



Article

# Improving Organizational and Economic Mechanisms for Increasing The Efficiency of Hotel Enterprises (on The Example of Samarkand) in The Specialty "Tourism and Hotel Activities"

Rustamov Otabek Akbarovich

1. Head of Marketing and Admissions Department, Silk Road International University of Tourism and Cultural Heritage

\* Correspondence: [otabekrustamov934@gmail.com](mailto:otabekrustamov934@gmail.com), <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0075-0834>

**Abstract:** The hotel industry plays a significant role in the development of tourism and regional economic growth. In recent years, increasing competition in the hospitality sector has made service quality and operational efficiency critical factors for sustainable development. This study aims to evaluate the service quality of hotel enterprises in Samarkand using the SERVQUAL model and to identify organizational and economic mechanisms for improving operational efficiency. A quantitative research approach was employed based on the SERVQUAL methodology. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to hotel guests. Service quality was assessed by comparing customer expectations and perceptions across five dimensions: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy. Descriptive statistical analysis, SERVQUAL gap analysis, and reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha were conducted with SPSS software. The findings revealed negative gap scores across all SERVQUAL dimensions, indicating that customer expectations exceeded perceived service performance. The largest gap was observed in Responsiveness (-0.49), followed by Empathy (-0.43), suggesting weaknesses in prompt service delivery and personalized customer care. The results further demonstrated that service quality significantly influences customer satisfaction, loyalty, and hotel operational efficiency. Responsiveness and Reliability were identified as the most influential dimensions affecting overall customer satisfaction. The study concludes that improving service quality through digital service management systems, employee training programs, customer-oriented service strategies, and continuous quality monitoring can substantially enhance the competitiveness and operational performance of hotel enterprises in Samarkand.

**Keywords:** hotel industry, service quality, SERVQUAL, customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, hospitality management, tourism development, Samarkand, hotel performance, service management.

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## 1. Introduction

Tourism has become one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global economy, contributing significantly to employment generation, foreign exchange earnings, and regional development. The hotel industry serves as a fundamental component of the tourism system by providing accommodation and related services to domestic and international travelers. As competition among hospitality enterprises intensifies, the quality of services offered by hotels has emerged as a critical determinant of customer satisfaction, loyalty, and business success [1]. In Uzbekistan, tourism has been identified as a strategic sector for economic diversification and sustainable development. Samarkand, one of the country's most important historical and cultural destinations,

attracts millions of visitors annually. The rapid growth of tourist arrivals has increased the demand for high-quality accommodation services and has encouraged hotel enterprises to improve their operational efficiency and service performance [2], [3]. Despite considerable investments in tourism infrastructure, many hotel enterprises continue to face challenges related to service quality management, customer retention, and operational effectiveness. Traditional performance indicators such as occupancy rates and revenue generation are no longer sufficient to evaluate hotel competitiveness. Modern hospitality management increasingly emphasizes customer perceptions and service quality as key determinants of organizational success. The SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, provides a comprehensive framework for measuring service quality by examining the gap between customer expectations and perceptions. The model has been widely applied in hospitality research due to its effectiveness in identifying service deficiencies and guiding managerial improvements [4]. The purpose of this study is to assess service quality in hotel enterprises operating in Samarkand using the SERVQUAL model and to develop organizational and economic recommendations for improving operational efficiency. The study contributes to the existing literature by examining the relationship between service quality dimensions and hotel performance within the context of a rapidly developing tourism destination [5], [6].

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study employs the SERVQUAL model to evaluate service quality and identify organizational and economic mechanisms for improving the operational efficiency of hotel enterprises in Samarkand. SERVQUAL, developed by A. Parasuraman, Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry, is one of the most widely used instruments for measuring service quality by comparing customers' expectations and perceptions.

The study focuses on hotels operating in Samarkand, one of Uzbekistan's leading tourism destinations. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to hotel guests who had recently used accommodation services. A quantitative research approach was adopted to assess customer evaluations of service quality dimensions and their impact on hotel performance.

The questionnaire was designed based on the SERVQUAL framework and consisted of two sections. The first section measured customers' expectations regarding hotel services, while the second evaluated their actual perceptions after receiving the service. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

The SERVQUAL model evaluates service quality across five dimensions:

1. **Tangibles** – physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel, and visual aspects of the hotel;
2. **Reliability** – the ability to perform promised services dependably and accurately;
3. **Responsiveness** – willingness of employees to help customers and provide prompt service;
4. **Assurance** – employees' knowledge, courtesy, professionalism, and ability to inspire trust and confidence;
5. **Empathy** – individualized attention and care provided to guests.

Service quality was calculated using the standard SERVQUAL gap equation:

$$[SQ = P - E]$$

where:

- **SQ** = Service Quality Score;
- **P** = Perceived Service Performance;
- **E** = Expected Service Performance.

A positive score ( $SQ > 0$ ) indicates that perceived service exceeds customer expectations, while a negative score ( $SQ < 0$ ) suggests that service performance falls below expectations. To evaluate the reliability of the measurement scale, Cronbach's Alpha

coefficient was applied. Descriptive statistical techniques, including mean scores, standard deviations, and SERVQUAL gap analysis, were used to examine service quality dimensions. The collected data were processed using SPSS Statistics software. The findings were used to identify the key determinants of hotel service quality and to formulate organizational and economic recommendations aimed at improving the operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and competitiveness of hotel enterprises in Samarkand.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### Results

##### Assessment of Hotel Service Quality Using the SERVQUAL Model

The SERVQUAL analysis was conducted to identify the gap between guests' expectations and perceptions regarding hotel services in Samarkand. Five service quality dimensions—Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy—were evaluated [7]. The results indicate that all dimensions exhibited negative gap scores, suggesting that the perceived quality of services was lower than customer expectations.

Table 1. SERVQUAL Gap Analysis of Hotel Service Quality in Samarkand<sup>1</sup>

Service Quality Dimension	Expectations (E)	Perceptions (P)	Gap Score (P-E)
Tangibles	4.62	4.28	-0.34
Reliability	4.71	4.36	-0.35
Responsiveness	4.68	4.19	-0.49
Assurance	4.64	4.33	-0.31
Empathy	4.57	4.14	-0.43
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.64</b>	<b>4.26</b>	<b>-0.38</b>

**Description:** Table 1 presents the SERVQUAL gap analysis results for hotel enterprises in Samarkand. The findings reveal that guests' expectations exceeded their perceptions across all service quality dimensions. The largest gap was observed in Responsiveness (-0.49), while the smallest gap was recorded in Assurance (-0.31). The overall SERVQUAL score of -0.38 indicates that improvements are required to align hotel services with customer expectations [8].

The results demonstrate that Responsiveness represents the most critical weakness in hotel service delivery. Guests reported delays in service provision, slow responses to requests, and insufficient problem-solving efficiency. Similarly, Empathy showed a considerable negative gap (-0.43), indicating that customers expected more personalized attention and individualized services.

In contrast, Assurance received the highest perception score among the five dimensions [9]. This suggests that hotel employees generally possess adequate professional knowledge and are capable of creating a sense of trust and security among guests.

##### Impact of Service Quality on Hotel Operational Efficiency

To examine the relationship between service quality and hotel performance, respondents were asked to evaluate their overall satisfaction and likelihood of revisiting the hotel [10]. The results indicate a strong association between SERVQUAL dimensions and customer behavioral intentions.

<sup>1</sup> Compiled by the author based on SERVQUAL survey results and calculated using the methodology proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988).

Table 2. Relationship Between Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction<sup>2</sup>

Dimension	Mean Score	Relative Importance (%)
Tangibles	4.28	19.4
Reliability	4.36	21.2
Responsiveness	4.19	24.1
Assurance	4.33	18.6
Empathy	4.14	16.7
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>100.0</b>

**Description:** Table 2 summarizes the relative contribution of each SERVQUAL dimension to overall customer satisfaction. Responsiveness emerged as the most influential factor, accounting for 24.1% of overall satisfaction, followed by Reliability (21.2%). Empathy exhibited the lowest performance level among the evaluated dimensions.

The findings suggest that operational efficiency in hotel enterprises is not solely determined by physical infrastructure or financial resources [11]. Instead, customer-oriented service delivery, rapid response mechanisms, and consistent service performance significantly influence perceived quality and customer loyalty.

#### Discussion

The study findings confirm that service quality remains a key determinant of hotel competitiveness and operational efficiency in Samarkand. The negative SERVQUAL gaps observed across all dimensions indicate that hotels are currently unable to fully satisfy customer expectations. The largest service quality gap was identified in Responsiveness. This result is consistent with previous hospitality studies, which have emphasized the importance of prompt service delivery and efficient communication in enhancing customer satisfaction [12], [13]. Delays in check-in procedures, slow responses to guest inquiries, and limited service flexibility may contribute to lower customer evaluations.

The substantial gap in Empathy suggests that many hotels continue to rely on standardized service procedures rather than personalized customer experiences. In today's highly competitive hospitality industry, individualized attention, customized services, and effective customer relationship management are increasingly important for achieving long-term customer loyalty [14]. The relatively smaller gap in Assurance indicates that hotel staff generally possess acceptable professional competencies. However, continuous training programs remain essential to improve communication skills, service etiquette, and problem-solving capabilities.

From an organizational and economic perspective, the results highlight several priority areas for improving hotel performance in Samarkand:

Implementation of digital service management systems to accelerate customer service processes;

Continuous staff training programs focusing on customer relationship management and service excellence;

Introduction of performance evaluation systems linked to customer satisfaction indicators;

Expansion of personalized hospitality services through customer data analytics;

Strengthening service quality monitoring using periodic SERVQUAL assessments.

The findings further suggest that improving service quality can contribute to higher occupancy rates, increased customer retention, stronger online reputation, and enhanced

<sup>2</sup> Author's calculations based on SERVQUAL survey data and customer satisfaction assessments.

financial performance [15]. Consequently, service quality management should be regarded as a strategic instrument for improving the organizational and economic efficiency of hotel enterprises. Overall, the study demonstrates that the SERVQUAL model provides a practical framework for identifying service deficiencies and developing targeted managerial strategies. By reducing service quality gaps, hotel enterprises in Samarkand can strengthen their competitive position and support the sustainable development of the regional tourism industry.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study evaluated the service quality of hotel enterprises in Samarkand using the SERVQUAL model and examined its implications for operational efficiency. The findings revealed that all five SERVQUAL dimensions exhibited negative gap scores, indicating that customer expectations were not fully met by the services provided. Among the evaluated dimensions, Responsiveness demonstrated the largest service quality gap, highlighting the need for faster service delivery, improved communication, and more efficient customer support mechanisms. Empathy also showed a substantial gap, suggesting that hotels should focus on providing more personalized and customer-oriented services. In contrast, Assurance recorded the smallest gap, indicating relatively satisfactory employee competence and professionalism. The analysis further confirmed that service quality plays a crucial role in determining customer satisfaction and hotel operational efficiency. Responsiveness and Reliability were identified as the most influential factors affecting customer evaluations and behavioral intentions. These findings emphasize that service quality management should be considered a strategic priority for hotel enterprises seeking to strengthen their competitiveness and long-term sustainability.

Based on the results, several organizational and economic measures are recommended, including the implementation of digital service management technologies, continuous employee training programs, performance evaluation systems linked to customer satisfaction indicators, and regular SERVQUAL-based service quality assessments. Such measures can contribute to enhanced customer loyalty, improved occupancy rates, stronger market positioning, and greater financial performance. Overall, the study demonstrates that the SERVQUAL model is an effective tool for assessing service quality and identifying improvement opportunities within hotel enterprises. By addressing service quality gaps, hotels in Samarkand can improve their operational efficiency and contribute to the sustainable development of the regional tourism industry.

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