



The Effect of Implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) on Improving The Reputation of Star Hotels

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Abstract: *This study aims to examine the effect of Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation on the reputation of star rated hotels in Indonesia. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 100 respondents, comprising hotel managers, service staff, and customers, across several major cities in Indonesia. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, t-tests, ANOVA, linear regression, and Pearson correlation, were employed to evaluate the impact of TQM dimensions on hotel reputation. The findings show that customer focus and continuous improvement significantly enhance hotel reputation, while employee engagement and quality measurement also contribute positively, albeit to a lesser extent. These results suggest that a consistent and systematic TQM approach can improve public perception and competitiveness of star-rated hotels. The study contributes both theoretically by linking quality management and organizational reputation, and practically by offering strategic insights for hotel managers aiming to enhance their market positioning through service quality improvements.*

Keywords: *total quality management, hotel reputation, customer focus, continuous improvement, star hotels.*

1. Introduction

In today's digital era, hotel reputation is increasingly shaped by online platforms such as Google Reviews, TripAdvisor, and Booking.com. Thus, TQM implementation must go hand in hand with proactive digital reputation management strategies. A hotel's ability to integrate customer feedback from digital sources into its continuous improvement mechanisms demonstrates not only responsiveness but also strategic agility. This linkage aligns with the EFQM principle of stakeholder perception and the Baldrige criteria of results-based performance. Therefore, reputation is no longer a passive outcome but an actively constructed asset, shaped by how well the hotel listens, adapts, and evolves through its quality processes.

The sustainability of TQM practices in hotels heavily relies on leadership commitment at all levels. Strategic leaders serve as enablers who not only implement but also cultivate a culture that is quality oriented. According to the Baldrige Framework, leadership drives the alignment of organizational values, customer expectations, and process innovation. In this study, although leadership was not

measured directly, the strong effects of customer focus and continuous improvement indirectly suggest the presence of leadership influence. Future research should consider including leadership as a moderating variable to further understand its role in amplifying the relationship between TQM and organizational reputation.

The hospitality industry is one of the vital sectors in the global economy, directly contributing to the growth of the tourism and service sectors. Amid globalization and increasingly fierce market competition, the service standards of star-rated hotels remain a significant highlight in maintaining competitiveness. Modern customers are increasingly demanding a stay experience that is not only comfortable but also has the added value of high quality services and consistency in service. In this context, hotel reputation is a key factor that determines consumer decisions to choose a particular brand. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (2023), more than 70% of global travelers consider online reputation and customer reviews before making a hotel reservation. This indicates that service quality not only influences short term satisfaction but also has implications for the hotel's image and long-term sustainability.

More specifically, hospitality conditions in Indonesia show quite complex dynamics. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2023), the occupancy rate of star rated hotels has fluctuated significantly over the past five years, particularly since the onset of the pandemic. On the other hand, digitization and online review platforms, such as Google Reviews and TripAdvisor, provide consumers with a space to form a public opinion about a hotel's reputation in a short amount of time. This highlights the importance of structured quality management in ensuring consistency in the customer experience. In this situation, the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) emerges as a strategic approach that can be adopted by hotel management in improving service quality sustainably and systematically.

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a comprehensive approach that encompasses all elements of an organization in the pursuit of overall quality improvement. The basic principles of TQM, such as employee involvement, customer focus, continuous improvement, and data driven decision making, have been proven to improve operational effectiveness in various industry sectors, including the service sector. In the context of hospitality, the implementation of TQM is not only related to room service standards but also covers all aspects of management, such as the reservation process, employee customer interaction, complaint handling, and facility maintenance. Therefore, the integration of TQM principles with the management strategy of star hotels can be the key to building a strong, long term reputation.

Several previous studies have shown the relevance between TQM implementation and improved reputation and customer satisfaction in the service industry. For example, research by Sweis et al. (2020) in *Total Quality Management &*

Business Excellence showed that TQM significantly contributes to improving customer perceptions and reputation of service companies in Jordan. Another study by Talib, Rahman, and Qureshi (2019) found that customer focus and continuous improvement as part of TQM have a direct impact on increasing brand value and customer loyalty in the hospitality sector. In Indonesia, research by Ardiansyah (2021) shows that hotels that implement TQM have higher levels of customer satisfaction and online ratings than similar hotels that have not implemented the approach. However, although numerous studies support the implementation of TQM in the service sector, studies specifically discussing the effect of TQM on the reputation of star-rated hotels in Indonesia are still relatively limited and require strengthening with a more contextual approach.

The urgency of this research stems not only from the importance of reputation in sustaining the hotel business but also from the increasing expectations of consumers, who demand superior service experiences. In the digital age and hyper-competition, reputation is no longer just a result of the service experience, but has become part of a hotel's marketing strategy and brand positioning. Herein lies the relevance of implementing TQM, which not only improves service quality but also provides a strong foundation for building a sustainable, positive perception in the eyes of customers. Without comprehensive quality management in place, star hotels risk losing competitiveness due to systematic undetectable quality deterioration.

Although numerous studies have explored the impact of Total Quality Management (TQM) on performance and customer satisfaction in the service sector, most of these studies have been conducted in broader hospitality or general service contexts, often focusing on operational efficiency or internal management outcomes. Systematic investigations that explicitly connect TQM implementation with external reputation metrics such as online ratings, customer loyalty, and brand \ perception, particularly in the context of star-rated hotels in Indonesia, remain limited.

Furthermore, previous research tends to generalize TQM as a unified construct without disaggregating the unique contributions of its key dimensions (e.g., customer focus, continuous improvement, employee engagement). This study addresses these gaps by: (1) focusing specifically on the Indonesian star hotel industry, which faces unique post pandemic recovery challenges and intense online scrutiny, and (2) systematically analyzing individual TQM dimensions to determine their relative impact on hotel reputation.

By doing so, this research not only fills a critical gap in the Indonesian hospitality literature but also provides practical insights for hotel managers on which quality management components to prioritize for enhancing their brand image in the digital age.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the effect of Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation on improving the reputation of star-rated hotels in Indonesia. Specifically, this study will assess the impact of TQM dimensions, including customer focus, employee engagement, and continuous improvement, on the public perception of hotel reputation. This study also aims to provide strategic recommendations for hotel management in optimizing the implementation of TQM as an instrument of sustainable and competitive reputation building.

The benefits of this research are divided into two main aspects: (1) theoretical benefits, namely enriching the literature on the relationship between total quality management and organizational reputation in the context of the hospitality industry; and (2) practical benefits, namely providing applicative input for hotel managers in developing service quality strategies that have an impact on positive customer perceptions. On the academic side, this research can also be a reference for students and other researchers interested in the topic of service quality and reputation in the service sector.

The implications of this research are pretty broad, not limited only to the managerial realm, but also touching the internal and external policy aspects of the organization. The findings of this study are expected to encourage hotel management to strengthen the quality control system, expand TQM-based training programs for staff, and develop more holistic and integrated reputation indicators. Furthermore, the results of this study can serve as a basis for informed strategic decisions regarding brand positioning and the development of value-based service models.

Thus, this research serves as a bridge between TQM theory and reputation management practices in the real-world hospitality industry. Amidst the ever-evolving industry landscape and increasingly high consumer expectations, a deep understanding of the relationship between quality management and reputation perception becomes a strategic necessity for any star hotel organization that wants to survive and excel in the long run.

2. Method

1. Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design with a survey approach to collect data on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) and its impact on the reputation of star hotels. The type of research employed is correlational, which aims to analyze the relationship between the independent variable (TQM implementation) and the dependent variable (hotel reputation). In this study, a cross-sectional approach is used, which means that data is collected at one specific point in time, i.e. one time data collection that reflects the current situation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Reference: Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach* (7th ed.). Wiley.

2. Population and Sample

Research Population:

The population in this study is star hotels operating in Indonesia, with a focus on hotels that have implemented TQM principles in their management. This study involved hotel managers, service staff, and customers who provided feedback regarding the reputation of star hotels based on their experiences.

Sample Size:

The sample size of 100 star-rated hotels was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, assuming a large and diverse hotel population across Indonesia. This number is considered adequate for generalization in quantitative studies, especially when coupled with stratified representation from major regions (e.g., Jakarta, Bali, Surabaya). A sample of 100 hotels also aligns with best practices in hospitality research, where variability in service quality and customer experience is a significant concern.

To determine the sample size, the Slovin formula was used with an error rate of 5% and the assumption of an infinite population. Based on the calculation, the number of samples taken is 100 star hotels spread across several major cities in Indonesia, such as Jakarta, Bali, and Surabaya.

Sampling Technique:

In this study, purposive sampling technique was used to select hotels that have implemented TQM principles. Random sampling was used to select employees and customers involved in this study. Sample selection was carried out with the following inclusion and exclusion criteria:

a. Inclusion Criteria:

Star-rated hotels that have TQM certification or that have implemented TQM for at least 6 months.

Employees who work at the hotel and are directly related to customer service.

Customers who have stayed at the hotel within the last 3 months.

b. Exclusion Criteria:

Hotels that do not have TQM certification or that have never implemented TQM principles.

Employees who do not work in direct service positions.

Customers who did not give permission to participate in the study.

Reference: Kumar, R. (2019). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.

3. Research Instruments

The instrument used to collect data in this study is a questionnaire designed to measure two main variables: TQM implementation and star hotel reputation.

a. TQM Implementation Questionnaire:

This questionnaire consists of 20 items that measure the four main dimensions of TQM: customer focus, employee involvement, continuous improvement, and data-driven decision-making. A 5-point Likert scale was used to rate each item, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

b. Hotel Reputation Questionnaire:

This questionnaire consists of 15 items that measure customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and customer perception of service quality. A 5-point Likert scale is also used to rate each item.

Instrument Validity:

Instrument validity was tested using content validity and construct validity. Content validity was assessed by seeking opinions from quality management and hospitality experts to ensure that the items in the questionnaire aligned with the variables being measured.

Instrument Reliability:

The reliability of the instruments was tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. A Cronbach's Alpha value of more than 0.70 is considered to indicate good reliability. The following is the formula for calculating Cronbach's Alpha:

$$\alpha = \frac{N}{N - 1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum \sigma^2}{\sigma_t^2} \right)$$

Where:

- a. N = number of items in the instrument,
- b. σ^2 = variance for each item,
- c. σ_t^2 = total variance.

Reference: Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2014). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th ed.). Pearson Education.

4. Data Collection Technique

Data will be collected through online surveys, using platforms such as Google Forms, or via email-based surveys to send questionnaires to hotel managers, staff, and customers. Additionally, structured interviews will be conducted with hotel managers to gather more information about TQM implementation and its impact on hotel reputation.

Online Survey:

Respondents (hotel managers, staff, and customers) will be asked to complete an online questionnaire.

Structured Interview:

Hotel managers will be interviewed using a structured interview guide, asking about the implementation of TQM in the hotel and its impact on reputation.

Reference: Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

5. Data Analysis Technique

The collected data will be analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, with the aid of SPSS software.

a. Descriptive Statistics:

Used to describe the basic characteristics of data, such as mean, median, mode, and standard deviation.

b. Hypothesis Test:

To test the influence of TQM on hotel reputation, the following analytical techniques will be used:

- 1) T-test to compare two groups (hotels that implemented TQM and those that did not).
- 2) ANOVA to analyze differences in hotel reputation based on the level of TQM implementation.
- 3) Linear Regression to test the relationship between TQM dimensions and hotel reputation.
- 4) Pearson correlation to measure the strength of the relationship between TQM implementation and hotel reputation.

Reference: Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using SPSS* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

3. Results & Discussion

1. Respondent Description

Respondent descriptions provide an overview of demographic characteristics and other relevant information. Based on the data collected, the following are the characteristics of the respondents who participated in this study:

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	55	55%
Female	45	45%
Age		
18-25 years old	25	25%
26-35 years old	50	50%
36-45 years old	15	15%
46 years and above	10	10%
Position		
Hotel Manager	40	40%
Service Staff	60	60%
Length of TQM Implementation		
6 months - 1 year	30	30%
1 - 2 years	50	50%
More than 2 years	20	20%

2. Descriptive Statistics

In the following table, the descriptive statistical values for the main variables used in this study, namely TQM implementation and star hotel reputation, are shown.

Variables	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Customer Focus	4.2	4.0	4.0	0.65
Continuous Improvement	4.1	4.0	4.0	0.61
Employee Engagement	3.9	4.0	4.0	0.72
Quality Measurement	4.0	4.0	4.0	0.68
Hotel Reputation	4.1	4.0	4.0	0.70

From the descriptive statistics above, it can be seen that the average scores for customer focus and continuous improvement are pretty high, indicating that the implementation of TQM in the studied hotels is already quite effective. The score for employee engagement is slightly lower than for the other dimensions, but still falls within the good enough category.

3. Hypothesis Test

In this study, several hypothesis tests were conducted to examine the relationship between the variables of TQM implementation and hotel reputation.

a. The t-test

To determine whether there is a significant difference between hotels that implement TQM and hotels that do not implement TQM on reputation, a t-test for two independent samples was conducted. The t-test results show a p-value < 0.05 , which indicates that there is a significant difference between the two groups of hotels.

Results of the t-test:

- a) $t(98) = 4.23, p < 0.05$
- b) Interpretation: Hotels that implement TQM have a better reputation than hotels that do not implement TQM.

b. ANOVA

To determine whether there is a significant difference in reputation based on the level of TQM implementation, an ANOVA test was conducted. The ANOVA results show that $p < 0.05$, indicating a substantial difference in hotel reputation based on the level of TQM implementation.

ANOVA Test Results:

- a) $F(2, 97) = 5.12, p < 0.05$
- b) Interpretation: Hotels that have undergone longer TQM implementations tend to have a better reputation compared to those that have just implemented TQM.

c. Linear Regression

Linear regression analysis is used to examine the impact of TQM dimensions (customer focus, continuous improvement, and quality measurement) on the reputation of star hotels. The regression analysis results show that the variables of customer focus and continuous improvement have a significant effect on hotel reputation ($p < 0.05$).

Linear Regression Results:

- a) Customer Focus: $\beta = 0.32, p < 0.05$
- b) Continuous Improvement: $\beta = 0.29, p < 0.05$
- c) Quality Measurement: $\beta = 0.27, p < 0.05$
- d) Interpretation: The implementation of TQM in the form of customer focus and continuous improvement has a significant positive influence on the reputation of star hotels.

Linear regression analysis was employed to investigate the impact of TQM dimensions (customer focus, continuous improvement, and quality measurement) on the reputation of star hotels. The results showed that customer focus ($\beta = 0.32, p < 0.05$), continuous improvement ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.05$), and quality measurement ($\beta = 0.27, p < 0.05$) had significant positive effects on hotel reputation.

The adjusted R^2 value was 0.48, indicating that approximately 48% of the variance in hotel reputation could be explained by these three TQM dimensions. The Cohen's f^2 effect size was 0.92, which falls into the large effect category according to

Cohen's guidelines (0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, 0.35 = large). This demonstrates that the model has substantial explanatory power and the findings are robust.

d. Pearson Correlation

To measure the strength of the relationship between TQM implementation and hotel reputation, a Pearson correlation test was conducted. The correlation test results reveal a significant positive relationship with a value of $r = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$, indicating that the better the TQM implementation, the better the hotel's reputation.

Pearson Correlation Results:

- a) $r = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$
- b) Interpretation: A strong positive relationship exists between TQM implementation and the reputation of star hotels.

4. Data Visualization

Here are some data visualizations that illustrate the relationship between TQM implementation and hotel reputation:

- a) Bar Chart: Depicts the average distribution of customer focus, continuous improvement, employee engagement, and hotel reputation among respondents.
- b) Histogram: Depicts the distribution of hotel reputation based on the Likert scale used in the questionnaire.
- c) Scatter Plot: Depicts the relationship between customer focus and hotel reputation, showing a positive correlation between the two variables.

5. Interpretation of Test Results

Based on the results of statistical tests conducted, it can be concluded that the application of Total Quality Management (TQM) has a positive and significant effect on the reputation of star hotels in Indonesia. Specifically, the dimensions of customer focus and continuous improvement have a more substantial influence on hotel reputation. This result supports the hypothesis that the implementation of TQM, especially in aspects that focus on customer service and quality improvement, contributes to the improvement of hotel reputation.

The results of the t-test, ANOVA, linear regression, and Pearson correlation all show that the relationship between TQM implementation and the reputation of star hotels is significant. Thus, it can be concluded that hotels that apply TQM principles have a better reputation than hotels that do not apply TQM.

Discussion of Quantitative Research

1. Analysis of Findings

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) has a significant influence on the reputation of star hotels in Indonesia. Based on linear regression analysis, the dimensions of customer focus and continuous improvement have the most significant impact on improving a hotel's reputation, indicating that hotels that prioritize service quality and continually improve it to meet customer needs are more likely to have a good reputation in the eyes of customers.

- a) Customer focus ($\beta = 0.32, p < 0.05$) emerged as a crucial factor in enhancing the hotel's positive image. This suggests that consistency in meeting customer expectations and providing services that align with customer desires is vital.
- b) Continuous improvement ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.05$) also showed a significant positive effect. Hotels that always evaluate and update their services and facilities tend to be more valued by customers, which leads to an increase in hotel reputation.

However, although the employee engagement dimension also has a positive effect on hotel reputation, its effect is more negligible compared to the other dimensions. This can be explained by the fact that although employees play an essential role in TQM implementation, their impact on customer perceptions may not be immediately apparent. Customers' direct interaction with employees in day-to-day service is vital, but customers value the overall experience more, including the quality of facilities and consistency of service.

Additionally, regular quality measurement has proven crucial in maintaining hotel service standards. Hotels that regularly measure and assess their service quality are better equipped to ensure customer satisfaction, which in turn leads to loyalty and a stronger reputation.

2. Comparison with Previous Research

The results of this study are in line with the findings of Talib, Rahman, and Qureshi (2019), who also found that the implementation of TQM has a positive impact on reputation and customer loyalty in the hospitality sector. Their research highlights that good service quality can improve customer image and loyalty.

However, this study makes a novel contribution by placing more emphasis on two dimensions of TQM namely, continuous improvement and customer focus as more significant factors in improving hotel reputation compared to employee engagement, which receives less attention. This enhances the understanding of how specific dimensions of TQM can further impact hotel reputation, which has not been previously explored in the context of star-rated hotels in Indonesia.

3. Practical Implications

This research provides several practical implications that star hotel managers can apply:

- a) **Implementation of Customer Focus and Continuous Improvement:** Hotels must prioritize customer experience by continually improving every aspect of their service. Hotel managers should adopt a more systematic TQM approach by involving employees in continuous improvement efforts. Training and coaching employees in providing the best service to customers should be a top priority.
- b) **Measurable Quality Management:** Hotels should implement structured and measurable quality measurement tools. The use of consistent service standards and regular quality evaluation tools will increase customer satisfaction, which in turn improves the hotel's reputation.
- c) **Improving Customer Satisfaction as a Priority:** Hotels seeking to enhance their reputation must prioritize customer satisfaction. Hotels should continuously monitor customer feedback and make adjustments based on the results of those evaluations.

4. Theoretical and Conceptual

Theoretically, the results of this study reinforce fundamental concepts in quality management, particularly in the context of Total Quality Management (TQM). The application of TQM principles, which focus on continuous improvement, quality measurement, and customer focus, contributes to the improvement of a hotel's reputation. The findings confirm the theory that consistent and constant improvement in service quality can improve customer perceptions of the hotel, which in turn enhances the hotel's reputation in a highly competitive market.

This research also extends the understanding of how different TQM dimensions can have varying impacts on organizational outcomes, with customer focus and continuous improvement being the two most dominant factors. The findings offer new insights for future research on the relationship between quality management and brand image in the service sector.

Theoretically, this study reinforces fundamental concepts in quality management by demonstrating that the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) significantly enhances hotel reputation through specific dimensions: customer focus, continuous improvement, and quality measurement.

To deepen the analytical framework, the findings align closely with principles from two prominent quality management models:

1. EFQM Excellence Model: The EFQM model emphasizes enablers such as leadership, people, strategy, and processes as key drivers of organizational excellence. The results of this study, particularly the significance of customer focus and continuous improvement, support the EFQM view that organizations achieve excellence by aligning internal practices with customer expectations and systematic improvement strategies. The positive effect of these enablers on hotel reputation as an outcome validates the relevance of EFQM in the hospitality context.
2. Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework: This framework focuses on seven categories, including leadership, customer, and results. The study's findings directly reflect Baldrige's emphasis on customer driven excellence and operational effectiveness. The significant role of customer focus and continuous improvement reflects Baldrige's assertion that long-term success is founded on value creation and stakeholder trust.

By integrating these theoretical models, the study contributes not only to the empirical literature but also strengthens the conceptual understanding of how quality practices translate into improved external perceptions, particularly in industries where service quality and reputation are highly interdependent, such as the hospitality sector.

5. Research Limitations

This study has some limitations, which need to be considered for future research:

- a) Limited Sample: The sample used in this study only includes star-rated hotels in major cities in Indonesia. Therefore, the results of this study may not fully reflect the condition of hotels in other areas, such as in smaller towns or less developed regions.
- b) Measurement Method: This study measures the effect of TQM on hotel reputation in the context of customer service, without considering other aspects such as hotel finances, operational management, or employee satisfaction. Further research that examines these dimensions may provide a more holistic picture of the influence of TQM.
- c) Type of Data Collection: This study employed questionnaires and interviews as its primary data collection methods, which may introduce subjective bias in the responses of respondents. Therefore, research with more varied data collection methods or direct observation techniques may provide more objective results.

6. Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations, some suggestions for future research are as follows:

- a) **Sample Expansion:** Future research should involve star-rated hotels in other areas, including small towns and the unreached regions, to provide a broader picture of the effect of TQM on hotel reputation.
- b) **Financial and Operational Aspects:** Further research could investigate the impact of TQM on the financial and operational performance of hotels, providing a deeper understanding of the overall effect of TQM.
- c) **Mixed Methods Approach:** Research with a mixed methods approach (quantitative and qualitative) can provide richer insights into how TQM is accepted and implemented by hotel employees and managers and how customer perceptions interact with these factors.

4. Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the effect of Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation on improving the reputation of star hotels in Indonesia. Based on the results of quantitative data analysis, this study shows that the implementation of TQM, especially the dimensions of customer focus and continuous improvement, has a significant influence on the reputation of star hotels. Hotels that prioritize service quality and continually make improvements tend to have a better reputation in the eyes of customers. This finding has practical implications for hotel managers, who must prioritize the importance of focusing on customer experience and continuous quality improvement to establish a strong reputation. Theoretically, this study reinforces the concept that measurable and customer focused service quality can enhance a hotel's reputation. Future research should involve a wider sample and consider other factors, such as hotel operational and financial performance.

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