

Guest's Satisfaction: The Case of a Resort in Sipalay City, Philippines

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Abstract

The importance of satisfaction for hospitality and tourism companies' survival is essential to verify the aspects of resort products and services. The study reported the guests' level of satisfaction with a particular beach resort in Sipalay City, Philippines. Descriptive design was used in the conduct of the study, having resorts' guests as the respondents. The results showed that guests' satisfaction in the resort is high, and there is a significant difference in the guests' level of satisfaction on products and services when the guests were grouped according to age. However, there is no significant difference in the guests' level of Satisfaction of the resort when categorized according to sex. Despite the high satisfaction result, the management may explore the possibilities of improving the resort in the areas of guest rooms and security services.

Keywords: *hospitality management, guests' satisfaction, resort, descriptive design, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction describes the starting point in forming customer loyalty and long-lasting connections in business. In other words, it develops hotel customer loyalty and contributes significantly to improving the corporate image of the

overall hotel chain (Radojević, Stanišić, & Stanić, 2014). Customer satisfaction is viewed to be one of the primary determinants of customer loyalty (Faullant, Matzler, & Füller, 2008). Enhancing customer satisfaction is a critical component of the hospitality industry's value proposition to the guests (Enz & Siguaw, 1999). Meng, Tepanon, and Uysal (2008) added that tourist appreciation of a destination is a function of attribute importance, performance, and travel motivation. Tourist satisfaction is also related to target attributes, including the attractiveness of a destination itself and the supporting industry-level attributes.

It is also essential to consider that customer satisfaction increases customer loyalty, influences repurchase intentions, and will lead to positive word of mouth (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2003). Qualities of service and customer satisfaction are critical factors for the success of any business (Dominici, & Guzzo, 2010). Hotels and businesses, in general, can go a step further and personalize the friendly, accommodating, and flexible experience guests receive by customizing the service, guest satisfaction increases (Ganesh, Arnold, & Reynolds, 2000).

Moreover, the concept of delivering quality service for ensuring guests' satisfaction to obtain guests' loyalty and subsequent repeat business has continuously been a typical assumption on the part of many theorists and practitioners (Bowen & Chen, 2001). Common dimensions of service satisfaction include service quality, product quality, price, and location. Researchers suggest the "people factor" may be the most salient of these dimensions in determining overall satisfaction and in securing repeat business in the service industries (Ganesh, Arnold, & Reynolds, 2000). To achieve customer satisfaction, it is essential to recognize and to anticipate customers' needs and to be able to satisfy them (Eshetie, Seyoum, & Ali, 2016). Companies that can rapidly understand and satisfy customers' needs make higher profits than those which fail to understand and satisfy them (Al-maslam, 2014).

The Philippines has a diverse and vibrant tourist destination derived from its natural and cultural heritage, yet not all are fully recognized or exploited (Henderson, 2011). The Philippines has timeless competitive advantages. It is near North Asia, which is composed of the rich sources of tourists: China, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong. The country has world-class natural attractions, like the world-famous Boracay beaches and Taal Lake (Lagman, 2008). In addition to coastal destinations, usually at self-contained interspersed resorts, opportunities are advertised for the reef, scuba, and wreck diving, snorkeling, surfing, sailing, and swimming (Henderson, 2011).

The island of Sipalay has potential for development based around water recreation, including underwater activities and surface recreation. Although sustainability needs to be assured by low-key development, consideration should be given to a small beach hotel and associated beach upgrading (Boquiren, Idrovo, & Valdez, 2005).

The researchers who are interested in areas of resort management and operations were motivated to determine the guests' level of satisfaction in a resort in Sipalay city.

Objectives

This study sought to determine guests' Level of Satisfaction in a Resort in Sipalay City on the food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and overall rating of their stay as an entire group and when grouped according to age and sex.

Moreover, the study also seeks to find out if there is a significant difference in the guests' level of satisfaction in a Resort in Sipalay City on the food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services and overall rating of

their stay as an entire group and when grouped according to age and sex.

Hypothesis

There is a significant difference in the guests' level of satisfaction in a resort in Sipalay City on the food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services and overall rating of their stay as an entire group and when grouped according to age and sex.

Framework

Satisfaction is the result of the positive things reduced by negative things and identified through the gap between customer expectations with customer experience. To discover how to satisfy the customer, companies must break down the components of experience (Meyer & Schwager, 2007). Customer satisfaction can be influenced by how a company can provide the emotional benefits experience that can be felt by customers when purchasing products/services (Mano & Oliver, 1993). Thus the customer experience management influences the formation of consumer satisfaction (Luturlean & Anggadwita, 2016).

More importantly, understanding the consumer is crucial to success in the hospitality industry (Lu, Berchoux, & Marek, 2015). Consumer motivation has often been viewed in terms of customer decision making, satisfaction, experiences, environment, and interactions with others, and hotel management personnel are taught that all decisions about the management of the hotel should begin with an understanding of the guest and determination of which option promotes success for the hotel as the strategy most likely to produce a high measure of guest satisfaction. Satisfaction is understood to be predicted by service quality, and the hotel sector should focus primarily on providing quality service concerning the factors of perceived

quality that are the most important to customers (Nasution, & Mavondo, 2005; Sudin, 2011).

Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty can contribute to the financial performance of an industry (Gruca & Rego, 2005). For instance, resort hotels are a highly relevant service context while examining the role of customer emotions in service consumption (Ali & Amin, 2014). This is because such services are utilized primarily to fulfill the customer's pursuit of pleasure in their lives (Madriral, 2003). It is essential to note that the resort industry should not stop in satisfying the needs of the guests since a satisfied guest does not guarantee loyalty. Marketing can reinforce their efforts on customer loyalty (Dimitriades, 2006). Hence, customers are presently no longer willing to sacrifice the physical environment or poor service for good value when they explore a relaxing experience in a resort hotel (Ali & Amin, 2014).

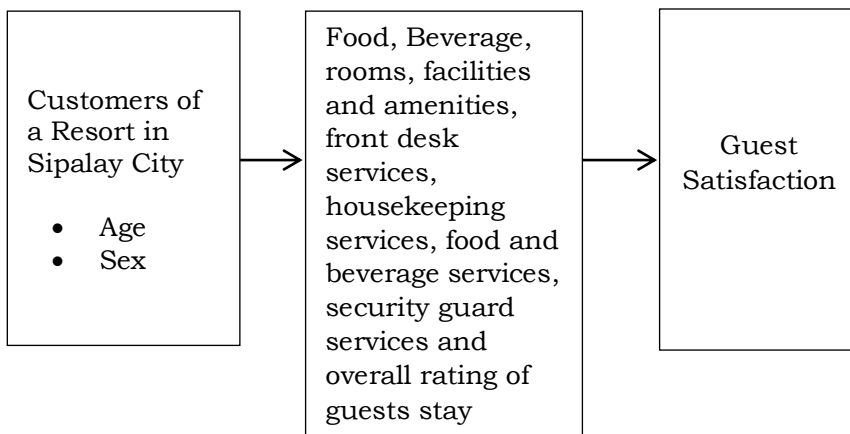


Figure 1: Schematic Diagram of the Study

The schematic diagram illustrates the profile of the guests in consideration of their sex and age. The variables Food, Beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services,

housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and overall rating of guests stay were the factors for the guests' level of satisfaction in the products and services of the resort in Sipalay City, Philippines.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study was administered at a resort in Sipalay City between January to March 2017. The inquiry was focused on determining the guests' level of satisfaction in the aspects of food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and an overall rating of their stay at a Resort in Sipalay City. The respondents of the study were the 261 guests of the resort using a non-probability sampling called convenience sampling.

METHODOLOGY

The study focused on the guests' level of satisfaction where the descriptive design was utilized in the manner of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study. Usually, a descriptive study establishes only associations between variables (Hopkins, 2000). Utilizing the convenience sampling, the respondents were the 261 guests of a resort in Sipalay City, Philippines. According to Bryman and Bell (2003), convenience sampling is available to the researcher by its accessibility.

A researchers-made survey instrument was used to gather data. The questionnaire has two parts. Part I was consists of the profile of the respondents on their age and sex. While part II of the survey questionnaire pertains to the guests' level of satisfaction in the aspects of food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and overall rating of guests stay in the resort.

For the responses to each of the items, the respondents were given four options to choose from. Each option was provided a numerical score to quantify the data with the corresponding verbal interpretation.

<u>Ratings</u>	<u>Verbal Interpretation</u>
4	Very High Level
3	High Level
2	Low Level
1	Very Low Level

The instrument was validated by the jury of experts from the field of Hospitality and Tourism Management using content validity ratio (CVR). The content validity index(CVI) was 0.99 considered valid. The CVI is simply the mean of the CVR values of the retained items (Lawshe, 1975).

The validated instrument was subjected to reliability using Cronbach's Alpha to measure how well a test consistently measures what it is deemed to measure. High reliability for the test would mean it consistently measures what it intends to measure. The result of the reliability test using the Cronbach alpha was 0.964, which was interpreted as highly reliable.

As to the ethical consideration, the researchers asked permission from the owner of the resort by sending a letter asking for approval because the researchers conducted a study in the resort establishment. Using convenience sampling, the researchers personally distributed the survey instrument to the available guests around the resort area. The researchers employed convenience sampling, foreseeing that it would provide two significant advantages to us as researchers. First, convenience sampling allowed us to reach a larger group of students than we would have using another sampling technique. Second, it allowed us to reach our participants in a shorter period (Ruzgar & Babadogan, 2017).

The data were treated using various statistical tools for the computation of the descriptive data. Mean and Standard Deviation was used to determine the guests' level of satisfaction in the resort when they were grouped according to age and sex and what level of satisfaction do the guests perceive in the resort in the aspects of food, beverage, rooms, facilities, and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and an overall rating of their stay at a resort. To interpret the results, the following guide was used:

<u>Mean Score Range</u>	<u>Verbal Interpretation</u>
3.25 - 4.00	Very High Level
2.50 - 3.24	High Level
1.75 - 2.49	Low Level
1.00 - 1.74	Very Low Level

To determine if there is a significant difference in the guests' level of satisfaction in a Resort in Sipalay City on the food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and overall rating of their stay as an entire group and when grouped according to age and sex, Mann-Whitney U test was used. Mann-Whitney U test is a non-parametric statistical method. The Mann-Whitney U is also applied to test the null hypothesis, subject to both samples coming from the same fundamental set or having the same median value (Milenović, 2011).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Guests' Level of Satisfaction of a Resort in Sipalay City when Taken as a Whole

Aspects	n= 261		
	\bar{x}	Sd	Interpretation
Food	2.97	0.45	High
Beverage	2.97	0.48	High
Rooms	2.95	0.52	High
Facilities and Amenities	2.98	0.55	High
Total Mean Score of Product Satisfaction	2.97	0.41	High
Front Desk Services	3.00	0.52	High
Housekeeping Services	3.05	0.54	High
Food and Beverage Services	3.02	0.49	High
Security Guard Services	2.93	0.58	High
Total Mean Score of Service Satisfaction	3.00	0.46	High
Overall Rating of Stay in a Resort in Sipalay City	3.04	0.49	High
Overall Mean	3.00	0.412	High

Table 1 shows guests' level of satisfaction in a resort in Sipalay City when taken as a whole; the overall mean score was 3.00, interpreted as High. It is illustrated in the table that the highest mean score of 3.05 was in the aspect of Housekeeping Services, while the lowest score of 2.93 was in the aspect of security guard services, which was still interpreted as a high level of satisfaction.

This may imply that the guests availing the products and services of the resort experienced high satisfaction.

In a competitive hospitality industry that offers similar services, individual hoteliers must be able to satisfy customers better than their counterparts (Choi & Chu, 2001). Customer satisfaction is a business philosophy that leads to the formulation

of value for consumers, anticipating and handling their expectations, and demonstrating ability and responsibility to satisfy their needs (Dominici & Guzzo, 2010). As guests' expectations continuously increase, resort managers should continually improve the services to obtain guests' satisfaction and enable the resort to compete in the competitive market (Yusof, Rahman, & Iranmanesh, 2015).

Table 2 Guests Level of Satisfaction on the Product and Services of a Resort in Sipalay City when grouped according to Sex

Aspects	Male (n=122)	Sd	VI	Female (n=139)	Sd	VI
Product Satisfaction	\bar{x}			\bar{x}		
Food	2.98	0.41	High	2.96	0.49	High
Beverage	2.94	0.43	High	2.99	0.52	High
Rooms	2.98	0.53	High	2.92	0.51	High
Facilities and Amenities	3.02	0.53	High	2.94	0.56	High
Service Satisfaction						
Front Desk Services	2.99	0.49	High	3.00	0.55	High
Housekeeping Services	3.04	0.52	High	3.05	0.56	High
Food and Beverage Services	3.00	0.44	High	3.03	0.53	High
Security Guard Services	2.91	0.60	High	2.94	0.57	High
Overall Rating for Your Stay in the Resort	3.05	0.44	High	3.04	0.53	High

Table 2 reveals that both the male and female groups had a high level of satisfaction in the variables of food, beverage, rooms, facilities & amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food & beverage services, and security guard services, and overall rating of the guests stay in the resort in Sipalay City.

The highest mean rating obtained by the male group was the overall rating for the stay in the resort, with an average of 3.05 interpreted as high, while the lowest mean score of 2.91 was in the aspect of security guard services but still considered as high. On the other hand, the female group got the highest mean score of 3.05, interpreted as high in the area of housekeeping services, while the lowest mean score of 2.92 was in the aspect of Rooms, and still interpreted as high

This may be assumed that the male and female guests in the resort perceived a high level of satisfaction in the various products and services of the resort but just differ in some aspects.

Na (2010) suggests that female guests are maybe more sensitive to the relational aspects with service encounters and male guests to the core aspects. Consequently, it can be argued that women place more importance on quality because they consider and assess in detail every single feature of the products and services they acquired. At the same time, customers evaluate the overall aspects (Kwok, Jusoh, & Khalifah, 2016). Therefore, it is not unusual that the expectation of the service or products for females is likely to be higher than male consumers, together with lower perceptions score reports than male consumers do, which, in turn, affects the level of the satisfaction (Juwaheer, 2011).

Table 3 Guests Level of Satisfaction on the Product and Services of a Resort in Sipalay City when Grouped according to Age

Aspects	Younger (n =155)			Older (n = 106)		
	\bar{x}	sd	VI	\bar{x}	sd	VI
Product Satisfaction						
Food	3.06	0.45	High	2.84	0.43	High
Beverage	3.08	0.47	High	2.81	0.46	High
Rooms	3.03	0.50	High	2.83	0.53	High
Facilities and Amenities	3.07	0.56	High	2.84	0.51	High
Service Satisfaction						
Front Desk Services	3.07	0.52	High	2.89	0.52	High
Housekeeping Services	3.12	0.53	High	2.94	0.54	High
Food and Beverage Services	3.09	0.49	High	2.91	0.49	High
Security Guard Services	3.06	0.53	High	2.74	0.58	High
Overall Rating for the Stay in a resort	3.15	0.51	High	2.89	0.49	High

Table 3 exhibits guests' level of satisfaction on the product and services of a resort in Sipalay City when grouped according to age. It shows that both the younger and older group had a high level of satisfaction in the variables food, beverage, rooms, facilities & amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services,

food & beverage services, and security guard services, and an overall rating of guests stay in the resort. The younger group attains the highest mean rating of 3.15 in the area of the overall rating for the stay in a resort, which was understood as high, while the lowest average score of 3.03, interpreted as high, was in the aspect of Rooms. Whereas, the highest mean score of 2.94 was attained by the older group was in the area of housekeeping services, while the lowest average rating of 2.74 was in the aspect of security guard services.

The results connote that the younger group was much contented on their overall experiences in staying in the resort. Also, young guests may underrate the rooms because they might prefer rooms that can satisfy their needs and wants. On the other hand, the older group was presumed to be meticulous in the cleanliness of the resort. Therefore they appreciate the housekeeping services. Since the older group was very particular with their safety and security, it can be implied that they find areas for improvement for security guard services.

Several theories can be applied to explain age-related differences in the context of customer satisfaction and loyalty (Evanschitzky & Wunderlich, 2006; Homburg, C., & Giering, 2001). First, customers' needs can change with age. Hence, older customers will consider other factors to be more critical than younger customers will. Second, older customers may have more consumption experiences than younger customers and may have another comparison standard regarding product or service evaluation. Third, older customers process less information (Gilly & Zeithaml, 1985) and rely more strongly on heuristic or schema-based forms of processing (Wilkes, 1992). Moreover, (Bryant, B. E., & Cha, 1996) found that customer satisfaction ratings vary systematically by age, heightening sharply with older age. Hence, it can be expected that age plays a significant role in the customer satisfaction formation and moderates the relationship between the satisfaction factors and overall customer satisfaction (Matzler, Füller, Renzl, Herting, & Späth, 2008).

Table No. 4 exhibits a significant difference in the guests' level of satisfaction in the resort when grouped according to age. The table showed that the p-values of the areas food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and an overall rating of guests stay at the resort are lesser than the level of significant at 0.05. Thus, the younger and older guests' level of satisfaction varies significantly.

Table 4 Significant Difference in Guests' Level of Satisfaction in a Resort in Sipalay City when grouped According to Age (n=261)

ASPECTS	Age	n	p-value	Sig @0.05	Status of Hypothesis
Food	Younger	155	0.000	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			
Beverage	Younger	155	0.000	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			
Rooms	Younger	155	0.012	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			
Facilities and Amenities	Younger	155	0.000	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			
Front Desk Services	Younger	155	0.003	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			
Housekeeping Services	Younger	155	0.003	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			
F&B Services	Younger	155	0.003	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			
Security Guard Services	Younger	155	0.000	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			
Overall Rating for Your Stay at the Resort in Sipalay City	Younger	155	0.000	Significant	Rejected
	Older	106			

In the study of Stranjancevic and Bulatovic (2015), the results affirmed that age has a moderate effect on customer satisfaction. Moreover, in the investigation of Sivesan and Karunanithy (2013) reveals that there is a significant difference among age, income, and education level on service quality. It is also evident in the work of Hilmi, Melkis, and Mustapha (2014) that there is a significant difference in customer satisfaction towards fast food based on the different age groups. Each age

group has its expectation and requirement for customer satisfaction.

Table 5 Significant Difference in Guests' Level of Satisfaction of a Resort in Sipalay City when grouped According to Sex (n=261)

ASPECTS	Sex	N	p-value	Sig @0.05	Status of Hypothesis
Food	Male	122	0.610	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			
Beverage	Male	122	0.334	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			
Rooms	Male	122	0.520	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			
Facilities and Amenities	Male	122	0.383	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			
Front Desk Services	Male	122	0.999	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			
Housekeeping Services	Male	122	0.970	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			
F&B Services	Male	122	0.890	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			
Security Guard Services	Male	122	0.847	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			
Overall Rating for Your Stay at the Resort in Sipalay City	Male	122	0.896	Not significant	Accepted
	Female	139			

Table 5 presents the significant difference in the Guests' Level of Satisfaction of the resort when grouped according to sex. The table showed that the p-value in the aspects of food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and overall rating of your stay in the Resort in Sipalay City is greater than the level of significance at 0.05. Henceforth, male and female level of satisfaction predicts no difference in

guests level of satisfaction in the aspects of food, beverage, rooms, facilities, and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services, and overall rating of your stay in the resort, aspects regarding sex, between male and female respondents.

The results in the study of Stranjancevic and Bulatovic (2015) confirmed that gender has no significant effect on customer satisfaction. However, this was contradictorily argued by the findings of Theodorakis, Alexandris, Rodriguez, and Sarmiento (2004). They found a statistically significant difference between males and females on their perceptions of customer satisfaction in health club settings. Further, the similarities in gender response may be influenced by the fact that the research sites were couples-only, all-inclusive resorts: these couples may have had similar experiences during their vacation (Frater, 2007).

CONCLUSIONS

Having determined that the guests' level of satisfaction in the resort was high, this may be interpreted that most guests find pleasures on the products and services of the resort. This gave the owner the possibility of improving the areas of food, beverage, rooms, facilities and amenities, front desk services, housekeeping services, food and beverage services, security guard services and may also consider the overall rating of guests so that the guests will be delighted if these issues will be taken into consideration.

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