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# THE EFFECTS OF INDIVIDUAL DIMENSIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY IN FIVE STAR HOTELS USING SERVQUAL MODEL

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## ABSTRACT

*The concept of "Service quality" is earmarked to play a significant role for any successful business. A customer usually expects the service in a way he/she wants to receive when they avail any service. Service quality can thereby be explained as how well a service is effectively delivered compared to what customer expects. If customers' expectations are greater than the quality of services rendered, customer dissatisfaction occurs. The current empirical study has been undertaken with an intention to measure the service quality (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) dimensions that affects the customer's perception towards services offered by the Service provider (Five star Hotels) in Bengaluru city. In order to realise the stated objectives the researchers collected the data from 320 respondents. The validity of the questionnaire was adjudged, using Cronbach's coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of the responses. In the second phase, normality of the data and reliability statistics have been investigated and extrapolated by using inferential statistics. In the last phase, a multiple regression model has been run to identify the major drivers of service quality. The results revealed that Tangibility, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy were the major determinants of the Overall Satisfaction. When we rank the dimensions we found that Tangibility ranked first followed by Empathy. Finally the results have been compared with the possible evidence.*

## KEYWORDS

SERVQUAL scale, service quality, responsiveness, tangibility, reliability.

## JEL CODES

M20, M31, M37, L8, L83.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Quality of services rendered and customer retention through customer satisfaction have long been recognized as playing a decisive role for survival in today's competitive service industry. As service sector matures, competitive advantage through rendering high quality services is an increasingly prominent tool for survival. The five star hotel has certainly not been excluded from increased customers' expectations of quality. During the past few decades, the hospitality industry has become one of the most influential players of majority of the economies across the globe (Shahin and Dabestani, (2010)). Five star hotel sector is largely subject to the influence of economic cycles. Apart from this, the hotels are encountered with increasingly intense competition. Therefore, service quality is the crux of hotel business and has become crucial for them to improve competitive strength. Even Parasuraman et al., 1985; Reichheld and Sasser, 1990; Zeithaml et al., 1990 were of the opinion that in today's global competitive environment, rendering a high quality service is treated as a crucial strategy for success and survival. Service quality has since emerged as a pervasive strategic force, a key strategic issue and management agenda (Eisen, 1999). In the words of Sathy-anarayana et al. (2017), all service providers try to cater high quality services to their customers yet they fall short of their customers' expectations. Nowadays customers have become more and more aware of their needs and have held high demand for service standards. The concept of "Service quality" is earmarked to play a significant role for any successful business. A customer usually expects the service in a way he/she wants to receive when they avail any service. Service quality can thereby be explained as how well a service is effectively delivered compared to what customer expects. If customers' expectations are greater than the quality of services rendered, customer dissatisfaction occurs. Service quality is assessed low when the performance is below expectation. High quality of services rendered by a service provider has a profound influence on satisfaction and retention of his customers and it has a direct bearing on the customer satisfaction and retention, profitability, enhanced corporate image, and decreased customers defection (Bauman et al.(2007); Wang et al. (2003) and Ladhari et al. (2011)). Customer satisfaction and retention are global issues that affects all service providers at large, be it small or big firms, a global or local player, profitable or non-profitable organizations. Gundersen, Heide and Olsson, (1996) defined customer satisfaction as a post consumption evaluative judgement concerning a specific product or service. Consequently, many service providers are focusing their attention on studying, evaluating, and implementing various service strategies that intend to improve the quality of service rendered and retention of customers with a view to maximizing the long term profits and overall financial performance of the firm. The service sector displays several distinct features that are not shared in the traditional manufacturing sector. The hotel and hospitality business are often perceived as the most prominent among all the other service sectors (Mace (1995); Littlejohn (1997)). Consequently, considerable capital is invested in designing and improving the quality of services in hotels every year. In order to ensure and keep the service quality in accordance with the expectations of present day's guests, service providers need to focus on designing service quality strategies and confirming the strategies with design. Various attempts have been made in literature to define the concept of service quality from the perspective of a service provider. According to Bitner, Booms and Mohr (1994), service quality is a consumer's overall impression of the relative inferiority/superiority of the organisation and its services. In the words of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry's (1985) the service quality is a function of the differences between expectation and performance along the quality dimensions. According to Cronin and Taylor (1994) service quality is an attitudinal form indicative of an overall evaluation in the long run. According to Asubonteng et al. (1996) service quality is "the difference between customers' expectations for service performance prior to the service encounter and their perceptions of the service received". In the words of Butcher (2005) the repurchase intention of the customer is observed as a robust service outcome that is measurable and Soderlund and Ohman (2003) supported this view. Hellier et al. (2003) defined repurchase intention as 'the individual's judgement about buying again a designated service from the same

company. According to Newman, (2001) service quality has been defined as the degree and direction between customer service expectations and perceptions. In the words of Reeves and Bednar (1994), no universal definition of service quality exists; instead, different definitions are appropriate under different circumstances as service quality is a complex, slippery and highly subjective concept. It means different things to different people. Multiple definitions are needed to capture the complexity of the service quality construct. Despite the lack of unanimity in the definition of service quality, all the above definitions on service quality are formulated from the customer perspective and the following are the major thrusts (i) Service quality has an effect on customer loyalty; (ii) Service quality has an effect on customer satisfaction; (iii) Service quality creates competitive advantage; (iv) Service quality affects relationships and relationship marketing and (v) Service quality has an effect on profitability and costs.

In 1985, one of the most prominent and systematic scale to measure the service quality was proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985). The first scale introduced by them had ten dimensions namely, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, competence, courtesy, credibility, security, communication, understanding, and access. Later the same authors (Parasuraman et al. (1988)) developed and iterated the SERVQUAL model based on two principles: first principle is that service quality can be divided into dimensions and the customers evaluate the quality of a service rendered by the service provider on five dimensions namely tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy and the second principle is that the service gap in the above mentioned dimensions are measured as a difference between expectations and perceptions. The SERVQUAL instrument has twenty two statements for gauging consumer perceptions and expectations regarding the quality of a service rendered by the provider. The authors continued to refine the proposed SERVQUAL scale by publishing research results through a series of publications (Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988, 1994a, 1994b). However in 1992, Cronin and Taylor proposed one more model to measure the quality of service called SERVPERF and claimed the model is more efficient than the SERVQUAL model. Despite of the criticism, the SERVQUAL scale is still the most widely used scale to measure the service performance as this scale allows the service providers to review whether they need to re-deploy resources to areas of underperformance (Wisniewski, 2001). The SERVQUAL instrument has been revised and used extensively in a variety of service sectors such as organised retailing, online services, banking, hospital, repair and maintenance services, etc.

The structure of the current research paper is as follows. Section two discusses the review of previous work done pertaining to the chosen topic. Section three outlines the objectives of the study and the methodology adopted for the current study. Section four discusses the analysis and inference of the collected data and in the last part a brief discussion has been made, conclusion has been drawn and the findings of the study have been compared with the possible evidence.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Service quality has received prominent attention in the literature, with studies being carried out in a wide variety of service sectors such as the health care sector (Bakar et al., (2008), Babakus and Mangold, (1989); Babakus and Mangold, (1992); Babakus and Boller, (1992); Soliman, (1992); Headley and Miller, (1993); McAlexander et al., (1994)), hospitality industry and tourism (Saleh and Ryan, (1992); Fick and Ritchie, (1991); Mey et al., (2006); Spreng and Singh, (1993)); telecommunications services (Van Der Wal et al., (2000)), banking (Kwon and Lee, (1994)). (Lam 2002). (Kangis and Passa, 1997); (Bei and Chiao 2006); (Johnston, 1995), (Zhou, 2004); sports (Kouthouris and Alexandris, 2005); public utilities and services (Wisniewski and Donnelly, (1996); Rowley, (1998); Wisniewski, (2001); Brysland and Curry, (2001); Babakus and Boller, (1992)), departmental stores (Finn and Lamb, 1991); public-transport (Sánchez Pérez, 2007), information system (Van Dyke et al., (1997); Jiang et al., (2002); Carr, (2002)), air travel (Miller, (1993); Lee and Cunningham, (1996); Ott (1993); Ostrowski et al. (1993); libraries (Cook et al., (2003)) and the public sector (Wisniewski, (2001)), fast food (Jain and Gupta, (2004)), travel agencies (Martinez Caro and Martinez Garcia, 2008); universities (Galloway, (1998)), police services (Donnelly et al., (2006)), travel agencies (Luk, (1997)), hostel services (Pearce, (2009); Rodríguez, (2011); Godfrey, (2011) and Vaals (2013)), audit firms (Ismail (2006)), health spas (Snoj and Mumel (2002)), insurance (Tsoukatos et al, (2004)) and e-tourism (Kim et al, (2005); O'Connor, (2000); Yoon C. Cho and Jerome Agrusa, (2006); Costas Zafiroopoulos (2006); Pierre Benckendorff, (2006)).

During the past few decades, service quality has become a major area of consideration to service providers because of the quality of services rendered by a service provider has a profound influence on customer satisfaction. Empirical studies conducted across various service sectors show that customer satisfaction may have both direct and indirect impact on business results (Anderson et al., (1994); Cronin and Taylor, (1992)). Anderson et al. (1994), and Luo and Homburg, (2007) concluded that customer satisfaction positively affects business profitability. Bulk of the studies for example Söderlund, (1998); Kandampully and Suhartanto, (2000); Chi and Qu, (2008); Faullant et al., (2008) have been conducted with an intention to explore the relationship between customer satisfactions with their behaviour patterns. They concluded that customer satisfaction increases customer loyalty, influences repurchase intentions and leads to positive word-of-mouth, enhanced corporate image, and decreased customers defection, business performance, lower costs and return on investment (Newman, (2001); Leonard and Sasser, (1982); Chang and Chen, (1998); Seth and Deshmukh, (2005)). In the words of Lewis, (1989) service quality is regarded as a critical dimension of competitiveness in service sector. According to Hung et al., (2003) providing high service quality and customer satisfaction is the important factor and a challenge being faced by service industry sector. However, majority of the empirical investigations concluded that the service quality is an outcome of comparison by customers between service expectations and perception of service offered by the marketers (Parasuraman, et al. (1988); Grönroos, (1994); Caruana, (2002); Sathyanarayana et al. (2017)).

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) developed a scale for measurement of service quality and called it as the SERVQUAL model. It is developed to measure two important components. First component service quality has dimensions and measured as a difference of expectations and perceptions. This is the most frequently used scale for measuring the service quality in various service industries (Mattson, (1994); Carman, (1990); Kilbourne et al., (2004); Teas, (1993); Kouthouris and Alexandris, (2005); Sathyanarayana et al. (2017)). However, this model has been criticised by Teas, (1993); Buttle, (1996); Brown et al. (1993) on the methodological and conceptual grounds. Jain and Gupta, (2004) in an empirical investigation tried to compare the SERVQUAL scale and SERVPERF scale in fast food sector. They concluded that SERVPERF scale was more convergent and discriminate valid scale than SERVQUAL scale in the measurement of service quality in fast food restaurants. Similar findings were documented by Nadiri and Hussain, (2005) in the hotel sector and Brochado and Marques (2007) in case of education sector.

In an investigation by Dawkins & Reichheld, (1990) concluded that the service quality is considered crucial for the success and survival of any service undertaking. Service quality influences the consumer behaviour in the decision making process, and also the level of relationship between customer and company and can impact customer's loyalty. Henning-Thurau, et al. (2001) supported this view.

In the hospitality and hotel industry, several empirical studies have examined hotel attributes that guests may find important when evaluating the performed service quality rendered by the hotel service provider. The hotel guests perceived that security and safety of the guests (Knutson, 1988), the cleanliness of the hotel room and the food quality (Atkinson, 1988), location factors (Barsky and Labagh 1992), employees' empathy and competence while handling the task (Barsky and Labagh 1992) and physical facilities (Choi and Chu 2001) were the most prominent attributes. However, applicability of SERVQUAL for the hotel and hospitality industry has been criticised by few researchers such as Carman 1990; Teas 1994. Therefore Knutson et al. (1991) came out with LODGSERV scale to measure the service quality of lodges with twenty six items. Later LODGQUAL was introduced by Getty and Thompson (1994) followed by DINESERV introduced by Stevens, Knutson and Patton (1995) to measure the service performance of restaurants.

El-Farra (1996) in his empirical study found that price was the very prominent variable which influences the patronage of medium priced hotels by guests. In a study Raspor (2010) concluded that the major drivers of perceived service quality in hospitality were reliability, empathy and staff accessibility. However, in another study Gunaratne (2014), concluded that the dominant factor in perceived service quality in tourism sector was tangibility, empathy and reliability. Similar findings were documented by Akbaba (2006) in his research. He found that tangibility was the major actor that drives the service quality of hotels in Turkey. For this study he applied SERVQUAL scale with twenty nine items. In an empirical study by Saleh and Ryan (1991) proposed five driver of service quality namely tangibility, sarcasm avoidance, transparency, trust and empathy with thirty three items to measure the service quality. Soriano (2002) tried to investigate the service quality of restaurant service in Spain by taking ambience quality, food quality, relationship between price and quality and service quality. In another study by Ramsaran-Fowdar (2007) identified seven quality drivers for a hotel industry from the context of Mauritius. Yet another research was conducted by Snoj and Mumel (2002) to investigate the service quality in spa centres in Slovenia with five factors with 23 questions. In an empirical study by Kariru AN, Aloo C (2014) concluded that

the hotels in the Western Kenya should focus on tangibility and reliability of services while rendering services to their guests. In the words of Molah and Jusoh, (2011) every service provider should measure customer satisfaction survey continuously to evaluate the service performance.

The review of literature on the proposed title, thus throws light on facts relating to the gap on the chosen topic. Few academic researchers have attempted to define and model service quality because of the difficulties involved in delimiting and measuring the construct. Apart from this, despite the sensational growth of the Indian service sector, only a few of the researchers have focused on measuring the service quality of hospitality and five star hotels in Indian context by using SERVQUAL scale. Limited published research has been conducted into service quality from the context of developing economy like India with respect to hospitality and five star hotel sector. This means that the issue of service quality in the hospitality sector is a largely unknown factor, making this study exploratory in nature. The present research would make an addition to existing literature on measurement of service quality by collecting first-hand information from the guests by using SERVQUAL scale with little modification with respect to their perceived service quality. Current empirical research is going to fill this gap by addressing the most important of SERVQUAL in five star hotel sector.

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the study, which the researchers wish to enquire and understand in the process of this study.

1. To study the service quality (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) dimensions that affects the customer's perception towards services offered by the Service providers (Five star Hotels) in Bengaluru city;
2. To investigate the relationship between the demographic factors and the chosen five dimensions;
3. To study the interrelationship among the various dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) of the service quality rendered by the Service providers (Five star Hotels) in Bengaluru city;
4. To study the service gap on the basis of respondents' perceptions (P) from respondents' expectations (E);
5. To investigate the most dominant service quality dimension that influences customer's satisfaction in the hospitality and five star hotel sector; and
6. To offer suggestions based on this research.

#### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H1: There is no significant relationship between the Gender, Age, Occupation, Qualification and Income of the respondents and various factors (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy).

H2: There is no significant correlation among the various identified variables for the purpose of the study.

H3: There is no significant relationship between independent variables (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) and Overall Service Satisfaction.

#### NATURE OF STUDY

The study is exploratory in nature as it endeavours to uncover the latent behavioural aspects of hotel guests who stayed in the five star hotels with respect to the perceptions (P) and expectations (E) of service quality provided by the five star hotels in Bengaluru city.

#### UNIVERSE OF STUDY AND POPULATION

The universe of the study is the guests who stayed in the five star hotels for at least 3 days and 4 nights. The study is based on the empirical survey of 320 respondents from Bengaluru city situated in the state of Karnataka.

#### PRIMARY DATA SOURCE

First-hand information was obtained from respondents through a structured questionnaire. An interview schedule was constructed based on SERVQUAL model to elicit information from the respondents. The literature has given a number of instruments to measure the service quality in different service sectors. However, there has been no consensus on the measurement of service quality concept. But the majority of the work till date have used the SERVQUAL model to measure service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985; 1988). As per Parasuraman et al. the five major dimensions of service quality are: (a) reliability; (b) assurance; (c) tangibility; (d) empathy and (e) responsiveness. According to SERVQUAL scale, service quality gap can be computed by applying the following formula:

Service Quality Gap = Perceived Service (P) – Expected Service (E)

The researchers chose an interview schedule since the respondent has to be coaxed to answer the questions put forth in the questionnaire. Moreover the researchers had a stringent requirement for the data to be pure and in all senses comprehend the very spirit of the questionnaire and thus the research. The researchers could also clarify any doubts to the respondent and explain the objective of each question whenever the respondent raised doubts. Before scaling for full research, the researchers initiated a pilot study with 50 respondents. These collected questionnaires were analysed to determine whether the data collected helps the researchers to fulfil the objectives of the study, apart from testing the validity of the questions put across to the respondents. The validity of the questionnaire was adjudged, using Cronbach's coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of the responses. Cronbach's coefficient, having a value of more than 0.7 is considered adequate for such exploratory work. The values of  $\alpha$  in this study for the framed questions were found to be 0.846, 0.776, 0.792, .915, .847 and .818 for the chosen variables. It implies that there is a high degree of internal consistency in the responses to the questionnaire.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

##### SAMPLING

The sample size taken for the purpose of the study was 320 respondents. Sampling technique used was convenience sampling. The population covers salaried, businessmen, professionals & others who were staying in five star hotels frequently.

##### PLAN OF ANALYSIS

The collected data has been collated by using SPSS software and MS Excel. In the first phase, frequency distribution was drawn to gain insight into guest's perception about the services offered by the service provider with respect to five dimensions tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy chosen for the purpose of the study. In the second phase, normality of the data and reliability statistics have been investigated and extrapolated by using inferential statistics. In the last phase, a multiple regression model has been run to identify the major drivers of service quality. Based on that a brief summary of findings has been made and a meaningful conclusion has been drawn. Finally the results were compared with the possible evidence.

**IV. DATA ANALYSIS**

In order to realize the stated objectives, various statistical tools have been employed. First, respondents' demographic factors have been presented in the following two tables.

**TABLE NO. 4.1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Variables	Categories	No of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	246	76.9
	Female	74	23.1
Age	Below 30	80	25.0
	31-40	100	31.3
	41-50	56	17.5
	51 and Above	84	26.3
Monthly Household Income	< Rs. 10,00,000 per annum	41	12.8
	Rs. 10,00,000-20,00,000 per annum	189	59.1
	> Rs. 20,00,000 per annum	90	28.1
Qualification	College but not Graduate	52	16.2
	Graduate	152	47.5
	Post Graduate	30	9.37
	Others	86	26.8
Occupation	Salaried	64	20.0
	Self-employed	176	55.0
	Professional	64	20.0
	Others	16	5.0

It is evident from Table No. 4.1 that among 320 respondents interviewed, 76.9 percent of the respondents were male and rest 23.1 percent were female. There were more males than female respondents. Out of 320 respondents interviewed 31.3 percent of the respondents belong to age group below 30, followed by 25 percent belong to age group below 30, 26.3 percent belong to age group above 51 and balance 17.5 percent belong to age group 41-50. This indicates that the majority of the respondents (31.3 percent) belong to age group 31-40 years. Out of 320 respondents, 59.1 percent respondents have an annual household income between 10 lakh to 20 lakh, followed by 28.1 percent had more than 20 lakh and balance 12.8 percent respondents had an annual household income of less than 10 lakh. 47.5 percent of the respondents were graduates, followed by others 26.8 percent. However, 16.2 percent of the respondents have gone to the college but not graduates and balance 9.37 percent of the respondents in the sample have done their post-graduation. 55 percent of the respondents were self-employed, followed by 20 percent salaried and professionals respectively and balance 5.0 percent were others.

**TABLE NO 4.2: MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF 26 ITEMS**

Sl. No	Items	Mean	SD	Std. Error of Mean	Cronbach's Alpha
1	T1	4.19	.901	.071	.846
2	T2	4.24	.733	.058	
3	T3	4.15	.799	.062	
4	T4	4.23	.771	.061	
5	T5	4.16	.903	.071	
6	T6	4.03	.900	.071	.776
7	R1	3.83	.926	.073	
8	R2	3.91	.907	.072	
9	R3	3.86	.961	.076	
10	RS1	3.93	.836	.066	.792
11	RS2	3.85	.940	.074	
12	RS3	3.88	.937	.074	
13	RS4	3.83	.926	.073	
14	A1	4.04	.907	.072	.915
15	A2	3.73	1.093	.086	
16	A3	3.63	.888	.070	
17	A4	3.69	1.111	.088	
18	E1	3.87	.949	.076	.847
19	E2	3.88	.963	.076	
20	E3	3.98	.801	.063	
21	E4	4.18	.836	.066	
22	DV1	3.91	.856	.085	.818
23	DV2	3.81	.801	.056	
24	DV3	4.12	.711	.065	
25	DV4	4.21	.705	.081	
26	DV5	4.27	.696	.082	

In order to investigate the relationship between the demographic variables (Gender, Age, Occupation, Qualification and Income) with various factors (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) chosen for the study, the researchers have framed the following hypothesis.

H0: There is no significant relationship between the Gender, Age, Occupation, Qualification and Income of the respondents and various factors (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy and Overall Satisfaction).

Later the researchers have employed the Pearson's Chi square test to prove or disprove the hypothesis. The results of the test has been presented as follows:

TABLE NO. 4.3: CHI SQUARE RESULTS

Variable 1	Variable 2	Chi Square Value	P value	Results
Gender	Tangibility	13.926	.379	Accept
	Reliability	12.590	.247	Accept
	Responsiveness	14.143	.364	Accept
	Assurance	14.196	.222	Accept
	Empathy	12.888	.230	Accept
	Overall Satisfaction	14.294	.112	Accept
Age	Tangibility	78.395	.000	Reject
	Reliability	71.190	.000	Reject
	Responsiveness	62.701	.009	Reject
	Assurance	72.236	.000	Reject
	Empathy	59.449	.001	Reject
	Overall Satisfaction	72.967	.000	Reject
Occupation	Tangibility	71.457	.001	Reject
	Reliability	69.562	.021	Reject
	Responsiveness	78.586	.000	Reject
	Assurance	79.412	.000	Reject
	Empathy	84.564	.000	Reject
	Overall Satisfaction	78.245	.000	Reject
Qualification	Tangibility	132.981	.000	Reject
	Reliability	69.444	.036	Reject
	Responsiveness	131.407	.000	Reject
	Assurance	125.962	.000	Reject
	Empathy	74.697	.013	Reject
	Overall Satisfaction	104.217	.000	Reject
Income	Tangibility	54.196	.054	Accept
	Reliability	58.930	.001	Reject
	Responsiveness	54.802	.048	Reject
	Assurance	69.122	.000	Reject
	Empathy	46.483	.028	Reject
	Overall Satisfaction	44.354	.019	Reject

**Analysis:** It is clear from the above table No 4.2 that the computed Pearson Chi-square value between demographic Gender and Tangibility was 13.926 with a p value of .379, followed by Reliability 12.590 with a p value of .247, Responsiveness was 14.143 with a p value of .364, Assurance was 14.196 with a p value .222 and Empathy was 12.888 with a p value .230. This indicates that we cannot reject the Null hypothesis.

The computed Pearson Chi-square value between demographic Age and Tangibility was 78.395 with a p value of .000, followed by Reliability 71.190 with a p value of .000, Responsiveness was 62.701 with a p value of .009, Assurance was 72.236 with a p value .000 and Empathy was 59.449 with a p value .001 indicating that we can reject the Null hypothesis.

The computed Pearson Chi-square value between demographic Occupation and Tangibility was 71.457 with a p value of .001, followed by Reliability 69.562 with a p value of .021, Responsiveness was 78.586 with a p value of .000, Assurance was 79.412 with a p value .000 and Empathy was 84.564 with a p value .000 indicating the rejection of Null hypothesis.

The computed Pearson Chi-square value between demographic Qualification and Tangibility was 132.981 with a p value of .000, followed by Reliability 69.444 with a p value of .036, Responsiveness was 131.407 with a p value of .000, Assurance was 125.962 with a p value .000 and Empathy was 74.697 with a p value .013 indicating that we can reject the Null hypothesis.

The computed Pearson Chi-square value between demographic factor Income of the respondents with the Reliability was 58.930 with a p value of .001, Responsiveness was 54.802 with a p value of .048, Assurance was 69.122 with a p value .000 and Empathy was 46.483 with a p value .028 indicating the rejection of Null hypothesis. However, between Income and Tangibility were 54.196 with a p value of .054, indicating the acceptance of Null hypothesis.

In the next phase, to assess the service quality gaps (both perceptions and expectations from the respondents) of five star Hotels, Gap analysis has been done. For this purpose, gaps were calculated by using the SERVQUAL approach by subtracting respondents' perceptions (P) from respondents' expectations (E) as  $G = E - P$ . In order to get the flawless results the reliability statistics has been conducted. The results are presented in the following table:

#### THE AVERAGE (MEAN) VALUES OF THE PERCEPTION AND EXPECTATION - SERVQUAL MODEL

TABLE NO. 4.4: GAP SCORE – SERVQUAL MODEL

Dimension	Perception	Expectation	Gap Score
Tangibility	4.1667	4.531	0.3643
Reliability	3.8667	4.5913	0.7246
Responsiveness	3.8725	4.1724	0.2999
Assurance	3.7725	4.7653	0.9928
Empathy	3.9775	4.6115	0.634
Average SERVQUAL score	3.931167	4.5343	0.603133

TABLE NO 4.5: INTER-CORRELATION MATRIX

		T	R	Res	A	E	O
T	Pearson Correlation	1	.247**	.227**	.117	.359**	.564**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.004	.141	.000	.000
	N	160	160	160	160	160	160
R	Pearson Correlation	.247**	1	.595**	.417**	.468**	.504**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	160	160	160	160	160	160
Res	Pearson Correlation	.227**	.595**	1	.566**	.594**	.615**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	160	160	160	160	160	160
A	Pearson Correlation	.117	.417**	.566**	1	.538**	.555**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.141	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	160	160	160	160	160	160
E	Pearson Correlation	.359**	.468**	.594**	.538**	1	.717**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	160	160	160	160	160	160
O	Pearson Correlation	.564**	.504**	.615**	.555**	.717**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	160	160	160	160	160	160

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

**Result:** As the tabulated value of Pearson correlation coefficient for Tangibility with Reliability was .247\*\* with a p value of .002, followed by Tangibility with Responsiveness with .227\*\* with a p value of .004, with Empathy .359\*\* with a p value of .000 and Overall Satisfaction was .564\*\* with a p value of .000; therefore, we can reject the Null hypothesis. However, between Tangibility and Assurance the correlation coefficient was .117 with a p value of .141, therefore, we cannot reject the Null hypothesis.

In case of Reliability, the tabulated value of Pearson correlation coefficient with Responsiveness was .595\*\* with a p value of .000, followed by Assurance with .417\*\* with a p value of .000, with Empathy .468\*\* with a p value of .000 and with Overall Satisfaction with .504\*\* with a p value of .000 which is less than the set significance of 0.05; therefore, we can reject the Null hypothesis.

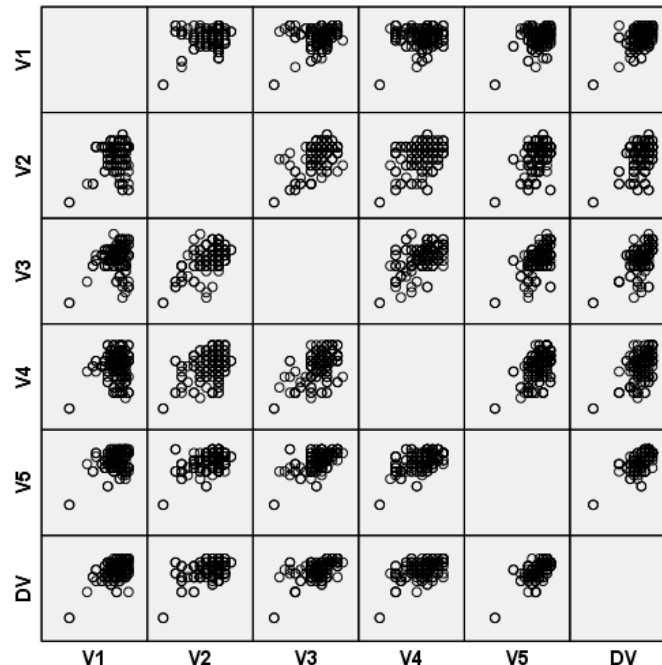
Between Responsiveness and Assurance, the tabulated value of Pearson correlation coefficient was .566\*\* with a p value of .000, with Empathy .594\*\* with a p value of .000 and Overall Satisfaction with .615\*\* with a p value of .000, which is less than the set significance of 0.05; therefore, we can reject the Null hypothesis.

Between Assurance and Empathy, the tabulated value of Pearson correlation coefficient was .538\*\* with a p value of .000 and Overall Satisfaction .555\*\* with a p value of .000, which is less than the set significance of 0.05; therefore, we can reject the Null hypothesis.

Between Empathy and Overall Satisfaction, the tabulated value of Pearson correlation coefficient was .717\*\* with a p value of .000, which is less than the set significance of 0.05, therefore, we can reject the Null hypothesis.

There is a significant correlation between the dependent variable (Overall Service Satisfaction) and the independent variables (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy).

GRAPH 1: SCATTER PLOT OF THE VARIABLES



#### REGRESSION MODEL

For the purpose of the study, a multiple regression model was run to test the hypothesis. The following multiple regression model has been used to test the theoretical relationship between the Overall Service Satisfaction as perceived by the respondents with five factors (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy).

$$Y (\text{Overall Service Satisfaction}) = a + b_1 X_1 (\text{Tangibility}) + b_2 X_2 (\text{Reliability}) + b_3 X_3 (\text{Responsiveness}) + b_4 X_4 (\text{Assurance}) + b_5 X_5 (\text{Empathy}) + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where,

$Y$  = (Overall Service Satisfaction)

$X$  is the vector of explanatory variables in the estimation model

$X_1$  = Tangibility



$X_2$  = Reliability

$X_3$  = Responsiveness

$X_4$  = Assurance

$X_5$  = Empathy

$a$  = constant intercept term of the model

$b$  = coefficients of the estimated model

$\epsilon$  = error component

TABLE NO. 4.6: REGRESSION STATISTICS

R	.838
R Square	.703
Adjusted R Square	.693
Std. Error of the estimate	1.403
F	72.771
F Significance	.000
Durbin –Watson	2.114

**Analysis:** R square represents the percentage movement of the dependent variable which is captured by the intercept and the independent variable(s). Above obtained results explain 70.3% of the variation in Overall Satisfaction is captured by independent variables (*Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy*).

#### Inference

From the above analysis, one can infer that Overall Satisfaction is highly dependent on the predictors or explained by the independent variables *Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy*, which means there is an impact of independent variables on the dependent variable Overall Service Satisfaction.

In the above table ANOVA explains the joint impact of Independent variables on the dependent variables. It is evident from the above analysis that F value is 72.771 with a significance value of .000. Therefore, we can reject the Null hypothesis.

TABLE NO. 4.7: TABLE SHOWING REGRESSION RESULTS

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.030	1.052		.979	.329		
Tangibility	.278	.037	.361	7.573	.000	.850	1.177
Reliability	.076	.065	.065	1.167	.245	.616	1.625
Responsiveness	.186	.068	.176	2.747	.007	.471	2.121
Assurance	.193	.054	.201	3.550	.001	.605	1.653
Empathy	.339	.060	.344	5.679	.000	.526	1.902

Intercept is  $\alpha$  in the set equation. Standard error measures the variability in approximation of the coefficient and lower standard error means coefficient is closer to the true value of coefficient. Overall Service Satisfaction is a dependent variable and *Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy* are independent variables.

Results show that independent variables *Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy* have positive coefficients i.e. they share a direct relationship with Overall Service Satisfaction.

#### TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

In order to assess the relationship between the independent variable (s) and dependent variable, the researchers have established the following hypothesis and to prove or disprove the hypothesis the researchers have employed multiple regression analysis.

**Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ )** There is no significant relationship between independent variables (*Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy*) and Overall Service Satisfaction.

**Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ )** There is a significant relationship between independent variables (*Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy*) and Overall Service Satisfaction.

Results show that p-value is less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance for *Tangibility, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy* so the Null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the overall service quality has significant relationship with *Tangibility, responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy*.

Results show that p-value is more than 0.05 at 5% level of significance for *Reliability*, so the Null hypothesis is accepted, which signifies that Overall Service Satisfaction has no significant relationship with *Reliability*.

TABLE NO. 4.8: THE RELATIVE WEIGHTS OF THE FACTORS

Factor	Relative weights in percentage
Tangibility	0.314734089
Empathy	0.299912816
Assurance	0.175239756
Responsiveness	0.153443766
Reliability	0.056669573

It is evident from the above table No. 4.1 that the very important quality dimension is *Tangibility* with a relative weight of 0.314734089 or 31.47 percent, followed by *Empathy* with 29.99 percent, *Assurance* with 17.16 percent, *Responsiveness* with 15.34 percent and *Reliability* with less than one percent.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current empirical study has been undertaken with an intention to investigate the effects of individual dimensions of service quality in Five Star Hotels in Bengaluru city. In order to realize the stated objectives, a structured SERVQUAL questionnaire was framed in two models i.e., perception and expectations. The research instrument was pretested and administered on 320 respondents. The validity of the questionnaire was adjudged, using reliability statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficient. Cronbach's coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) was calculated to test the reliability and internal consistency of the responses. The values of  $\alpha$  in this study for the various dimensions were found to be .846, .776, .792, .915, .847 and .818. It implies that there is a high degree of internal consistency in the responses to the questionnaire. The study revealed the following major findings: Majority of the respondents were male, majority of the respondents interviewed belong to age group below 30, major chunk of the respondents have an annual household income of between 10 lakh to 20 lakh. Majority of the respondents were graduates and 55 percent of the respondents were self-employed. We found a significant relationship between Age, Occupation, Qualification and Income with the chosen variables; however, we did not find any relationship between the Gender of the respondents and the variables. We found a significant correlation between the Overall Satisfaction (dependent variable) and the five dimensions chosen for the purpose of the study. Regression results show *Tangibility, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy* were the major determinants of the Overall Satisfaction. This indicates that the overall service quality has significant relationship with *Tangibility* (consistent with the findings of Choi and Chu 2001 Gunaratne (2014) Akbaba (2006); Sathyanarayana et al. (2017)), *Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy*



((consistent with the findings of Boshaff and Gray (2004); Jaboun and Chaker (2003); Raspor (2010) Gunaratne (2014); Michael C. Handrinis (2015); Sathyana-rayana et al. (2017)). We found a gap in expected and perceived service quality offered by the five star hotels. Evidence from the study shows that the dimension one Tangibility has ranked as the most important determinant of all the chosen variables since it is a hotel industry. The hotel should focus more on these issues, as it can capture the attention of the guests. Here, the hotel should focus on beautifying the external and internal atmosphere of the hotel. However, variable five Empathy stood second on the basis of ranking parameter. The prominent facts documented for the purpose of the study were "Staff pays individual attention", "Staff listen carefully to complaints of guests and solve it", "Hotel understands customer's necessities/needs" and "Hotel takes guests' best interest at heart". Once again since it is hotel industry, the vital link for success is staff attitude towards the guest. Therefore it is suggested to the hotel to improve the mannerism, attitude of the staff towards the handling of guests. They should be properly trained and motivated to discharge their roles effectively and efficiently. The third prominent factor based on the ranking of dimensions was Assurance. The items chosen for this purpose were "Feel safe and secure while staying in the hotel", "Hotel services are provided at a competitive and affordable price", "Hotel staff have the proper skill to perform requested services" and "Hotel refunds the amount on cancellation of order". This indicates that guests who entered into five star hotels expect certain important considerations relating to their stay. Therefore, the hotel should always fix a competitive price for stay, refund and settlement of accounts should be smooth and timeless. They should train the staff to handle and serve the guests with a smile. The next major determinant for the current study was Responsiveness (V3). This covers various items such as "Hotel responds quickly for requests", "Speed of service is quick", "Hotel staff is always willing to help guest", and "Employees of hotel will never be too busy to respond to customer's request". This indicates that the responsiveness or the quickness on the part of the staff to handle the guests play a very crucial role for the success of a hotel industry. Therefore it is suggested to the hotel management to take care of this important determinant. The last prominent factor for the current study was Reliability (V2). The items taken for this purpose were "Hotel provides service which they promised", "Hotel employees provide accurate information about the service", "When a customer has a problem, hotel will show a sincere interest in solving it". This indicates that the management should walk the talk meaning that they should focus on rendering the promised services without fail.

### MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE CURRENT STUDY

For long, service providers have been obsessed with improving the service quality in order to retain the customers. From the background of the current study, the following managerial implications have been arrived at: (i) the current study enables the managers to get a significant clarity and understanding of guests' attitude towards various services offered by the five star hotels in Bengaluru city; (ii) it enables the service providers to understand the Demographic factors and its impact on various chosen dimensions; (iii) the findings of the current study would enable the service providers to understand the impact of Tangibles (ambience, warm lighting, appealing interiors, layout, other physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials etc.), Empathy (understanding the guests and making the effort to know guests and their needs.), Assurance (knowledge, courtesy and trustworthiness of the hotel personnel), Responsiveness (willingness to help guests and provide prompt service to them) and Reliability (ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately) on the service quality and they can re-frame their service strategies to cater the needs of their guests. If the above mentioned dimensions are kept in mind while rendering services to their customers, this can give a five star hotel a great competitive advantage over other major players in the segment. As we know that in the highly competitive five star hotel segment, service becomes one of the most important element for gaining a sustainable competitive advantage in the marketplace.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the background of the present study, the researchers have identified the following areas for future research which can be carried in the field of service marketing.

- Since the study was confined to geographical limits of Bengaluru city only, an extended study of this kind encompassing more number of cities and tourist areas over a longer period of time may be taken up.
- The present study on service has been restricted to Five Star Hotel segment only, a study covering both three, four and five stars segments may be taken up.
- In future, the empirical studies may be taken up with two more important dimensions such as communication and access. In the current study, majority of the respondents felt that these two factors play very crucial role while enjoying the services rendered by the five star hotels.

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With sincere regards

Thanking you profoundly

**Academically yours**

Sd/-

**Co-ordinator**

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