605) for "Hotel employees address customers by the name" (EMP 7) and (0.726) "Hotel employees understand your specific needs" (EMP 3).

Table 9: Correlation coefficient for "Empathy"

Items	Expectation		Perception	
	Corr.	P-value	Corr.	P-value
EMP 1	0.531	0.000	0.585	0.000
EMP 2	0.541	0.000	0.586	0.000
EMP 3	0.546	0.000	0.726	0.000
EMP 4	0.545	0.000	0.728	0.000
EMP 5	0.583	0.000	0.734	0.000
EMP 6	0.631	0.000	0.669	0.000
EMP 7	0.518	0.000	0.605	0.000
EMP 8	0.653	0.000	0.722	0.000
EMP 9	0.628	0.000	0.754	0.000
EMP 10	0.586	0.000	0.669	0.000
EMP 11	0.670	0.000	0.736	0.000

6.0 Analysis of the Research Information

In order to analyze the SERVQUAL constructs of this study used the univariate analysis to measure the level of the factors cause for the service quality among the customers in Trincomalee district. It explains the Mean, Stand Deviation, and Relative Importance Index of the factors.

Table 10: Summary of Results of SERVQUAL Constructs

NO	ITEMS	Total SERVQUAL gap			RII Gap
		E	P	P-E	Percentage
1	Tangible	4.152	3.147	-1.005	17.90%
2	Reliability	4.094	3.124	-0.970	19.63%
3	Responsiveness	4.082	2.954	-1.128	28.79%
4	Assurance	4.391	3.010	-1.381	23.62%
5	Empathy	3.664	2.828	-0.836	24.10%
	Total	4.077	3.013	-1.064	22.81%

(Source: Survey Data)

In general, Table 10 shows that the level of agreement on the expectation part is very high, where the means of the constructs ranged between 4.391 out of 5 (85.12%) for "Assurance" and 4.152 out of 5 (83.00%) for "Tangible". In

addition, the total degree of the expectation part was 4.077 (82.46%). This result indicates that there is a very high level of agreement on "Expectation" from the respondents' point of view.

Table 10 also shows that the level of agreement on the perception part is high, where the means of the constructs ranged between 3.147out of 5 (3.147%) for "Tangible" and 3.124 out of 5 (62.25%) for "Reliability". In addition, the total degree of the perception part was 3.013 (59.65%). This result indicates that there is a high level of agreement on "Perception" from the respondents' point of view.

The previous Table 11 results indicate that the level of agreement on "SERVQUAL Constructs" dropped between expectation and perception is 1.064 (22.81%) from the respondent's point of view.

Table 11: Total SERVQUAL Gap

NO	ITEMS	Expectation			Perception		
		Mean	ST.DEV	RII	Mean	ST.DEV	RII
1	Tangible	4.152	0.438	83.00%	3.147	0.537	65.10%
2	Reliability	4.094	0.454	81.88%	3.124	0.585	62.25%
3	Responsiveness	4.082	0.459	81.65%	2.954	0.617	52.86%
4	Assurance	4.391	0.409	85.12%	3.010	0.547	61.50%
5	Empathy	3.664	0.441	80.66%	2.828	0.612	56.56%
	Total	4.077	0.440	82.46%	3.013	0.580	59.65%

(Source: Survey Data)

7.0 Discussion of Research Findings

There is a significant difference between perception and expectation for the total mean of the model dropped -1.064 represented by 22.81%. Which is called a negative gap between perception and expectation. Therefore, the customer perceptions are less than their expectation. There is considerable and significant weakness regarding the administrative and operational side which led to the existence of such a gap.

The hotels in the Trincomalee district is don't concentrate on marketing surveys and researches which led to the misunderstanding of the main guest's needs and desires.

The dimension of Empathy refers to the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. To fully appreciate the importance of empathy in a hotel service context. There are three kinds of elements including empathy access, communication, and understand the customers. In additionally caring, the individualized attention the hotel industry provides its customers. The Trincomalee district has a very low value of mean drop -0.836 represented. Therefore, the service providers are very good at taking care of the customers from their maximum level. It's considered to be one of the main strengths of the hotels operating in the Trincomalee district. At the time

assurance, is refers to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence. It's including competence, courtesy, credibility, and security. The Trincomalee district has a high value of mean drop -1.381 represented. Therefore, the service of the hotel employees has poor knowledge and politeness of behavior and also trusty of the employees is also not having a good level from the side of customer perception. It's considered to be one of the main weaknesses in the hotels operating in the Trincomalee district.

The lack of distance between management and ownership when making decisions is considered to be one of the key drawbacks which led to random and unstudied decisions that impact negatively on the current condition of hotels. There is a lack of a quality control unit to monitor and evaluate the quality of the hotels operating in the Trincomalee district. There is no delegation from owners and board of directors in the hotels operating in the Trincomalee district which is considered to be the main factor that affects negatively how the duties are accomplished.

The analysis of data indicated the weakness of understanding for the tourism industry especially the hotel industry. The absence of the role of the Ministry of Tourism in formulating laws and regulations to monitor the quality is considered to be one of the main outcomes derived from the current study. It is concluded that there is an absence to the role of the female in the hotel industry which reflected the negative side of this profession due to the prevailed culture and traditions in the society.

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