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An Exploration of Service Gaps between Customer Changing Service Expectations and Demands and the Satisfaction from the Service Delivered: Swiss Travellers to Swiss Luxury Hotels

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Abstract

The Swiss hospitality industry has one of the greatest reputations among the countries, which raises customer expectations and extends the service gap. To quantify the gap, the industry must have in-depth information and awareness of the guest's service expectations. Many studies have been undertaken to measure the service gap, but there has been relatively limited research into how to close the gap and enhance service quality. The aim of the research is to measure the service gap and try to close it by implementing service models in Swiss luxury hotels. Theoretical background involving model components, essential customer demands, and the relevance of customer happiness is utilised to support the achievement of the paper's aim. The quantitative method is used by applying questionnaires for two purposes: the first is to quantify the guest's past experiences, and the second is to evaluate the stay after it has ended. The findings revealed that the Swiss guests' past experiences created an expectation, and the post-stay review revealed whether the anticipation was accurate or inaccurate. The Swiss hospitality industry still has to develop in order to preserve its reputation and reduce the service gap.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background information

The purpose of this study is to look at the service gaps between expanding customer service expectations in Swiss five-star hotels. The hospitality sector within the service economy is progressively increasing in importance in addressing the demands of society in the twenty-first century, and the Swiss hotel business is anticipated to supply a rich seam of data in our knowledge of this phenomena (Tajeddini, 2012). Throughout the years, customers' satisfaction levels increased, and the service tried to keep up with the expectations. Furthermore, try to understand and close the service gaps by applying theories. Service quality (SERVQUAL) has five dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy). The five dimensions represent the differences in consumer demands and impressions of the company's performance at each level of quality. Furthermore, five elements help us to identify the gap. On the other hand, Perceived quality mainly focuses on (expectations vs experiences), which is another opportunity to measure the gap. According to the model, quality and satisfaction are directly related to technical and operational quality aspects, in addition to the potential effects of technical and functional quality on service quality perception (Grönross, 1990). There is another way to look at service quality, which Cronin and Taylor (1992) call the Service Quality Performance Evaluation Model (SERVPERF). The SERVPERF models are 'performance measures' or assessments of service quality, aimed solely at organisational performance as seen by

customers rather than at distinguishing between the perceptions of consumers of performance and their expectations of service quality (Ali, Ali, and Radam, 2010).

1.2 Rationale of the study

This research is significant in terms of gaining a better knowledge of the difficulties surrounding the effective implementation of hotel service quality. Most of the existing research on hotel service quality has come to the realisation that hotels are competing for greater customer satisfaction and service quality (Parayani et al., 2010). This might have an impact on the quality of service provided, as well as the unit's efficiency (Ingram, 1999). In most cases, customer satisfaction or discontent with service providers stems from a disconnect between past expectations and actual performance (Mola, 2011).That means that no study on customer satisfaction and service performance has been conducted. That is why the author wishes to do study on the service quality gap in order to assist the hotel business in gaining a better reputation. The SERVQUAL scale was created by Parasuraman et al. (1988), is a tool for assessing functional service quality that may be used across a wide range of services. The SERVQUAL model, according to Ekinci (2002), defines service quality as the difference between guest expectations and perceived performance. The studies show that models are insufficiently developed to measure the gap between provided and expected service. Many research of quality of service link it to other factors and their outcomes, such as customer happiness and loyalty. As a result, it is suggested that the research of service quality determinants be expanded to include the study of service quality's mediating influence on the link between determinants and their outcomes (Lai, 2018).

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study, to investigate the Swiss five star hotels service gaps between growing customer service expectations and demands and fulfilment with the service provided.

Objectives:
-        To analyse the gap between expected and provided service in five-star hotels
-        To investigate customer satisfaction despite growing expectations towards provided service
-        To identify critical customer needs in the Swiss five star hotel environment and experience

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1. Introduction

The author will identify the gap between offered service and guest requests as a consequence of this study, and the results will lead to a better knowledge of the gap and attempt to close it. The author will use models (SERVQUAL, SERVPERF, Perceive quality) to demonstrate the gap.

2.2. Theoretical framework

2.2.1. Service quality

According to the literature on service quality, service evaluation should be based on five factors: tangibility, responsiveness, dependability, assurance, and empathy (Mola and Jusoh, 2011). These criteria have the potential to be a useful tool for assessing service quality and, as a result, client satisfaction. A comparison of customer expectation and perception was done in order to discover inadequacies in delivering service quality. This indicates that the hotel customers' expectations for perceived service quality were not met. As a result, hoteliers and service providers must address several gaps and shortcomings in order to improve service. Priority and attention should be directed to the areas where expectations and perceptions differ the most. Experts go on to add that other components of performance measurement are crucial, such as reviewing current protocols and supervision. Furthermore, internal performance must be improved since it reflects actual service quality and contributes to consumer satisfaction with service quality, (Jamali, 2007). Providing consistently high-quality goods and services was one of the most difficult issues that American businesses confronted in the 1980s (Parasuraman et al., 1986).

An increasing body of data suggests that delivering high-quality goods and services improves productivity, profitability, market share, and return on investment, while also lowering costs (Thompson et al., 1985). SERVQUAL was designed to evaluate service quality at the beliefs and perception of work quality, with the difference between the two defining customer satisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Even though the IS SERVQUAL instrument and a suitable measure of satisfaction allow many linkages to be studied, the model cannot be evaluated in its totality since the SERVQUAL measure of service quality is a difference between performance and expectation components independently quantified.

They argued that focusing on the qualities with the biggest difference between performance and

standards – in terms of desire or expectation – does not always indicate focusing on the most essential ones. The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction is seen as a disconfirmation relationship (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982). As a result, service quality is described as a gap between what customers expect from service and how they perceive the service experience (Lewis et al., 1994). When there is a deficiency in service quality that the service provider would like to close, a service quality gap exists. There are five elements that makeup SERVQUAL: tangibles, dependability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The SERVQUAL instrument was initially developed to measure the gap between quality expectations and perceived service by concentrating on five aspects: tangibles (Curry and Sinclair, 2002). It is thus not recommended to use SERVQUAL to correctly assess hotel service quality (Saleh and Ryan, 1991). Servqual's incompetence is explained by the fact that consumers do not know what to anticipate before they receive the service (Gurbuz et al., 2008). Carman (1990) claimed that SERVQUAL could not be a general metric that could be used for any service. Customers' contentment may evolve as a result of a single encounter or as a result of a sequence of different experiences, according to academics (Richard et al., 2021). The importance of emotional antecedents in determining perceived worth and satisfaction is important (Gallarza et al., 2013).

2.2.2 Perceived quality

The perceived value of a client is a significant predictor of numerous behavioural outcomes, including patronage, re-patronage intent, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty (Chen and Dubinsky, 2003). They also believe that the difference between expectations and perceptions of actual performance levels influences a customer's overall service quality evaluation (Zaibaf, 2013). According to (Armstrong and Kotler, 2009) Showed that satisfaction refers to a person's sentiments of liking or disliking a thing after comparing its performance to his or her expectations. According to (Grönroos, 1990) Underlying variables are impacting the outcome of the two; perceived service quality, each component of perceived service quality (Experience vs Expectations). In line with prior findings, while quality is multifaceted, dependability is the key to establishing the overall views of the quality of service. It is generally recognised that customer interactions include the exchange of social and economic resources (such as responsiveness and reassurance) (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009). Satisfaction may be described as an effective customer state in the focus on services that emerges from an overall assessment of all factors in connection to the customer (Severt, 2002).

Second, the quality of service as perceived by consumers is determined by two aspects: dimensions of technology and functionality, or the "how" and "what." (Grönroos, 1990). Technical service refers to the assistance provided to consumers throughout their interactions with the firm (Grönroos, 1990). Since consumers frequently deal with the same service provider, they bring their prior experiences and general perceptions with them to every interaction (Grönroos, 2001). The technical and functional quality pattern of Gronroos (2006) shows that a company must understand consumer quality to compete successfully, and how the quality of service is affected. The performance-only approach, on the other hand, reduces expectations to zero, making them irrelevant to the final results. A recency effect would explain why recent performance assessments are more relevant and influential (Tversky and Kahneman, 1974).

2.2.3. SERVPERF

There is another way to look at service quality, which Cronin and Taylor (1992) call the Service Quality Performance Evaluation Model (SERVPERF). The originators of SERVQUAL recognised that SERVPERF is a more efficient measure of service quality (Boulding et al., 1993). According to Cronin and Taylor (1992) are used as two sets of articles (SERVPERF and SERVQUAL) in effect, rather than as two factor-based scales, as the four industries investigated have not identified a coherent factor structure. As SERVPERF provides more "convergent and discriminant valid explanations for service quality construction," it is a more accurate metric for service quality in contrast with SERVQUAL" (Jain and Gupta, 2004). Only client views of a service provider's performance are taken into account when SERVPERF assesses service quality (Cronin and Taylor, 1994). This instrument has not been able to corroborate the five SERVPERF characteristics in the hospitality industry (assurance, responsiveness, tangibles, reliability, empathy) (Nadiri and Hussain, 2005). According to (Robledo, 2001) concluded that SERVPERF was not an effective measuring scale after evaluating its validity and reliability. According to (Ye et al., 2014) customer's perception of the advantages of utilising the service and its price are comparable to perceived service quality, thus it should be regarded that service quality involves a trade-off between these two notions. Customer sacrifice (the financial and nonmonetary costs involved with receiving the service) and customer frame of reference determine a customer's sense of value for the

service (Xia and Suri, 2014). When it comes to measuring the difference between performance and expectation, Cronin and Taylor (1992) suggest using solely performance-based measures (Yılmaz, 2011). The SERVPERF models are 'performance measures' or assessments of service quality, aimed solely at organisational performance as seen by customers rather than at distinguishing between the perceptions of consumers of performance and their expectations of service quality (Ali, Ali, and Radam, 2010). They thought that an efficiency metric might account for greater differences than SERVQUAL (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Dabholkar, Thorpe, and Rentz, 1996; Tse and Wilton, 1988).

2.2.4. Customer Satisfaction

If a company wants to stay competitive and develop, it must grasp the principles of service quality and customer fulfilment. Delivering high-quality service is critical in today's competitive climate for a long-term competitive edge. Customer satisfaction has a beneficial impact on the profitability of a company. Customer satisfaction is the foundation of effective business since it leads to purchase intention, customer retention, and good word-of-mouth recommendations (Angelova, 2011). Repeat purchases, loyalty, and client retention are all influenced by customer satisfaction (Zairi, 2000). A customer's overall attitude toward a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers expect and what they get in terms of the fulfilment of some objectives, goals, or desires, is referred to as satisfaction (Hansemark and Albinson, 2004). According to (Kotler, 2000) satisfaction is defined as a person's feelings of joy or disappointment as a result of comparing a customer's perceived effectiveness or conclusion to his or her demands. The term "perceived service quality" refers to a broad judgement or attitude about the excellence of a service, whereas "satisfaction" refers to a single transaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988). A disgruntled client is likely to tell seven to twenty individuals about their bad experience. Only three to five individuals will hear about a great experience from a pleased consumer (Kan, 1995).

2.3. Review of existing empirical research

2.3.1. SERVQUAL model used in medium-sized hotels

The impact of the SERVQUAL model's five dimensions on visitor fulfilment was investigated using structural equation modelling (Ahmad, 2018). According to Groonroos (1983), service quality is a significant predictor of image. Maintaining a relatively high score rating among loyal clients is dependent on the hotel's image.

Getty and Thomson (1994) investigated the relationship between lodging quality, satisfaction, and the effect on customers' intentions to recommend the lodging to others; their findings suggest that customers' intentions to recommend are a function of their satisfaction and service quality perceptions from their lodging experience. Akbaba (2006) concluded that the 'tangibles' dimension is the strongest of the five dimensions of SERVQUAL, and this scale has to be fine-tuned to fit the demands of researching service quality in the hotel sector. Knutson et al. (1990) proposed LODGSERV, a variant of SERVQUAL whose dimensions were named on the original SERVQUAL but items differed: this scale was found to be consistent when administered in different parts of the world, including Japan, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, and the United Kingdom (Patton et al., 1994). The remaining two Service quality model qualities, dependability and empathy, have no substantial influence on guest satisfaction (Ahmad, 2018). Despite the critique, none of the studies could completely rule out SERVQUAL's applicability, and it is still the most often used method of assessing service quality. Based on empirical research, Chaturvedi (2016) found that there is a gap in service provider perception (which produces expectations) and customer perception of services delivered, confirming the operational setup of SERVQUAL, which focuses on calculating the gap between expectation and perception. Expectation component scores outnumber perception values in all five categories that indicate hotel service quality. It clearly demonstrates that clients have high expectations for the level of services provided by the hotels they book, which the hotels have continually failed to satisfy Chaturvedi (2016).

2.3.2. Perceived quality model used in upscale hotels

According to Grönroos (1990) Perceived Quality Service Model is a useful tool for understanding elements that influence consumer perceptions of service quality. According to Bitner et al., (1990) the individual service encounter between the client and the service provider, during which the client evaluates the quality and creates satisfaction or discontent, determines customer satisfaction. Consumers will evaluate the service experience based on their a priori expectations, which will be used to assess quality, determine satisfaction, and build expectations for future consuming experiences (Yi et al., 2003). First, perceived quality is measured in two distinct nations' hotels. Second, guests' national cultures are taken into account while evaluating the perceived excellence of each country. The findings reveal substantial variations in perceived quality ratings based on hotel guests' national cultures in each country. While domestic tourists in Croatia reported

higher levels of quality than other guests, Italians in Italy valued their performance poorer than their American counterparts.(Šerić, 2018). As a result, cultural impacts on perceived quality need to be studied further (Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007). According to Chen et al., (2012), additional study is needed to evaluate the influence of culture on hotel marketing core ideas. Recently, it was recommended that future research incorporate perceptions of quality in nations with similar cultural features (Guesalaga and Pitta, 2014). The implications for Italian and Croatian hotel management, two direct rivals in the Mediterranean region, are explored. These findings are rather paradoxical since reduced cultural distance appears to support better-perceived quality evaluations among Croatian hotel visitors in Croatia, but not among Italian hotel guests in Italy. This conclusion is also consistent with Etgar and Fuchs (2011), who investigated how similar service providers and care clients were based on whether they came from the same racial or ethnic categories.

2.3.3. Investigating Customer Satisfaction in Star-Rated Hotels

Client happiness is seen as a prerequisite for customer retention and loyalty, and so aids in the achievement of economic objectives such as sales and income (Reichheld, 1996; Scheuing, 1995). One of the primary reasons why service quality and customer satisfaction have become so important is because of the significant level of competition in the marketplace in which hospitality businesses such as hotels operate. The study used a qualitative methodology to investigate service quality and customer satisfaction from the perspective of customers at Nairobi's star-rated hotels. In the hotel sector, for example, pleased clients are more likely to return and generate revenue (Watiki, 2014). Customers are happy, according to Williams et al. (2003), when their assessment of the service they received is equal to or better than what they expected. If the performance meets expectations, the customer is pleased, and if it surpasses expectations, the client is ecstatic (Kotler et al., 1996). Customer satisfaction, according to Gunderson et al. (1996), is defined as a guest's post-consumption appraisal of a product or service, which may be assessed by analysing a guest's rating of performance on various qualities. Manyi (2011) discovered that all five aspects of service quality were strongly connected to customer satisfaction when researching the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality. The study's findings showed that in order to satisfy clients, businesses must enhance service quality aspects. These findings were in line with Akoko's findings (2012). Akoko (2012) investigated the relationship between

customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions in the Kenyan telecoms market, finding that all five service quality dimensions had a positive influence on customer satisfaction. According to Musyoka (2013) there is a link between service quality and library user happiness among Kenyan universities, it was discovered that service quality is responsible for 73.9 percent of user satisfaction. The findings also demonstrate that different aspects of service quality have varying effects on customer satisfaction. The most significant influence was determined to be on the Reliability dimension, followed by Tangible and Empathy (Watiki, 2014). According to their research, the most important elements in determining customer happiness are reliability and assurance and responsiveness. Furthermore, these two criteria exhibited the most significant differences in ratings, showing that customers' views fell well short of their expectations (Lam and Zhang, 1999). Moreover, all five dimensions were highly scored, leading to the conclusion that the rated Hotels provide excellent service in all five key categories.Users who express greater levels of satisfaction are more likely to buy new or additional services from their existing service provider and to continue with their supplier even if their vendor raises pricing or a competitor lowers costs, as predicted. Simultaneously, very pleased consumers are less likely to complain than unsatisfied ones (Yol et al., 2006). The presence of distinct forms of customer fulfilment cannot only be established theoretically but also experimentally by analysing customer behaviour (Stauss, 1997). Customer satisfaction isn't designed to be universally applicable to all online purchase scenarios; rather, it's meant to be utilised as a starting point for creating these links in other circumstances (Ha, 2008). In order to prove the model's efficiency in other online situations, future research will need to evaluate the model's connections in other online contexts (Ha, 2008).

2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the author's primary concern is determining which suitability model to use to detect the gap. The models of service quality have been refined in order to get the most accurate findings. Customer satisfaction will also be included as a notion because it has an impact on the service offered.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

3.1 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the Swiss five star hotels' service gaps between growing customer service expectations and demands and fulfilment with the service provided.

Objectives:
- To analyse the gap between expected and provided service in five-star hotels
- To investigate customer satisfaction despite growing expectations towards provided service
- To identify critical customer needs in the Swiss five star hotel environment and experience

Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1
H0: There is no gap between the Swiss five-star hotels' service quality and guest expectations
H1: There is a gap between the Swiss five-star hotels' service quality and guest expectations
Hypothesis 2
H0: The Swiss hotel industry's reputation does not influence the customer needs and expectations
H1: The Swiss hotel industry's reputation does influence the customer needs and expectations
Hypothesis 3
H0: There is no relationship between Swiss customer loyalty and Swiss customer satisfaction

H1: There is a relationship between Swiss customer loyalty and Swiss customer satisfaction

3.2 Research Design

In light of current research' methodological critiques, this study takes a deductive approach to identify information and relevant notions (Yu, 2015). The deductive approach begins with different generalisations (hypotheses) and employs specific observations to distinguish between them (Maclure, 1993). A theoretical perspective organises a scheme, and it is this framework that deduces the sorts of data collecting equipment, assessments, and even evaluation types. Consider, however, that the investigation has now progressed to the quantitative deductive stages (Morse, 2002). Quantitative research is a method for evaluating the connection between variables in order to evaluate objective ideas (Creswell, 2015). These elements can then be measured using equipment, resulting in numerical data that can be evaluated using analysis measures (Creswell, 2015). The conventional type of research has been characterised by post-positivist assumptions, which are more valid for quantitative research than qualitative research (Creswell, 2015). When examining human behaviour and activities, post-positivism represents thinking after positivism, questioning the conventional concept of absolute truth of knowledge (Phillips and Burbules, 2000) and acknowledging that we cannot be confident about our statements of knowledge (Creswell, 2014). A postpositivist's understanding is founded on thorough observation and analysis of the objective reality that exists "available today" in the environment. As a result, for a postpositivist, establishing quantitative measurements of observations and researching individual behaviour becomes crucial. Survey design is a nonexperimental type of research that gives a quantitative or numeric account of a group's trends, attitudes, or views by analysing a sample of that population (Creswell, 2014). It comprises cross-sectional and continuous studies that collect data using surveys or individual questionnaires with the goal of generalising findings from a sample to the population (Creswell et al., 2014). This concept looks to be a basic and straightforward method of study, however, it is neither simple nor straightforward to execute effectively (Thompson, 2007).

3.3 Sampling

The research paper will be carried out using the simple random sample technique, which means that every case of the population has an equal probability of inclusion in the sample (Taherdoost, 2016). Sampling is a crucial approach in quantitative analysis that includes selecting a sample of a population to evaluate or gain anything from the population at a low cost (Meng, 2013). For the quantitative method, the basic random sampling strategy will be suitable and efficient (Creswell, 2014). The author of this study will concentrate on consumers at five-star hotels in Switzerland, applying the above-mentioned quantitative technique. According to Creswell (2014) choosing participants at random will assess the capacity to generalise to a population supplied by a representative sample from the population. It will help the author have a better understanding of expectations, demands and satisfaction towards the service in Swiss Luxury hotels. The author will search for 50 people in all, including Swiss visitors who have stayed in five-star hotels more than three times. More than three times is necessary to have the perfect sampling because of the service expectations from five-star properties. Furthermore, the researcher only included adults in the study because of their maturity level.

3.4 Data Collection

The researcher will use questionnaires to measure the demands, expectations and customer satisfaction level with two factors. These questionnaires will be emailed to the participants through hotel chains, and they will include a scale rating thus, the responders must reply between 1 and 5, indicating 1 vehemently disagrees and 5 indicating agreement wholeheartedly. The first questionnaire will measure the expectations before entering the hotel, so it will provide

information about previous experiences. The second questionnaire will function as an evaluation tool, allowing us to analyse the gap between expectations and perceived service. The questionnaire will be valuable for a hotel chain in terms of future wants and expectations for five-star properties.

3.5 Data Analysis

This study will use an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to identify the gaps between the variable customer expectation and customer satisfaction. According to Hooper (2012), factor analysis investigates the inter-correlations present among an extensive amount of elements (questionnaire responses), reducing the components into various categories known as factors. It is 'exploratory' in this sense since it enables the researcher to determine the underlying dimensions or variables that exist in a set of data. The questionnaires will gather information from individuals who have been in a Swiss 5-star hotel more than three times across the hotel network. Respondents must answer on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating entire agreement. The immersive bubble chart is ideal for demonstrating expectations before visiting the hotel and analysing expectations and perceived service after leaving the hotel. The Immersive Bubble Chart is a data visualisation tool for portraying large and complicated data sets (Onorati et al., 2018).

3.6 Validity

The idea of validity has evolved significantly throughout time. Most notably, it has evolved from a very restricted and evidence-based focus to one that is complicated and wide, encompassing the repercussions of instruments and evaluation techniques (Angoff, 2013). According to Mujis (2011), there are three separate dimensions of validity, all of which are crucial: criteria validity, content validity and construct validity. Content validity relates to whether or not the content of the manifest variables is appropriate for measuring the latent idea that we are attempting to assess (Mujis, 2011). Criteria validity is assessed by comparing test scores to one or more external variables (called criteria) thought to offer a direct assessment of the trait or behaviour under consideration (Messick, 1990). According to Messick (1990), construct validity is identified by studying what attributes a test measures and, thus, by identifying the extent to which specific explanatory ideas or definitions impact test performance. Construct validity is quite a complicated issue that involves the internal structure of an instrument as well as the notion being measured (Mujis, 2011). The researcher

requires a theoretical framework that corresponds to the questionnaires, what should be measured and what meets the abstraction to achieve the applicable outcome.

3.7 Ethical Issues

During questionnaires, the author must consider some ethical considerations. The research entails gathering information about individuals from individuals (Punch, 2015). Researchers must defend their study participants, build trust with them, promote research integrity, defend against impropriety that may reflect on their organisations or institutions, and deal with new and hard situations (Israel and Hay, 2006). According to Israel and Hay (2006), today's ethical challenges include personal disclosure, the authenticity and reliability of research reports, the role of researchers in cross-cultural contexts, and difficulties of personal privacy as a result of online data gathering. The researcher will highlight two ethical issues: Respect the privacy and anonymity of participants and gain local permission from the site and participants. According to Creswell (2014), before the study, researchers must acquire permission from those in positions of power to gain access to study locations and study participants. Participants must provide authorization for the use of online replies obtained through electronic interviews or surveys. This may be gained by first acquiring authorization and then distributing the survey. To secure the names of the participants, the author must respect their privacy and anonymity. As a consequence, the researcher will ensure that the responses are handled anonymously. Furthermore, the data will be stored in a safe area where no one else will have access to it.

3.8 Limitations

Effective quantitative research often necessitates a large sample size, potentially thousands of individuals. However, a shortage of funding makes large-scale studies of this type unfeasible at times (Choy, 2014). According to Choy (2014), the limitation of quantitative data is that it does not give an in-depth account of the disaster's impact on the afflicted people. According to Queirós (2017), quantitative researchers might face various problems: the reliability of data is highly dependent on the quality of responses and the structure of the survey, which does not capture respondents' emotions, behaviour, and emotional changes. Furthermore, quantitative model construction necessitates an extensive understanding of the subject, also time-consuming and costly (Queirós et al., 2017). While online surveys can help with cost-effectiveness and time efficiency (Queirós et al., 2017). The involvement and readiness to respond

to online surveys is regarded as a restriction. Aside from that, the erroneous target group of samples will invariably arise during the study.

Chapter 4: Discussion

4.1 Introduction

In the following chapter, three objectives will be explored in order to obtain an improved knowledge of the Swiss customer demands, critical needs, expectations and satisfaction despite the service gap. Furthermore, while no primary research was conducted, the next part will review and summarise the current findings in the literature review and empirical research in order to establish an association between the Swiss hotel industry offerings for their customers and their standards.

4.2 To analyse the gap between expected and provided service in five-star hotels

A comparison of customer expectations and perception was performed in order to identify shortcomings in service quality delivery. This shows that the hotel clients' perceived service quality requirements were not met (Mola and Jusoh, 2011). It is apparent that guests have high expectations for the level of services given by the hotels they book, which the hotels have consistently failed to meet (Chaturvedi, 2016). It is assumed that Swiss five-star hotel customers are more likely to evaluate the service quality based on their previous experiences, which they bring with them all the time and broaden. To support this assumption, consumers bring their past experiences and general views to every engagement because they regularly deal with the same service provider (Grönroos, 2001), which will certainly be the case with customers to Swiss five-star hotels. The latter will cause effects and a number of consequences for the Swiss five-star hotel segment, as Cronin and Taylor (1992) recommend using only performance-based indicators to quantify the gap between performance and expectation (Ylmaz, 2011). Analysts go on to say that other aspects of performance measurement, such as assessing current processes and monitoring, are essential. Priority should be allocated to areas where standards and views differ most significantly in the Swiss five-star hotel service. The gap between customers' expectations and perceptions of actual performance levels affects their overall service quality rating (Zaibaf, 2013). Furthermore, internal performance should also be enhanced since it represents actual service quality and helps to satisfy customers with service excellence (Jamali, 2007). Although Swiss five-star hotels have extremely high standards and excellence, hotels must additionally be consistent, which is one of the most difficult aspects of the service industry. To support this statement, According to Parasuraman et al., (1986) delivering persistently outstanding services and products was one of the most difficult challenges faced by businesses. Service expectations are among the highest in Switzerland because of the Swiss five-star hotel's reputation, affluent lifestyle and attention to every detail. It clearly shows that guests have high standards for the quality of services delivered by the hotels they book, which the hotels consistently fail to meet, according to Chaturvedi (2016). The Swiss five-star hotel industry has one of the greatest reputations and service quality in the world, making it more difficult to compare the anticipated and delivered service in the industry due to the expectations, which might be ten times greater here than anywhere else in the world. Furthermore, because we are unable to find an adequate model that can quantify the variations between each service, we can only adjust to different service styles, which will eventually produce misunderstandings in the hotelier's region. The inadequacy of Servqual is explained by the fact consumers are unaware of what to expect before receiving the service (Gurbuz et al., 2008).

4.3 To investigate customer satisfaction despite growing expectations towards provided service

According to Hansemark and Albinson (2004), satisfaction is defined as a customer's complete attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what consumers anticipate and what they receive in terms of the fulfilment of specific objectives, goals, or wishes. Customers are satisfied when their judgement of the service they experienced is equivalent to or greater than what they anticipated (Williams et al., 2003). If the performance correlates with their expectations, the customer is delighted; if it exceeds expectations, the customer is overjoyed (Kotler et al., 1996). In order to keep up with the growing expectations towards the service, we may find a model that can measure customers' satisfaction in the hospitality industry. When examining the link between customer satisfaction and service quality, Manyi (2011) revealed that all five components of service quality were substantially related to customer satisfaction. According to the study's conclusions, firms must improve service quality components in order to satisfy customers (Akoka, 2012). The Reliability component was shown to have the most significant effect, followed by Tangible and Empathy (Watiki, 2014). Therefore, it can be assumed that customer satisfaction is affected differently by different characteristics of service quality. Assuming that customer satisfaction would increase day by day, SERVQUAL may be a model that may balance the service gap.

However, the model may be updated to meet modern standards. Furthermore, client satisfaction is regarded to be the primary component of a company's competitive advantage. To support this statement, a dissatisfied customer is likely to tell seven to twenty people about their negative experience. Only three to five people will hear about a positive experience from a satisfied customer (Kan, 1995). On the other hand, unpleasant experiences may hurt us more, and we prefer to complain rather than enjoy the previous good experiences. Customers who are extremely satisfied are less likely to complain than those who are dissatisfied (Yol et al., 2006). Customer satisfaction has a significant influence on the hotel industry, which requires more research and a comprehensive quantifiable model that is standardised and modernised for 5-star facilities. It is expected that customer happiness might evolve through time, introducing new components into the model.

4.4 To identify critical customer needs in the Swiss five star hotel environment and experience

Service evaluation should be based on five criteria: tangibility, responsiveness, dependability, assurance, and empathy (Mola and Jusoh, 2011). These criteria have the potential to be a valuable tool for analysing service quality and, as a result, client satisfaction as in the case of Swiss five-star hotels. A comparison of customer expectations and perception was performed in order to identify deficiencies in service quality delivery. Customer value perception is a major predictor of a variety of behavioural effects, particularly favouritism, re-patronage intention, consumer satisfaction, and customer loyalty (Chen and Dubinsky, 2003). Swiss consumers anticipate that their requirements will be fulfilled as they will be loyal to that brand, as we know that Swiss customers rely extensively on prior experiences, which is one of their critical needs. If the performance matches demands, the consumer is delighted; if it exceeds requirements, the customer is overjoyed (Kotler et al., 1996). According to Akbaba (2006), the 'tangibles' component is the most significant of SERVQUAL's five components, and this scale must be modified to meet the demands of investigating service quality in the hotel industry in all five categories indicating hotel service excellence, expectation component scores outweigh perception values, which will undoubtedly be the case for consumers in Swiss five-star hotels. The latter will have a variety of significance and impacts on the Swiss five-star hotel industry, which might open up new customer needs in the Swiss hotel industry. Consumers will rate the service experience based on their pre-existing standards, which will be used to evaluate excellence, determine satisfaction, and

set requirements for future consuming experiences (Yi et al., 2003). Swiss customers may have high standards due to their reputation, which relates to several critical demands in the industry, which may have an influence on their customers' experience. According to Ahmad (2018), dependability and empathy have no significant impact on customer satisfaction, which may not apply to Swiss customers due to their perfectionism, which requires every detail to be perfect, dependability may be one of the critical needs that attracts more consumers from one hotel to another in the Swiss Hotel Industry.

4.5 Conclusion

To summarise, the three objectives were discussed, emphasising that for Hypothesis 1 it is assumed that there is a gap between the Swiss five-star hotels' service quality and expectations verifying H1. Hypothesis 2 examined the connection between the Swiss hotel industry's reputation and influence on customer needs and expectations, which is validating H1. Last but not least, Hypothesis 3 refers to a connection between Swiss customer loyalty and Swiss customer satisfaction, which is assuring H1.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The hospitality industry is becoming increasingly competitive across the globe, particularly in Switzerland, due to its high standards and reputation. Furthermore, customers' demands and expectations are evolving, which plays an essential part in service gaps and customer satisfaction. The Swiss customer's expectations for service throughout their stay exceed what they can deliver, indicating a gap in the Swiss Hotel Industry. Although the industry is aware of the issue, their capacity to solve it is limited. According to Chaturvedi (2016), It is clear that customers have high expectations for the level of services provided by the hotels they book, which the hotels have continually failed to match. The author recommends using an excellent case study, the country of Switzerland, to investigate the service gap and customer satisfaction in luxury hotels, which includes different strategies to measure the service gap in the Swiss service industry. To fulfil the paper's objective all three ideal theories are used: service gap, customer satisfaction and critical Swiss customer needs. The service gap shows that the delivered service and the guests' expectations of the service were different, which will influence the customer, even while theories attempted to sustain a balance but were unable to keep up with the guests' growing demands. Furthermore, the most well-known

model, SERVQual, was regarded as an ineffective model for measuring Swiss service quality. The fundamental consumer demands in Switzerland are based on five dimensions: tangibility, responsiveness, dependability, assurance, and empathy. Dependability is essential in the Swiss hotel industry due to their attention to detail, which may not be applicable in other countries. According to Watiki (2014), the aspect of Dependability was shown to have the greatest impact, followed by Tangible and Empathy. Meanwhile, client satisfaction is the most important component in the Swiss hotel sector since it gives a competitive edge through customer loyalty. According to studies, customer satisfaction is the driving force behind long-term profitability and referrals. Additionally, it shows that customer fulfilment and service quality go hand in hand, implying that as service quality is improved, customer satisfaction improves. Nevertheless, the findings require more investigation. As a result, in this work, the author expanded on the findings of previous investigations by employing applicable ideas. The paper's goal was achieved when the three objectives were discussed, implying that the recognition and comprehension of increasing customer demands have an influence on the Swiss five-star hotel business and that efforts should be made to close the gap in order to benefit the hospitality industry. Thus, the first objective was met by verifying Hypothesis 1 (Ha). Hypothesis 1 (Ha) also advises that, despite rising expectations, establishing new norms and trends in order to reduce the gap between the service and the customer's experience. The second objective has been met by validating Hypothesis 2 (Ha). Hypothesis 2 (Ha) Swiss hotels have one of the best reputations in the world, which they have built up over time, and this comes with higher standards and expectations from customers. Because of the great demand, it functions as both a gain and a drawback. However, it is doubtful if they will be able to preserve and grow their image in this competitive business while profiting from it. The third objective was accomplished by ensuring Hypothesis 3 (Ha). Hypothesis 3 (Ha) The discussion section suggests that there is a link between customer loyalty and satisfaction; nevertheless, finding a consumer who is loyal to a brand is difficult due to consistency, which is one of the most difficult to achieve in the business. Due to consistency, hotels are providing more advantages to their frequent customers in order to meet their needs and keep them pleased, which has a snowball effect and generates more prestige and income for the hotel.

This study has led to a better understanding of the Swiss hotel sector's service gap and customer expectations of service, both of which have a detrimental influence on the hospitality industry in general. Furthermore, the significance of the service gap has been reviewed and analysed by models and the author as part of this study to offer a better understanding of this issue. Furthermore, an in-depth awareness of Swiss service necessitates constant and additional research. Additionally, the SERVqual model dimensions should be categorised by country in order to acquire a better understanding of the components where the service lacks competence, hence widening the service gap.
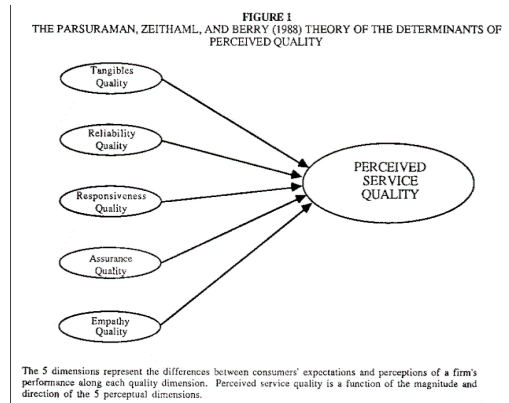
5.2 Recommendations

This study examines the service gap and tries to evaluate it in Swiss five-star hotels using models to gain a comprehensive picture of the gap. It also investigates important aspects such as customer satisfaction, changing customer needs, and expected service. Future researchers may add to this paper's insights by integrating additional external elements, such as what other components of SERVQual play an essential part in the Swiss service gap. Furthermore, future studies might include qualitative studies in which customers are asked about their thoughts and the offered service and then evaluated, providing a clear image of the gap and attempting to close it. On the other hand, it will take more time and money. However, this study did not take into account factors such as specific destinations, the number of customers, hotel size, and others that might have an influence on growing the service gap. This might be considered in the future when conducting a similar study. Further study might also be conducted in countries where hospitality is a major industry to determine the disparities between the studies and the validity of the existing research. Using a quantitative method, this study investigates the service gap and what influences it. The author advises conducting comparable research with a qualitative study in order to have a better knowledge of the customer and the gap. The qualitative approach allows the research to be carried out from a different perspective and to expand the findings in a quantitative method, such as in-depth interviews that explore the impressions of the customers from their perspective and also the staff from their perspective, providing more details and possibly identifying a component that needs to be improved. Last but not least, the Swiss hotel industry advocated offering continuous service in order to narrow the service gap not only in luxury hotels but also in small-sized hotels in order to enhance or retain their reputations. To begin, every customer should receive individualised attention in order to elicit empathy from them and to provide the greatest service possible at all times. Furthermore, for these standards, management is in charge of leading by example

and directing employees in the acceptable direction.

Appendices

Appendix A: Theory of the determinants of perceived quality

FIGURE 1
THE PARSURAMAN, ZEITHAML, AND BERRY (1988) THEORY OF THE DETERMINANTS OF PERCEIVED QUALITY

The 5 dimensions represent the differences between consumers' expectations and perceptions of a firm's performance along each quality dimension. Perceived service quality is a function of the magnitude and direction of the 5 perceptual dimensions.

Appendix A: Theory of the determinants of perceived quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988.)

The five dimensions reflect the discrepancies between the expectations and perceptions of customers about the performance of the firm in each level of quality. The perceived quality of service is a consequence of the magnitude and direction.

Appendix B: The determination of user satisfaction
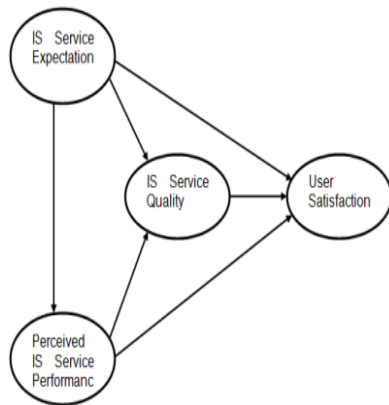
Appendix B: The determination of user satisfaction (Jiang, J. J., Klein, G., Parolia, N., and Li, Y. 2012)

In the case of IS, the user is aware of a gap in either direction.

In the case of service quality, a gap that surpasses service perception is a good scenario, whereas

customers' scorn is caused by failing to satisfy expectations.

Appendix C: Total perceive quality
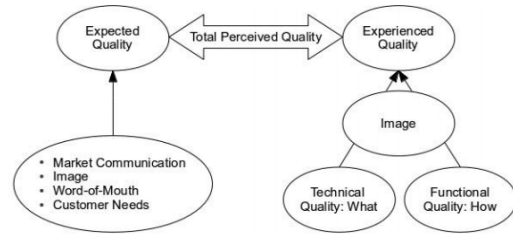
Appendix C: Total perceive quality (Grönroos, 1990, 41)

The concept suggests that service quality has both technical and functional aspects and that the image of a service organisation acts as a filter in how customers perceive service quality. The model implies that, in addition to the indirect effects of technical and functional quality on service quality perception, quality and satisfaction are directly connected to technical and operational quality features. In the end, the model implies that customer happiness is a result of high service quality.

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