

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOTEL SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SPA HOTELS IN INDONESIA

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## ABSTRACT

*This study aims to determine the relationship of service quality variables and their influence on customer satisfaction at hotels in East Jakarta. The service quality variables used were those defined by Parsuraman as the five dimensions of service quality. To analyze the relationship between dimensions of physical evidence, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy with hotel customer satisfaction. This research method is quantitative and online questionnaires were distributed to 155 customers in East Jakarta spa hotels. Data was analyzed using SPSS ver 25. The results of the Cronbach Alpha analysis showed the reliability of the identified factors. The relationship between the dimensions of physical evidence and customer satisfaction is significant. The relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction is significant. The relationship between responsiveness and customer satisfaction is significant. The relationship between guaranteed certainty and customer satisfaction is significant. The relationship between empathy and customer satisfaction is significant. From the correlation analysis, it can be concluded that the dimensions of service quality have a significant positive correlation with customer satisfaction, meaning that if the quality of service changes, the customer satisfaction is expected to increase as well.*

**Keywords:** Physical Evidence, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy, Customer Satisfaction

## INTRODUCTION

The Spa industry is a fast growing industry in the world. In Asia, it grew more than 100% from 2003 to 2009, while in Indonesia alone, this industry grew by 174%. This phenomenon has a beneficial impact on the products used by the spa industry, especially companies that produce local or traditional spa products. In order to anticipate the needs and desires of customers for spa products, it is very important to consider the quality of spa services seen from the expectations and perceptions of international and domestic tourists. The pressures associated with modern lifestyles can have a negative impact on health and can lead to high levels of stress so that consumers seek opportunities for relaxation. Health tourism, especially spa tourism, is one of the main choices for people who want to fight stress in their daily lives or treat certain diseases (Vajirakachorn, 2004). The demand for spa tourism has been increasing globally for more than 20 years (Gligorijevic & Petrovic, 2010; Madanoglu & Brezina, 2008) Spa tourism is currently

one of the fastest growing health tourism sub-sectors (Mak et al., 2009). The study focuses on measuring the quality of spa services in East Jakarta hotels.

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. This sector makes a major contribution to economic development, poverty reduction, employment and has various other positive impacts like economic, social, political and cultural. At a macro level, Indonesia's national tourism in 2020, shows the development and contribution that continues to grow, and is increasingly significant to the national GDP of 4.23% or Rp. 461.36 trillion. This resulted, in an increase of foreign exchange being generated, reaching USD 11.9 billion and a workforce of 12.16 million people. Alshehri et al. (2021) and Soliha et al. (2021). The more number of tourists visiting a tourist attraction or the greater the development of an area is due to tourism, one of the essential requirement is lodging or hotel services. Lodging or hotel services are very important, as visitors need a place to rest, stay overnight, have meetings, or plan other activities while traveling. A hotel is an organization engaged in activities that focuses on offering guests quality services. Hotels are required to have the best form of services to be offered to hotel guests, so that the guests choose their services. Providing the best service, of course every hotel will use creativity or innovation to expand the hotel guest market. So the competition as the best and most affordable service provider will be seen in the ease of obtaining information. Providing good service to consumers by a company will create customer satisfaction. If consumers are satisfied, they will make repeat purchases and recommend others to buy at the same place. Therefore, companies must start thinking about the importance of customer service in a more mature manner through quality service. It is increasingly recognized that quality service is now a vital aspect required to maintain business and win over competition.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several studies in the field of health tourism from a demand perspective (Connell, 2006; Garcia-Altes, 2005), but there is a lack of research on spa tourism and spa hotels in the literature (Koh et al., 2010; Mak et al., 2009). This research was done to answer the question: What service performance strategies are implemented to increase customer satisfaction at East Jakarta hotels? The research objective is to analyze and examine the relationship and influence of service quality variables to customer satisfaction at hotels in East Jakarta. The spa is one of the fastest growing tourism market segments (Mak et al., 2009). The number of spa locations has grown by an annual average of 20 percent and there are more than 100 million active spa visitors worldwide (Kim et al., 2010; Saar, 2010). This sector continues to grow in terms of demand and economic potential and has led to the opening of more companies related to spas (Madanoglu & Brezina, 2008). One of the most important types of businesses in the spa industry are spa hotels (Hsieh et al., 2008) which aim to promote the overall well-being of mind, body and spirit through various professional services (Saar, 2010). The quality of some non-healthcare services is as important as the specialized healthcare services provided, in ensuring guest satisfaction and in distinguishing the hotel from its competitors (Bennett et al., 2004; Lebe, 2006). A service product has four well-documented characteristics that differentiate it from a physical product: intangibility (a service product is intangible and cannot be evaluated prior to purchase); heterogeneity (performance varies from producer to producer); the inseparability of production and consumption (production and consumption take place simultaneously); perishable (the product cannot be stored for later use) (Antony et al., 2004; Parasuraman et al., 1985) Currently, quality is considered as the main driver in improving a company's business performance (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Sureshchandar et al., 2002) and is variously defined as

“value, conformity with requirements, suitability for use and meeting customer expectations (Lin et al., 2001) Quality is essential to gain a competitive advantage in today's business world (Sureshchandar et al., 2002).

In the service industry, definitions of service quality tend to focus on meeting customer expectations and how well the services provided match their expectations (Munhurrun et al, 2009; Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988). However, due to the intangible nature of service products, measuring service quality may be more difficult than measuring the quality of physical products (Babakus & Manngold, 1992; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Karatepe et al., 2005). One of the most widely used instruments to measure service quality is SERVQUAL, developed and later refined by (Parasuraman et al., 1991; Parasuraman et al., 1988). Parasuraman et al. (1985) began studying service quality using disconfirmation, namely focusing on the gap between customer expectations and perceptions. Service quality is considered higher when the gap between customer expectations and perceived performance is small or non-existent (Barringer, 2008; Parasuraman et al., 1985). Parasuraman et al. (1985) identified ten dimensions in assessing service quality which were reduced to five dimensions: tangibles; reliability; responsiveness; guarantee; empathy (Barringer, 2008; Parasuraman et al., 1988). In SERVQUAL, 22 statements are used to measure performance across these five dimensions. The hotel sector is a major element in a rapidly growing and highly competitive tourism industry (Shi & Su, 2007). In this competitive arena, service quality has become a critical success factor (Avcikurt et al., 2011). So, it is very important that hotel managers get continuous feedback from their customers about the quality of service so that they can continue to improve it (Braunlich et al., 1995; Briggs et al., 2007; Nadiri & Hussain, 2005; Yilmaz, 2009). Researchers continue to focus on measuring service quality in hotels and restaurants (Juliana et al., 2021; Juliana, 2019; Markovic & Raspor, 2010), and responsiveness does not fit the lodging sector well (Akbaba, 2006; Fowdar, 2007). According to Jallad (2000) the main purpose of health tourism is to recommend the idea of relaxation, leisure, and leisure time for customers to compensate for daily stress and routine, and therefore stay at a health resort spa. Satisfaction refers to the condition of the buyer who is adequately rewarded in a situation where the purchase has been concluded for the expense that was made (Al-alak, 2009).

Satisfaction adequacy is the result of matching previous actual purchase and consumption experiences with the expected rewards of the brand in terms of their anticipated potential to satisfy customers (Loudon et al., 1993). Oliver (1997) defines satisfaction as customer satisfaction responses. It is an assessment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides a satisfactory level of fulfillment related to consumption. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003) translate Oliver's definition of satisfaction which means that satisfaction is the customer's evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether that product or service has met their needs and expectations. The customer satisfaction literature shows that expectation is the most direct determinant of satisfaction, followed by perceived performance (Kim, 2005). Value perception theory considers satisfaction as an emotional response triggered by a cognitive evaluation process (Parker & Mathews, 2001). However, Swan and Combs (1976) are among the first to suggest that satisfaction is associated with performance that meets expectations, whereas dissatisfaction occurs when performance falls below expectations. Therefore, it is clear that customer satisfaction is abstract and ambiguous. The concept of manifestation of satisfaction differs from one person to another and from one product to another (Munteanu et al., 2010). The condition called 'satisfaction' depends on a number of psychological and physical variables, and

correlates with certain behaviors. Among the psychological variables, personal beliefs, attitudes and evaluations can influence customer satisfaction (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Service quality is an assessment factor that reflects consumer perceptions of five specific indicators of service performance. The five indicators of service quality are described by Maharsi et al. (2021), Wardana et al. (2021), Zaid and Patwayati (2021) as follows:

1. Tangibles, with regard to the attractiveness of physical facilities, equipment and materials used by the company, as well as the appearance of employees.
2. Reliability, related to the company's ability to provide accurate service from the first time without making any mistakes and delivering services according to the agreed time.
3. Responsiveness, with regard to the willingness and ability to help customers and process their requests, as well as informing when services will be provided and then providing those services quickly.
4. Assurance, with regard to employee behavior will foster customer trust in the company and the company can create a sense of security for customers.
5. Empathy, means that the company understands the customer problems and acts in the interests of customers, as well as giving personal attention to customers and has convenient operating hours. This study aims to determine the extent to which tourists perceive the quality of spa services that meet their expectations.

The study also determines the relationship and the influence of service quality variables on customer satisfaction at hotels in East Jakarta. The service quality variable used was developed from the service quality variable defined by Parsuraman in five dimensions of service quality, namely: physical evidence, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Each dimension consists of several service variables, to analyze the relationship between dimensions of physical evidence, responsiveness, assurance, empathy with hotel customer satisfaction. This research method is quantitative and online questionnaires were distributed to 155 customers in East Jakarta spa hotels.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research is quantitative in nature, where the data collection for the independent variable and the dependent variable uses a questionnaire and a Likert scale, at the same time. This study aims to determine the relationship of service quality variables and their influence on customer satisfaction at hotels in East Jakarta. The service quality variable used was developed from the service quality variable defined by Parsuraman in five dimensions of service quality, namely: physical evidence, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Each dimension consists of several service variables.

According to Roscoe (1975), Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the sample size for multivariate analysis must be many times (preferably ten times or more) the number of variables tested. The sample of this study is the customers of hotels in East Jakarta, determined by random sampling with as many as 155 people. Before being analyzed, the data from the questionnaire were first tested for validity and reliability, using the Pearson Correlation and the Cronbach coefficient. The statistical count in the form of validity test, reliability test, correlation analysis and multiple regression, from these data, uses SPSS ver. 25.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For the physical evidence dimension, the Pearson correlation value is significant at 0.01, which is already less than 0.05. Thus the Pearson correlation is significant. This means that the data for physical evidence is valid. The Cronbach coefficient for the dimensions of physical evidence is 0.8080, which is already greater than 0.6, so it can be said that the data for physical evidence is reliable. For the reliability dimension, the Pearson correlation value is significant at 0.01, where this value is already less than 0.05. Thus the Pearson correlation is significant. This means that the data for reliability are valid. The Cronbach coefficient for the reliability dimension is 0.900, which is already greater than 0.6, so it can be said that the data for reliability is reliable. For the responsiveness dimension, the Pearson correlation value is significant at 0.01, where this value is already less than 0.05. Thus the Pearson correlation is significant. This means that the data for responsiveness is valid. The Cronbach coefficient for the responsiveness dimension is 0.8806, which is already greater than 0.6, so it can be said that the data for physical evidence is reliable.

For the assurance dimension, the Pearson correlation value is significant at 0.01, where this value is already less than 0.05 (Table 1). Thus the Pearson correlation is significant. This means the data for assurance of certainty is valid. The Cronbach coefficient for the assurance dimension is 0.9217, which is already greater than 0.6, so it can be said that the data for certainty assurance is reliable. For the dimension of empathy, the Pearson correlation value is significant at 0.01, where this value is already less than 0.05. Thus the Pearson correlation is significant. It means that the data for empathy are valid. The Cronbach coefficient for the empathy dimension of 0.8606 is already greater than 0.6, so it can be said that the data for empathy is reliable. For the customer satisfaction variable, the Pearson correlation value is significant at 0.01, where this value is already less than 0.05. Thus the Pearson correlation is significant. This means that the data for customer satisfaction is valid. The Cronbach coefficient for the customer satisfaction dimension is 0.9176, which is already greater than 0.6, so it can be said that the data for customer satisfaction is reliable. From the validity and reliability test, it was concluded that the data obtained were valid and reliable. Based on these data, correlation and regression analysis were carried out.

The relationship between the dimensions of physical evidence and customer satisfaction is stated by a correlation value of 0.462 at sig. 0,000. Since the sig. value is less than 0.05, this relationship is significant. These results are consistent with research conducted by Saad and Alshehri (2021) and Soliha et al. (2021) that the dimensions of physical evidence are related to customer satisfaction. Research conducted by Laparojkit and Suttioun (2021), states that the dimensions of physical evidence are related to customer satisfaction. According to the research conducted by Soliha et al. (2021), Sasono et al. (2021), Maharsi et al. (2021), Wardana et al. (2021), Zaid and Patwayati (2021), the dimensions of physical evidence are aligned with customer satisfaction.

Table 1 CORRELATION OF SERVICE QUALITY VARIABLES WITH CUSTOMER SATISFACTION							
Pearson Correlation		Satisfaction	XX1	XX2	XX3	XX4	XX5
	Satisfaction	1,000	,462	,548	,567	,654	,540
<b>Tangibles</b>	XX1	,462	1,000	,539	,470	,506	,352
<b>Reliability</b>	XX2	,548	,539	1,000	,596	,541	,435
<b>Responsiveness</b>	XX3	,567	,470	,596	1,000	,645	,629
<b>Assurance</b>	XX4	,654	,506	,541	,645	1,000	,581
<b>Empathy</b>	XX5	,540	,352	,435	,629	,581	1,000
<b>Sig. (1-tailed)</b>	Satisfaction	.	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
	XX1	,000	.	,000	,000	,000	,000
	XX2	,000	,000	.	,000	,000	,000
	XX3	,000	,000	,000	.	,000	,000
	XX4	,000	,000	,000	,000	.	,000
	XX5	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	.

The relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction is stated by a correlation value of 0.548 in sig. 0,000. Since the sig value is less than 0.05, this relationship is significant. These results are consistent with research conducted by Saad and Alshehri (2021) and Soliha et al. (2021) which state that the dimensions of reliability lead to customer satisfaction. Research conducted by Laparokit and Suttioun (2021); Soliha et al. (2021); Sasono et al. (2021); Maharsi et al. (2021); Wardana et al. (2021); Zaid and Patwayati (2021) states that the dimensions of reliability are in sync with customer satisfaction.

The relationship between responsiveness and customer satisfaction is stated by a correlation value of 0.567 at sig. 0,000. Since the sig. value is less than 0.05, this relationship is significant. These results are consistent with research conducted by Saad and Alshehri (2021) and Soliha et al. (2021) that the dimensions of responsiveness to customer satisfaction. Research conducted by Laparokit and Suttioun (2021); Soliha et al. (2021); Sasono et al. (2021); Maharsi et al. (2021); Wardana et al. (2021); Zaid and Patwayati (2021) states that the dimensions of responsiveness are pro customer satisfaction and in accordance with the research.

The relationship between the assurance of certainty and customer satisfaction is stated by a correlation value of 0.654 at sig. 0,000. Because the sig. value is less than 0.05, this relationship is significant. This result is in accordance with research conducted by Saad and Alshehri (2021) and Soliha et al. (2021); Laparokit and Suttioun (2021); Soliha et al. (2021); Sasono et al. (2021); Maharsi et al. (2021); Wardana et al. (2021); Zaid and Patwayati (2021) who state that the dimensions of assurance are with customer satisfaction and in accordance with research conducted.

The relationship between empathy and customer satisfaction is expressed by a correlation value of 0.540 in sig. 0,000. Since the sig. value is less than 0.05, this relationship is significant. These results are in accordance with research conducted by Saad and Alshehri (2021) and Soliha et al. (2021) who state that the dimensions of empathy are needed for customer satisfaction.

**Table 2  
MODEL SUMMARY**

<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>	<b>Durbin-Watson</b>
,711	,506	,496	2,328	2,049

Research conducted by Laparojkit and Suttioun (2021) states that the dimensions of empathy align with customer satisfaction and according to the research conducted by Soliha et al. (2021); Sasono et al. (2021); Maharsi et al. (2021); Wardana et al. (2021); Zaid and Patwayati (2021). The results of multiple regression using the stepwise method are shown in Tables 2, 3 and 4.

**Table 3  
ANOVA**

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	838,660	3	279,553	51,587	,000
Residual	818,282	151	5,419		
Total	1,656,942	154			

Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

**Table 4  
COEFFICIENTS**

	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>			
<b>(Constant)</b>	2,411	1,436		1,679	,095
<b>Assurance</b>	,330	,062	,409***	5,356	,000
<b>Reliability</b>	,205	,059	,240**	3,482	,001
<b>Empathy</b>	,332	,120	,198**	2,771	,006

\*\*, p-value <0.05; \*\*\* p-value < 0.01; significant at the 0.05 level

Based on these results, there are three dimensions of service quality that have a significant effect on customer satisfaction, namely reliability (XX2), assurance (XX4) and empathy (XX5). This is reinforced by the t-count value for each of these dimensions which is significant at a sig. value that is less than 0.05. Together, these three dimensions significantly affect customer satisfaction with an F value of 51.587 at sig. 0.000. The correlation of the three dimensions of service quality together shows a value of 0.711, also showing a strong correlation. The third contribution in the dimension of service quality is shown by the Ninal R-square of 0.506, which means that 50.6% of customer satisfaction is largely determined by reliability, assurance and empathy. Meanwhile, as much as 49.4% is determined by dimensions or other variables not examined in this study. There are two dimensions of service quality that do not significantly affect customer satisfaction, namely physical evidence and responsiveness. Therefore, the hotel management, based on the results of this study, must increase physical evidence and responsiveness.

Research and theory developed by Saad and Alshehri (2021) and Soliha et al. (2021) for services that guests feel are appropriate or close to guest expectations, so guests will feel comfortable such that there is an interest or desire to use the service again. Thus it can be

concluded that if the quality of service provided is better, it will stimulate loyalty in guests. This is also in accordance with the research objectives which understand the significant effect of service quality on hotel guest loyalty. This study is in line with research conducted by Sasono et al. (2021). It is said that many organizations have realized that maintaining excellence depends on obtaining customer loyalty, because service quality is a necessary ingredient to convince customers to choose one organization over another. Achieving a high level of quality of the service provided is of importance for loyal customers. Providing high quality services is considered the most effective way to ensure the superiority of hospitality services over its competitors by maintaining customer loyalty.

Alshehri (2021) and Soliha et al. (2021) state that tourist satisfaction should be considered to be a model designed to understand the determinants of tourist loyalty. In the hospitality sector, tourist loyalty needs to be considered in relation to tourist satisfaction when designing and providing services. Policies need to be developed on strategy to ensure that tourists are loyal to a hotel, on the basis of customers or tourists who are satisfied with the services provided, Laparojkit and Suttioun (2021). The satisfaction felt by hotel guests is the result of the guest's personal experience in using the services of the service provider. If the service provider is deemed in accordance with the personal value of the guest and makes him satisfied, it is highly possible that the guest will use the service again and even recommend it to others.

Research conducted by Maharsi et al. (2021); Wardana et al. (2021); Zaid and Patwayati (2021) determined that in general there is a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction has been widely recognized as an indicator of customer loyalty in the hotel industry. This study also shows that satisfied hotel guests tend to remain loyal to the service provider concerned, therefore customer loyalty is a highly valued asset and is a reflection of the long-term success guaranteed to a hotel if it can expand and maintain customer loyalty.

## CONCLUSION

The relationship between the dimensions of physical evidence and customer satisfaction is significant. The relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction is significant. The relationship between responsiveness and customer satisfaction is significant. The relationship between guaranteed certainty and customer satisfaction is significant. The relationship between empathy and customer satisfaction is significant. From the correlation analysis, it can be concluded that the dimensions of service quality have a significant positive correlation with customer satisfaction, meaning that if the quality of service changes, the customer satisfaction is expected to increase as well. The hotel is expected to be able to maintain and improve the quality of service, by improving those dependent on employees, tangible effects, and better service code of ethics. It is hoped that hotels like, Hotel Mahkota Plengkung, pay attention to the level of satisfaction of hotel guests, because of the positive ratings that these guests give after a visit, can result in them becoming loyal by recommending the hotel to other parties, growing trust, making repeat visits and so on. For further researchers or other interested parties who will carry out further research, especially those related to the influence of service quality, satisfaction and loyalty of hotel guests, they can research at different locations with different dynamics. In addition, further research can add other variables or use other intermediary variables besides hotel guest satisfaction.

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