Developing a TQM Evaluation Indicators for Rural Tourism in Jordan

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Abstract
The study aims at developing a Total Quality Management model TQM indicator for small businesses in rural touristic businesses in Jordan including (accommodation, travel and services including accessibility, sites, local product information) to support rural planners for the implementation of sustainable tourism in the targeted area. To achieve this aim, the study has conducted four different types of surveys to assess the quality of a provided service from four different prospective, the customers, business owners, the mystery shoppers, and field visit by specialists from the team members. The respondents were asked to rate their opinion about services quality by select from a list which were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with "5" indicating "very satisfied" and "1" indicating "very dissatisfied. All questions were designed to measure how users, service providers, mystery shoppers, and quality control expert to interpret and evaluate the service quality and obtain insights that measure the service performance and perception against the intended service promise. The results revealed that the overall average of quality of the services ranked between poor and fair

1. Introduction

Total Quality Management TQM is an administrative approach for long-term success through customer satisfaction. (Zehira, Ertosunb, Zehir, & Müceldilli, 2012) All members in the organization participate in improving the procedures, products, services and culture prevailing in the workplace

The quality of service is a measure through the degree to which the level of service provided to the customers meets to their expectations, therefore the provision of a distinguished quality service means matching the actual quality level with the client's expectations or exceeding their expectations (Topalovic, 2015) The importance of quality of service as a basis for achieving excellence has increased, and thus the level of quality of service performance has become one of the competitive tools for building and achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty (Ofori, Boakye , & Narteh, 2018).

There is no doubt that tourism sector plays a significant role in economy of any country, especially the developing ones. Tourists no longer searches for products only, but searches for solutions to his problems, hence the mission of the institution is no longer to provide products but to find solutions for customers' problems (Font & McCabe, 2017).

Definitions of tourism deviate from what tourism means to ordinary people than another specialists in economics, socialists, environmentalists, or cultural (Yu, Kim, & Chen, 2012). From environmental point of view, it improve biodiversity conservation and reduce poverty (Liu, et al., 2012), and creates economic development (A, S, & Hamzah , 2016), in addition to its impact on social and cultural impact on local communities (Smith & Ram , 2017). Others define tourism as the activities of persons temporarily away from their usual environment for not more than one year for virtually any activity, except the pursuit of remuneration from within the place visited (Abuamoud, Libbin , Green, & ALRousan, 2014), (Ghanem , 2017). United States Department of Commerce, Office of Tourism Industries (TI) defines travel and tourism as a sector made up of "a diverse group of industries that supply goods and services purchased by business and other travelers" (Abuamoud, Libbin , Green, & ALRousan, 2014)

According to the World Tourism Organization, the worldwide arrivals grew by 5% in 2018 reaching 1.5 billion (UNWTO, 2019). The Middle East attained the highest growth rate, of 8% (Holland, 2019). Also, it has been estimated that the Middle East will achieve an annual growth rate of 10% over the period 2019-2020 (UNWTO, 2019). The contribution of the tourism sector in the global economy was about 10.4% as a percentage of global GDP, 319 million jobs in 2004. These numbers are estimated to reach US $2 trillion and 305 million jobs in 2019 (WTTC, 2019)

This study aims at developing a TQM model for tourism providers in Jordan through interviews and questionnaires used to collect data from small business service providers in tourism sector from different locations in Jordan.

2. Literature review

Earlier in the 1920s, statistical theory was first applied to product quality control which considered as the origins of Total Quality Management (TQM). Then during the 40s TQM concept has developed by Japanese before it has been developed by Deming, Juran and Feigenbaum between 50s and 80s (BPIR, 2020). (Manthou & Vlachopoulou, 2001) (Mohammad, 2004), Figure 1. Quality in the tourism industry is defined as the process that meets consumer needs and expectations regarding the products and services at an acceptable price, and to in line with the terms and expectations of the customers, such as safety, security, hygiene, accessibility, transparency, and environmental requirements (Alsrabi, 2013).

Quality has become a critical component that enables businesses to maintain its direction and positions in the industry, especially with the current global development in all fields, and this is why modern thought has taken care of TQM in consideration especially in tourism sector (Erdogan , 2007). TQM has been defined as the integrated form of the organization's business with the goal of achieving quality and continuous development. Productivity through the efforts of all departments (Benavides, García, & Macarena , 2014). From another dimension, TQM is introduced very important comprehensive management approach through working horizontally across an organization, connecting all employees and departments and extending backward and forward to include all suppliers and customers (Kiran, 2016) (Sadikoglu & Olcay, 2014)

Since 1980s a tremendous progress in management methods has been evolved especially in fields of operations and production management, and the emergence of quality management has had a clear impact on increasing the efficiency of productive activities in various organizations and customer satisfaction (Blau, Simpson , & Anderso, 2010). Under globalization and the global trade agreements TQM have causes an intense competition between businesses, only high-quality service providers that fulfill the desires of consumers can survive (Lee & Hwang, 2011) (Stepanov, Stepanov, & Vukotić, 2017).

According to the American Society of Quality (ASQ, 2017), TQM can be summarized as an administrative system where organization focused on the requirements of its customers, based on the fact that all employees work to ensure continuous improvement. Strategies, and effective communication are used to integrate quality competence into the organization's culture and activities. The essential elements in total quality management are (Bouranta, Psomas, Suárez, & Jaca, 2019) (Milosan, 2014) (Bigliardi & Galati, 2014):

Customer Focus: The customer ultimately determines the quality level. Regardless of what the organization is doing to promote quality improvement, staff training, quality assimilation into the design process, upgrading online systems, reviews, or purchasing process and implementing measurable factors, the customer determines whether the efforts are worthwhile or not.

Comprehensive employee participation: all employees participate in the work to achieve common goals. The employee's full commitment takes place only when fear of the workplace is removed and is empowered within his duties and the administration provides the appropriate environment. Essential procedures, integrated system, strategic direction, continuous improvement, and high quality communication with the customers are all the main elements of TQM.

TQM approach is one of the most important means to achieving excellence in the tourism services (Abuamoud, Ibrahim, & Alrousan, 2018), for example, some countries have developed quality assurance programs (Simon , Kaosiri, & Narangajavana, 2019). These programs directed to tourism service providers such as restaurants, hotels, and airlines with special symbol of quality that distinguishes them from other service providers (Widarsyah, Ghiselli, & Adler, 2016). Another example from the United Arab Emirates, where the Emirate of Dubai seeks to achieve excellence in the field of tourism through developing number of quality standards aiming at providing sustainable tourism (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2015) (Kotsi & Michael , 2015). The importance of quality appears in the tourism sector as a service industry and the level of services vary based on different factors such as, human resources which includes; human culture, management, level of education, specialization, training and experience. Secondly the physical, such as specifications and classification and measurement indicators, and thirdly the quality in public services in the destination like, health services, transportation, traffic and general cleaning services, as well as "access services" or something (Thornton, Soriano, & Urbano, 2011) (Dirani, 2007) (Grenčíková, Vojtovič, & Gullerová, 2013)

One of the first pioneers in total quality management is Armand V. Feigenbaum who built the foundation stone of the concept of TQM through his book "Total Quality Control." 1958 to 1968 (Weiers, 2008) (Behnam, 2017). In his book "Total Quality Control**,** Feigenbaum stated that TQC is "the system where quality development, maintenance, and improvement are effectively integrated to ensure production and service at considerably lower costs. This ultimately leads to higher customer satisfaction, which is so critical for all businesses" (Feigenbaum., 1983) which is not far away of the definition of TQM. Also Feigenbaum emphasized on the importance of understanding customers' perception, quality and cost are important and the importance of involving all teams in the process (Feigenbaum , 1983).
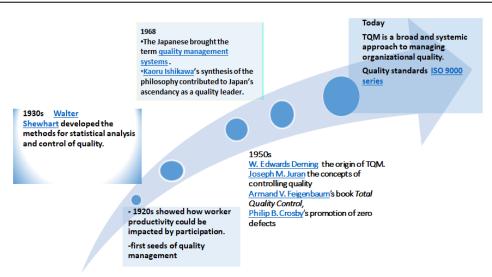
Figure 1Addapted from the Certified Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence Handbook, Fourth Edition3.

3. Methods

The study aims at evaluating and developing a TQM indicators for small businesses in rural touristic businesses in Jordan. To measure, and evaluate the current services quality level in the targeted small businesses, a survey were designed, conducted in two rural touristic site. A questionnaire was developed as a means to collect data from 55 small businesses. The questionnaire consists of (33) questions answered by three groups (Customers, Business Owners, and Mastery Shoppers) focused on four categories (Activities, Employee, Customer Services, and Overall evaluation) table1. The questions focused on the information availability and accuracy, safety and security procedures. The activity section focused on the level of understanding of activities by employees, the development plan, and diversity of the activities. Regarding employees, the questions covered areas such as training needed, performance of employee, evaluation of services, and communication skills. The questions covered the overall of services included questions about the care taken of the customers in general, does the service provided meets customers expectation, and the readiness of service provider to deal with unexpected events or needs. The results of the service provider's survey is expected to help service providers to understanding their current situation in four different areas shown in table1. The respondents were asked to rate their opinion about services quality by select from a list which were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with "5" indicating "very satisfied" and "1" indicating "very dissatisfied. The data were analyzed on the base of frequency and mean to compare between the answers of the three groups on the four categories.

Table 1categories included in the assessment

Category	TQM sub categories	Number of questions
Activities	• Process center • Integrated system • Systematic approach	7
Employee	• Tourism employee investment • Communication • Continual improvement	6
Customer service	• Customer focus • Fact base-decision	8
General information	• Services on route	12
Total number of questions		33

4. Results

4.1. How to read the results?

Table 2shows the meaning of each statement in Likert scale and the rank of the service. For example "strongly disagree" equivalent to "poor service", while "Strongly agree" is equivalent to "Excellent service".

Table 2Ranking of services

Statement	Category	Result /Rank
Strongly Disagree	0-0.99	Poor service
Disagree	1-1.99	Fair service
Neither Agree or Disagree	2-2.99	Good service
Agree	3-3.99	Very good service
Strongly Agree	4-5	Excellent service

Figure 2Ranking of services

The respondents were asked to rate their opinions on the level of services quality   provided by the service providers in the targeted sites. They could select from a list of items which were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with (with "5" indicating "very satisfied" and "1" indicating "very dissatisfied"). Table 2 shows the ranking of the level of services evaluated by the three groups, (Customers, Business Owners, and Mastery Shoppers) The results revealed that, "the ooverall satisfaction by customers about the level of services evaluated as good service with mean at 2.46, while the lowest overall satisfaction was by the business owners when they evaluated their level of services against the indicators they have given and they supposed to be at mean 1.71 which indicated fair level of service, followed by the evaluation by the mystery shoppers with mean at 1.81. The lowest satisfaction (mean 1.54) which represents the opinion of mastery shoppers with the customer services Table2.

Figure 3 ranking results of the services

Category / Group Opinions	Activities Mean	Employee Mean	Customer Service Mean	Overall evaluation Mean	Over All Mean
Customers	2.48	2.36	2.49	2.49	**2.46**
Business Owners	1.81	1.68	1.65	1.71	**1.71**
Mastery Shoppers	1.81	1.81	1.54	2.10	**1.81**

4.2. The Overall Action

Based on the survey results, the service provider must take these actions into considerations through the following steps.

4.3. TQM Guidelines Check

The service provider in consultants with the quality expert should be able to decide on which of the TQM guidelines relates to the selected service flaw and try to enforce and/or apply the TQM guideline to it. (TQM Guidelines in table 3)

4.4. Training Session

In collaboration with the quality experts, the service provider should be able to attend and/or prepare training sessions that are related to the selected service item. These training sessions should be a chance for the service provider to increase the quality of the selected service item to meet a standardized model that is accepted within the service culture.

4.5. The Sub Actions

Based on the grades of each sub categories, the stakeholder/service provider recommended to take these actions into considerations in-order to improve the quality of each sub category which as a result would improve the overall quality of the service.

Table 4TQM Guidelines and Indicators

Grand total grade	General overview	Activities within the service	Employee attitude and behavior	Customer service
0-0.99	1. Raising awareness about TQM 2. Participating Training Sessions.	1. Raising awareness about TQM 2. Participating Training Sessions.	1. Raising awareness about TQM 2. Participating Training Sessions.	1. Raising awareness about TQM 2. Participating Training Sessions.
1-1.99	1. Applying TQM Guidelines Check 2. Developing and/or participating in training Sessions.	1. Applying TQM Guidelines Check 2. Developing and/or participating in training Sessions.	1. Applying TQM Guidelines Check 2. Developing and/or participating in training Sessions.	1. Applying TQM Guidelines Check 2. Developing and/or participating in training Sessions.
2-2.99	1. Check TQM Guidelines Check, 2. Developing and/or participating in training Sessions.	1. Check TQM Guidelines Check, 2. Developing and/or participating in training Sessions.	1. Check TQM Guidelines Check, 2. Developing and/or participating in training Sessions.	1. Check TQM Guidelines Check, 2. Developing and/or participating in training Sessions.
3-3.99	1. Check TQM Guidelines 2. Looking for a raw model 3. Sustaining the system.	1. Check TQM Guidelines 2. Looking for a raw model 3. Sustaining the system.	1. Check TQM Guidelines 2. Looking for a raw model 3. Sustaining the system.	1. Check TQM Guidelines 2. Looking for a raw model 3. Sustaining the system.
4-5	1. Keeping on sustaining the system 2. Being a model through collaboration with other Stakeholders.	1. Keeping on sustaining the system 2. Being a model through collaboration with other Stakeholders.	1. Keeping on sustaining the system 2. Being a model through collaboration with other Stakeholders.	1. Keeping on sustaining the system 2. Being a model through collaboration with other Stakeholders.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation:

All results of all the surveys can be cross tabulated by matching the co-related items of the each surveys with each other to get a collective understanding of the overall respondents. The cross tabulated results will affect the overall understanding of the qualitative aspect of the offered service for each stakeholder. Tourism local industry should:

- Adopt "Tourism Standards indicators";
- Use a "service charter" which states its commitment in delivering;
- Review progress according to the framework;
- Use feedback from tourists to improve the product;
- Measure the impact of quality initiatives in terms of effectiveness and efficiency;
- Use data and information predicatively and reflectively.

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