

## AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON SERVICE QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE IN MALAYSIAN HOTELS

Qudratullah<sup>\*1</sup>, Ikmal Abd Malik<sup>2</sup>, Azrin Abdul Razak<sup>3</sup>, Grace Derioh<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone, Indonesia

<sup>2,3,4</sup>UNITAR International University, Malaysia

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**ABSTRACT:** This study explores employees' scope and level of commitment towards service quality management practises in Malaysian hotel organizations. A descriptive research design is used to investigate the parameters of hotel service quality management. By applying a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods from 100 hotels in Kuala Lumpur, 54 hotels responded, resulting in a response rate of 45%. The results indicate that the design and monitoring functions were ranked as the two most essential phases in the service management process to incorporate service quality practises into a hotel's infrastructure for improved service quality gap management, followed by the implementation and planning functions.

**Keywords:** Quality Service; Hotel Organisation; Hospitality Management; Service Sector

\*Corresponding Author : [qudratullah@iain-bone.ac.id](mailto:qudratullah@iain-bone.ac.id)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Hospitality is a unique operating system which is considered the people industry. It is a service business where the hosts provide service to guests apart from home (Christou and Sharples, 2019). One of the hospitality industry's characteristics, stated by Walker (2008), is the operation time of 24 hours a day and 365 days a year for hospitality businesses (Ampofo, 2020). A study conducted by Pradhan (2021) also pointed out that the personnel in the hospitality industry have to work a long time compared to the other industries due to its long hour's operation time. The personnel in this industry even need to work during the holiday, while others enjoy their free time. In the operation of a hospitality business, many peaks and valleys happen. In a hotel, seasonal fluctuations are months with a high, moderate, or low volume of business. Besides, weekly fluctuations also can be seen in a hotel. There are differences in business volume between weekdays and weekends. Even in a day, it has peak and valley time. Many customers will patronize the restaurant during the meal period (Lahap, Azlan, Bahri, Said, Abdullah and Zain, 2018).

George (2021) has explained another characteristic of the hospitality industry: inseparability. Both the host and guests are indispensable in the transaction in the hospitality industry (Brotherton, 1999; Velthuis, 2022). There is interaction exists between the hospitality provider and receiver. Nunkoo, Robin, Viraiyan, Christian and Vivek (2020) have recognized that customer-employee contact is part of the product. Customers may dissatisfy with poor service delivery despite the high quality of food. Customers are also considered as part of the product. The behaviour of one group of customers, such as making a loud noise, can influence another group.

Service in the hospitality industry needs to meet customer satisfaction besides making a profit and creating customer loyalty (Adebayo, 2019). Besides, a good image of the hospitality industry would at least depend on the service business provided by the organizations under the hospitality system (Chung, 2020). Thus, service must be treated as a function that will help the organization generate profit, ensure high quality, and make every moment count (Lane and Dupre, 1997). Generally, service plays a significant role in customer-oriented industries such as hospitality. It was argued that the service quality in the hospitality industry was highly competitive in meeting customer satisfaction (Hung, 2017). The importance of customer service in hospitality is highlighted since that customer decision has a significant implication for the continued survival of the business in the market based on the degree of customer satisfaction.

Good service is usually associated with better customer relationships. Establishing good customer relationships is vital, particularly in the hospitality industry. Satisfaction toward the quality of service received significantly affects business performance, in which good service quality will lead to customers' repetitive patronage (Su, 2016). Designing quality service has gradually evolved, becoming an essential issue in the hospitality industry. The service quality should be continuous and consistent. The first-time visit of customers in

experiencing the service will affect the decision for their patronage in the future. A pleasant service experience will retain regular customers and develop more business. On the other hand, a bad service experience causes complaints, negative word-of-mouth, lower satisfaction, and reputation loss. Service quality as a business concept is a relatively new concept compared to the idea of product quality. For a service organization, managing quality is a challenging and complex problem which essentially combines both the features of the product (tangible) and the service (intangible). Anaman and DaCosta (2018) added that not only does the organization faces the problem of providing a high-quality product, but it is also required to counter the problems of service delivery through a high degree of interaction between employees and customer. Varsanis (2019) refers to service encounters as the "moment of truth or critical incidents".

On the other hand, total quality management (TQM) requires a comprehensive organizational approach. Feigenbaum (1961) first defined TQM as an effective system for integrating quality development, quality maintenance, and quality improvement efforts of the various groups in an organization to enable production and service at the most economical levels that allow for total customer satisfaction. TQM had a rising and considerable impact on service quality beginning in the late 1980s when it became one of the most overall management strategies. Customer orientation became the first TQM principle focusing on the individuals who purchase products or services. The discovery and anticipation of client requirements and experiences became vital for measuring service quality (Chen, Reyes, Dahlgaard and Dahlgaard-Park, 2022). Cortada (1993) suggested three basic steps in determining the organization's definition of quality. First, solicit customers' views on what quality should be. Second, to get ideas from the employees, each needs to understand what constitutes quality and be convinced of the importance of delivering quality service. The third step is to determine how competitors define quality. However, establishing effective quality improvement programmes necessitates the regular monitoring of present quality levels before judgements can be made regarding the direction of future improvements.

Quality is a management process and a business strategy that should lead to a competitive advantage. Cortada (1993) added three characteristics of effective quality initiatives: (1) Information – decisions are made based on facts. Facts about the competitors, the external environment, and the internal operations; (2) Cycle Time Reduction – the ability to enter the market earlier than competitors. The focus is on all the activities involved in the process, and the aim is to shorten the time required for each activity; (3) Task and Processes. The task is viewed as a process or group of activities. The documentation of all steps in the task is required as this will enhance the organization's ability to identify strategies that could be eliminated or whose cycle time could be reduced.

The fundamental issues arise from the need to manage the quality movement of the organizations more effectively and in totality. The tourism industry in Malaysia has been acknowledged as one of the most important contributions to the country's economic prosperity. The sector has achieved numerous local and international notable milestones over the years. In addition

to being ranked 4th in Southeast Asia as a top tourist destination, US-based online travel guide Travel Lemming has placed Malaysia 27th in its “Best Places to Travel in the World in 2022”, ranking among 50 countries. On top of that, Malaysia has been recognized as first in the list of best Muslim-friendly holiday destinations, according to the MasterCard-Crescent Rating Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) 2021. However, in the National Tourism policy, the year 2020 – 2030, published by MOTAC (Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture), Malaysia's inability to cultivate a service culture has led to an actual or perceived decline in service quality compared to the ASEAN neighbours. It is empirical that researchers need to continually update the understanding of how an ever-changing customer base perceives hotel service excellence and mitigate service quality integration in an organization. The competition between hotels to attract and keep guests is severe. Customers may be less inclined to return if they fail to satisfy their service quality standards, regardless of the price range (Rauch, Collins, Nale and Barr, 2015). Hotel organizations are confronted with challenges and problems that have magnified quickly. Issues such as workforce suitability and intense competition demanded that organizations re-examine their traditional management practices. It requires the organization to continuously monitor environmental changes and proact by aligning the organization's processes and systems to meet future demands. Service quality has emerged as the vehicle to provide a competitive edge. Thus, the purpose of this study is two-fold, i.e., to determine to what extent the quality management concept and fundamentals are woven into the organizational structure and processes and to investigate the organization's commitment towards their service quality.

## THEORETICAL REVIEW

The conceptual model used for this study is illustrated in Figure 1. The framework is based on the premise that the progression of the process begins with the planning for the quality phase. It proceeds to the quality design phase, followed by the implementation of quality programs, and lastly, by monitoring the quality programs phase. At every stage, there would be a feedback loop to review the progress/appropriateness of the programs. This would be the continuous quality improvement process. Thus, there is no beginning and ending to the process.

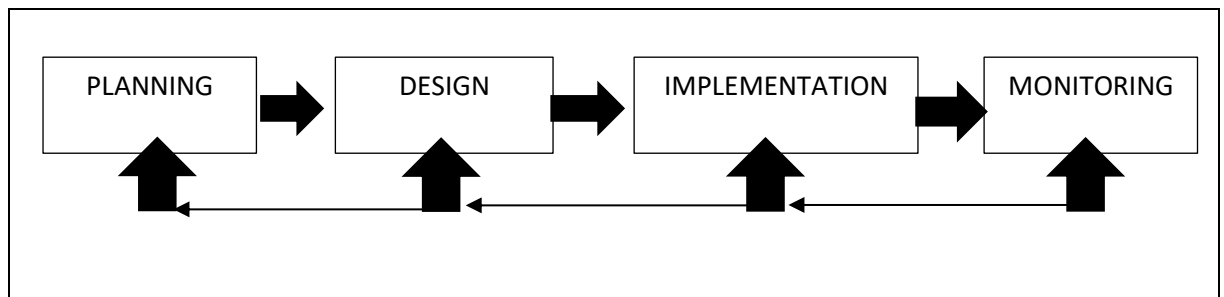


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Service quality is widely acknowledged as a crucial success factor in a company's efforts to differentiate itself from rivals. Due to its significant influence on corporate performance, profitability, customer satisfaction, customer retention, and service guarantee, service quality has been an essential subject of study in various disciplines throughout the years (Sohail,2003). The development of the SERVQUAL scale was based on service marketing theory, which at the time lacked adequate conceptual frameworks for investigating service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985). The segment used as a sample for the development of SERVQUAL was based on banking organizations and insurance companies. The SERVQUAL scale was then adjusted to reflect some of the distinctive characteristics of the leisure, tourism, and hospitality industries in the United States or to solve some of the fundamental flaws of the original SERVQUAL scale (Parasuraman et al., 1991). While this instrument may help analyze the levels of consumer satisfaction with various features of services, it does not accurately measure the quality of complex leisure, tourism, and hospitality services (Augustyn and Seakhoa-King, 2005). The authors added that measuring consumer satisfaction only partially adds to comprehending how well an organization operates regarding the quality levels offered.

Meanwhile, finding ways to improve the delivery process's quality at each stage enhances the overall product or service quality. The organization must prepare the infrastructure for improvement to ensure quality commitment at all levels. Employees must be empowered to act towards quality improvement. Each organization needs to take an incremental approach, moving at a pace and direction that suits its existing culture and management style.

For service providers to produce and deliver a service, management must recognize what that means in practice. Mudie and Cottam's (1994) service management framework briefly noted the essential elements of good service practice, where a service must be channelled through an adequately planned foundation (planning). Quality service will unlikely be delivered if these "bottom line" design, structure, and setting conditions (design) are not adequately considered. To serve customers, human resources, materials, and equipment must be deployed and managed to deliver the service desired by customers (implementation). The company must set and enforce service quality standards throughout the entire process. Finally, service performance must be monitored and evaluated (monitoring) to assess commitment success. This ongoing process will enable management to identify and fix gaps in its service quality integration into the organization's infrastructure.

However, Dale (1994) identified eight elements of total quality management, they are (1) Customer-driven quality standards; (2) customers are internal and external; (3) Prevention rather than cure; (4) Commitment at the highest echelons; (5) Each employee is a quality inspector; (6) Two-way communication; (7) Continuous improvement, and (8) Measurement. In a study on hospitality education, Fried and Richardson (1994) indicated four essential components of total quality management—team problem-solving, strategic

planning, performance standards, and customer feedback management. As they suggested, these four components could be divided into ten units forming integral parts of total quality management. They are (1) Action planning, (2) Cost-Benefit analysis, (3) Designing customers' surveys, (4) Designing employees' surveys, (5) Group Dynamics, (6) Guest Feedback management, (7) Mission statement, (8) Performance standards; (9) Strategic Planning, and (10) team problem-solving.

Dale (1994) indicated eight fundamental elements in total quality management. The first element is the total commitment and leadership requirement of the chief executive, immediate executive, and senior officers. They must fully believe in the concept and that it suits the organization. The second element is planning and organizing, which would include developing a clear, long-term strategy for total quality management, and the know-how of building service quality into designs and processes, developing plans for quality systems, and the infrastructure to support the improvement agendas. The third element is the development of tools and techniques to support the continuous improvement process, which should be integrated into routine operations. The fourth element would be education and training, which should be provided to every team member to ensure their general awareness of the quality management efforts and the relevant skills and appropriate attitude to support the quality move. The fifth element is involvement, which means that management always seeks and listens to employees' views and suggestions, recognizing that employees are valuable assets required to ensure the plan's successful implementation. The next element is teamwork, the knowledge of the nature and types of teams to be stable to fit into the organization structure, and the reward and compensation systems should be aligned with the team concept. The seventh element is measurement and feedback, designing and implementing a series of critical internal and external performance indicators. These would be used as feedback on improving the systems. The last element is a cultural change that will ensure continued support for quality improvement in which every employee can participate. Changing employee behaviour and attitude remains one of the most challenging as it would require considerable ability and skills in motivation and persuasion. Thus, a conscious effort must be devoted to building the infrastructure to support the cultural change process.

The total quality management approach assumes that the entire organization is committed to delivering quality, not just to external customers. The production of the service delivery system is seen as a series of links in the quality chain, with each employee acting as a supplier to the next employee until the service is delivered to external customers. Developing a quality culture presents a challenging role in management. Any attempt at instituting a service quality program must be supported by the changes required in the organizational culture. Some of the factors to be considered in changing culture are the human resource management practices, administrative and work unit structures, and the appropriate systems support such as technical communication network for the deployment of policies, procedures and

feedback, external communication such as customer education and awareness, and the creation of proper expectations and image.

Qiu et al. (2019) stated that exceptional service could not be delivered to the customer until good service exists within the organization and that progressive organizations develop a service culture within their organization to compete and be successful where it counts, that is, outside in the marketplace. From his studies on organizations, he found that to sustain their competitive advantage, the service culture must be founded on five pillars which he termed as REACH: Research, Empowerment, Acknowledgement, Communication, and Help. Organizations must begin with research and analysis into their customers' requirements, needs, and beliefs on the expectation of service quality. This would be followed by Empowerment which implied that everyone from the chief executive officer to the first-level employees must be given the authority to develop and maintain a service culture. Management must have the power to establish the service strategy and be provided with the tools and techniques to reinforce them. Acknowledgement meant management should set service quality standards expected by its customers and employees. The measures must be communicated to all employees through the training and educational programs provided. In short, Brien (2017) called the methodology the EDGE process: Evaluation, Design, Guide (Implementation), and Encourage Excellence. The first step in conducting the Evaluation process is to benchmark the best practices of other organizations. The process is followed by thoroughly investigating the organization's standing compared to the best and identify the gap. In the design process, the gaps are reviewed to determine the causes of the differences, and this process should be done with the involvement of all employees. In planning the actions, quality teams should be formed, training programs should be developed and implemented, and the communication network to be set up to ensure that the climate of change is assimilated throughout the organization. The final step is to provide the sustainability of a service excellence culture.

Fried and Richardson (1994), in their study of the essential components of total quality management, initially use the four components as suggested by the American Hotel and Motel Association model. The four components are Team Problem Solving, Strategic Planning, Performance Standards, and Guest Feedback management. These four components were further broken down into ten elements, i.e., action planning, cost-benefit analysis, designing customer surveys, designing employee surveys, group dynamics, guest feedback management, mission statements, performance standards, strategic planning, and team problem-solving.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A descriptive design was used in this study to describe service quality management practices in hotel organizations systematically. This cross-sectional design is the most relevant when assessing the prevalence of attitudes and knowledge, in validation studies comparing, for example, different measurement instruments and in reliability studies (Kesmodel, 2018). Cross-sectional research

design is undertaken to dig out information on total quality management practices, the degree of commitment shown through the support given and areas of priority in managing services. This cross-sectional study spanned a period of six weeks, with first and second follow-ups. As a preliminary study, 100 hotels were selected from a list in Kuala Lumpur's capital. According to Hair et., al (2018), the minimum sample for an exploratory study cannot exceed 50. Primary data were collected through a mail survey questionnaire, while secondary information was collected from the organizations' websites and brochures. The ten elements of total quality management concepts, as defined by Fried and Richardson's (1994) model, can be divided into four categories as suggested by Mudie and Cottam (1994):

- a. Planning Function: Action Planning; Strategic Planning
- b. Design Function: Mission Statements; Performance Standards; Designing Customer Surveys; Designing Employee Surveys
- c. Implementation Function: Group Dynamics; Team Problem Solving
- d. Monitoring Function: Guest Feedback Analysis; Cost-Benefit Analysis

This study adopted a 5-point Likert scale, as shown below, to measure the mean score of each item in the ten components.

Table 1. Likert's Composition of Research

1.00 - 1.79	1.80 - 2.59	2.60 - 3.40	3.41 - 4.21	4.22 - 5.00
Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High

The qualitative analysis will be five-fold – first, the data regarding providing the profile of the organizations. Secondly, the service quality components measure the functions of planning, design, implementation, and monitoring. Thirdly, the overall priority of service quality practices is presented. Fourthly, this study will identify the most valued factor, and fifthly, it by indicating the areas that require immediate attention. In contrast, the quantitative analysis will focus on the mean scores of each item in the service quality components and the priority ranking in the service quality practices. These practices will provide a descriptive information for strategic changes within organization.

## RESULTS

Table 2 shows that out of 100 hotels contacted, 54 responded, resulting in a response rate of 45%. The profiles of respondents are top-level management in the hotels. This selection will present the best information for the study's objective in the strategic infrastructure service quality of the hotel industry. The hotel managements are responsible for the construction of strategic decision-making, thus prompting the specific needs in this study.



Table 2. Profile of Respondents.

Positions	Number	Percent
First level – CEO or General Manager	17	32
Second level – Directors or Department Heads	21	39
Third level – Assistant Department Heads	4	7
No response	12	22
Total	54	100

As indicated by Table 3, the responding organizations can be categorized by their employment numbers. A fair number of employees, amounting to >500, dominates the data correspondence.

Table 3. Profile of Responding Organizations.

Number of Employees	Number	Percent
800 and over	9	17
500 to 799	10	19
300 to 499	9	17
200 to 299	9	17
100 to 199	5	9
99 and less	8	14
No response	4	7
Total	54	100

#### *Functions Supporting Service Quality*

Planning, Design, Implementation, and Monitoring should be integrated into a hotel organization's infrastructure to gauge its level of support for delivering quality services. Table 4 indicates the degree of support for those actions and strategic planning.

Table 4. Planning Function.

No	Factors	Mean Score	Level
1	Availability of formal general environment scanning activities	2.42	Moderate level – examining by department
2	Availability of a formal system to monitor competition	3.78	Quite well-developed system
3	Level of employees' dedication towards service quality	4.32	Very high level of frontline dedication
4	Degree of importance as reflected in the emphasis on attitude towards customers in recruiting management-level employees	2.14	Relatively low- focus mainly on experience and competency
5	Conduct strategic planning on service quality	2.70	Somewhat included but not specific
	<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>Very highly dedicated employees and do focus on monitoring competitors</b>

Regarding formal environment scanning activities, the hotel organizations indicated it was available moderately, with a mean score of 2.42. In contrast, the organizations had quite a well-developed system for monitoring their competitors, with a mean of 3.78. The employees' dedication towards service quality was extremely high at 4.32 on a 5-point scale. However, when recruiting management-level employees, there was quite a low emphasis on customer attitude, as reflected in the mean score of 2.14. The focus was placed mainly on experience and competencies. Service quality was also only moderately indicated in strategic planning, with a mean score of 2.70. Thus, the overall mean score was 3.07, with a mixture of moderate and very high scores, specifically the focus on monitoring competitors and the level of employees' dedication. The design function was measured on four factors, i.e., mission statement, performance standards, customer surveys, and employee surveys (see Table 5).

Table 5. Design Function.

No	Factors	Mean Score	Level
1	Quality service is stated in the hotel's mission statement	4.30	Specified
2	The concept of quality service is indicated in the hotel's strategy	3.22	Moderately indicated in the strategy
3	Existence of performance standards to ensure consistency in the service quality delivered	4.72	Very clearly and expressly indicated
4	Existence of a statement on employees' roles in achieving quality service	4.43	Very clearly stated employees' roles
5	Availability of employee surveys with specific feedback on satisfaction with teamwork	2.83	Moderate level - only in some large organizations
6	Existence of a department or individual responsible for ensuring the delivery of quality service	4.57	Designated guest relations division and individual employees
7	Availability customer surveys are designed to get feedback on their satisfaction with service quality received.	3.50	Somewhat high - mainly comment cards
	<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.94</b>	<b>Relatively high with precise design specifications</b>

On the mission statement, quality service was explicitly mentioned by the hotel organization's high mean score rating of 4.30. However, the quality service concept was only moderately indicated in the hotels' strategy, with a mean score of 3.22. Employees' roles in supporting quality service were stipulated, with the mean at 4.43. Some large organizations indicated that they conduct employee surveys, but the smaller organizations did it informally; thus, the overall mean score was at a moderate level of 2.83. Almost all organizations indicated that they

did have guest relations divisions and that they also emphasized that all employees were responsible for delivering service quality. Thus the mean score was displayed at a very high level of 4.57. The mean overall score was relatively high at 3.94, with precise design specifications. The Implementation Function includes group dynamics and team problem-solving factors, as in Table 6.

Table 6. Implementation Function.

No	Factors	Mean Score	Level
1	Availability of reward or compensation for the performance of quality service for external guests	3.12	Moderately indicated – expected of all employees
2	Availability of budget allocation for quality initiatives	2.89	No specific allocation, ad hoc basis
3	Availability of reward provisions for quality service for internal customers	2.11	Relatively low – a tie-in with an employee of the month
4	Use of methods (e.g., suggestion box) to encourage employee creativity	3.20	Suggestion box available – no formal analysis
5	The importance of attitude towards guests and teamwork were criteria in the recruitment of frontline employees	4.50	Extremely important and used
6	Use of employee work team to solve work-related problems	4.22	Used in discussions and briefing
	<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.34</b>	<b>The relatively moderate level of emphasis on teamwork but low on the availability of reward</b>

The hotel organizations indicated that on a moderate level at 3.12 that they had provisions of rewards or compensation for the delivery of quality service, but the mean score was average since all the organizations indicated that it was expected that all employees would provide such since it was part of their job specifications. On a moderate level, with a mean score of 2.89, there is no specific budget allocation for quality initiatives. Related to that, the organizations did not have reward provisions for delivering quality service, with a low mean of 2.11 among employees, except for recognition of 'employee of the month', where some rewards were provided. The suggestion box had a mean score of 3.20, but no formal analysis was conducted to encourage employees' creativity. In the recruitment of guest contact employees, the hotel indicated that teamwork and attitude were of prime importance, as indicated by the high mean score of 4.22. Also, a high score of 4.22 was noted for using employees' teams to solve work-related problems. Thus, the overall mean score for the implementation function

was relatively moderate level at 3.34, with emphasis on teamwork but low on the availability of rewards. In the Monitoring Function, two factors were emphasized: guest feedback and cost-benefit analysis, as detailed in Table 7.

Table 7. Monitoring Function.

No	Factors	Mean Score	Level
1	Level of senior management commitment to service quality	4.56	Extremely high - often observing the process of service delivery
2	Hotel's overall dedication to service quality	4.25	Very high level
3	Management effectiveness in communicating a commitment to service quality to employees	4.20	Relatively high with a regular briefing and online communication
4	Management effectiveness in communicating the successes and failures in delivering quality service	3.78	Somewhat high - communicating exemplary services
5	The team member gains monetarily from a long-term commitment to the delivery of quality service	3.77	Moderately high recognition provided with monetary pay increments
6	Effectiveness use of guest feedback on the delivery of service quality	3.98	Somewhat high - standard procedure
7	Use of feedback analysis in decision making	3.41	Relatively high - use in the improvement of overall service level
8	Conduct of overall cost-benefit analysis in the delivery of quality service	3.48	Moderate level - high in large-size organizations
	<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.93</b>	<b>A pretty high level -of analysis and communication effectiveness</b>

The senior management was very committed to service quality, as indicated by the mean score of 4.56. Thus, the hotel's dedication to service quality was also very high at 4.25. Management was also quite effective at 4.20 in communicating their commitment to service quality. The mean score of 3.78 also indicated a somewhat high level of their ability to share successes and failures in quality service delivery. Employees did moderately gain monetarily for their long-term commitment to quality service, as indicated by the mean score of 3.77. The organizations had an effective mean score of 3.98 in the use of guest feedback to ensure delivery of quality service and input in making decisions, with the

mean score of slightly lower at 3.41. Similarly, the organizations effectively conducted a cost-benefit analysis, at a mean score of 3.48, in delivering service quality. Overall, the mean score was 3.93, indicating a high level of research and communication.

*Overall Priority in Service Quality Practices*

In combining the four functions of Planning, Design, Implementation, and Monitoring, the overall mean score was 3.65, as shown in Table 8, indicating a high priority placed on service quality by hotel organizations. The mean scores for all the functions were quite close, with a range difference of 0.87 or 17.4% between the highest and the lowest scores. The design and the monitoring functions were ranked as the top functions, followed by the implementation and the planning functions.

Table 8. Overall Priority in Service Quality Practices.

Factors	Overall Rating	Mean Score	Ranking
Planning	Very highly dedicated employees and do focus on monitoring competitors	3.07	4
Design	Relatively high with precise design specifications	3.94	1
Implementation	The relatively high emphasis on clear guidelines	3.65	3
Monitoring	Relatively high dedication and communication effectiveness	3.93	2
<b>Overall</b>		<b>3.65</b>	<b>A high level of Priority on Service Quality</b>

*Service Quality Tools*

Data collection methods are used to solicit guests' feedback on service quality. As indicated in Table 9, many hotels (68%) dominate the data.

Table 9. Data Collection Methods.

No	Factors	Percent	Level
1	Comment card	68	Very High - use in most hotels
2	Questionnaire	40	Moderate - use in some hotels
3	Phone Calls	40	Moderate - use in some hotels
4	Meeting with guests	35	Moderate - use in some hotels
5	Suggestion box	3	Very Low - seldom used by hotels
6	Email	65	Very High - use in most hotels
7	Website	46	Moderate - use in some hotels
8	Blog	2	Very Low - seldom used by hotels

On the number of data collection methods used, the most used was three methods, indicated by 69% of the hotels, as in Table 10.

Table 10. The Number of Data Collection Methods Used.

No	Factors	Percent	Level
1	1 method	2	Very Low - use by very few hotels
2	2 methods	6	Very Low - use by few hotels
3	3 methods	69	High - use by the majority of hotels
4	4 methods	35	Moderate - use by some hotels
5	5 methods	5	Very Low - use by few hotels
6	6 methods	1	Very Low - use by very few hotels

In the Ranking of Importance in quality component, the ten features on the four functions were rated and ranked from 1 as the essential factors while ten would be considered as the least important. Table 11 shows the rank order of the components, and the top three highest mean scores were: guest feedback analysis (4.41), team problem solving (4.36), and mission statement. Here service quality was indicated as ranked (4,30). The fourth-ranked was performance standards (3.74), followed by cost-benefit analysis (3.73) and designing customer surveys (3.50). The following four components ranked were considered only of average importance.

Table 11. Ranking of Importance in Quality Component.

Ranking	Variables	Cumulative Score
1	Guest Feedback Analysis	4.41
2	Team Problem Solving	4.36
3	Mission Statement	4.30
4	Performance Standards	3.74
5	Cost-Benefit Analysis	3.73
6	Designing Customers Surveys	3.50
7	Action Planning	3.23
8	Strategic Planning	2.97
9	Group Dynamics	2.83
9	Designing Employee Surveys	2.83

## DISCUSSION

This research was conducted to describe hotel organizations' service quality management practices systematically. This cross-sectional study covers a period of 6 weeks with the first and second follow-ups. As a preliminary study, 100 hotel and lodging organizations were selected from the list of hotels in Kuala Lumpur's capital. From the findings above, four functions measured to indicate the extent of support for delivering quality service that should be woven into the hotel organization's infrastructure were: Planning, Design, Implementation, and Monitoring.

The planning function is essential to any successful hotel organization (Xu et al., 2020). The planning function is responsible for setting goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve those goals. It is the foundation on which all other parts of the hotel organization are built. The planning function allows the hotel organization to monitor progress and adjust as necessary (Melian et al., 2020). The hotel organization can measure its progress towards its goals by setting clear objectives and metrics. Furthermore, it provides a roadmap for the organization, ensures that resources are used effectively, minimizes risks and uncertainties, and allows the hotel organization to monitor progress and adjust as necessary (Khaled, 2021). By investing time and effort in the planning function, hotel organizations can set themselves up for long-term success.

Meanwhile, the design also plays a crucial role in the success of any hotel organization (Alzoubu and Ali, 2021). A well-designed hotel can provide a memorable experience for guests, increase their satisfaction and loyalty, and even impact the business's bottom line. A well-designed hotel also can create a positive brand image, enhance guest comfort and pleasure, improve operational efficiency, and increase financial performance (Padma and Ahn, 2020). Hotel organizations that invest in thoughtful and well-executed design will be better positioned to succeed in today's competitive market.

The hotel industry is highly competitive and constantly evolving. To succeed, hotels must provide high-quality accommodations, excellent customer service, and a memorable guest experience (Ali et al., 2021). Effective implementation also plays a critical role in sustainability initiatives. Many hotels implement environmentally friendly practices such as energy-efficient lighting, water-saving fixtures, and recycling programs. By implementing these initiatives, hotels can reduce their environmental impact and demonstrate their commitment to sustainability (Haldorai et al., 2022). These focuses can put hotels ahead of the curve and remain relevant in a highly competitive industry (Basbeth et al., 2021).

Monitoring is a crucial aspect of the hotel industry. Monitoring refers to the continuous observation of various operations and processes in the hotel. This includes monitoring the guest experience, the performance of employees, financial performance, communication effectiveness and adherence to regulatory requirements, among others. One of the main reasons monitoring is essential in a hotel organization is that it helps to identify problems and challenges early on (Koseoglu et al., 2020). By monitoring various processes and operations, hotel managers can quickly detect issues that could negatively impact the guest experience, employee satisfaction, or financial performance. Besides, monitoring also helps ensure that hotel employees perform their duties effectively and efficiently (Rivaldo, 2021). By monitoring various aspects of the hotel organization, managers can make informed decisions, improve overall efficiency and provide a better guest experience (Pillai et al., 2021).

In conclusion, this study provides new insights into an essential aspect of service quality management in hotels—The four functions that should be integrated into a hotel organization's infrastructure to gauge its level of support for delivering quality services that stand from planning, design, implementation, and monitoring, operating in a developing country, specifically Malaysia. It

contributes enormously to the body of knowledge as it provides a comprehensive understanding used in the hotel industry to manage service quality.

## FURTHER STUDY

This study provides insight into the service quality of the hotel organization sector from the four functions, planning, design, implementation and monitoring. However, other factors need to be studied, which contributed to improving the service quality in the hotel industry, especially in the VUCA world. Technology, co-creation service and employee well-being are crucial to achieving sustainability in the hotel industry. In conclusion, it was recommended to consider these factors in analyzing and improving the service quality.

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