



# Hotel Guest Satisfaction: Servqual Gap Study Of Katra Town

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	<p>Katra is well-known across the globe for the holy temple of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, and the information gathered may be used to encourage more pilgrims to stay in local hotels as their first option during their trips. This research looks at Service Quality (SERVQUAL) characteristics from the perspective of hotel guests in Katra Town. The SERVQUAL Model and factor analysis are utilized to analyze the data collected to estimate the satisfaction and perception of visiting pilgrims. Data were collected from 189 respondents who had stayed in town's star-rated hotels. The majority of data demonstrate a negative Gap 5 perception as well as a wide range of anticipation and perception characteristics. Managerial recommendations and future investigations are offered.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Katra Town, Satisfaction, and Quality.</p>

## Introduction

Situated at the base of Trikuta Mountains, 48 kilometers from Jammu, Katra Town acts as the base camp for visiting the renowned temple of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, which is reachable on foot via a 13 kilometers long well laid pathway. Every year, almost 4.5 million pilgrims go through Katra on their route to the sacred sanctuary. The cave shrine of Mata Vasihnodeviji, also known as Trikuta Bhagwati (altitude: 5,200 ft.), has served as a beacon of faith and fulfillment for millions of followers worldwide. The pilgrimage to the Shrine is very important for the pilgrims.

Hotels are becoming ubiquitous. There are several hotels with diverse clients all around the world. The city is famed for its holy shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, and people visit there all year round. As the number of pilgrims grows, so does the need for hotel accommodations. As a result, several new hotels have appeared in recent years. There are several hotels in and around Katra city to accommodate travelers to Katra City Jammu. There are a range of options available. Katra Hotels provide extremely beautiful accommodations to Katra guests.

This study aims to investigate the degree of satisfaction among hotel visitors in town on the service quality linked with Katra star-rated hotels. There is a lack of information, and little empirical data exists on how to evaluate service quality from the customer's perspective. Furthermore, most hotel managers in Katra rarely conduct research on service quality. Following this introduction, the discussion will focus on literature, methods, findings, and conclusions.

## Literature Review

To thrive in this developing market, hotels must be able to provide service that leaves consumers satisfied. This service must exceed expectations in quality; otherwise, the consumer will most likely be unhappy (Shemwell et al., 1998). Several studies have found that when a service is judged to be of high quality, clients are satisfied. They share their experience with others and intend to return in the future. As a result, larger returns on investment, market share, and maybe profit are more likely (Barsky and Labagh, 1992; Fornell, 1992; Hackl and Westlund, 2000; Halstead and Page, 1992; LeBlanc, 1992; Legohérel, 1998; and Stevens et. al., 1995).

Previous studies have proved that the companies with good service quality will increase the possibility of higher return in investment, market share, and perhaps profits. Hotels of Katra town must implement the basic marketing concept of knowing what the customer wants and meeting that want. They must as well differentiate the product offered. The customer must be understood, so that the service provided is from the perspective of the customer (Fache, 2000).

### ***Tourism and hotel Attributes***

Tourism is regarded as a one-of-a-kind commodity since it is composite in nature, consisting of both physical and ethereal elements that include everything a tourist encounters. Previous research has revealed that tourism has become the economic backbone of many nations (Kandampully, 2000). When visitors visit a state, they generate cash. Because of their visit, there are openings in hospitality and tourism.

**Table-1 Domestic and Foreign Tourist Arrivals in Kashmir valley from 2006-2017**

<b>Domestic &amp; Foreign tourist arrival (In numbers)</b>				<b>%age change over the previous year</b>
<b>Year</b>	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>Foreign</b>	<b>Total</b>	
2006	322	8198	8520	---
2007	375	9592	9967	14.51%
2008	7027	9111	16131	38.21%
2009	99636	10247	109883	85.31%
2010	200162	17130	217292	49.43%
2011	104337	7575	111912	-92.37%
2012	66732	5859	72591	-54.16%
2013	24670	2686	27456	-165.35%
2014	182205	8959	191164	85.68%
2015	358095	18234	376729	49.25%
2016	585702	19680	605382	37.77%
2017	412879	20009	432888	-39.84%
Source: Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Department				

Travel and tourism covers transportation, lodging, catering, recreation, and guest services. Tourist arrivals have altered substantially during the previous ten years. Tourism growth is projected to continue in the future years, as the J&K government has chosen a number of tourist areas to promote.

Despite of all the positive aspects, tourism as any service industry, suffers from the limitations of the industry such as sensitivity to environmental and political issues, quality issues, national economies and sudden growth. Author had suggested that quality in tourism will be the driving force to meet these challenges. The outcome of a process which implies the satisfaction of all the legitimate product and service needs, requirements, and expectations of the consumer, at an acceptable price, in conformity with mutually accepted contractual conditions and the underlying quality determinants such as safety and security, hygiene, accessibility, transparency, authenticity, and harmony of the tourism activity concerned with its human and natural environment is how the World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines quality (2006:1).

Quality means a variety of elements from the consumer's standpoint. Previous research has shown that hotel customers have different perspectives on the factors people consider when deciding whether or not to stay at a certain hotel. These include cleanliness (Atkinson, 1988; Knuston, 1988a; Saleh and Ryan, 1992; Taninecz, 1990), comfort, spacious and well-maintained rooms (Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988; Knuston, 1988a; and Saleh and Ryan, 1992), convenient location and easy accessibility (Ananth et al., 1992; LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1996; and Rivers et al., 1991), safety and security (Ananth et al., 1992; Atkinson, 1988; Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988; and Knuston, 1988a), and room facilities such as Easy-to-use door handles in the bathrooms, as well as supports for beds and chairs.

Other factors include prompt and courteous service quality (Ananth et al., 1992; Atkinson, 1988; Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988; Knuston, 1988a; LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1996; Rivers et al., 1991; and Saleh and Ryan, 1992), food value of a restaurant, convenient parking, interior decor, exterior aesthetics (Saleh and Ryan, 1992), value for money (Atkinson, 1988; and Shifflet and Bhatia, 1997), personal services, physical attractiveness, opportunities for relaxation, standard of service. Other researchers identified security, image, tranquility, service quality, location (Lewis, 1984, 1985), and previous experience as relevant considerations.

### ***SERVQUAL and its Applications in the Tourism Industry***

Previous conversations have shown that hotel patrons have a wide range of desires. This makes distinction possible. However, each "want" must be satisfied to the degree that the buyer specifies. Hotel visitors While people in Australia primarily want confidence (O'Neill et al., 2000), Mauritius desired certainty and dependability (Juwaheer and Ross, 2003).

Therefore, the client's needs must be satisfied, and this is accomplished by offering the high-quality service that the consumer desires. Functional quality, or the actual delivery of the service, and technical quality, or what the client really received, are two ways to measure quality (Gronroos, 1984). Physical, situational, and behavioral factors—that is, what is provided, the conditions under which it is provided, and the manner in which it is provided—can all be used to describe the quality of a service (Klaus, 1985).

Research has indicated that there is no one dimension that can adequately describe service quality. There are several dimensions, as previous research has confirmed (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000; Parasuraman et al., 1988). The most popular and well-known, SERVQUAL, includes tangibles, empathy, assurance, responsiveness, and dependability (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

In the tourist business, the SERVQUAL model is crucial for articulating what true customer happiness means and highlighting the close connection between value and customer services (Augustyn and Ho, 1998). Additionally, it has been used to the tourist industry as a way to identify areas of weakness and subsequently strengthen them (Ryan, 1999). According to the model, service quality is defined as the difference between what consumers anticipate (E) and how they perceive the performance of the service providers (P). Consequently, quality may be expressed mathematically as Gap 5, which is the basic ratio of perception to anticipation. According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), the higher the positive score, the higher the positive level of service quality.

Another way to gauge contentment or discontent is to use the mathematical formula for gap 5, which is perception less expectation. The customer's opinion of how well a service was provided has been shown to be a good indicator of service quality (Lewis and Booms, 1983). A discrepancy between expectations and perceptions is represented by a negative score in the Gap 5 formula, which denotes a breakdown in the quality and delivery of services.

As a result, Gap 5 analysis is a very helpful tool for management to keep an eye on service performance in the Katra hotel sector. In order to determine if the level of service quality offered by the Katra hotel sector met, exceeded, or fell short of the guests' expectations, it is crucial to assess the visitors' perceptions (actual experience). Expectations for service quality may also be utilized as a segmentation variable in the travel industry. The expectations of various groups have an impact on their overall satisfaction, according to a study that used multiple regression analysis and the K-means method to examine the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer perceptions of the service received (Diaz-Martin et al., 2000).

### ***Customer Satisfaction***

Numerous research (Almanza et al., 1994; Barsky and Labagh, 1992; Cadotte and Turgeon, 1988; Gundersen et al., 1996; and Qu and Li, 1997) have examined consumer satisfaction in the service sector. According to Swan and Combs (1976), a business's ability to meet or exceed the expectations of its customers is a measure of customer satisfaction. In other words, guests are happy when a hotel meets or exceeds their expectations based on its services. Therefore, determining and meeting the degree of customer satisfaction is crucial (Lam et al., 1996; Lewis and Nightingale, 1991).

According to Engel et al. (1990) and Williams (1982), a customer's history, traits, and outside influences will all affect whether or not they are happy with the purchase they make. Therefore, understanding these traits is crucial for businesses. A business has a competitive edge if it understands what makes its consumers happy (Garvin, 1991; Berry and Parasuraman, 1991). Customers may end up criticizing the business if this isn't done, which might be expensive (Chon et al., 1995).

According to research on customer satisfaction, a happy customer will increase loyalty, generate positive word-of-mouth recommendations, make repeat purchases, and ultimately boost the company's profits (Barsky and Labagh, 1992; Gundersen et al., 1996; Lam et al., 1996; Fornell, 1992; and Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000).

These factors ought to be strong motivators for a hotel to maintain happy patrons. Since happy customers are more likely to tell others about their hotel experience, they are the least expensive form of advertising (Knuston, 1988b; and Naumann, 1995).

Since word of mouth is more reliable and powerful, this is crucial for all services (Berkman and Gilson, 1986). Additionally, it has been demonstrated to be a significant driver of new sales (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). From a customer's perspective, satisfaction is comparable to Gap 5, which is the discrepancy between expectations and perceptions of a service (Barsky, 1992; Hill, 1986; and Oliver, 1980). According to the writers, contentment is a state of mind rather than a physical, situational, or behavioral concept (Klaus, 1985) (Anton, 1996).

This customer's mental state is the primary criterion used to assess the quality of the product or service and any related services that are actually provided to clients (Vavra, 1997). The difficulty is in providing the appropriate level of service that the client demands (Barsky and Labagh, 1992). Expectations have historically served as a model for satisfaction (Fornell, 1992). This is founded on expectation theory, which emphasizes that customers look forward to a service's performance before using it (Tolman, 1932). Since performance is assessed cognitively, this has traditionally been viewed as a cognitive concept (Westbrook and Oliver, 1991). This is related to the cognitive expectancy-disconfirmation model (Oliver, 1980).

Comparing expectations, perceived performance, and felt disconfirmation is how cognition works. Following the usage of the hotel service, results—in this example, the performance's perception—are contrasted with the initial projections. When a product or service performs better than anticipated, this is known as positive disconfirmation; when it performs worse, this is known as negative disconfirmation. Since negative disconfirmation poses the biggest danger to customer loyalty, word-of-mouth referrals, repeat business, and other positive customer reactions, it is particularly critical for company service managers to identify it.

Fornell (1992) goes on to say that loyalty and satisfaction are related. This is due to the fact that contentment may be accrued and influenced by prior satisfaction across time (Johnson et al., 1995).

A research measuring Chinese visitors' satisfaction with Hong Kong's hotel services serves as an illustration of how satisfaction relates to hotel occupancy. It showed that mainland Chinese visitors were pleased with the range of food and drink options, the tranquility of the hotel, and the availability of personal care items. They expressed dissatisfaction with the luggage handling service, the availability of the frequent quests program, and the recreational amenities (Heung, 2000).

Value, on the other hand, is seen to have the greatest impact on Asian visitors' overall contentment, whereas Western visitors place the most value on staff service when assessing their overall satisfaction with Hong Kong hotels (Choi and Chu, 2000). A research carried out in Malaysia found that, particularly in the wake of September 11, Western visitors view security and safety as the most important considerations, but Asian visitors are more focused on value for money services (Poon and Low, 2005).

### ***Research Methodology***

As the main survey tool, the SERVQUAL scale (Parasuraman et al., 1988) was employed. Visitors who stayed in four hotels in Katra with a rating of at least two stars were the target demographic. A minimum of 180 responders was determined to be the sample size (Table 2). A total of 260 visitors to four-star hotels in Katra were given surveys and cover letters. 189 (72.7%) of them were returned.

Based on service impressions and expectations (both "adequate" and "desired"), a self-administered questionnaire and an English cover letter were created. There were three sections in the questionnaire. The first component collected demographic information from the respondents, while the second and third sections included 22 SERVQUAL scale questions assessing expectations and perceptions, respectively, and one more item measuring total customer satisfaction.

On a five-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 5 denoting "strongly agree," respondents were asked to rank the hotels they had been at with respect to the 22 criteria. Respondents were asked to rank the hotel on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly dissatisfied" and 5 denoting "strongly satisfied," in order to assess their overall happiness with their stay in Katra.

The questionnaire was given to each and every room guest at the four hotels. With the help of the hotel marketing and cleaning staff, the management of the hotel gave their prior authorization to distribute the questionnaire to the guests.

Following completion of the survey, hotel visitors have the option to deposit the completed form in a collection box located in the room, in the hotel lobby, or at the reception desk. After entering the data into SPSS, reliability, means, and factor analysis were used for analysis.

**Table 2: Total Population and Sampling Size**

Hotels	Total Rooms	Total Occupancy	Average Occupancy Rate %	Total Population	% of sample size	Sample Size	Distributed	Collected
Hotel 1	168	336	45	151	26.5	48	60	48
Hotel 2	113	226	60	135	23.7	42	90	42
Hotel 3	189	378	50	189	33.1	60	70	67
Hotel 4	95	190	50	95	16.7	30	40	32
Total	588	1130	50	570	100.0	180	-	-

Sources: Primary Data

**Findings****Table 3: Demographic Profile**

	Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	101	53.4
	Female	88	46.6
Age	Below 20	5	2.6
	21 to 30	70	37.0
	31 to 40	51	27.1
	41 to 50	36	19.1
	51 to 60	21	11.1
	Above 60	6	3.2
Nationality	Indian	166	87.8
	Non-Indian	23	12.2
Education	Primary	8	4.2
	Secondary	79	41.8
	Bachelor Degree	80	42.3
	Masters	13	6.9
	Ph.D.	6	3.2
	No formal education	3	1.6
Profession	Skilled labour	3	1.6
	Office worker	18	9.5
	Management	21	11.1
	Professional	49	25.9
	Self-employed	4	2.1
	Retired	4	2.1
	House-wife	3	1.6
	Government	82	43.4
	Others	5	2.6
Individual Monthly income	Less than \$2001 (< Rs10000)	66	34.9
	\$2001 to \$4000 (Rs10000 to Rs 40000)	82	43.4
	\$4001 to \$6000 (Rs80000 to Rs 120000)	16	8.5
	\$6001 to \$8000 (Rs120000 to Rs 160000)	11	5.8
	More than \$8000 (> Rs160000)	14	7.4

Sources: Primary Data

To ascertain the degree of dependability of the information gathered from the questionnaires, reliability analysis was carried out (Table 4). Table 5 displayed the mean of each variable, combinations, and gaps.

**Table 4: Reliability of SERVQUAL Attributes**

Dimensions of SERVQUAL	Number of Items	Expectations	Perception
		Reliability ( $\alpha$ )	Reliability ( $\alpha$ )
Tangibles	4	0.714	0.749
Reliability	5	0.812	0.842
Responsiveness	4	0.770	0.841
Assurance	4	0.793	0.814
Empathy	5	0.842	0.883
Combined Scale	-	0.932	0.944

Sources: Primary Data



**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on Guests' Expectations, Perceptions and Gap Mean of Service Quality in Hotel Industry of Katra town (n=189)**

Dimensions	Expectations		Perceptions		Gap Mean (G)
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
<b>Tangible</b>	3.71	0.698	3.66	0.674	-0.05
Statement 1	3.66	0.629	3.59	0.659	-0.07
Statement 2	3.61	0.703	3.59	0.652	-0.02
Statement 3	3.94	0.752	3.87	0.698	-0.07
Statement 4	3.62	0.709	3.60	0.689	-0.02
<b>Reliability</b>	3.79	0.721	3.68	0.689	-0.11
Statement 5	3.81	0.767	3.67	0.698	-0.14
Statement 6	3.86	0.741	3.66	0.710	-0.20
Statement 7	3.82	0.714	3.67	0.660	-0.15
Statement 8	3.86	0.638	3.70	0.650	-0.16
Statement 9	3.59	0.743	3.67	0.728	+0.08
<b>Responsiveness</b>	3.82	0.719	3.71	0.692	-0.11
Statement 10	3.69	0.746	3.64	0.659	-0.05
Statement 11	3.88	0.637	3.73	0.673	-0.15
Statement 12	3.94	0.708	3.79	0.733	-0.15
Statement 13	3.76	0.786	3.68	0.703	-0.08
<b>Assurance</b>	3.84	0.678	3.73	0.696	-0.11
Statement 14	3.80	0.675	3.73	0.697	-0.07
Statement 15	4.03	0.635	3.84	0.641	-0.19
Statement 16	3.85	0.679	3.70	0.720	-0.15
Statement 17	3.67	0.721	3.65	0.727	-0.02
<b>Empathy</b>	3.60	0.710	3.53	0.713	-0.07
Statement 18	3.46	0.725	3.40	0.749	-0.06
Statement 19	3.83	0.679	3.76	0.647	-0.07
Statement 20	3.49	0.741	3.44	0.709	-0.05
Statement 21	3.61	0.710	3.54	0.718	-0.07
Statement 22	3.62	0.694	3.50	0.741	-0.12
Overall, I am satisfied with the hotel services			3.78	0.661	
Note: 1. Gap mean is defined as perception mean — expectation mean; 2. A negative gap indicates that guests perceived that service delivery did not meet their expectations; a positive gap indicates that guests perceived that service delivery exceeded their expectations.					

Sources: Primary Data

To ascertain if there was a significant difference in the responses, the mean values were then examined using a t-test (Table 6).

**Table 6: Paired Samples T-Test**

Variables	t	df	Significant (2-tailed)
<b>Tangible</b>	1.460	188	0.146
Statement 1	1.467	188	0.144
Statement 2	0.339	188	0.690
Statement 3	1.497	188	0.136
Statement 4	0.304	188	0.762
<b>Reliability</b>	3.090	188	0.002
Statement 5	2.510	188	0.013
Statement 6	3.513	188	0.001
Statement 7	2.944	188	0.004
Statement 8	3.203	188	0.002
Statement 9	-1.504	188	0.134

<b>Responsiveness</b>	2.314	188	0.022
Statement 10	0.904	188	0.367
Statement 11	2.852	188	0.005
Statement 12	2.823	188	0.005
Statement 13	1.355	188	0.177
<b>Assurance</b>	2.734	188	0.007
Statement 14	1.592	188	0.113
Statement 15	4.036	188	0.000
Statement 16	2.704	188	0.007
Statement 17	0.469	188	0.639
<b>Empathy</b>	2.457	188	0.015
Statement 18	1.021	188	0.309
Statement 19	1.635	188	0.104
Statement 20	1.054	188	0.293
Statement 21	1.203	188	0.230
Statement 22	3.060	188	0.041

Sources: Primary Data

The purpose of factor analysis was to distill a vast number of variables into a manageable, interpretable, and significant collection of components. It enabled the researcher to identify the primary determinants of Katra hotels' expectations and perceptions.

The sample adequacy, which must be larger than 0.5 for a factor analysis to proceed satisfactorily, was deemed adequate based on the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) for expectation of 0.915 (Anonymous, 2006a, 2006b). At 2095.147, the Bartlett's test Chi-Square was significant ( $p = 0.000$ ). Out of the five components—courteous and competent, caring and attentive, convenient, appealing physical environment, and reliable—the total variation explained was 64.44% (Table 7).

The sample adequacy, which must be larger than 0.5 for a factor analysis to be considered adequate, was deemed appropriate based on the perception KMO of 0.928 (Anonymous, 2006a, 2006b). At 2448.848, the Bartlett's test Chi-Square was significant ( $p = 0.000$ ). Out of the four components - competent and security, polite and dependable, appealing physical environment, and caring and attentive - the total variation explained was 63.36% (Table 8).

**Table 7: Rotated Component Matrix on Expectation Variables**

SERVQUAL Attributes	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tangible</b>					
Statement 1	-	-	-	-	0.799
Statement 2	-	-	-	0.735	-
Statement 3	-	-	-	0.643	-
Statement 4	-	-	0.747	-	-
<b>Reliability</b>					
Statement 5	-	-	0.610	-	-
Statement 6	-	-	-	-	-
Statement 7	-	-	-	-	-
Statement 8	-	-	-	-	0.723
Statement 9	-	-	-	-	0.760
<b>Responsiveness</b>					
Statement 10	-	-	-	-	-
Statement 11	0.736	-	-	-	-
Statement 12	0.719	-	-	-	-
Statement 13	0.594	-	-	-	-
<b>Assurance</b>					
Statement 14	0.696	-	-	-	-
Statement 15	0.659	-	-	-	-
Statement 16	0.725	-	-	-	-
Statement 17	-	-	-	-	-

<b>Empathy</b>					
Statement 18	-	0.811	-	-	-
Statement 19	-	-	0.625	-	-
Statement 20	-	0.850	-	-	-
Statement 21	-	0.661	-	-	-
Statement 22	-	0.626	-	-	-
Initial Eigenvalues	9.240	1.456	1.330	1.092	1.059
% of variance	42.001%	6.618%	6.044%	4.963%	4.813%
Cumulative %	42.001%	48.619%	54.663%	59.627%	64.440%
Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations					

Sources: Primary Data

### Discussion

The variable assurance had the highest expected means, closely followed by responsiveness. Assurance shows that guests want hotel staff to be informed, polite, provide a sense of security, and inspire trust. This is consistent with earlier research conducted in Australia and Mauritius (Juwaheer and Ross, 2003; and O'Neill et al., 2000). It is difficult to go to a new area, and hotel customers expect their safety to be guaranteed. Interestingly, empathy was the component that was least predicted. This could be because the hotels under study are barely two or three stars, and little is expected of them in terms of individualized service.

Of the 22 attributes, only the attribute "the hotel insists on error-free records" has a positive gap mean of +0.08, which may be a sign of the hotel's requirement for bookings, documentation procedures, and computerized systems that most travelers are familiar with and found to function as expected. Unfortunately, perception of Katra hotels falls short of expectations (Table 5). Despite this, the variables assurance and empathy continue to have the highest and lowest mean scores, respectively.

The variables assurance, reliability, and responsiveness had the largest gaps (i.e.,  $G = -0.11$ ). The attributes that had the biggest gap mean were intangibles, like the hotel's genuine interest in resolving your issue when you have one ( $G = -0.20$ ) (Reliability), your sense of security during your transaction with the hotel ( $G = -0.19$ ) (Assurance), and the hotel's timely delivery of its services ( $G = -0.16$ ) (Reliability).

**Table 8: Rotated Component Matrix on guests' Perception Variables**

SERVQUAL Attributes	Components			
	1	2	3	4
<b>Tangible</b>				
Statement 1	-	-	-	0.765
Statement 2	-	-	-	0.822
Statement 3	-	-	-	0.513
Statement 4	-	-	-	-
<b>Reliability</b>				
Statement 5	-	-	0.550	-
Statement 6	-	-	0.710	-
Statement 7	-	-	0.757	-
Statement 8	-	-	0.712	-
Statement 9	-	-	0.584	-
<b>Responsiveness</b>				
Statement 10	-	0.605	-	-
Statement 11	-	0.647	-	-
Statement 12	-	0.642	-	-
Statement 13	-	0.648	-	-
<b>Assurance</b>				
Statement 14	-	0.702	-	-
Statement 15	-	0.687	-	-
Statement 16	-	-	0.565	-
Statement 17	0.542	-	-	-



<b>Empathy</b>				
Statement 18	0.732	-	-	-
Statement 19	0.710	-	-	-
Statement 20	0.755	-	-	-
Statement 21	0.693	-	-	-
Statement 22	0.646	-	-	-
Initial Eigenvalues	10.212	1.379	1.271	1.077
% of variance	46.417%	6.270%	5.777%	4.896%
Cumulative %	46.417%	52.687%	58.464%	63.360%
Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.				

Sources: Primary Data

The drawback There is obviously space for service quality development in Katra town's hotels, as indicated by the gap 5 ratings across these areas. As demonstrated by earlier research (Ekinci et al., 2003; and Karatape and Avci, 2002), the results of the gap analysis showed that customers' perceptions of the quality of service offered by Katra Hotels were seriously lacking. This suggests that customers' expectations of service quality were not fulfilled in both tangible and intangible services. The intangibles had a major role in determining the overall assessment of service quality at Katra hotels. Thus, the study validates earlier empirical research in the literature on hospitality and tourism (Karepe and Avci, 2002; Ekinci et al., 2003).

Guest satisfaction has been shown to be significantly influenced by almost all independent factors, including assurance, responsiveness, empathy, and dependability (Table 6). Nonetheless, each of the independent factors had a distinct level of significance. It was shown that the most significant factors on the perception of quality are the traits of hotel staff. Good work knowledge (i.e., competency) and interpersonal skills (i.e., civility) were highly valued in the expectations of a visitor. Therefore, the most effective predictors of visitors' pleasure were assurance and responsiveness dimensions (i.e., competence and courtesy), followed by empathy (i.e., attentiveness and care), tangible dimensions (ranked third and fourth, respectively), and reliability dimension (ranked fifth). The hotel staff's recognition of the value of having strong interpersonal and work skills reflected the opinions of the guests. But, to a great extent, they also want to get some level of individual attention and acknowledgment (i.e., attentive and caring) when they are staying at the hotel. Compared to earlier research, the factor analysis reveals a more comprehensive reaction from the visitors.

These results show that prior to checking into the hotel, customers were attentive to both tangible and intangible factors. According to earlier research, customers obviously expect hotel staff to be tidy, clean, and suitably groomed; they also want modern amenities like key cards; computerized accounting; and quick, efficient elevators (Knutson et al., 1990). It also suggested that the service providers for Katra hotels should not ignore or undervalue any of the aspects of service quality. The primary element of the respondents' expectations for the hotel service was a combination of certainty and responsiveness. This suggests a need for improved staff service, as it is still scarce and subpar at the moment. The second essential element is empathy. The sole positive Gap 5 measurement and error-free recordings make up the least anticipated component. This suggests that the star-rated hotels in Katra need to recognize that the needs of its patrons have changed and now include more than simply a bed—they now include responsiveness, certainty, and empathy. According to respondents' current perceptions, empathy is the most important factor, followed by responsiveness, dependability, and tangibility. Overall, since tangibles are necessary, they are not a big problem.

### **For Managers**

For hotel managers looking to determine the degree of customer satisfaction among both local and foreign visitors, the findings of this study have several practical ramifications. First and foremost, the study's conclusions are significant for Katra hotels' management, who should take note of the fact that guests are probably going to grow pickier about the kind of hotel service they deem acceptable. The findings clearly show that visitors' pleasure is predicted by both tangible and intangible factors.

Second, if hotel managers wish to raise the caliber of services provided within their establishments, they should focus on the intangibles. There is still room for improvement in areas like certainty, dependability, and responsiveness. This may be achieved through employee training and the adoption of a business culture that prioritizes these factors. Managers should make sure that staff members are properly trained and aware of the standards for customer service that the hotel demands. Costs may go up, but customer satisfaction will rise if staff are properly trained and other aspects that are necessary for delivering high-quality services are taken into consideration.

Thirdly, managers should investigate how funds are allocated for fresh searches for human resources. This is due to the fact that hiring and choosing the best applicants for open positions and ongoing employee training will enable competent staff to offer clients considerate, personalized service and flexible business hours. By allocating funds to the human resources department, staff members will have a deeper comprehension of service excellence.

Finally, it's an intriguing discovery that the physical component did not greatly add to the forecast of guests' contentment. According to one perspective, the quality of the tangible component in the hospitality sector is a must nowadays; it is something that is anticipated and has little bearing on the opinions of patrons. Hospitality companies cannot get a competitive edge just from the tangible component. It is essential.

### ***Conclusion***

SERVQUAL measures how well a visitor is served by comparing their expectations of the quality of service they will receive with their opinions of the service they received. The purpose of this study was to assess the degree of visitor satisfaction with Katra hotels' perceived service quality and ascertain how they felt about it.

Hotel operators can evaluate the present state of the hotels in terms of whether they satisfy the requirements and expectations of visitors by assessing the satisfaction levels of both local and foreign guests. From a diagnostic perspective, this should more clearly show the reasons why hotel customers are unhappy. Therefore, it may be possible to improve current hotel services, create new hotel services, and educate clients by having a better understanding of their evolving needs and expectations for hotel features.

The results show that Katra's hotels still need to improve the quality of their services. It is thought that management has good cause to begin putting appropriate market segmentation and targeting rules into place. The information gathered may then be utilized to identify the services that hotels can offer to meet the needs of particular targeted segments. As a result, the existing disparity between expectations and perception will be lessened.

Additionally, management must continue to oversee employee civility and knowledge through on-the-job training. Employees that are well-informed, self-assured, and presentable will be advantageous to hotels. Customers will then be impacted by the service's certainty and dependability. At the moment, the hotels' check-in and billing procedures are regarded as trustworthy. This has to be applied to every other activity that the hotels are doing at the moment.

Additionally, the outcome showed that the responsiveness component had a major impact on visitors' pleasure. Being responsive is being ready to assist clients and offer timely service. Here, staff training and programming are the main concerns. First and foremost, managers have the task of training staff to handle client requests, inquiries, wants, and grievances. Examples of programming-related factors that impact responsiveness include the response quality (e.g., how the staff handles issues) and the wait time for consumers to receive attention to their requests, particular requirements, or issues (e.g., inadequate cleaning conditions).

Even though the physical aspects appear to be less significant than the other four, they must nonetheless be taken into account when evaluating the level of service provided to hotel customers. The physical setting of a hotel is at a level that guests are already familiar with and comfortable with. If hotels don't reach that level, people won't believe their star ratings. When the desired physical environment is realized, the consumer will be enthusiastic, refer the business favorably, and maybe return (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1999). Hotel management should maintain a clean and appealing physical environment, enhance the tangibles, and perform ongoing maintenance.

### ***Limitation and Future Research***

The study's drawback is that the sample was limited to five hotels with a minimum rating of two stars, excluding medium-class and low-cost lodgings. In order to meet the goals of our study, this is done in consideration of the different and superior services offered in hotels with higher rankings. Future studies must look at a larger sample that includes non-star hotels and broaden their focus to include additional relevant connections where the travel and tourism sector may be taken into account.

Second, due to heat waves and the reopening of schools, the study period was the "low season," which ran from July to October. During high and off-peak seasons, hotel services may behave differently. Third, this study looked at how two elements - tangibles and intangibles - affect visitors' pleasure at hotels in Katra town. Other factors, such as situational considerations, advertising, pricing, repurchase intention, and word-of-mouth recommendation, may also influence how wide the elements affecting visitors' happiness are. Future empirical studies ought to examine how these elements affect consumer expectations (Zeithaml et al., 1993).

There are several chances to further this research. Research has not yet been done on additional SERVQUAL model gaps. By examining certain segments and identifying the gaps for each, more modifications can potentially be made. Additionally, more research may be done to determine exactly what guests want from a hotel, creating a new set of expectations and perceptions.

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### Assessment Statements

	<b>Tangible</b>
Statement 1	The hotel has modern-looking equipment
Statement 2	The hotel's physical facilities are visually appealing
Statement 3	The hotel employees are neat-appearing
Statement 4	Materials associated with the service (such as pamphlets or statements) are visually appealing at the hotel
	<b>Reliability</b>
Statement 5	When the hotel promises to do something by a certain time, it does so
Statement 6	When you have a problem, the hotel shows a sincere interest in solving it
Statement 7	The hotel performs the service right the first time
Statement 8	The hotel provides its services at the time it promises to do so
Statement 9	The hotel insists on error-free records
	<b>Responsiveness</b>
Statement 10	Employees of the hotel tell you exactly when services will be performed
Statement 11	Employees of the hotel give you the prompt service
Statement 12	Employees of the hotel are always willing to help you
Statement 13	Employees of the hotel are never too busy to respond to your requests
	<b>Assurance</b>
Statement 14	The behaviour of employees of the hotel instils confidence, in customers
Statement 15	You feel safe in your transaction with the hotel
Statement 16	Employees of the hotel are consistently courteous towards you
Statement 17	Employees of the hotel have the knowledge to answer your questions
	<b>Empathy</b>
Statement 18	The hotel gives you individual attention
Statement 19	The hotel has operating hours convenient to all its customers
Statement 20	The hotel has employees who give you the personal attention
Statement 21	The hotel has your best interests at heart
Statement 22	Employees of the hotel understand your specific needs