

# Measuring Service Quality Dimensions: An Empirical Analysis of Thai Hotel Industry

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to focus on hotel service quality based on the application of 29 characteristic indicators from the SERVQUAL model by comparing two hotel types, namely the boutique and the business hotel, in Thailand and to understand the expectation, perception and gaps between expectation and perception regarding hotel service quality. The study applied a self-administered questionnaire to measure the expectation and perception of service quality characteristics of hotels in Thailand. A total of 108 usable questionnaires were analyzed. The analysis shows that the service quality of hotels in Thailand was moderately low. Hotels were not able to deliver services as expected. Also, the customer expectation of the services of the boutique hotels was higher than that of the business hotels. It is observed that this study can claim to be the pioneer study of hotel service quality in Thailand; in that sense this study contributes to the literature by providing an advanced understanding of the hotel service quality in different types of hotel. This study also provides an opportunity for a comparison with other studies conducted previously in different parts of the world.

**Keywords:** Service quality, Hotel industry, Thailand

## 1. Introduction

Over the years the attention of practitioners and the academic literature on quality has significantly concentrated on measuring the quality in the manufacturing sector. However, the demand for better customer service has considerably increased the need for managing service quality (Wu et al, 2012). As a result, the number of research studies on quality in the service context has started to increase in several parts of the world (Gummesson, 1991). In the context of the hotel industry, service quality in terms of both customers' expectation and customers' perception could lead to customer loyalty, enhanced image, reduced costs and increased business performance (Choi & Chu, 2001; Ramanathan & Ramanathan, 2011). For this reason, one of the most important factors affecting hotel business performance is the improvement of service quality, which is important for creating financial benefit leading to a long-term competitive advantage for the hotel (Zhang et al, 2011).

Several studies have identified potential difficulties regarding the conceptual foundation and empirical measures of service quality (Badri et al, 2005; Jabnoun & Khalifa, 2005; Landrum et al, 2007). In fact, the quality of services cannot be measured objectively in the same way as the quality of manufactured goods (Zeithaml et al, 1990; Crick and

Spencer, 2011). Since service quality is an elusive concept, there is still a debate on how best to conceptualize it and how service quality can be measured in different contexts. There is still a need to develop service quality measures that are country/industry-specific (Karatepe et al, 2005; Crick and Spencer, 2011). This is because service quality constructs that are developed particularly for one culture/industry may not be applicable in a different setting (Mattila, 1999; Hsieh and Tsai, 2009; Salaza et al., 2010). In other words, country/industry differences are likely to have varying effects on the definition of service quality. In the context of the hotel industry, other attributes, such as imprecise standards, short distribution channels, reliability and consistency, face-to-face interaction, and fluctuating demand, have been identified for the task of defining and measuring service quality (Akibaba, 2005; Sohrabi et al, 2012). In addition, the demand for different hotel types in different countries is usually clustered around peak periods such as holiday seasons, which makes it difficult to provide consistent service quality measures.

Therefore, this study has been conducted with the aim of focusing on measuring service quality in the Thai hotel industry by comparing two hotel types with different target groups, namely (1) the boutique hotel, which has been popular among investors and has generated high returns, and (2) the business hotel. Tsang and Qu (2000) and Victorino et al. (2005) indicated that types of hotel could influence customer decisions, leading to different dimensions of service quality. In terms of theoretical contributions, the use of a service quality model has contributed to the literature by investigating the differences in hotel service quality attributes between the two types of hotel. As suggested by Salazar et al. (2010), this study could contribute in the areas of both consumer decision-process theory and service marketing literature focusing on customer satisfaction. It includes the different customer groups requiring different management strategies in order to achieve excellent service quality. Analyzing both the perception and the expectation of service quality in terms of different types of hotel can help hoteliers to develop different strategies to meet the needs of each specific segment (Zhang et al, 2011). In practice, the management is able to apply the research findings in designing and prioritizing hotel strategies and to recognize the weaknesses of service quality in order to undertake quality improvement and development to satisfy customer needs more efficiently and effectively.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Service Quality Measurement in the Hotel Business*

In the face of increasing competition, the hotel business is seeking new tools to create competitive advantages. Therefore, it is putting a large amount of effort into selecting the best tools or methods to measure service quality development. In terms of measuring the service quality in the hotel business, SERVQUAL has been applied as a tool for understanding the factors affecting the service quality in the hotel business, including gaps, from the customers' perspective. The outcomes of these studies have delivered contributions in relation to understanding the dimensional structure of service quality in the hotel industry. Numerous studies have postulated that service quality (SERVQUAL) is multidimensional in essence for measuring hotel service quality (e.g. Knutson, et al., 1992; Armstrong et al., 1997; Choi and Chu, 1998; Ekinici & Riley, 1998; Antilgan et al., 2003; Akbaba, 2006; Maria and Serrat, 2011). For instance, Akbaba (2006) studied the service quality of hotels in Turkey by analyzing the expectation and actual perception of service quality based on 29 characteristic indicators, which were applied from SERVQUAL, and the most important factor reflecting the overall needs of service quality measurement was tangible services. Wilkins et al (2007) also studied the service quality of hotels in Australia. The seven factors were developed from SERVQUAL, covering style and convenience, room quality, special offers, quality staff, personality, fast service, and quality food and beverages. In addition, other research has indicated and explained that the characteristics of service quality factors and service priorities, from the customers' perspective, differed depending on the hotel types.

Gabbie and O'Neill (1997) conducted research on the service quality of hotels in North Ireland. Their aims were to study the gaps between the expectation and the perception of service quality delivered by two 3-star hotels using 22 characteristics of SERVQUAL. The research revealed that a gap between the customer perception and the customer expectation of the first hotel that applied total quality management (TQM) was smaller than that of another one. TQM drove better performance due to employee empowerment, so the first hotel was able to satisfy customer needs more efficiently. Carrillat et al (2007) found that SERVQUAL was a well-known instrument, and became a proper measurement tool for the hotel business, one of the service businesses focusing on customer satisfaction. Salazar et al. (2010) also developed a service quality evaluation scale for the hospitality sector.

However, Knutson et al (1992) and Victorino et al. (2005) pointed out that there might have been differing service quality when dealing with hotels that serve different segments/countries, which all have different characteristics. It is shown that, in a specific hotel setting, some of the service quality dimensions differed from the five dimensions described in the original SERVQUAL (Xu and Chan, 2010). For instance, Ekinici & Riley (1998) tested the dimensions of the original SERVQUAL in Turkish resorts. Their study did not confirm the original SERVQUAL dimensions.

Mohsin and Locker (2010) also assessed the service quality perception of customers of luxury hotels in India. They provided an opportunity to recognize, in ranking order, the features that are considered important by the guests staying in luxury hotels. Knutson et al (1992) investigated the application of the SERVQUAL instrument and developed a new scale called LODGSERV. Based on their study, five main dimensions including reliability, assurance, responsiveness, tangibles, and empathy were developed for LODGSERV. Mei et al (1999) also examined the dimensions of service quality in the hotel industry. They used SERVQUAL as a foundation and developed a new scale called the HOLSERV scale. As a key finding from their study, they concluded that service quality was represented by three dimensions, relating to employees, tangibles, and reliability. According to these three dimensions, the best predictor of overall service quality was employees.

### 3. Research Methodology

In this study, an adapted version of SERVQUAL mainly developed from Akibaba (2005) was used to analyze the service quality expectations and perceptions of the guests. A self-administered questionnaire was applied to measure the expectation and perception of 29 service quality characteristics based on a review of the literature on SERVQUAL and in-depth interviews with practitioners in the Thai hotel industry. The questionnaire for this study included two main sections. The first section of the questionnaire was designed to measure the respondents' expectations and perceptions regarding the service quality offered by the hotel in Thailand regarding attributes such as the convenience of the location, sufficient equipment/decoration, safety, hotel staff–guest interaction, etc. Some service quality characteristics were revised in order to make them more applicable to the hotel setting in Thailand. The questionnaire was structured so that hotel guests were asked to rate their level of agreement for the hotels at which they stayed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) indicating “very low” to (5) indicating “very high.” The second part of the questionnaire was designed to elicit demographic and travel information about the respondents. The questionnaire was pre-tested by 20 guests of various nationalities staying in both business and boutique hotels in Bangkok. Based on this pre-test, several items were reworded to improve the clarification of the questions.

Prior to the main survey, the questionnaires were reviewed by four experts working in the hotel industry and four other customers. This review was undertaken to ensure that the respondents understood the contents and questions clearly. A pilot test was further conducted to assess the reliability of the attributes, and to ensure that the wordings of the questionnaire were clear. Ten questionnaires were completed by the guests accompanied by the researcher. Some problems with unclear wording were identified, so some minor revisions were made to avoid confusion.

The questionnaires were distributed to customers from 20 boutique hotels and 21 business hotels (3–4 stars) in Bangkok, where there is a big market with high growth and favourites among chain hotels and investors from all over the world. A convenience sampling approach was employed and a total of 200 questionnaires and research invitation letters were distributed to all the target hotels. Hotel guests who had checked out from the hotel and were about to leave were approached. The questionnaires were handed to the ones who were willing to complete them. A total of 108 usable questionnaires from 53 and 55 respondents from boutique and business hotels, respectively, were used for further analysis, representing a 54% response rate. Statistical software was used to analyze the data with regard to the descriptive analysis and the expectation and perception analysis of the 29 characteristics. The paired sample t-test was applied by calculating the mean and difference/gap. The comparisons between expectation, perception and gap for boutique and business hotels were analyzed by an independent samples t-test.

### 4. Findings and Discussion

For the 108 respondents, 53 and 55 from boutique hotels and business hotels, respectively, the gender distribution was 54% male and 46% female. Their ages were 25–34 years (53%), 18–24 years (19%) and 35–44 years (16%). The majority of the respondents were single (79%). Most respondents were company employees (white collar) (32%), management/managers (17%) and students/college students (17%). The question on the educational level of the guests showed that most of the respondents had a bachelor's degree (46%), followed by a master's degree (19%) and college education (15%). Their purposes were traveling (74%) and business (26%). Regarding the respondents' frequency of staying at hotels, 31% of the respondents stayed in hotels 5 times per annum.

Descriptive statistical methods were used to investigate the expectations (E), perceptions (P) and gap score (P-E) of guests who stayed in both boutique and business hotels. The means, standard deviations and difference score between perceptions and expectations were computed for each service quality characteristic. The paired-sample *t*-test for all the service quality characteristics also showed whether they were significantly different (Table 1).

<Insert Table 1 here>

#### 4.1 Expectation

From the data collection and averages of expectation shown in Table 2, the perception and gap of the 29 service quality characteristics mentioned, the customer expectation of the services of 3–4 star hotels in Bangkok was at a moderately high level, with an average of 4.09. This finding affirms that customer expectation of hotels in Thailand can be measured by SERVQUAL's service characteristics, which were developed from customer needs (Parasuraman et al, 1985). The most expected factors of customers were hotel security (4.44), friendly staff (4.40) and staff service mind (4.31); their least expected ones were facilities for disabled persons (3.56), personal care products such as soap, shampoo and towels (3.81) and special care and services (3.82).

To explain this finding, Thailand has faced several problems and disasters that have severely affected its tourism industry during the past five years. These problems have covered a natural disaster, political conflicts and a higher number of criminal cases; such events have a strong impact on tourist confidence in security. When traveling to big cities with uncertain political conditions, customers are most concerned about hotel/accommodation security. This supports a research finding of Akbaba (2006) in Turkey, which revealed that customers in Turkey were most concerned about security as well. With the Thai identity as friendly people – the so-called “Thailand is a land of smiles” – customers have a high expectation of tourist-friendly services from the hotel business. The expectation of service minds is derived from hotel characteristics (as service-based business). Hence, tourism public relations should focus on hotel security and friendly services in order to increase tourist confidence and attract more tourists. The least expected, sufficient facilities for disabled persons, reflects the fewer choices for disabled people or a closed-minded society; it is different from that of developed countries such as Japan, the USA or the UK, for example. It is noticed that customers had a low expectation for a supply of personal care products since the research covered a minimum standard of 3–4 star hotels. The low expectation for special care and services may be because customers prefer to have private relaxation after spending all day working or traveling. In addition, since the studied hotels were located in Bangkok, a business hub with many sightseeing attractions, their customers' objectives was sleep and relaxation only.

#### 4.2 Perception

Based on the results shown in Table 2, an average score for the customer perception of the service quality of 3–4 star hotels was above average (4.00), reflecting service delivery at the moderately high level. The top three characteristics perceived by customers were friendly staff (4.25), hotel security (4.24) and service mind (4.20); the least perceived characteristics were facilities for disabled persons (3.31), sufficient service units such as a cafeteria, meeting room, swimming pool and business facilities (3.71), and special care and services (3.85). This means that hotel staff members were able to apply the Thai identity efficiently in service delivery. Even though, in recent years, several circumstances affecting the tourism business in Thailand have occurred, tourists are confident about the security measures of hotels in Thailand. The least perceived characteristics reflected a low priority for disabled people in Thailand. Since the studied hotels were located in the city center and therefore had limited space, they could not offer service units such as a swimming pool, meeting room, etc. Special care and services demonstrate that 3–4 star hotels in Thailand did not emphasize special/individual services, but overall services. Such special services depended on the skills and capabilities of each individual staff member who may understand customer needs thoroughly while training and high experience were required.

#### 4.3 Gap Score

From customers' perspectives, the gaps between expectation and perception explicitly reflect the service quality of hotels. A positive gap (+) means the service quality of the hotels is good and the hotels deliver services that are better than expected; a negative gap (-) means the service quality of the hotels is bad and the hotels deliver worse services; a zero gap (0) means the service quality of the hotels satisfies the customer needs.

The service quality of hotels in Thailand was moderately low; hotels were not able to deliver services as expected (perception – expectation = -0.09). Table 1 shows the paired-sample *t*-test results. As can be seen from Table 1, the top three weaknesses of hotels in Thailand were unresolved problems and customer compensation (-0.27), insufficiency and quality of food and beverages (-0.26) and insufficient facilities for disabled persons (-0.25). On the other hand, the best services were sufficiency of personal care products such as soap, shampoo and towels (0.19), clean dress and good personality (0.10) and interesting design of hotel buildings (0.06). It was found from the research that the services of hotels in Thailand were weak in terms of problem resolution and customer compensation since staff lacked understanding of customer problems, probably due to their insufficient skill in the English language. In addition, responses and resolutions may not be undertaken immediately due to the hotels' management systems. Also, front office staff members had insufficient authority to make decisions and authority was mainly centralized at the management level. To improve such service quality, the authority to make decisions should be assigned to the staff responsible for

specific tasks or for contacting customers so that they will be able to respond to customer needs and solve customer problems promptly and conveniently. Harrington and Akehurst (1996) emphasized the need for hotels to develop more effective internal communication systems to facilitate a greater understanding of company policy as it relates to providing quality services for the customer. Other characteristics to be improved are the sufficiency and quality of food as well as services for disabled persons in order to enhance the quality and upgrade the service standards of hotels in Thailand to reach the international standards.

#### *4.4 Expectation Comparison*

According to Table 2, the customer expectation of the services of the boutique hotels (4.21) was higher than that of the business hotels (3.98). However, the expectations, in terms of 14 characteristics, differed at a significant level ( $p < 0.05$ ). The most different characteristics were hotel security ( $t = 5.536$ ), correct data collection such as reservations, customer information or payment ( $t = 4.279$ ) and easy access to hotel facilities and services such as a telephone, the Internet and guideposts ( $t = 4.185$ ). The finding mentioned above corresponds to that of some researchers who stated that customer expectation differed depending on hotel types (Victorino et al, 2005; Akibaba, 2006). Different expectations resulted from customers' experiences and objectives. For the boutique hotels, the customer expectation was higher because the customers were tourists with long stays who had various needs such as communication with hotel staff and sightseeing information. On the other hand, customers of the business hotels, staying for a short period, focused more on business facilities than on interaction with hotel staff. As a result, if the members of the hotel management understand the customer expectations comprehensively, they will be able to establish suitable strategies for each type of hotel in order to satisfy customer needs and create differentiation within their services.

<Insert Table 2 here>

#### *4.5 Perception Comparison*

As shown in Table 2, customers' perceptions of the services of the boutique hotels were higher than those of the business hotels in almost all the characteristics, except facilities for disabled persons ( $t = -2.920$ ) and easy access to the hotel ( $t = -0.148$ ). The reason may be that businessmen are the main target group of the business hotels, so business facilities are much more important than leisure facilities. Business hotels were situated in good locations where the customers can easily reach the transportation facilities. On the other hand, the boutique hotels emphasized tourists as their main customers, so their locations were close to interesting places. Since most customers staying in boutique hotels were backpackers who were not using personal cars, they were not concerned about parking space. Hence, the hotel access and parking lots provided by the business hotels were better. Regarding 20 characteristics, the boutique hotels had better services at a significant level, namely correct data collection ( $t = 5.216$ ), interesting design of hotel buildings ( $t = 4.718$ ) and hotel security ( $t = 4.227$ ).

#### *4.6 Gap Comparison*

Based on Table 2, the gaps for all the characteristics of both types of hotel were indifferent at the significance level of  $p < 0.05$ , except the design of hotel buildings ( $t = 3.340$ ). This means that the buildings of the boutique hotels were more interesting than those of the business hotels. The design, differentiation and warmth of boutique hotels were emphasized to respond to each individual's lifestyle and needs, but the business hotels mainly focused on business facilities. Therefore, the research results implicitly reflect that the hotel types do not identify their service quality. Service quality depends on the process of designing services and strategies. The managers need to understand a variety of customer needs, while the hotel staff needs to convey and deliver quality services to all the customers (Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2011). It may be concluded that it is impossible to enhance the service quality of hotels with management understanding of customer expectations but no capable personnel, or with capable personnel but no management understanding of customer needs.

### **5. Summary and Future Research**

The key findings from our study are: first, the service quality of hotels in Thailand was moderately low – hotels were not able to deliver services as expected; second, the customer expectation of the services of the boutique hotels was higher than that of the business hotels. This study has contributed to the theoretical advancement of the consumer decision-process theory, service marketing and hotel industry literature by analyzing some pivotal service quality issues in a specific type of hotel. Identifying accurately the specific expectation of customers, the dimensions of the service quality around which customers make their quality evaluations and their importance to customers carries vital importance for quality improvement efforts. This study also helps in discovering the needs, wishes and expectations of the guests. These are analyzed by determining the characteristics of service quality that are most important to guests. Having knowledge of these areas would definitely help managers meet the challenge of improving the service quality in

the hotel industry.

This research has broadened the existing knowledge as it has been found that the factors affecting the service quality in the hotel industry vary in different countries. The type of hotel also plays a very important role in the perception and expectation of service quality. Customers have different expectations and perceptions for different types of hotel. As a result, there is no “one best way” to improve the service quality in the hotel industry. It is contingent upon the type of hotel and the country where the hotel is located. It has also been found that the SERVQUAL model can be applied in the Thai hotel industry with some adjustments. The findings of this study will definitely help the hotel business in Thailand.

Further research may extend the study scope to cover other types of hotels (e.g., resort and spa, 2- or 5-star hotels and hotels located in other provinces). Seasons should be taken into consideration, such as the high season or low season, because customer expectations or perceptions of service quality may be different in different seasons. Since this is quantitative research, the next study should be qualitative in order to learn and emphasize more from the customers’

perspective.

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Table 1. Means of expectation, perception and gap for each service quality attribute in boutique and business hotels (n=108)

|                                                                | Attributes                                                                                                                                               | Mean | SD   | Means | SD (P) | Gap   | t      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------|--------|-------|--------|
|                                                                |                                                                                                                                                          | (E)  |      | (P)   |        | P-E   |        |
|                                                                |                                                                                                                                                          |      | (E)  |       |        |       |        |
| 1                                                              | Materials associated with the services are adequate and sufficient (soap, shampoo, towel, etc.)                                                          | 3.81 | 0.81 | 4.00  | 0.76   | 0.19* | 2.217  |
| 2                                                              | Hotel staff appear neat and tidy (as uniforms and personal grooming)                                                                                     | 4.00 | 0.77 | 4.10  | 0.80   | 0.10  | 1.107  |
| 3                                                              | The hotel has visually appealing buildings and facilities                                                                                                | 3.86 | 0.69 | 3.93  | 0.62   | 0.06  | 0.767  |
| 4                                                              | The hotel has modern-looking equipment (air conditioner, furniture, elevator, communication devices, etc.)                                               | 3.90 | 0.78 | 3.94  | 0.67   | 0.04  | 0.430  |
| 5                                                              | Hotel staff give guests individualized attention that makes them feel special                                                                            | 3.82 | 0.83 | 3.85  | 0.83   | 0.03  | 0.281  |
| 6                                                              | Hotel staff have knowledge to provide information and assistance to guests in areas they would require (shopping, museums, places of interest, etc.)     | 3.99 | 0.70 | 3.95  | 0.75   | -0.04 | -0.457 |
| 7                                                              | The hotel provides consistent services (providing the same services and associated materials every time)                                                 | 4.05 | 0.73 | 3.99  | 0.79   | -0.06 | -0.726 |
| 8                                                              | Hotel staff instill confidence in guests                                                                                                                 | 4.11 | 0.70 | 4.06  | 0.83   | -0.06 | -0.661 |
| 9                                                              | The hotel keeps accurate records (reservations, guest records, bills, orders, etc.)                                                                      | 4.21 | 0.76 | 4.15  | 0.83   | -0.06 | -0.927 |
| 10                                                             | Hotel staff understand the specific needs of guests                                                                                                      | 4.04 | 0.74 | 3.98  | 0.79   | -0.06 | -0.716 |
| 11                                                             | The atmosphere and equipment are comfortable and appropriate for the purpose of the stay (beds, chairs, rooms, etc. are comfortable, clean and tranquil) | 4.28 | 0.68 | 4.19  | 0.73   | -0.08 | -0.976 |
| 12                                                             | The hotel performs the services right from the first time                                                                                                | 4.16 | 0.70 | 4.07  | 0.78   | -0.08 | -1.103 |
| 13                                                             | Getting information about the facilities and services of the hotel is easy (reaching information via phone, Internet, direction signs, etc.)             | 4.11 | 0.65 | 4.03  | 0.83   | -0.08 | -1.609 |
| 14                                                             | Hotel staff are always willing to serve customers                                                                                                        | 4.31 | 0.71 | 4.20  | 0.79   | -0.11 | -1.364 |
| *p<0.05      **p<0.01      E = Expectation      P = Perception |                                                                                                                                                          |      |      |       |        |       |        |

Table 1. Means of expectation, perception and gap for service quality attributes in boutique and business hotels (n=108) (continued)

|                                                         | Attributes                                                                                                                          | Means       | SD   | Means                 | SD (P) | Gap          | t      |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------|-----------------------|--------|--------------|--------|
|                                                         |                                                                                                                                     | (E)         | (E)  | (P)                   |        | P-E          |        |
| 15                                                      | The service units of the hotel have adequate capacity (dining room, meeting room, swimming pools, business center facilities, etc.) | 3.83        | 0.87 | 3.71                  | 0.72   | -0.12        | -1.206 |
| 16                                                      | The hotel provides the service at the time it promises to do so                                                                     | 4.26        | 0.70 | 4.13                  | 0.80   | -0.13        | -1.713 |
| 17                                                      | Hotel staff are always available when needed                                                                                        | 4.30        | 0.66 | 4.17                  | 0.79   | -0.13        | -1.436 |
| 18                                                      | Hotel staff have in-depth occupational knowledge (professional skills, foreign language, communication skills, etc.)                | 4.03        | 0.70 | 3.90                  | 0.81   | -0.13        | -1.340 |
| 19                                                      | The hotel provides the services as they were promised                                                                               | 4.26        | 0.70 | 4.12                  | 0.76   | -0.14*       | -2.092 |
| 20                                                      | The hotel provides flexibility in services according to guest demands                                                               | 4.02        | 0.74 | 3.88                  | 0.83   | -0.14        | -1.762 |
| 21                                                      | The hotel and its facilities have operating hours convenient to all their guests                                                    | 4.10        | 0.72 | 3.96                  | 0.78   | -0.14        | -1.620 |
| 22                                                      | Hotel staff provide prompt service                                                                                                  | 4.25        | 0.73 | 4.10                  | 0.78   | -0.15        | -1.612 |
| 23                                                      | Hotel staff always treat guests in a friendly manner                                                                                | 4.40        | 0.67 | 4.25                  | 0.77   | -0.15        | -1.808 |
| 24                                                      | The equipment of the hotel works properly without causing breakdowns                                                                | 4.19        | 0.75 | 4.02                  | 0.77   | -0.17*       | -2.016 |
| 25                                                      | The hotel is easy to access (transportation, loading and unloading area, car parking area, etc.)                                    | 4.06        | 0.71 | 3.88                  | 0.81   | -0.19*       | -2.095 |
| 26                                                      | The hotel provides its guests with a safe and secure place                                                                          | 4.44        | 0.65 | 4.24                  | 0.80   | -0.20**      | -2.838 |
| 27                                                      | The hotel is also convenient for handicapped people (necessary arrangements made for the disabled)                                  | 3.56        | 1.19 | 3.31                  | 1.04   | -0.25*       | -2.373 |
| 28                                                      | Food and beverages served are hygienic, adequate and sufficient                                                                     | 4.22        | 0.81 | 3.96                  | 0.82   | -0.26**      | -2.834 |
| 29                                                      | The hotel resolves guest complaints and compensates for the inconveniences guests go through                                        | 4.16        | 0.74 | 3.89                  | 0.81   | -0.27**      | -2.869 |
| <b>Means of 29 attributes</b>                           |                                                                                                                                     | <b>4.09</b> |      | <b>4.00</b>           |        | <b>-0.09</b> |        |
| <b>*p&lt;0.05      **p&lt;0.01      E = Expectation</b> |                                                                                                                                     |             |      | <b>P = Perception</b> |        |              |        |

Table 2. Table of comparative means of expectation, perception and gap of service quality attributes between boutique and business hotels

|                        | Attributes                                                                                                                                               | Means                 |      |         |                       |      |         |       |       |         |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|---------|-----------------------|------|---------|-------|-------|---------|
|                        |                                                                                                                                                          | Expectation           |      |         | Perception            |      |         | Gap   |       |         |
|                        |                                                                                                                                                          | Bou                   | Bus  | t       | Bou                   | Bus  | t       | Bou   | Bus   | t       |
| 1                      | The hotel has visually appealing buildings and facilities                                                                                                | 3.85                  | 3.87 | -0.177  | 4.19                  | 3.67 | 4.718** | 0.34  | -0.20 | 3.340** |
| 2                      | Materials associated with the services are adequate and sufficient (soap, shampoo, towel, etc.)                                                          | 3.81                  | 3.80 | 0.072   | 4.17                  | 3.84 | 2.322*  | 0.36  | 0.04  | 1.857   |
| 3                      | The hotel has modern-looking equipment (air conditioner, furniture, elevator, communication devices, etc.)                                               | 3.91                  | 3.89 | 0.097   | 4.09                  | 3.78 | 2.467*  | 0.19  | -0.11 | 1.743   |
| 4                      | The service units of the hotel have adequate capacity (dining room, meeting room, swimming pools, business center facilities, etc.                       | 3.77                  | 3.89 | -0.699  | 3.81                  | 3.62 | 1.392   | 0.04  | -0.27 | 1.638   |
| 5                      | Food and beverages served are hygienic, adequate and sufficient                                                                                          | 4.38                  | 4.07 | 1.974   | 4.19                  | 3.75 | 2.891** | -0.19 | -0.33 | 0.756   |
| 6                      | Hotel staff appear neat and tidy (as uniforms and personal grooming)                                                                                     | 4.04                  | 3.96 | 0.496   | 4.21                  | 4.00 | 1.359   | 0.17  | 0.04  | 0.723   |
| 7                      | The atmosphere and equipment are comfortable and appropriate for the purpose of the stay (beds, chairs, rooms, etc. are comfortable, clean and tranquil) | 4.45                  | 4.11 | 2.697** | 4.42                  | 3.98 | 3.215** | -0.04 | -0.13 | 0.522   |
| 8                      | The equipment of the hotel works properly without causing breakdowns                                                                                     | 4.47                  | 3.91 | 4.183** | 4.26                  | 3.78 | 3.397** | -0.21 | -0.13 | -0.484  |
| 9                      | The hotel keeps accurate records (reservations, guest records, bills, orders, etc.)                                                                      | 4.51                  | 3.93 | 4.279** | 4.53                  | 3.78 | 5.216** | 0.02  | -0.15 | 1.176   |
| 10                     | The hotel provides the service at the time it promises to do so                                                                                          | 4.45                  | 4.07 | 2.909** | 4.38                  | 3.89 | 3.310** | -0.08 | -0.18 | 0.701   |
| * p<0.05      **p<0.01 |                                                                                                                                                          | Bou = Boutique hotels |      |         | Bus = Business hotels |      |         |       |       |         |

Table 2. Table of comparative means of expectation, perception and gap of service quality attributes between boutique and business hotels (continued)

|                                                                              | Attributes                                                                                                           | Means       |      |         |            |      |          |         |       |        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------|---------|------------|------|----------|---------|-------|--------|
|                                                                              |                                                                                                                      | Expectation |      |         | Perception |      |          | Gap     |       |        |
|                                                                              |                                                                                                                      | Bou         | Bou  | t       | Bou        | Bou  | t        | Bou     | Bou   | t      |
| 11                                                                           | The hotel performs the services right from the first time                                                            | 4.38        | 3.95 | 3.359** | 4.34       | 3.82 | 3.660**  | -0.04   | -0.13 | 0.542  |
| 12                                                                           | The hotel provides the services as they were promised                                                                | 4.51        | 4.02 | 3.865** | 4.40       | 3.85 | 3.961**  | -0.11   | -0.16 | 0.378  |
| 13                                                                           | The hotel provides flexibility in services according to guest demands                                                | 4.09        | 3.95 | 1.046   | 4.06       | 3.71 | 2.219*   | -0.04   | -0.24 | 1.220  |
| 14                                                                           | Hotel staff provide prompt service                                                                                   | 4.42        | 4.09 | 2.373*  | 4.32       | 3.89 | 2.946**  | -0.09   | -0.20 | 0.573  |
| 15                                                                           | The hotel and its facilities have operating hours convenient for all their guests                                    | 4.21        | 4.00 | 1.501   | 4.08       | 3.85 | 1.471    | -0.13   | -0.15 | 0.078  |
| 16                                                                           | Hotel staff are always available when needed                                                                         | 4.45        | 4.15 | 2.479*  | 4.32       | 4.02 | 2.008*   | -0.13   | -0.13 | -0.026 |
| 17                                                                           | Hotel staff are always willing to serve customers                                                                    | 4.55        | 4.09 | 3.534** | 4.42       | 4.00 | 2.794**  | -0.13   | -0.09 | -0.252 |
| 18                                                                           | The hotel is also convenient for handicapped people (necessary arrangements made for the disabled)                   | 3.34        | 3.76 | -1.869  | 3.02       | 3.58 | -2.920** | -0.32   | -0.18 | -0.653 |
| 19                                                                           | The hotel resolves guest complaints and compensates for the inconveniences guests go through                         | 4.40        | 3.93 | 3.466** | 4.04       | 3.75 | 1.891    | -0.36** | -0.18 | -0.943 |
| 20                                                                           | Hotel staff have in-depth occupational knowledge (professional skills, foreign language, communication skills, etc.) | 4.08        | 3.98 | 0.690   | 4.06       | 3.75 | 2.029*   | -0.02   | -0.24 | 1.125  |
| * p<0.05      **p<0.01      Bou = Boutique hotels      Bus = Business hotels |                                                                                                                      |             |      |         |            |      |          |         |       |        |

Table 2. Table of comparative means of expectation, perception and gap of service quality attributes between boutique and business hotels (continued)

| Attributes                    |                                                                                                                                                      | Means       |             |         |             |             |         |              |              |        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------|-------------|-------------|---------|--------------|--------------|--------|
|                               |                                                                                                                                                      | Expectation |             |         | Perception  |             |         | Gap          |              |        |
|                               |                                                                                                                                                      | Bou         | Bou         | t       | Bou         | Bou         | t       | Bou          | Bou          | t      |
| 21                            | Hotel staff instill confidence in guests                                                                                                             | 4.21        | 4.02        | 1.401   | 4.23        | 3.89        | 2.135*  | 0.02         | -0.13        | 0.868  |
| 22                            | The hotel provides its guests with a safe and secure place                                                                                           | 4.75        | 4.15        | 5.536** | 4.55        | 3.95        | 4.227** | -0.21        | -0.20        | -0.052 |
| 23                            | The hotel provides consistent services (providing the same services and associated materials every time)                                             | 4.23        | 3.87        | 2.589*  | 4.15        | 3.84        | 2.098*  | -0.08        | -0.04        | -0.254 |
| 24                            | Hotel staff have knowledge to provide information and assistance to guests in areas they would require (shopping, museums, places of interest, etc.) | 4.08        | 3.91        | 1.231   | 3.98        | 3.93        | 0.370   | -0.09        | 0.02         | -0.688 |
| 25                            | Hotel staff give guests individualized attention that makes them feel special                                                                        | 3.75        | 3.89        | -0.852  | 3.92        | 3.78        | 0.888   | 0.17         | -0.11        | 1.417  |
| 26                            | Getting information about the facilities and services of the hotel is easy (reaching information via phone, Internet, direction signs, etc.)         | 4.36        | 3.87        | 4.185** | 4.32        | 3.75        | 3.847** | -0.04        | -0.13        | 0.572  |
| 27                            | Hotel staff always treat guests in a friendly manner                                                                                                 | 4.57        | 4.24        | 2.630*  | 4.43        | 4.07        | 2.479*  | -0.13        | -0.16        | 0.192  |
| 28                            | Hotel staff understand the specific needs of guests                                                                                                  | 4.11        | 3.96        | 1.057   | 4.04        | 3.93        | 0.729   | -0.08        | -0.04        | -0.251 |
| 29                            | The hotel is easy to access (transportation, loading and unloading area, car parking area, etc.)                                                     | 4.11        | 4.02        | 0.690   | 3.87        | 3.89        | -0.148  | -0.25        | -0.13        | -0.666 |
| <b>Means of 29 attributes</b> |                                                                                                                                                      | <b>4.21</b> | <b>3.98</b> |         | <b>4.16</b> | <b>3.84</b> |         | <b>-0.05</b> | <b>-0.14</b> |        |

\* p&lt;0.05

\*\*p&lt;0.01

Bou = Boutique hotels

Bus = Business hotel