Impact of Total Quality Management on Marketing of Tourism Services: An Applied Study on Hotels Located in Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract: This present study aims at corroborating the complementary relationship between the Total Quality Management (TQM)and marketing of tourism services in the selected sample hotels located in Al-Kharj governorate. This study also investigates its effects on the targeted customers in introducing the tourism services and the extent of their turnout to those services as well. Further, this research targets in finding the gap between customers' perceived and expected tourism service quality offered by the hotels located in Al-Kharj governorate.

Key words: Al-Kharj, Tourism, TQM, Marketing, Hotels' Service.

Introduction

Tourism industry is one of the sustainable industries which may positively contribute to the local economy in a number of ways (Abdulhosain 2015). Further, the tourism industry may also support the phenomena of sustainable development in the world economy including Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Alhazmi2017). In addition, it may contribute in the economic growth of any country by improving the per capita income. It may also help in diversifying an economy to achieve a balanced development and could motivate the private investments in developing the infrastructure and facilities of tourism services (Nouraldain2013).

Considering the importance of tourism sector, there is an urgent need to give attention to quality aspects of products and services offered by this sector with a broader aim to activate the system of "consumer protection" and "standards of quality assurance" in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as per tourists' demand (Alhazmi2017). In addition, the development and progress of this sector represents a specific and clear strategy of a country to improve tourism (Eshawi2008). The competition is heating up in the tourism market of the world, in all of its services and products, due to nature of this market and due to lack of protection measures i.e. tariff or any other similar commercial protection measures (Bathatho2010). At the same time, the tourists are also interested in those destinations of travel and tourism products where the intensity of competition is increasing day by day to get full advantage of their tours at low cost. Therefore, there is an urgent need to activate specific and clear standards for quality assurance in this sector to achieve competitive advantage at national and international level (Alzahra2011). This may fulfill the aspirations of customers by receiving the greater level of their satisfaction from the better quality of services offered by tourism sector. Generally, the quality is defined as a set of interrelated processes which strive to

achieve the requirements and expectations of customer (customers) and this can only be achieved through adopting the procedures established in approved standards / criteria. The quality systems are generally aimed at to achieve integration among all factors which may enhance the quality of product or service offered by a company (Augustyn1998). It is worth mentioning that Al-Kharj governorate is one of the promising governorates of kingdom as it carries great tourism potential with a number of hotels situated in the center of the city.

Literature Review

There is a vast published literature on the implementation of TQM in the business management and marketing. For example, Al-Musawi (2003) proposes TQM as a tool in the higher education institutions' promotion to verify the reliability, consistency and applicability of TQM in educational institutions. In order to achieve the objective of this study, he develops a scale of 48 items which is consisted of four constructs of quality management in higher education institutions. He finds an effective impact of TQM activities on the performance of educational institutions. Johannsen (2000) proposes the models of information management to propose TQM. Further, his study proofs a positive relationship in the quality control and TQM and he has also differentiated the theoretical similarities and differences between information management and knowledge management models. Alzamel (2000) provides a general framework for the concept of TQM. Then, he examines the 161 knowledge organizations for analyzing major constraints of TQM in case of Saudi Arabia and discusses the ways to promote awareness of the principles and concepts of TQM by using

descriptive analysis. Dima (2005) corroborates the relationship between TQM and cost of quality in the pharmaceutical industry in Jordan and reports a number of conclusions. For example, the pharmaceutical companies have adopted TQM concepts and have met the challenges froman increasing domestic and international competition. Adams (2007) investigates the application of TQM in hotel business in the city of satellite in France. He finds that the application of TQM in hotel business helps in the development of tourism activities. Further, he finds that human resources and structural problems have been found as major obstacles in the successful way of the application of TQM in hotel business. Boissevain (2005) compares the application of fifty quality improvement practices in four and five stars hotels located in California. He finds that five stars hotels are found more similar in terms of differentiating the effective use of quality improvement initiatives despite of operating characteristics. Mclntosh (2003) aims at to highlight the individual differences of operational parameters in adopting TQM strategies. He finds that TQM has been found as better indicators of organizational success. Mohamed (2004) investigates the role of TQM in increasing the efficiency of business in the presence of enterprise market challenges and competitiveness. He utilizes the data from an institution named as National Foundation of Gluten to find the extent of the application of TQM in this institution. He finds that quality has been continuously improved in this institution with an application of TQM on the basis of continuous improvement strategy. Aishaoi (2006) applies the Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) concept of TQM to the service organizations. He argues that quality management institutions try to integrate the principles and methods of service delivery

institutions. Then, he illustrates the inter connectedness of TQM and competitive entries to achieve a better level of performance of service quality according to desires and expectations of customers. He concludes that the application of TQM is very necessary for the service sector organizations. Anter (2007) examines the role of TQM in the contemporary organizations to support the competitiveness and to improve their efficiency to be maximized their potential for a global competition. Further, he focuses on the relevance of success factors and possible indicators of failures in the contemporary organizations in the presence of ISO standard sunder the contemporary management challenges. Then, he concludes that TQM is one of the landmark concepts in the evolution of modern management thought and is also a prerequisite to increase competitiveness.

In conclusion of literature review, there are various applied studies available in the hotel business, education sector and other business sector. But, no single has been carried out to explore the role TQM in the marketing of tourism services in Al-Kharj governorate. Therefore, this present study claims to fill this literature gap by applying the TQM in the marketing of tourism services in Al-Kharj. Hence the application of TQM in the marketing of tourism and its application for a particular Al-Kharj region are both unique in the present literature. Therefore, this study is an empirical contribution in hotel services literature.

Research Problem

Hotels and Tourism Management in Al-Kharj governorate can be claimed as weak in many tourists' surveys conducted before which have exhibited the huge gaps in the perceived and expected service quality of this sector.

In spite of increasing awareness of hotel industry by understanding the needs and desires of customers to provide them excellent services to achieve a long lasting competitive advantage, most of hotels are still needed to revise their strategic plans and visions to monitor and to achieve a high level of service quality. For this purpose, the participation of the hotels' employees should be increased to support the concept of tourism services quality. In large, TQM activities are very necessary for the success of marketing activities of hotel services. These efforts may increase competitiveness of hotels by adopting the sharply changing trends in the tourism business environment locally, regionally and internationally.

Research Objectives

This present study majorly aims at corroborating the complementary relationship between the TQM and marketing of tourism services in the selected sample hotels located in Al-Kharj governorate and to investigate its effect on the targeted customers as well. To achieve our main objective, several sub-objectives may be traced in the following manner:

1. To know the impact of TQM and its constructs on marketing of tourisms services in Al-Kharj governorate, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
2. To quantify the perceptions of employees regarding the TQM of hotel business.
3. To explore the overall importance of TQM in the tourism sector and marketing aspects of hotel business.
4. To analyze the effect of TQM on the level of satisfaction of tourists / customers.

Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of study, we rely on a scientific methodology which combines the quantitative and qualitative methods to address the existing problems in the process of TQM of tourism services. Further, a well-structured questionnaire is distribution among 500 sample individuals through pure random sampling method.
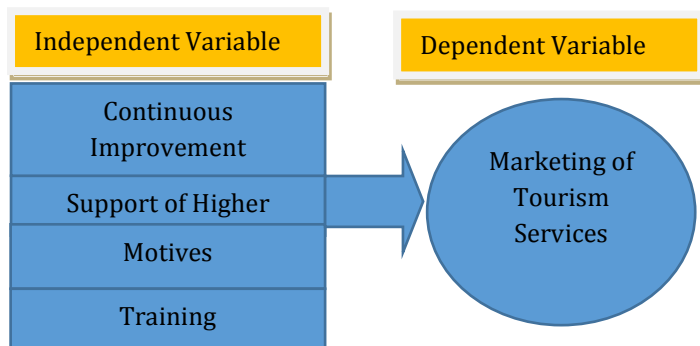

Figure 1. Model of the study

Population and Sample

The research population is comprised of all employees working in the hotels located in Al-Kharj governorate. A sample of 500 individuals is selected through random sampling.

Research Questions

This study has been conducted to find the solution for the following questions:

1. What is the perception of employees about the TQM in the tourism sector in Al-Kharj governorate?
2. What is the perception of customers about the marketing of tourism services?
3. Do the TQM and its dimensions are impacting the marketing of tourism services?

1. Hypotheses

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the following hypothesis is developed: -

H0: There is no statistically significant effect, at the significance level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$),of the TQM on the marketing of tourism services.

To achieve the above hypothesis, following sub-hypotheses can be derived: -

1. There is no statistically significant effect, at the significance level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$), of Continuous Improvement on the marketing of tourism services.
2. There is no statistically significant effect, at the significance level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$), of Care of Customers on the marketing of tourism services.
3. There is no statistically significant effect, at the significance level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$), of Incentives and Appreciation on the marketing of tourism services.
4. There is no statistically significant effect, at the significance level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$), of Team Work on the marketing of tourism services.
5. There is no statistically significant effect, at the significance level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$),of the Participation of Workers on the decisions related to the marketing of tourism services.

Research Instrument

To achieve the objectives of this study, a questionnaire has been developed which contains a set of fifty questions (items)related to the principles / constructs of TQM and marketing activities of the hotel business in Al-Kharj City. Table (1) shows the distribution of the questions according to some selected attributes / variables / constructs.

Table 1. Variables of the Study and Number of Items in each Construct.*

Variable name	Items / Paragraphs
Continuous improvement	1-10
Attention to customers	11-20
Teams work	21-30
Participation in decision-making	31-40
Incentives and Recognition	41-50
Marketing of Hotel Services	51-65

*Source: Prepared by Researcher.

Validity and Reliability of Questionnaire

At first, a questionnaire has been developed and distributed among a group of specialists reviewers who are specialized in the area of marketing, management and business administration in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, King Abdulaziz University, King Khalid bin Abdulaziz University and King Faisal bin Abdulaziz University. The recommendations of specialists have been considered in re-designing the items and constructs to improve the structure of the questionnaire. Further, to ensure the consistency of selected items in each construct and overall reliability of each construct, Cronbach's Alpha has been utilized. The coefficients of Cronbach's Alpha have been found great than 0.8 in all cases, greater than 0.9 in most of constructs and highest score has been observed for Continuous Improvement construct. Therefore, we can claim that our constructs are statistically reliable and consistent for further analyses.

Table 2. Internal Consistency: Cronbach's Alpha Estimates.*

Paragraphs	Principles of TQM	Coefficients of Cronbach's Alpha
1-10	Continuous improvement	0.941
11-20	Attention to customers	0.902
21-30	Teams work	0.893
31-40	Participation in decision-making	0.912
41-50	Incentives and Recognition	0.924
51-65	Marketing of Hotel Services	0.932
Total		0.921

*Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey.

Data Analyses

Table (3) shows the descriptive analysis of all the variables of the study, based on the responses of the items in the questionnaire which has been collected from the 500 sample individuals. The arithmetic mean and the standard deviation have been calculated and are ranked in descending order according to their relative importance. We are claiming that a level of response can be considered as high if average is greater than 3.5. Further, less than 2.5 represents a lower level of agreement and 2.5-3.49 range represents a medium level of agreement. The results show a mix kind of response / perception by carrying highest 5 and lowest 1 in the maximum and minimum descriptive analysis respectively. Further, an average of Continues Improvement (4.561) is showing a high degree of agreement and other all constructs are falling at least in the domain of medium level of agreement. Furthermore, the reasonably high values of standard deviation are showing a presence of mix

kinds of opinions of respondents and these also validate the soundness of our collected data.

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis of Constructs OF TQM.*

	Axis	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	level
1	Continuous Improvement	500	1	5	4.561	0.424	High
2	Customers Care	500	1	5	3.190	0.823	Medium
3	Team Work	500	1	5	3.112	1.066	Medium
4	Participation in Decision-Making	500	1	5	2.621	1.232	Medium
5	Incentives and Recognition	500	1	5	3.423	0.982	Medium
	Total	500			3.541	0.521	Medium

*Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey.

In the aggregate analysis of TQM, the average is 3.541 (with a standard deviation of 0.521).This is showing a medium level of agreement on the application of TQM on the whole. In the individual construct's analysis, Continuous Improvement stands at first position with an arithmetic mean of 4.561 (with standard deviation 0.424) followed by the construct Incentives and Recognition with an arithmetic mean of 3.423 (with standard deviation 0.982).Customer Care stands at third position with an arithmetic mean of 3.190 (with standard deviation 0.823) followed by forth position of Team Work with an arithmetic mean of 3.112 (with standard deviation 1.066) and fifth position of Participation in Decision-Making with an arithmetic mean of 2.621 (with standard deviation 1.232).From descriptive analysis, we can conclude the highest importance of Continues Improvement in TQM.

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis of the Marketing of Hotel Services.*

	N	.	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	level
Marketing of Hotel Services	500	1	5	2.832	1.935	Medium

*Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey

Table (4) shows the importance of marketing of hotels located in Al-Kharj City. The results show that average perception is 2.832 (with standard deviation 1.935) about marketing of hotels. The result corroborates an average of medium level of agreement of respondents about the importance of marketing of hotels. Therefore, we can conclude a significant importance of marketing in the hotel business.

Table 5. Regression Analysis: The Impact of TQM on the Marketing of Hotel Services. **

Independent Variables	Beta	t-value	p-value	R^2	F	p-value
Continuous Improvement	0.131	0.141	0.886			
Customers Care	0.212	0.232	0.142			
Team Work	0.317	1.521	0.113			
Participation in Decision-Making	0.216	1.234	0.214	0.765	12.456	0.000
Incentives and Recognition	0.317	0.328	0.458			

* *Statistically significant (α = 0.05)*
 ** Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey.

Table (5) shows the combined effects of different indicators of TQM on the marketing of hotel services. Here, we are only focusing on the overall significance of model to validate the importance of all TQM dimensions on the marketing of hotel services. The results corroborate the overall fitness of our proposed model as F-value (12.456) of model is reasonably high and model is significant at 1% level with a p-value (F-test)less than 0.01. Further, estimated R-square value shows that 76.5% variation in our dependent variable is due to our regressed TQM dimensions. Based on these results, we can reject the joint null hypothesis of the study. This states that there is not statistically significance effect of TQM in the marketing of hotel services. Therefore, we can claim the joint importance of all TQM indicators in determining the marketing of hotel services.

Table 6. Regression Analysis: The Impact of Continuous Improvement on the Marketing of Hotel Services. **

	Beta	t-value	p-value	R^2
Continuous Improvement	0.183	2.012	0.002	0.317

* Statistically significant (α = 0.05)
** Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey.

Table (6) shows an individual impact of Continues Improvement on the marketing of hotel services. Results show that Continues Improvement has positive and significant effect on the marketing of hotel services at 1% level of significance as p-value is lesser than 0.01. Further, one unit increase in the Continues Improvement is supporting the 0.183 unit increased in marketing of hotel services. Further, the value of R-square shows that 31.7% variation in the marketing of tourism services is due to Continuous Improvement. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis of no statistically significant effect of Continuous Improvement on the marketing of tourism services.

Table 7. Regression Analysis: The Impact of Customer Care in the Marketing of Hotel Services.**

	Beta	t-value	p-value	R^2
Customers Care	0.392	3.012	0.003	0.183

* Statistically significant (α = 0.05)
** Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey.

Table (7) shows an individual impact of Customer Care on the marketing of hotel services. Results show that Customer Care has positive and significant effect on the marketing of hotel

services at 1% level of significance as p-value is lesser than 0.01. Further, one unit increase in the Customer Care is supporting the 0.392 unit increased in marketing of hotel services. Further, the value of R-square shows that 18.3% variation in the marketing of tourism services is due to Customer Care. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis of no statistically significant effect of Customer Care on the marketing of tourism services.

Table 8. Regression Analysis: The Impact of Incentives and Appreciation in the Marketing of Hotel Services.**

	Beta	t-value	p-value	R^2
Incentives and Recognition	0.467	3.782	0.000	0.315

*Statistically significant ($\alpha = 0.05$)
**Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey.

Table (8) shows an individual impact of Incentives and Appreciation on the marketing of hotel services. Results show that Incentives and Appreciation has positive and significant effect on the marketing of hotel services at 1% level of significance as p-value is lesser than 0.01. Further, one unit increase in the Incentives and Appreciation is supporting the 0.467 unit increased in marketing of hotel services. Further, the value of R-square shows that 31.5% variation in the marketing of tourism services is due to Incentives and Appreciation. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis of no statistically significant effect of Incentives and Appreciation on the marketing of tourism services.

Table 9. Regression Analysis: The Impact of Team Work in Marketing Hotel Services.**

	Beta	t-value	p-value	R^2
Team Work	0.561	5.221	0.000	0.412

*Statistically significant ($\alpha = 0.05$)
** Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey.

Table (9) shows an individual impact of Team Work on the marketing of hotel services. Results show that Team Work has positive and significant effect on the marketing of hotel services at 1% level of significance as p-value is lesser than 0.01. Further, one unit increase in the Team Work is supporting the 0.561 unit increased in marketing of hotel services. Further, the value of R-square shows that 41.2% variation in the marketing of tourism services is due to Team Work. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis of no statistically significant effect of Team Work on the marketing of tourism services.

Table 10. Regression Analysis: The Impact of Participation in Decision Making in the Marketing of Hotel Services.**

	Beta	t-value	p-value	R^2
Participation in Decision-Making	0.634	6.345	0.000	0.512

*Statistically significant ($\alpha = 0.05$)
** Source: Author's calculation based on responses of survey.

Table (10) shows an individual impact of Participation in Decision Making on the marketing of hotel services. Results show that Participation in Decision Making has positive and significant effect on the marketing of hotel

services at 1% level of significance as p-value is lesser than 0.01. Further, one unit increase in the Participation in Decision Making is supporting the 0.634 unit increased in marketing of hotel services. Further, the value of R-square shows that 51.2% variation in the marketing of tourism services is due to Participation in Decision Making concept. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis of no statistically significant effect of Participation in Decision Making on the marketing of tourism services.

Conclusion

TQM is very important for the successful marketing of the hotel business. In the descriptive analysis, the construct Continues Improvement stands at the top in its average (4.561) with compare to others and the degree of acceptance is found at high level. The average of TQM, as a whole, has been observed at 3.541 and there is a medium level of agreement on the application of TQM. Further, all dimensions of TQM (Continuous Improvement, Customers Care, Team Work, Participation in Decision-Making and Incentives and Recognition) have, at least, scored the medium level of agreement in the respondents' perception. Further, a medium level of perceived agreement is also found in case of the marketing of hotel services. In the regression analysis, the joint impact of all dimensions of TQM on the marketing of hotel service is found statistically significant. Therefore, we can claim that all hypothesized constructs of TQM are jointly important for the marketing of hotel services. In the individual regression analyses, all constructs of TQM (namely Continuous Improvement, Customers Care, Team Work, Participation in Decision-Making and Incentives and Recognition) are positively and statistically significantly

impacting the marketing of hotel services. Therefore, we are concluding that all individual constructs of TQM are very important in determining the marketing of hotel services. Resultantly, Continuous Improvement, Customers Care, Team Work, Participation in Decision-Making and Incentives and Recognition are very important components of TQM activities and these can also claimed as complements of the marketing activities of hotel services in Al-Kharj governorate.

Based on the results, our research proposes following recommendations to the hotels located in Al-Kharj governorate:

1. There is an urgent need to improve the service quality of the hotels on the continuous basis. Further, the different aspects of "continuous quality improvement" should be evaluated urgently by taking into consideration the principle of priority in improving the different operations and processes of hotels' marketing activities.

2. The involvement of the employees of hotels, in the decision making process, should be encouraged at different stages of thoughtful steps of the marketing activities of the hotels.

3. There is an urgent need to improve the working conditions of employees. Further, employees should also be rewarded and motivated with financial and non-financial benefits and moral support of top management to perform better in hotel organization and to achieve goals of hotels in timely manners. These concepts would also be helpful in achieving the optimum outcomes from marketing activities of the hotels.

4. There is a need to develop the team spirit among the employee of hotels, through establishing a strong organizational culture, to achieve the missions and objectives of marketing activities of hotels.

5. The extensive marketing research should be conducted to enquire the needs and demands of hotel customers regarding different hotel services and a comprehensive marketing mix should be established accordingly to achieve the customers' demands in timely manners. Further, marketing activities should also be targeted for a specific segment of customers to promote the specific hotel services.

6. The TQM has been proved as complementary for the marketing activities of hotels. Therefore, a more extensive research should be conducted to find out the major obstacles in the way of implementation of the TQM activities for the marketing of hotel services in Al-Kharj region.

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