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IMPACTS OF ISO 17679 STANDARDS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS IN WELLNESS SPAS OF 5-STAR THERMAL HOTELS

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Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of ISO 17679 service requirements in wellness SPAs within 5-star thermal hotels and examines their impact on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. A conceptual model was developed to explore the direct and indirect effects of service requirements, with servicescape and service quality acting as mediators. A convenience sampling method was employed, gathering data from 397 customers who experienced wellness SPA services in Muscat's thermal hotels. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to analyze the data and test the proposed relationships. The findings indicate a high level of ISO 17679 compliance among thermal hotels in Muscat. Results highlight that adherence to service



requirements significantly enhances customer satisfaction and positively influences behavioral intentions. Moreover, the study reveals that servicescape and service quality partially mediate the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction, underscoring their critical role in shaping overall customer experiences. This research provides valuable insights for hotel managers and SPA operators, emphasizing the importance of maintaining ISO standards to drive customer satisfaction and long-term loyalty. It contributes to the growing body of literature on service quality and customer behavior in the hospitality sector, offering practical implications for improving SPA services in luxury thermal hotels.

Keywords: ISO 17679, Servicescape, Service quality, Customer satisfaction, Behavioral intentions, Oman

INTRODUCTION

Health-related travel has deep historical roots, as noted by Herrick (2007) and Connell (2005), but was initially limited to the wealthy. By the late 20th century, technological advances and improved transportation expanded access to health travel, establishing health tourism as a significant segment of the tourism industry. Since the 1970s, international programs have integrated health and tourism into unified offerings (Köstepen & Öter, 2013). Health tourism encompasses four types: thermal tourism (wellness & SPA), disabled tourism, geriatric tourism, and medical tourism. This research focuses on thermal tourism (wellness & SPA) within the Sultanate of Oman.

The wellness SPA sector has grown into a global industry, requiring strategies to enhance service quality and competitiveness. Key priorities include improving service transparency, efficiency, and trust, while ensuring adherence to standards like ISO 17679, which outlines service requirements for wellness SPAs (ISO 17679, 2016). Despite extensive research on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, the role of service requirements has been underexplored. This study addresses this gap by focusing on 5-star thermal hotel SPAs in Oman, a destination with significant potential yet relatively untapped by international tourists.

The primary goal is to evaluate the implementation of ISO 17679 in Oman's 5-star SPAs and assess its impact on customer satisfaction and behavior. The findings aim to provide theoretical insights and practical guidance for wellness SPA management.

This study seeks to develop and validate a model examining the influence of ISO 17679 on servicescape, service quality, and customer satisfaction. It investigates how servicescape and service quality mediate the relationship between ISO 17679 and customer satisfaction, while

also exploring how customer satisfaction affects behavioral intentions. The specific objectives include:

1. Assessing tourists' perceptions of ISO 17679 implementation in SPAs.
2. Measuring servicescape, service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions.
3. Exploring the direct and indirect effects of ISO 17679 on customer satisfaction.
4. Examining the relationship between customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

This study emphasizes the importance of service requirements in enhancing customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions within Oman's SPA industry. By focusing on ISO 17679 standards, it addresses six critical factors: reception facilities and services, treatment areas, equipment, hygiene, and staff. The research employs serial mediation models to uncover how servicescape and service quality contribute to customer satisfaction.

The findings offer practical benefits for SPA managers by providing insights to improve service quality, foster customer loyalty, and drive repeat business. These insights can help stakeholders refine service offerings, attract new customers, and strengthen retention strategies.

Oman, located at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, shares borders with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, covering 309,500 km². The country features diverse landscapes, from the northern mountains and fjords to the southern Dhofar hills and the central Wahiba Sands. Oman's climate is primarily hot and arid, except for the tropical southern region (Choufany & Younes, 2005).

Though Oman entered the tourism sector later than other Gulf nations, strategic government initiatives have leveraged oil wealth to diversify the economy, positioning Oman as an emerging tourist destination with increasing visitor numbers (Oukil, Channouf, & Al-Zaidi, 2016). According to the Omani Ministry of Information (2023), Oman's natural beauty and cultural richness were largely unnoticed by international tourists until the government prioritized infrastructure development. By 2004, Oman had 146 hotels, supported by ongoing expansions and Royal Decree No. 61/2004, which established the Ministry of Tourism and appointed its first female minister, highlighting the sector's importance and inclusivity.

Muscat International Airport has since become a hub for European tourists. By 2011, Oman hosted 248 hotels with 12,195 rooms and 19,265 beds, with an occupancy rate of 45%. The tourism sector spans various niches, including eco-tourism, cultural tourism, beach tourism, and adventure tourism. Popular activities include sand dune safaris, marine tourism, and turtle watching. In 2010, tourism contributed 2.66% to GDP, with visas valid for one month and large hotels offering recreational activities like water sports (Kumar & Mathur, 2013). By 2015, tourism

accounted for 5.7% of GDP, supporting 111,500 jobs. Projections for 2023 estimate the creation of 117,000 tourism-related jobs, underscoring the sector's growth potential.

A benchmarking analysis revealed that many hotels in Oman were inefficient, with the highest-performing hotels concentrated in Muscat (72.7%). Star ratings and cultural attractions emerged as key drivers of hotel efficiency (Oukil, Channouf, & Al-Zaidi, 2016). This highlights the critical role of tourism in economic growth and job creation across Oman.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The exploration of service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions draws heavily on foundational models such as SERVQUAL and the Gap Model, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1985, 1988), which have been extensively utilized across industries including tourism, hospitality, and healthcare to assess and improve service delivery. SERVQUAL, a prominent framework, delineates five critical dimensions that shape service quality: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. Reliability pertains to the consistency and accuracy of service delivery, responsiveness reflects the promptness and willingness to assist customers, assurance denotes the competence and credibility of service personnel, empathy highlights personalized attention and care, and tangibles encompass the physical aspects of the service environment (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Asubonteng et al., 1996). The model gauges service quality by comparing customers' expectations to their perceptions, with gaps indicating areas of improvement or excellence. Positive gaps signify that perceived performance exceeds expectations, fostering satisfaction and loyalty, while negative gaps highlight discrepancies requiring attention (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Complementing this, Bitner's (1992) concept of servicescape underscores the significance of the constructed physical environment in shaping customer experiences. Décor, spatial layout, and ambient conditions collectively influence perceptions and behavioral outcomes, reinforcing the role of environmental stimuli in customer satisfaction and retention (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2002; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). Mehrabian and Russel's (1974) Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory further elucidates the connection between the physical environment and human behavior, suggesting that positive environmental stimuli elicit favorable responses, while negative stimuli provoke avoidance. The literature consistently underscores the multifaceted nature of service quality, categorizing it into interpersonal, environmental, administrative, and technical dimensions (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Gronroos, 1990). Interpersonal quality hinges on the interaction between service providers and customers, where communication and friendliness are pivotal. Environmental quality encapsulates the tangible and atmospheric elements of the service setting, administrative quality addresses operational efficiency, and technical quality reflects the expertise and competence of service personnel (Clemes et al., 2020). These

dimensions collectively shape the overall service experience, driving satisfaction and influencing behavioral intentions such as repeat patronage, recommendations, and loyalty (Durmaz *et al.*, 2018). Customer satisfaction emerges as a cognitive and emotional evaluation process, where alignment between expectations and actual experiences enhances satisfaction and fosters long-term loyalty (Oliver, 1980; Han & Ryu, 2009). Studies consistently establish service quality as a precursor to satisfaction, which in turn predicts future behaviors, reinforcing the cyclical relationship between perceived quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006). The integration of these theoretical models offers a robust framework for understanding and managing service quality, ultimately enhancing organizational performance and customer retention across diverse service sectors. Drawing from the theoretical framework and a review of relevant literature, the study proposes the following hypotheses.

H1: Service requirements have a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.

H2: Service requirements have a significant positive effect on servicescape in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.

H3: Servicescape has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.

H4: Servicescape has a significant positive effect on service quality in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.

H5: Service requirements have a significant positive effect on service quality in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.

H6: Service quality has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.

H7: Customer satisfaction has a significant positive effect on behavioral intentions in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.

H8: Servicescape, and service quality separately and jointly mediate the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels. H8 is encompassing three hypotheses, outlined as follows:

- H8a. Servicescape mediates the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.
- H8b. Service quality mediates the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.
- H8c. Servicescape, and service quality jointly and respectively mediate the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels.



Figure 1. The Research Model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study follows a deductive research approach utilizing a quantitative method. This approach begins with formulating hypotheses based on existing theories and tests them through observations (Babbie, 2010; Wilson, 2014). The quantitative method systematically examines hypotheses by analyzing relationships between variables, often using instruments to gather numerical data for statistical analysis (Creswell, 2002).

A survey research technique is employed, collecting data through structured questionnaires distributed to participants (Check & Schutt, 2011). The study adopts a cross-sectional survey design to assess the attitudes of SPA tourists in 5-star thermal hotels in Oman. The questionnaire is divided into five parts:

1. Service requirements (ISO 17679) as the independent variable, covering six dimensions and 41 items.
2. Servicescape (Chang, 2016) as a mediator, measured through 12 items.
3. Service quality (Chen et al., 2015), also acting as a mediator, assessed through three items.
4. Customer satisfaction (Han & Ryu, 2009) as both an independent and dependent variable, measured by three items.
5. Behavioral intentions (Virabhakul & Huang, 2018) as the dependent variable, measured by five items.

The study focuses on gathering data from self-administered questionnaires distributed in the Sultanate of Oman. This study selected the Sultanate of Oman as the research context to assess the implementation of service requirements based on ISO 17679 in wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels. Several reasons justify this choice: Oman ranked fifth among Arab countries as a tourist

destination in 2014, with total tourism production amounting to R.O 1.22 billion. Inbound tourism contributed R.O 205.9 million (20.5%), while domestic tourism accounted for R.O 971.1 million (79.5%). Between 2005 and 2014, inbound tourism doubled, whereas domestic tourism more than tripled. The tourism sector added R.O 724.5 million (2.2%) to the GDP in 2014. Oman aims to attract 7 million tourists by 2040, constituting 6% of the GDP (Al-Badi *et al.*, 2017).

Oman especially the capital (Muscat) offers an ideal research setting to investigate the impact of implementing service requirements (ISO 17679) on customer satisfaction, considering the mediating roles of servicescape and service quality. Exploring the relationship between customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in Oman would yield valuable insights. This study in Oman deepens understanding of how service requirements implementation influences customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, while accounting for servicescape and service quality as mediating factors. The research contributes to existing knowledge and provides practical implications for the SPA industry in Oman and beyond. By conducting this study in Oman, valuable insights can be gained regarding the implementation of service requirements in wellness SPAs within a prominent and diverse tourism destination.

The study population for this research consists of customers who have utilized wellness SPA services at 5-star thermal hotels in Muscat. The sample for this study was selected from three specific thermal hotels (as shown in Table 1). These hotels were chosen based on their suitability for the study, considering their 5-star rating and the diverse range of wellness SPA treatments they offer to their guests. Since the current study targets only the guests of five-star thermal hotels who have experienced spa services at these hotels, and considering that such data is not available from official sources in Oman. Consequently, it was not possible to calculate the sample size required to adequately represent the population. However, considering the use of the "convenience sampling" method, which falls under non-probability sampling techniques, it is acknowledged that a sample size of 384 can provide a 95% reliability level when the total number of elements in the population is unknown (Mercan, 2018). A total of 503 questionnaires were distributed to collect data from the participants. Out of these, 397 questionnaires were found to be correctly and completely filled, which is considered sufficient for the convenience sample approach adopted in this study. These questionnaires will be analyzed to investigate the hypotheses proposed in this study. 141 questionnaires were collected from participants experienced the SPA experience in Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah, Muscat, 119 questionnaires were collected from participants experienced the SPA experience in AL BUSTAN PALACE, Muscat, and 137 questionnaires were collected from participants experienced the SPA experience in The CHEDI Muscat. The criteria for determining correctly filled questionnaires are as follows:

1. Absence of Missing Values: All mandatory fields and questions were completed. Any incomplete responses were excluded unless explicitly permitted based on the study design.
2. Consistency of Responses: Logical coherence among answers was ensured. For instance, participants' responses should align with expected patterns and avoid contradictions.
3. Absence of Outliers: Statistically improbable or extreme outlier responses were excluded, especially those likely to skew the results.
4. Central Tendency Consideration: Responses exhibiting extreme central tendency bias (e.g., consistently selecting neutral options) were flagged and reviewed for validity.
5. Adherence to Instructions: Participants followed the provided instructions, such as selecting a single option when required or responding in the specified format.
6. Validity Checks: Responses to specific "attention check" questions, designed to confirm participant attentiveness, were verified.
7. Completeness: All sections of the questionnaire were fully completed, covering all variables necessary for hypothesis testing.
8. Engagement Levels: Questionnaires with evidence of rushed responses (e.g., identical answers throughout without variability) were excluded from the analysis.

Table 1. The sample

Facility Name	Category	Participants Number (customer)
Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah, Muscat	SPA Hotel 5-star s and Resort	141
AL BUSTAN PALACE, Muscat	SPA Hotel 5stars and Resort	119
The CHEDI Muscat	SPA Hotel 5-star s and Resort	137

FINDINGS

The collected data underwent correlation analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM) to determine the relationships between the model's constructs. The measurement of the items was also scrutinized to ascertain the reliability and validity of the results. To assess the accuracy of the internal constructs, such as reliability, composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha were utilized.

Descriptive Analyses

This section is divided into three sub-sections, first of them shows the descriptive analyses in order to measure the levels of implementing of the service requirements, servicescape, service

quality, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions were measured as outlined in follows in Table 3, Table 4, Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7. Second sub-section shows the measurement model including the reliability and validity tests as outlined in Table 8 and Table 9. Third sub-section shows the results of the structural equation model and hypotheses testing as outlined in Table 10 and Figure 2. In the following Table 2 describes means, and their interpretation (value allocation) based on Alston and Miller (2002), Moohammed (2014) adopted interpretation for the 5-Points Likert scale as cited in a study of (Pärn, 2017).

Table 2. Mean and Interpretation (Value Allocation)

Mean	Interpretation
1.00 ≤ 1.49	Not at all (Very low)
1.5 ≤ 2.49	Slightly (Low)
2.5 ≤ 3.49	Moderately (Average)
3.5 ≤ 4.49	Mostly (High)
4.5 ≤ 5	Completely (Very high)

Source: The researcher; based on the adoptions of Alston and Miller (2002); Mohammed (2014)

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis (Service Requirements according to ISO 17679)

The Service requirements according to ISO 17679	Mean	Standard deviation	Relative weight %	Test value	p-value	Items Order
1. Reception (facilities) requirements	4.23	0.57	84.60	13.70	0.00	
The reception area exhibits a favorable condition concerning cleanliness, illumination, and absence of obstructions.	4.40	0.50	88.00	17.85	0.00	1
The areas dedicated to client service are effectively and visibly marked with appropriate signage.	4.05	0.78	81.00	8.48	0.00	2
2. Reception (services) requirements	3.95	0.52	79.00	11.68	0.00	
The reception offers clients a comprehensive menu of services, providing clear information on the offerings, including scope, treatments, packages, pricing, operating hours, and guidelines.	3.70	0.94	74.00	4.71	0.00	10
The wellness SPA reception provides new clients with an informational document outlining the potential health risks associated with each treatment. In order to ensure client awareness and responsibility, the SPA requires clients to sign this document.	3.40	0.67	68.00	3.77	0.00	11
A reservation procedure is in place, requiring the identification of the client's name, contact details (telephone, fax, or email), requested services, pricing, number of clients, reserved period, and the booking guarantee policy.	4.35	0.62	87.00	13.72	0.00	1
All additional requests are registered.	3.95	0.96	79.00	6.26	0.00	7
The confirmation is formally notified and delivered to the client, including the guarantees for booking conditions (prepayment, credit cards, deposit, etc.)	4.05	0.93	81.00	7.12	0.00	4
All booking requests are listed as soon as the request is received and answered within 24 hours.	4.00	0.55	80.00	11.40	0.00	5

Table 3. (Continued)

Clients are promptly informed by reception staff about any changes in bookings, accompanied by valid justifications. Any exceptional circumstances are communicated to clients through efficient means of communication such as telephone or email.	3.98	0.86	79.50	7.15	0.00	6
The check-in services are carried out in a prompt and effective way.	4.10	0.63	82.00	11.00	0.00	3
Precise indications of the schedule and form of access to the facilities, clothing, etc. is given (or it is provided in written form), if required.	3.78	0.73	75.50	6.68	0.00	9
If required, specific guidelines are given, indicating the steps to be physically followed by the client for each treatment.	3.90	0.63	78.00	9.00	0.00	8
The issuing of invoices and collection of payment are carried out effectively, promptly and discreetly. Invoices are detailed and all receipts signed by the client are provided upon request.	4.28	0.85	85.50	9.52	0.00	2
3. Requirements in Treatment area	3.93	0.53	78.60	11.05	0.00	
An area for treatment is present, equipped with a sink, unless in temporary settings like natural environments.	3.98	0.95	79.50	6.51	0.00	4
A specific amount of floor space is designated as the minimum requirement for each type of treatment.	3.85	1.10	77.00	4.89	0.00	10
The treatment room is equipped with a sufficient level of illumination that meets the necessary standards for cleanliness and safety, along with a lighting system that can be adjusted as needed.	4.23	0.89	84.60	8.69	0.00	1
The air conditioning systems in the treatment rooms are individually regulated, subject to regular servicing and maintenance.	4.03	0.83	80.50	7.79	0.00	3
In the event that the treatment room is utilized for herbal wraps or mud treatments, there is provision for a shower facility.	4.05	0.71	81.00	9.30	0.00	2
In the case of offering wet treatments, the presence of a floor drain is ensured.	3.65	0.80	73.00	5.12	0.00	11
The wellness SPA incorporates safety mechanisms, such as emergency alarms.	3.95	0.78	79.00	7.68	0.00	6
Appropriate technical measures are implemented to prevent hazardous situations for clients.	3.85	0.36	77.00	14.87	0.00	8
Visible placement of usage instructions is provided for all wellness facilities that can be utilized without the presence of a therapist.	3.85	0.80	77.00	6.70	0.00	9
The SPA establishes a protocol to ensure the capability of providing first aid to its clients.	3.95	0.64	79.00	9.41	0.00	5
The first-aid kit is readily accessible to the staff members.	3.88	0.82	77.50	6.73	0.00	7
4. Requirements in Equipment	4.20	0.52	84.00	14.70	0.00	
The SPA furnishes measuring instruments, including clocks, hourglasses, and thermometers.	4.10	0.78	82.00	8.94	0.00	3
All water-filled aquatic wellness facilities and equipment are maintained in a clean and debris-free condition, while also ensuring appropriate water chemistry.	4.33	0.62	86.50	13.61	0.00	2

Table 3. (Continued)

The design and construction of all floor surfaces are tailored to suit the specific activities conducted in each area, such as incorporating non-slip flooring in wet areas to ensure safety.	4.35	0.62	87.00	13.72	0.00	1
All electrical installations and equipment are constructed, maintained, and functioning in accordance with proper standards and specifications.	4.03	1.05	80.50	6.18	0.00	4
5. Hygiene good practices requirements	4.11	0.46	82.20	15.45	0.00	
Regular supervision by staff ensures that wellness facilities and equipment are consistently maintained in a hygienic and visually clean condition.	4.25	0.74	85.00	10.65	0.00	4
After each wellness treatment, thorough disinfection is performed on all elements of the facility that may have come into direct contact with the previous client.	3.83	1.15	76.60	4.53	0.00	9
For every client, textiles that have directly come into contact with them are replaced.	4.05	0.81	81.00	8.15	0.00	6
The taps or water outlets undergo daily cleaning and disinfection.	4.10	0.78	82.00	8.94	0.00	5
Following each utilization, tubs are emptied, subjected to cleaning procedures, and disinfected.	4.25	0.71	85.00	11.18	0.00	3
The showerheads are designed to be detachable, while providing easy access to their internal components for disinfection.	3.95	0.68	79.00	8.87	0.00	7
The cleaning and disinfection of the floor are promptly conducted whenever required.	3.90	1.19	78.00	4.77	0.00	8
The storage and utilization of maintenance and hygiene products for facilities and equipment strictly adhere to regulations.	4.38	0.49	87.60	17.74	0.00	1
The tubs, pools, and whirlpools undergo regular maintenance to ensure their proper upkeep.	4.33	0.66	86.50	12.78	0.00	2
6. Staff requirements	4.26	0.43	85.2	18.53	0.00	
The staff attends to all client requirements and upholds their privacy with utmost respect.	4.33	0.76	86.50	10.97	0.00	2
Clients are addressed in a respectful and formal manner, adhering to the protocols of courteous conduct.	4.43	0.50	88.60	18.00	0.00	1
The staff possesses the capability to effectively handle unforeseen circumstances.	4.08	0.66	81.50	10.37	0.00	4
The delivery of services is efficient and prompt in all aspects.	4.23	0.80	84.50	9.68	0.00	3
The Service requirements according to ISO 17679	4.11	0.40	82.20	17.67	0.00	

Table 3 shows that the relative weight of the service requirements according to ISO 17679, with its six dimensions, is 82.2%, which is at a high level, with a mean of 4.11 and a standard deviation of 0.40. These indicate the level of implementation of ISO 17679 standards in wellness SPAs in 5-Star thermal hotels under investigation in this study is at a high level and this is from the point of view of the respondents to the 66 questionnaire. That is the answer to part one of this study title, following sections investigate the impacts of the ISO 17679 standards on customer satisfaction through 2 mediators namely servicescape and service quality. Then investigate the impact of customer satisfaction on behavioral intentions.

Table 4. Descriptive Analysis (Servicescape)

Servicescape	Mean	Standard deviation	Relative weight%	Test value	P-value	Items Order
1. Substantive staging of servicescape	4.21	0.44	84.20	17.34	0.00	
The background music in this wellness SPA is pleasant.	4.08	1.07	81.60	6.35	0.00	8
This wellness SPA has nice smell.	4.13	0.76	82.50	9.39	0.00	6
The atmosphere in this wellness SPA is cheerful.	4.25	0.59	85.00	13.44	0.00	4
This wellness SPA is clean.	4.25	0.61	85.00	13.44	0.00	5
This wellness SPA has up-to-date facilities.	4.30	0.72	86.00	11.37	0.00	3
The architecture in this wellness SPA is attractive.	4.30	0.65	86.00	12.68	0.00	2
The color scheme in this wellness SPA is attractive.	4.08	0.76	81.50	8.90	0.00	7
The facilities in this wellness SPA are maintained well.	4.33	0.47	86.60	17.67	0.00	1
2. Communicative staging of servicescape	4.40	0.53	88.00	16.79	0.00	
The employees this wellness SPA are willing to help.	4.50	0.51	90.00	18.73	0.00	2
The employees this wellness SPA are polite and friendly.	4.55	0.75	91.00	13.08	0.00	1
The employees this wellness SPA give customers personal attention.	4.28	0.75	85.50	10.74	0.00	4
The employees this wellness SPA are passionate.	4.28	0.60	85.50	13.47	0.00	3
Servicescape	4.31	0.44	86.20	18.86	0.00	

Table 4 shows that the relative weight of Servicescape, with its 2 dimensions, is 86.2%, which is at a high level, with a mean of 4.31 and a standard deviation of 0.44. These indicate the level of servicescape in wellness SPAs of 5-Star thermal hotels under investigation in this study is at a high level and this is from the point of view of the respondents to the questionnaire. Table 5 shows that the relative weight of all service quality is 88.8% which is at a high level, with a mean is 4.44 and a standard deviation is 0.65. These indicate the level of service quality in wellness SPAs of 5-Star thermal hotels under investigation in this study is at a high level and this is from the 68 point of view of the respondents to the questionnaire.

Table 5. Descriptive Analysis (Service Quality)

Service quality	Mean	Standard deviation	Relative weight%	Test value	p-value	Items Order
The staffs provide a thorough and satisfactory service.	4.33	0.76	86.60	10.97	0.00	3
The staffs are reliable	4.48	0.85	89.60	11.01	0.00	2
The staffs are professional.	4.53	0.64	90.60	15.07	0.00	1
Service quality	4.44	0.65	88.80	14.10	0.00	

Table 6 shows that the relative weight of all customer satisfaction is 85.8% which is at a high level, with a mean is 4.29 and a standard deviation is 0.50. These indicate the level of customer satisfaction in wellness SPAs of 5-Star thermal hotels under investigation in this study is at a high level and this is from the point of view of the respondents to the questionnaire.

Table 6. Descriptive Analysis (Customer Satisfaction)

Customer satisfaction	Mean	Standard deviation	Relative weight%	Test value	p- value	Items Order
Overall, I am satisfied here.	4.26	0.44	85.20	18.03	0.00	2
I have really enjoyed myself here.	4.25	0.63	85.00	12.54	0.00	3
The overall feelings I got from here put me in a good mood.	4.38	0.63	87.60	13.85	0.00	1
Customer satisfaction	4.29	0.50	85.80	16.47	0.00	

Table 7 shows that the relative weight of all behavioral intentions is 85.60% which is at a high level, with a mean is 4.28 and a standard deviation is 0.36. These indicate the level of behavioral intentions in wellness SPAs of 5-Star thermal hotels under investigation in this study is at a high level and this is from the point of view of the respondents to the questionnaire. Behavioral intentions is the final dependent variable in this study.

Table 7. Descriptive Analysis (Behavioral Intentions)

Behavioral intentions	Mean	Standard deviation	Relative weight%	Test value	p- value	Items Order
I intend to revisit this place again.	4.50	0.51	90.00	18.73	0.00	1
This place will be the first choice for me	4.08	0.69	81.60	9.80	0.00	5
I have positive comments about this place	4.25	0.59	85.00	13.44	0.00	3
I will recommend this place to others.	4.13	0.56	82.60	12.63	0.00	4
I have a continual intentions to visit this place in the future.	4.43	0.64	88.60	14.17	0.00	2
Behavioral intentions	4.28	0.36	85.60	22.31	0.00	

Measurement Model

This study employed Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step analysis method. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 22 and AMOS 20. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to validate the factor loading of the five constructs and assess the model fit. The measurement model specifics are provided below.

In Table 8 and Table 9, the internal consistency and reliability and discriminant validity of the study's measures were tested.

Table 8. Reliability and Validity of the Measurement Model

		Factor loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Composite Reliability (CR)	Cronbach's alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
The Service requirements according to ISO 17679	Reception requirements (facilities)	.8250	4.190	0.545			
	Reception requirements (services)	.8390	3.956	0.499			
	Requirements in Treatment area	.8510	3.940	0.519			
	Requirements in Equipment	.7600	4.194	0.513			
	Hygiene good practices requirements	.7170	4.119	0.451			
	Staff requirements	0.779	4.259	0.419			
The Service requirements according to ISO 17679		0.991	4.112	0.388	0.804	0.936	0.533
Servicescape	Substantive staging of servicescape	0.747	4.211	0.440			
	Communicative staging of servicescape	0.892	4.409	0.527			
Servicescape		.8850	4.309	0.435	0.97	0.844	0.952
Service Quality		.8290	4.448	0.638	0.776	0.752	0.54
Customer satisfaction		.8130	4.287	0.489	0.794	0.830	0.614
Behavioral intentions		.5400	4.283	0.365	0.727	0.700	0.579

Model goodness of fit indices: $\chi^2= 13.117$, $df=3$, $p= 0.000$, $\chi^2/df= 4.372$, $GFI= 0.924$, $RMSEA=0.08$, $CFI= 0.931$, $RMR= 0.243$.

Table 8 displays the internal consistency of the constructs, comprising composite reliability (CR) values and Cronbach's alpha values that surpass 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability, as per the guidelines established by Hair et al. (1988). The assessment of construct validity encompassed both convergent and discriminant validity evaluations. Convergent validity criteria, encompassing factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE), surpassed the recommended threshold of 0.5, while reliability exceeded 0.7, following the recommendations by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

The confirmation of discriminant validity was derived from the correlation matrix and comparisons of the square root of AVE values as outlined in Table 9. The hypothesized

measurement model exhibits dependable and meaningful relationships for subsequent structural tests

Table 9. Discriminant Validity

	Service requirements according to ISO 17679	Servicescape	Service Quality	Customer satisfaction	Behavioral intentions
Service requirements	0.73				
Servicescape	0.314	0.976			
Service Quality	0.624	0.644	0.735		
Customer satisfaction	0.379	0.243	0.594	0.783	
Behavioral intentions	0.461	0.205	0.473	0.085	0.761

Diagonal elements are the square root of AVE.

The number of iterations taken by AMOS to achieve model minimization was 13 iterations. This number is well within the typical range for convergence, which is usually between 10–20 iterations for well-specified models. Achieving convergence in 13 iterations indicates that:

1. The model is well specified, with appropriate relationships between the constructs aligning with the observed data.
2. The data quality is adequate, as there are no significant issues like severe outliers, multicollinearity, or missing data that could hinder convergence.
3. The model complexity is appropriate, avoiding over parameterization or under parameterization.
4. Additionally, the achieved minimization aligns with acceptable model goodness-of-fit indices, which support the validity and reliability of the structural equation modeling (SEM) results.

Hypotheses Testing

The structural equation model (SEM) was estimated with a Maximum Likelihood Estimation method and a Correlation Matrix as input data. The overall structural model fit indicates that $\chi^2=13.117$, $df=3$, $p=0.000$, $\chi^2/df=4.372$, $GFI=0.924$, $RMSEA=0.08$, $CFI=0.931$, $RMR=0.243$. The details of the SEM analysis are displayed in Table 10. and Figure 2., which include parameter estimates, R^2 values and the results of the hypotheses tests. According to the model validity measure presented by (Chin et al.,2008), the endogenous latent variable can be classified as strong, moderate or weak based on R^2 values of 0.67, 0.33 or 0.19, respectively. Accordingly, servicescape ($R^2=0.391$), service quality ($R^2=0.581$), customer satisfaction ($R^2=$

0.572) and behavioral intentions ($R^2= 0.270$), which are all endogenously latent, can be described as moderate for servicescape, service quality, and customer satisfaction, and weak for behavioral intentions. All hypotheses were supported (see Table 10). Service requirements had significant positive effects on servicescape, service quality and customer satisfaction ($\beta= 0.66$, $p< 0.01$; $\beta= 0.43$, $p< 0.01$; $\beta= 0.26$, $p< 0.01$). Thus, H2, H5 and H1 were supported. Servicescape, as hypothesized, had significant positive effects on customer satisfaction and service quality ($\beta= 0.33$, $p< 0.01$, $\beta= 0.72$, $p< 0.01$). Thus, H3 and H4 were supported. As hypothesized, service quality had significant positive effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta= 0.29$, $p< 0.01$), supporting H6. Finally, customer satisfaction had a significant positive effect on behavioral intentions ($\beta= 0.37$, $p< 0.01$), supporting H7.

Table 10. Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypo: (Path)	Independent variables	Dependent variables	Standardized estimates	t-values
H1: (P1)	Service Requirements	→ Customer Satisfaction	0.26	2.364**
H2: (P2)	Service Requirements	→ Servicescape	0.66	6.044**
H3: (P3)	Servicescape	→ Customer Satisfaction	0.33	2.059**
H4: (P4)	Servicescape	→ Service Quality	0.72	4.730**
H5: (P5)	Service Requirements	→ Service Quality	0.43	2.912**
H6 (P6)	Service Quality	→ Customer Satisfaction	0.29	2.291**
H7 (P7)	Customer Satisfaction	→ Behavioral Intentions	0.37	4.595**
Total variance explained (R²):				
R ² for Servicescape = 0.391, R ² for Service Quality= 0.581, R ² for Customer Satisfaction= 0.572, R ² for Behavioral Intentions = 0.270.				
H8a: (P2 → P3)	Service Requirements → Servicescape → Customer Satisfaction			Indirect Effect $\beta = 0.2178^{**}$
H8b: (P5 → P6)	Service Requirements → Service Quality → Customer Satisfaction.			Indirect Effect $\beta = 0.1247^{**}$
H8c: (P2→P4→P6)	Service Requirements → Servicescape → Service Quality → Customer Satisfaction.			Indirect Effect $\beta = 0.137808^{**}$
Total Effect on Customer Satisfaction:				
β (Service Requirements → Customer Satisfaction) = 0.740308**				
β (Servicescape → Customer Satisfaction) = 0.5388**				
β (Service Quality → Customer Satisfaction) = 0.29**				

Model goodness of fit indices: $\chi^2=13.117$, $df=3$, $p=0.000$, $\chi^2/df=4.372$, $GFI=0.924$, $RMSEA=0.08$, $CFI=0.931$, $RMR=0.243$.

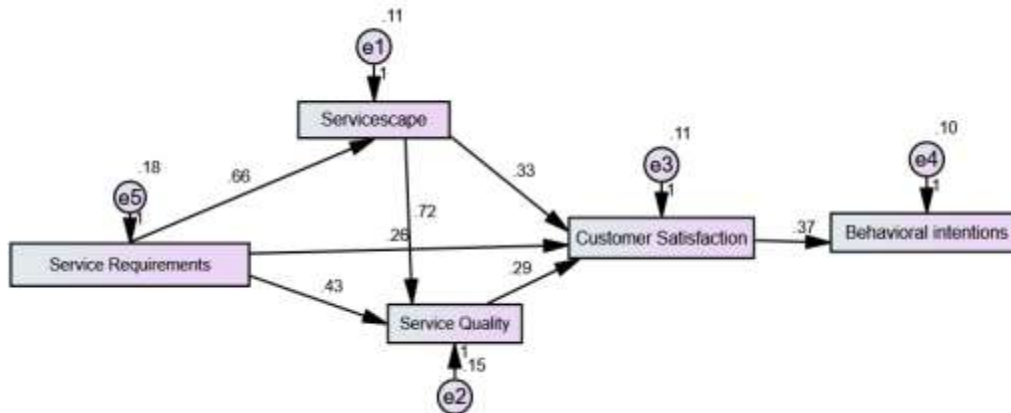


Figure 2. Estimated results of the research model

To investigate the mediating effect, the direct, indirect, and total effects between the variables were measured. Table 10 and Figure 2 shows that the total indirect effect of service requirements on customer satisfaction is 0.480308, which constitutes 64.9% of the total effect of 0.740308. This could be an indicator of a mediating effect. As hypothesized, Table 10 and Figure 2 shows that the indirect effect of service requirements on customer satisfaction via only servicescape (β (H8a) = 0.2178, $p < 0.01$), via only service quality (β (H8b) = 0.1247, $p < 0.01$), and via the combination of servicescape, and service quality (β (H8c) = 0.137808, $p < 0.01$) were significant, supporting H8a, H8b, and H8c. These results imply that servicescape, service quality, and both of them jointly acted as important mediators within the proposed theoretical framework. Thus, H8a, H8b, and H8c were supported. The total impacts of the latent constructs were also examined. The findings from the structural equation modeling (SEM) testing showed that service requirements ($\beta = 0.740308$, $p < 0.01$) had the greatest overall influence on customer satisfaction, followed by servicescape ($\beta = 0.5388$, $p < 0.01$), and service quality which had, as hypothesized, only a direct effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$). As well as the direct effect of service requirements on customer satisfaction was found to be significant (β (H1) = 0.26, $p < 0.01$) indicating the presence of partial mediation.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate the interconnectedness of various marketing concepts. Specifically, H1, H2, and H5, which were supported by the results, highlight the positive influence of providing service requirements based on ISO 17679 on the quality of service delivered by a wellness SPAs and its supporting processes. These findings align with the principles of ISO 17679. The standard seeks to ensure effective monitoring, provide guidelines for selecting appropriate measurement methods, and ensure the overall

effectiveness and adaptability of wellness SPA services (ISO 17679, 2016). Thus, the study's results corroborate the principles and objectives outlined by ISO 17679 in promoting quality in wellness SPA services.

The supported H3 in this study underscores the positive impact of servicescape on customer satisfaction. This finding aligns with previous research conducted by Amato (2016), which suggests that wellness facilities with well-designed servicescape tend to evoke more positive emotions compared to those with less successful designs. It is also consistent with the findings of Choi et al. (2016), who identified Servicescape as a factor contributing to customers' positive wellness service experience. Their study proposed that servicescape has a positive relationship with service experience and can strengthen the effects of emotions and trust. Furthermore, the findings of this study are consistent with earlier research conducted by Reimer & Kuehn (2005) and Wakefield & Blodgett (1996), emphasizing the importance of creating a pleasant and innovative atmosphere, as part of the physical environment, for the success of a firm. These studies provide additional support for the notion that a well-designed servicescape positively influences customer satisfaction (Han & Ryu, 2009). Overall, the findings of this study, along with the cited research, validate the relationship between servicescape and customer satisfaction, highlighting the significance of a well-crafted and appealing physical environment in enhancing customer experiences and satisfaction in wellness SPA settings.

The supported H4 in this study demonstrates the positive influence of servicescape on service quality. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Chang (2016), which suggests that the tangible facilities and intangible services within resorts interact to create value for customers. This concept is consistent with Levitt's (1981) notion of "marketing intangible products and product intangibles." The study by Chang (2016) further reveals that employee behaviors play a crucial role in service delivery, and the perceived servicescape and customer emotions significantly impact customer consumption experiences in a service firm. These findings are in line with the results of H4 in the present study, highlighting the positive relationship between servicescape and service quality. Collectively, these findings emphasize the importance of a well-designed Servicescape in contributing to the overall quality of services delivered. They also support the notion that both tangible and intangible aspects of the servicescape, along with employee behaviors, play key roles in shaping the customer experience and perception of service quality.

The supported H6 in this study demonstrates the positive influence of Service quality on customer satisfaction. This finding aligns with previous research conducted by Virabhakul & Huang (2018), which suggests that satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between service experience and behavioral intentions. Additionally, the findings are consistent with the

study by El-refae (2012), which found that service quality, particularly tangibles and empathy, had the strongest influence on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Furthermore, the findings of Durmaz *et al.* (2018) indicate that service quality positively affects customer satisfaction and hotel image.

This supports the idea that delivering high-quality services leads to increased customer satisfaction. Additionally, Dagger *et al.* (2007) emphasize the importance of health service quality as a determinant of patient satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Their findings highlight that high levels of perceived service quality result in higher customer satisfaction (Clemes, 2020). The consistency of these findings is further supported by studies such as Anderson *et al.* (1994), Cronin & Taylor (1992), and Zeithaml *et al.* (2006), which all highlight the role of service quality as an antecedent of customer satisfaction (El-refae, 2012). In summary, the results of this study, along with the cited research, provide robust evidence for the positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. They underscore the importance of delivering high-quality services to enhance customer satisfaction and subsequently influence behavioral intentions.

The supported H7 in this study indicates a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. This finding is consistent with previous research, such as the study conducted by Chen *et al.* (2015), which showed that positive and negative emotions have differential effects on diners' loyalty towards restaurants. It suggests that customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in shaping loyalty and behavioral intentions. Similarly, the findings of Durmaz *et al.* (2018) align with this study, as they indicate that customer satisfaction has a positive impact on the intentions to revisit and recommend. These findings suggest that satisfied customers are more likely to engage in repeat business and actively promote the service or product to others. Moreover, the alignment with studies conducted by Cho *et al.* (2004), Cronin *et al.* (2000), Kelly & Turley (2001), Tian-Cole *et al.* (2002), Bitner (1990), Patterson & Spreng (1997), and Yoo *et al.* (2003) further reinforces the relationship between customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (El-refae, 2012). These studies consistently highlight the role of customer satisfaction as a reliable predictor of repurchase intentions and reduced customer complaints. Furthermore, the findings are consistent with the study by González *et al.* (2007), which clearly demonstrates the influence of customer satisfaction on behavioral intentions in the tourism industry. Overall, these aligned results emphasize that customer satisfaction has a positive impact on behavioral intentions, loyalty, repurchase intentions, and reduced complaints. They highlight the importance of prioritizing customer satisfaction to foster positive customer behaviors and intentions in various industries.

The supported H8a in this study indicates that servicescape mediates the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous research, such as the study by NasarAmini et al. (2022), which states that the experiences of hotel customers are influenced by the servicescape, including both the physical and communicative aspects. It suggests that the quality of the servicescape plays a crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction. The alignment with the study by Inthasang et al. (2019) further supports this result, as they found that servicescape significantly contributes to place attachment, which, in turn, positively affects customer satisfaction. This indicates that servicescape acts as an antecedent to customer satisfaction. Additionally, the findings align with the study by Vilnai-Yavetz & Gilboa (2010), which emphasizes the impact of cleanliness in the servicescape on customer responses in various service contexts. It highlights that a clean servicescape can prevent service failures and support service recovery, ultimately influencing customer satisfaction. The study by Lee & Kim (2014) further reinforces the relationship between servicescape and customer satisfaction. Their findings indicate that elements of the servicescape, such as cleanliness, layout, and comfort, are crucial factors for service quality and satisfaction. These elements have a direct impact on user satisfaction and an indirect impact on loyalty and repeat usage in public service facilities. Furthermore, the alignment with the study by Ariffin et al. (2013) supports the positive influence of hotel hospitality on guest satisfaction and the moderating effect of servicescape. It suggests that servicescape can enhance the impact of hospitality on customer satisfaction. Overall, these aligned results highlight the mediating role of servicescape in the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. They emphasize the importance of a well-designed and clean servicescape in shaping customer perceptions, experiences, and ultimately, their satisfaction.

The supported H8b in this study illustrates that service quality mediates the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted by Gonzales and Brea (2005), Hsieh et al. (2008), Tsai et al. (2012), Giritlioglu et al. (2014), Lo et al. (2015), and Choi et al. (2015). These studies highlight the relevance of service quality in achieving customer satisfaction and subsequently influencing behavioral intentions (Clemes et al. 2020).

The alignment with Caruana (2002), Dandis et al. (2021), and Myo et al. (2019) further supports this result, as they emphasize the mediating role of customer satisfaction in the relationship between service quality and service loyalty. This implies that service quality acts as an antecedent to customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the alignment with Rashid (2013) indicates a significant relationship between the perception of service quality and customer satisfaction, leading to positive customer loyalty in the hotel industry. The results also align with

the study conducted by Aburayya *et al.* (2020), which found a positive correlation between customer orientation, service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. It suggests that customer satisfaction has a more substantial impact on consumer loyalty than service quality. Additionally, the results align with Kaura *et al.* (2015), indicating that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality dimensions, perceived price and fairness, service convenience dimensions, and customer loyalty. This supports the notion that service quality serves as an antecedent to customer satisfaction. Overall, these aligned results emphasize the mediating role of service quality in the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. They highlight the importance of delivering high-quality services that meet customer requirements to enhance customer satisfaction and ultimately influence customer loyalty and behavioral intentions.

The supported H8c in this study clearly illustrates that servicescape and service quality jointly and respectively mediate the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Siwi (2016), which concluded that servicescape and quality of service significantly influence customer satisfaction. Siwi found that these two variables, along with price (not examined in this study), account for 89 percent of consumer satisfaction. The alignment with Widyawati & Widowati (2021) further supports this result by identifying a new relationship between service quality, online servicescape, customer satisfaction, and loyalty. This suggests that service quality and servicescape together play a role in strengthening customer satisfaction and loyalty. The alignment with Parasuraman, Zeithaml, Berry (1985), Kant & Jaiswal (2017), Sanjuq (2014), and Ananth, Ramesh, Prabakaran (2010) emphasizes the importance of tangibility in service quality. These studies highlight the influence of tangible facets of the servicescape, such as equipment, physical facilities, and visual appeal, on customer satisfaction (Pakurár, 2019). Considering the findings of this study, where service requirements have a significant effect on servicescape (H2) and servicescape has a significant effect on service quality (H4), it confirms that servicescape and service quality jointly and respectively mediate the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. Overall, these aligned results highlight the combined and separate mediating roles of Servicescape and service quality in shaping the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. They emphasize the importance of creating an appealing servicescape, delivering high-quality services, and meeting customer requirements to enhance customer satisfaction.

Based on the findings of this study, the main findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Level of implementation of ISO 17679 standards in wellness SPAs within 5-Star thermal hotels investigated by this study, revealing a high level of implementation (82.2%).

2. Service requirements based on ISO 17679 have a significant direct effect on servicescape, service quality, and customer satisfaction.
3. Servicescape has a significant direct effect on service quality and customer satisfaction.
4. Service quality has a significant direct effect on customer satisfaction.
5. Customer satisfaction has a significant direct effect on behavioral intentions.
6. Servicescape partially mediates the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction, indicating that it plays a role in connecting these variables, but not to the extent of full mediation.
7. Service quality partially mediates the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction, suggesting that it acts as a mediator but does not fully explain the relationship.
8. Servicescape and service quality jointly and respectively partially mediate the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. This means that both variables have a combined and separate mediating effect on the relationship.
9. Service requirements have the greatest overall influence (total effect) on customer satisfaction comes from service requirements (β (service requirements \rightarrow customer satisfaction) = 0.740308**), followed by servicescape (β (servicescape \rightarrow customer satisfaction) = 0.5388**), and then service quality (β (service quality \rightarrow customer satisfaction) = 0.29**).
10. The mediation roles between service requirements and customer satisfaction are ranked as follows (in descending order):
 - a) Service requirements \rightarrow servicescape \rightarrow customer satisfaction (β (H8a) = 0.2178, $p < 0.01$).
 - b) Service requirements \rightarrow servicescape \rightarrow service quality \rightarrow customer satisfaction (β (H8c) = 0.137808, $p < 0.01$).
 - c) Service requirements \rightarrow service quality \rightarrow customer satisfaction (β (H8b) = 0.1247, $p < 0.01$).

These findings highlight the importance of meeting service requirements, creating an appealing servicescape, and delivering high-quality services to enhance customer satisfaction. They also emphasize the role of servicescape and service quality as partial mediators in the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

By consolidating the findings of this study, it is possible to construct a relationship model that illustrates the mediating role of servicescape and service quality in the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction. Notably, previous studies have not examined the serial mediating relationships of these variables while considering service requirements as

the starting point for achieving customer satisfaction. Furthermore, this study highlights that the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction is established through two interconnected mediators namely servicescape and service quality. Both mediators play a role individually and jointly in shaping customer satisfaction, as mentioned earlier. Additionally, a significant direct effect of service requirements on customer satisfaction was identified, underscoring the importance of meeting appropriate service requirements as a fundamental step toward achieving customer satisfaction. Moreover, the study reveals that the largest total effect on customer satisfaction originates from service requirements, followed by servicescape, and then service Quality. Furthermore, the study identifies the most effective path between service requirements and customer satisfaction is the path that involves only servicescape which is H8a, followed by the path that involves both servicescape and service quality jointly and respectively which is H8c. The path involving only service quality, which is H8b, follows thereafter. Overall, this model emphasizes the central role of service requirements in the pursuit of customer satisfaction, while recognizing a partial mediating influence of servicescape and service quality.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Prior studies have extensively explored a broad range of factors that influence customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, such as servicescape, service quality, service experience, emotions, perceived value, perceived quality, and more. However, these studies have often overlooked the significance of service requirements as a fundamental precursor to these antecedent variables of customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The findings of this study hold significant theoretical implications as the proposed extended causal chain relationship model of (service requirements - servicescape - service quality - customer satisfaction - behavioral intentions) demonstrates a satisfactory model fit. This indicates the validity and reliability of the model, adding to its theoretical significance. Consequently, this study integrates the operational standards proposed by ISO 17679, which suggest that adhering to ISO 17679 in providing service requirements and supporting processes positively influences the quality of service delivered to clients, with the prior studies that investigated the factors that influence customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. This integration fills a gap left by previous studies that investigated the effects of variables such as servicescape, service quality, emotions, and perceived value on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, without considering the importance of service requirements. For instance, Loureiro (2017) examined the impact of servicescape and credibility on emotions, perceived quality, and image. Amato (2016) investigated the effect of servicescape on consumers' emotions and sensations, while Choi et

al. (2016) explored the relationship between servicescape and service 88 experience. Similarly, Chang (2016) examined the influence of perceived servicescape and customer emotions on customer consumption experiences. Virabhakul and Huang (2018) investigated the mediating role of emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction in the relationship between service experience and behavioral intentions. El-refae (2012) examined the impact of service quality on satisfaction and revisited behavioral intentions, while Chen et al. (2015) explored the influence of stimuli in luxury restaurants on customers' emotions and loyalty. Durmaz et al. (2018) studied the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction and hotel image, as well as the impact of hotel image and customer satisfaction on the intentions to visit and recommend. Han and Ryu (2009) examined the relationships among physical environment components, price perception, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in the restaurant industry. Moreover, Dagger et al. (2007) investigated the effect of health service quality on patient satisfaction and behavioral intentions. While Tsai et al. (2012) explored the relationships between environmental service, experience, service quality, value reliability, overall satisfaction, likelihood to revisit, and likelihood to recommend (Clemes et al., 2020). Gonzalez et al. (2007) demonstrated the influence of service quality and customer satisfaction on behavioral intentions in the tourism industry. Anderson et al. (1994), Cronin and Taylor (1992), and Zeithaml et al. (2006) investigated the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction (El-refae, 2012). Despite the extensive research conducted on a wide range of antecedents of customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, the significance of service requirements has been largely overlooked. 89 The examined causal chain (service requirements - servicescape - service quality - customer satisfaction - behavioral intentions) can be applied to elucidate the services offered by wellness SPAs of 5-star thermal hotels within the context of the Sultanate of Oman, as investigated in this study. The results offer a comprehensive perspective on the services offered by wellness SPAs in 5-star thermal hotels within the Sultanate of Oman, as examined in this research study. A causal relationship can be established between service requirements, servicescape, service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions, highlighting the pivotal role of service requirements as a foundational element prior to servicescape and service quality. This sequential relationship ultimately shapes customer satisfaction and subsequently influences behavioral intentions. Prior research has not explored the sequential mediation relationship beginning with service requirements within the context of SPA services. Serial mediation can offer a deeper understanding of the linkage between service requirements and customer satisfaction, unveiling the mediators involved in this sequential chain. Furthermore, this study emphasizes that the association between service requirements and customer satisfaction is partially mediated by servicescape and service quality within wellness SPAs in 5-star thermal

hotels in the context of the Sultanate of Oman. Additionally, this study validates the direct impact of customer satisfaction on behavioral intentions. This causal interplay among service requirements, servicescape, service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions substantiates the theoretical foundation underpinning this research, particularly drawing from Customer Expectation-Perception Theory, Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory, Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Importance of service requirements: The study highlights the significance of adhering to service requirements based on ISO 17679 standards. SPA managers should prioritize meeting these requirements to ensure the delivery of high-quality services, as they directly influence customer satisfaction which, in turn, generates positive behavioral intentions.

Focus on servicescape: The research emphasizes the role of servicescape in influencing customer satisfaction. SPA managers should pay attention to the design and layout of the SPA facilities, reception areas, treatment rooms, equipment, and overall ambiance to create a positive and pleasant environment for customers. This can contribute to enhancing their satisfaction and overall service experience.

Emphasis on service quality: The study underscores the importance of service quality in shaping customer satisfaction. SPA managers should strive for excellence in service delivery, including factors such as staff competence, professionalism, responsiveness, and empathy. By consistently providing high-quality services, managers can enhance customer satisfaction and foster positive behavioral intentions.

Customer loyalty strategies: The findings suggest that by focusing on service requirements, servicescape, and service quality, SPA managers can develop effective customer loyalty strategies. By meeting customers' expectations and creating positive service experiences, managers can increase customer satisfaction, which in turn leads to favorable behavioral intentions such as repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

Customer experience as a key factor: The study highlights the importance of the overall customer experience in SPA marketing. SPA managers, especially in 5-star thermal hotels, should aim to provide a holistic experience that goes beyond individual service interactions. By considering all aspects of the customer journey, from the moment they enter the SPA until they leave, managers can create a memorable and satisfying experience for customers. Overall, the research underscores the need for SPA managers to focus on service requirements, servicescape, and service quality to enhance customer satisfaction and drive favorable behavioral intentions. By understanding and implementing these findings, managers can

improve their service offerings and customer loyalty strategies, ultimately leading to business success in the wellness SPA industry.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has certain limitations and provides opportunities for future research.

Firstly, the study exclusively focused on SPAs customers in Muscat, the capital of Oman. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings to SPA customers in other thermal hotels across different Omani cities may be constrained due to potential variations in the implementation of ISO 17679 among these locations.

Secondly, the current research utilized the convenience sampling technique, a widely used approach in the hospitality and tourism field. However, for future studies, it is recommended to explore alternative sampling methods beyond convenience sampling. Due to the unavailability of official data on the consumption of spa services in thermal hotels in Oman, determining the population size of customers using SPAs services was infeasible in this study. Adopting other sampling techniques could enhance the depth and accuracy of investigations in understanding customer behaviors and preferences related to SPAs services in Oman's thermal hotels.

Thirdly, the current research did not gather demographic data from respondents, as the main focus of this study was not to investigate differences among participants. However, for future studies, it is suggested to collect demographic data from respondents. This would allow researchers to explore potential variations among respondent groups concerning factors such as age, gender, education level, income, and cultural background. Analyzing these demographic variables could provide valuable insights into how different segments of tourists perceive and engage with the tourism experience, contributing to a deeper understanding of the dynamics in the field of tourism management.

Finally, as previously indicated, service requirements exert the most substantial influence on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.740308^{**}$), followed by servicescape ($\beta = 0.5388^{**}$), and then service quality ($\beta = 0.29^{**}$). Consequently, there are likely other variables that can impact customer satisfaction. Hence, it is recommended that future studies investigate additional variables that might mediate the relationship between service requirements and customer satisfaction.

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