



THE CLASSIFICATION AND QUALITY OF SERVICE AND HOTEL CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION

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Abstract

Background/Objectives: In this research study endeavored to determine how the classification and quality of service of hotels relate to the satisfaction of customers. **Methods/Statistical analysis:** The researcher examined three important variables – the classification of the hotels, quality of services and customer satisfaction. The researcher sought to determine if the first two mentioned variables – classification of hotels and quality of services, has a relationship to the customer satisfaction. **Findings:** The study concluded that the classification of the hotels did not relate significantly to the customers' level of satisfaction on the basis of the first three customer satisfaction variables - reception and service, guestroom service and business center, except in the food and beverage variable. **Improvements/Applications:** The employees as representatives of the different hotels have greatly influenced the quality of services that the hotels provide to their customers, and this affects the customer satisfaction service encounter with hotel staff.

Index Terms

Customer Satisfaction, Hotel Classification, Quality of Service

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I. INTRODUCTION

Management of many businesses within the hospitality and tourism industry such as hotels, restaurants, fast foods, travel agencies and the like are patiently planning; making more innovations on the service and product offerings to completely delight the complexities and the never-ending needs and wants of their customers — loyal and target. This has led to a more dynamic managerial decision making and intensive competency-based trainings for human resources and business survival in the stiffer competition brought about by the modern time. These became the turning point for the businesses to hire more service and people oriented individuals who can work for the realization of company's mission and vision, and can directly and indirectly represent the whole organization to the clientele in general to assure the delivery of quality service. The hospitality and tourism industry as a dynamic industry is considered as the largest and fastest growing industry in the world. This diverse industry is composed of many different professions that are part of the service offerings and they are very anxious in providing worth-remembering experience to customers. One of the paradoxes working in this industry is that hospitality employees have the ability to affect and infect human experience by creating powerful impressions — even brief ‘moments of truth’— which may even last a lifetime. This shows that the industry is undergoing to change constantly. Added to this, people within it are dramatically creating good experiences and performing their tasks to set pace in rendering high quality of services to meet the insatiable needs of customers.

So as the society is continuously changing that can be reflected to the needs and wants of people, hoteliers and restaurateurs are very anxious to continue changing for [4] reiterated that “Service is both the mission and product of the industry.” Its main components are those that satisfy guest's need for shelter and lodging and those that provide their patrons with food and beverages. With this, the lodging sector, including the other sectors of the industry — food, travel and recreation, has become a labor-intensive industry. This means that it relies on a large workforce to meet the needs of its guests [34]. To completely delight customers, establishments within this labor intensive industry are greatly dependent to their manpower requirements for these people occupying different positions do have their abilities that served as armament or battle shield in the stiffer competition. Paradoxically, personnel of many establishments play a primordial role to achieve success. Bateman and Snell [3] pointed out that employee involvement is central to success. To epitomize, labor forces help the company improve productivity and to obtain good health condition and

stability in operation. So, does the need for them to be professional in what they do is a requirement [3]. Truly, the industry's different sectors are composed of many people having different tasks. Thus, with primary concern on industry's goal — for the customers to completely experience satisfaction and moments of delight, Gray and Liguori [5] highlighted that regardless whether a hotel as lodging sector is simple rooming house or encompasses within its four walls all the facilities of a small city, it is truly a ‘people’ business not only in that it exists to serve and satisfy people, but in that it requires the services of people to exist. Automation of service may help, but only human beings can furnish the bulk of the services needed for the well-being of the guests. All hotels provide rooms and most also offer food and beverages for sale. The successful ones add an extra ingredient which is the good service. This is the only product that cannot be purchased.

In spite of the advent of modern technology, still, humans are irreplaceable when it comes to service issues. In short, people who are working in the industry can make or break the business. So it is therefore important that the service staff understand the distinct characteristics and the different facets and avenues of service. Generally, service is an intangible good or product that is offered for sale ([20]. Whether the services offered are tangible or intangible, the biggest factor for the satisfaction of customers to take place is the employees. They have the ability to level up the quality of service offerings in their respective hotel. In conjunction, Albrecht [1] pointed out that the quality of service as perceived by customers is made through service commitment that is considered as a total organizational approach. Developing employees' character and right attitude towards their respective job and in dealing with co-employees are factors to consider for the service commitment to realize.

With these numerous reasons, the researcher motivated to conduct a study about the hotel classification and hotels' level of quality of service and the level of customers' satisfaction in selected hotels accredited by the Department of Tourism.

Objectives of the Study

This research study endeavored to determine how the classification and quality of service of hotels relate to the satisfaction of customers. Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Classify the hotels based from the Department of Tourism standards.
2. Describe the level of employees' perception on the quality of service of the hotels in terms of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, confidence or assurance, empathy, process; and responsibility.

3. Determine the level of customers' satisfaction of the hotels in terms of: reception and service; guestroom services, business center, and food and beverage.
4. Identify if there significant relationship between the classification of the hotels and level of quality of service and the level of customers' satisfaction.

II. METHODS

A. Research Design

The researcher utilized descriptive correlation method. This method makes an accurate assessment of incidences, distribution and relationship or on the present status of the phenomena, predicting and identifying the relationship between and among variables [8]. Hence, this lends itself to the nature of the study that is the hotels' classification and quality of service, and, how these relate to the customers' satisfaction of Department of Tourism accredited hotels. Moreover, this research method is a useful tool for scientific investigations which aim to describe the existing status of the events or phenomena, and more importantly, this employs analysis and interpretation of the meaning and significance of what has been described [28]. This study focused only with establishing the relationship of the hotel classification on the basis of the DOT requirements; employees' perceived level of service quality and customers' level of satisfaction in hotel establishments accredited by the DOT for the year 2011. Respondents of this study were comprised of one hundred fifty (150) hotel employees and one hundred five (105) hotel customers where both employees and customers came from eleven (11) different selected hotels accredited by the DOT. To identify and describe the variables of the study and to determine their relationship, frequency, percentage, weighted mean and Pearson's Correlation were employed for the statistical treatment of data.

B. Research Design

The research instruments used were two (2) sets of questionnaires and an interview. The conceptualization of the two (2) sets of questionnaires was supplemented by observations and analyses of journals, books, newspapers, published theses and hotels' survey forms.

To identify the classification of the involved hotels, the researcher made a letter asking permission from the DOT office to furnish him a copy of the DOT Accredited hotels in Region III. The officer in charge gave the researcher a list of DOT Accredited Hotels. The researcher also asked the officer some vital questions. Specific objective number one (1)

was realized by the information gathered from this office.

On the other hand, the first instrument was intended for hotel employees. This questionnaire was derived from a study about "Service Quality Measurement: An Empirical Investigation and a Critical Evaluation" [26]. The study focused to the level of service quality of the different banks. As per suggested by experts who validated the questionnaire, the researcher had made some editing to the instrument to fit it in his study. This tool was designed to analyze the state of employees' perception regarding the level of quality of service of hotel establishments. Seven (7) service quality factors were included in the questionnaire: (1) tangibles, (2) reliability, (3) responsiveness, (4) confidence or assurance, (5) empathy, (6) process and (7) responsibility. Its content was validated by five (5) personnel who are currently employed in hotel industry, and based from their suggestions; jargons or the technical terms were simplified by the researcher. Specific objective two (2) of this study was achieved by this questionnaire.

Lastly, the second set of questionnaire was made by the researcher through making synthesis on the different guest satisfaction survey forms of the different hotels, and it was prepared for the hotel customers to determine the level of customers' satisfaction about the services of selected hotels. There are four (4) customer satisfaction factors: (1) reception and service, (2) guest room services, (3) business center and (4) food and beverage. Its content validity was evaluated by five (5) hotel customers. In the third set of questionnaire intended for hotel guests, specific objective number three (3) was attained. It dealt on the variable customer satisfaction.

The two (2) questionnaires were vital in realizing the specific objective number four (4) or in knowing the extent of relationship of the variables of the study.

Generally, after the validation of the instruments, the researcher was able to simplify the ambiguous parts, correct some deficiencies, add important items and delete unnecessary ones and improve the two (2) instruments. After which revised and finalized form of the instruments were shown to the researcher's adviser and critique.

III. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

A. Hotel Classification

The data appeared on Table 1 includes the following codes and their corresponding description: 4 – De Luxe, 3 – First Class, 2 – Standard and 1 – Economy. These classifications are based from the

Department of Tourism requirements. This particular table also shows the frequency distribution (f) and the percentage (%) of the hotel classification.

The researcher obtained the information from the DOT Region III Office in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga. The DOT officer provided him list of accredited establishments in Region III particularly hotels.

Table 1. HOTEL CLASSIFICATION

Classification	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
4	1	9.09
3	1	9.09
2	6	54.55
1	3	27.27
Total	11	100

Based on the data presented on the table, the hotel classifications were coded and described as 4 which means De Luxe, 3 that classifies First Class, 2 means Standard and 1 classifies as Economy. Also, as findings were presented on the table, there is only one (1) hotel that classifies De Luxe which is equivalent to 9.09 percent, one (1) hotel or 9.09 percent is classified as First Class, six (6) or 54.55 percent out of eleven (11) are classified as Standard and three (3) or 27.27 percent of the hotels are considered Economy. The findings about the hotel classification on the basis of the Department of Tourism revealed that each classification has different requirements with regards to the location, level of service and staff, structure, facilities and amenities, guest room’s classification, features and numbers of food outlets and others. As the classification of the hotel varies, the types of rooms and even services also vary, but the supreme importance of the major product of the hotel to the guest satisfaction is inevitable. Studies have shown important variables in determining the levels of patronage, satisfaction and repeat purchase are price and cleanliness of rooms [2][8]. Locker [8] has identified three key issues in the selection of a hotel room and these were the availability of a room, the price which served as the trigger point for initial hotel selection and cleanliness which had a direct influence on choice. It is interesting to note that different hotels have different structures. These structures make the offerings and services like rooms unique in each hotel. Through the hotel structures, clear differences between classifications of hotel, which suggests that star rating, still allow hotel managers to differentiate themselves [25].

B. Quality of Service

Table 2 shows the descriptive measures – mean and descriptive rating of the level of quality of

service factors – tangible, reliability, responsiveness, confidence or assurance, empathy and process.

Among the tangible factors, item “Employees have a neat, professional appearance”, obtained the highest weighted mean. This indicates that the respondents are aware on the requirements of the industry regarding personal grooming, hygiene and professional image in dealing with customers most especially the front of the house positions. The lodging industry in general is very particular with regards to the appearance of the hoteliers for these people make or breaks the image of the hotel in front of their respective clients. This is a healthy sign that hotels offer high quality tangible service. Added to this, the materials, amenities, dining and the general work environment and location must take in to consideration also for quality is consistency in all aspects. In congruence to the findings, study revealed that tangibles including visually attractive dining areas, modern dining equipment, and employees who are well dressed got lowest expectations of service quality from the patrons at French and Chinese restaurants in Australia [17]. This dimension – tangibles such as employees’ behavior, efficiency, appearance and interaction, created main competitive advantages to one contract caterer against its competitors [16].

Table 2. LEVEL OF QUALITY OF SERVICE FACTORS – TANGIBLE, RELIABILITY, RESPONSIVENESS, CONFIDENCE OR ASSURANCE, EMPATHY AND PROCESS

Tangible	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Employees have a neat, professional appearance	4.62	Excellent Quality
2. Dining/ work environment is comfortable/ attractive/ has a visually appealing facilities.	4.45	High Quality
3. Visually appealing tools, equipment, wares associated with the service.	4.26	High Quality
4. The hotel is accessible. It is easy to locate or find and contact.	4.23	High Quality
5. Materials/ amenities are visually appealing, tidy and sanitized.	4.28	High Quality
Weighted Mean	4.37	High Quality
Reliability		
1. Perform the service right and accurate especially at first time.	4.37	High Quality
2. Providing services at the promised time.	4.22	High Quality
3. Willing to help and correct the mistakes and errors.	4.26	High Quality
4. The employees are dependable and have the initiative/ ability in providing/ customers’ service.	4.33	High Quality
Weighted Mean	4.30	High Quality
Responsiveness		
1. Being polite and kind especially when employees are very busy.	4.29	High Quality
2. Keeping customers informed about when services will be informed.	4.24	High Quality
3. Willingness to provide advice and suggestions to guide customers.	4.27	High Quality
4. Easy to meet/ have a session/ appointment with the hotel managers or supervisors.	4.25	High Quality
5. Prompt service to customers. Respond quickly and efficiently.	4.31	High Quality
Weighted Mean	4.27	High Quality
Confidence and Assurance		
1. Employees show/ instill confidence in customer, making customer feel safe and welcome in their transactions/ dealings/ encounters.	4.33	High Quality
2. Employees have the knowledge in answering guests’ query. They give clear understanding and precise information.	4.63	Excellent Quality
3. Providing appropriate, accurate, clear communication and informing customers of their account changes.	4.58	Excellent Quality
Weighted Mean	4.51	Excellent Quality
Empathy		
1. Employees devote enough time to their customers.	4.15	High Quality
2. Sincerely show concern about the problems of customers. They do have willingness to help customers.	4.36	High Quality
3. Providing services in holidays to attend to customers’ problems and inquiry.	4.21	High Quality
4. Giving individual attention to customers and having the customers’ best.	4.22	High Quality
Weighted Mean	4.24	High Quality
Process		
1. Using standard processes in providing services.	4.33	High Quality
2. Employees provide services with an appropriate speed.	4.25	High Quality
3. Modern equipment and having up-to-date equipment are used.	4.23	High Quality
4. Reasonable waiting time.	4.22	High Quality
5. Enough number of employees to meet the demands.	4.27	High Quality
Weighted Mean	4.26	High Quality
Responsibility		
1. Employees are polite and kind and behave rationally.	4.35	High Quality
2. Appropriate geographical distribution of the tasks in different areas/ departments.	4.29	High Quality
3. Willing to accommodate special requests/ needs of the special customers/ very important persons.	4.25	High Quality
Weighted Mean	4.30	High Quality

“Perform the service right and accurate especially at first time”, obtained the highest weighted mean for reliability. This indicates that the respondents fully understand the importance of performing the tasks right. This can be seen through giving accurate and right needs of the customers. Also, this is the main reason why hotel industry is known as “service and people oriented industry”. Management of every hotel holds intensive training for their staff. The performance accuracy of employees in providing services influences the quality of the services in hotel. It is also interesting to note that as service and people oriented, employees must take an initiative in handling customers' service and complaints. Previous studies supported the findings. Stevens et al (1995) developed DINESERV, an instrument used in identifying customers' perceptions of a restaurant's quality. Findings showed that among the SERVQUAL dimensions, reliability ranked first to all customers. Also, this reliability dimension such as accurate check, staff are dependable rated highest expectations of service quality by the patrons [17].

The item “Prompt service to customers. Respond quickly and efficiently” obtained highest mean for the responsiveness. This indicates that respondents agree that hotel employees provide prompt service to customers; they respond quickly and efficiently to orders, requests and questions of customers. Employees' role and participation epitomizes this dimension. Research from restaurants identified approaches to deal with problems about food service employees. The first approach is an attempt by restaurant managers to sculpt a new employee into a person who fits the establishment's ideal for service delivery through practicing appropriate displays and instilling response cues in employees [30]. Here, employees are trained to respond in accordance with the company's standards. Clear instructions and trainings are given to employees about the appropriate verbal and emotional responses to guests such as being polite and kind in greeting guests, doing suggestive selling approach, responding immediately to the needs of customers and the like.

For the confidence and assurance, items “Employees have the knowledge in answering guests' query. They give clear, understandable and precise information” and “Providing appropriate, accurate, clear communication and informing customers on their accounts changes” got an excellent quality rating. This shows that employees of hotel have transparency and accuracy in every dealing they have with customers. Customers are informed consistently on the changes happened to their accounts/ payments. This indicates that hotel employees exude confidence and competence in their dealings with customers. They provide accurate

information to guests' query and maintain transparency with regards to payments and or accounts of customers. Cheek et. al. [5] reiterated that employees' qualities are the key to customers' satisfaction of service quality. These qualities can be reflected to the confidence and assurance level of employees or staff in rendering services. Personnel are expected to be sensitive in dealing with the needs of their patrons such as answering query, giving right information and others. It is recommended that employees must avoid expectations that cannot be fulfilled as this leads to dissatisfaction [13]. To give accurate information and to be confident transacting with guests, authority should go with knowledge. Follet [9] advocated that if workers have relevant knowledge, they are in control of the work process.

The items “Sincerely show concern about the problems of the customers. They do have willingness to help the customers” got the highest weighted mean. This is a manifestation that employees do have the willingness to help customers solving their problems specifically their complaints about the services of the hotel. At the same time they show empathy to guests which is the supreme consideration in dealing with guest complaints. This indicates that employees devote time and energy to give personalized service and to attend to customers' concern, problems, complaints and the like. This is the main reason why even holidays, employees work and perform their tasks. Human needs are not equal strength [19]. This is the reason why hotel management are very anxious to provide personalized or attention to detail service to cater the individual needs of customers. Graham [10] pointed out the multitude of ways in which employees participate and exercise initiative in their work – helping customers, working during holidays, dealing to customer problems and complaints.

“Using standard processes in providing services” obtained the highest computed weighted mean for the process factor. This means that hotels are very particular to the processes which are part of the standards in rendering services. Processes like making the bed, serving food and the like help the employees in executing their tasks clearly and efficiently. These processes are part of the standards of the hotels. The processes as part of the standards play an important for the employees to provide services to customers. These can also be guidelines in meeting time requirement and speed in giving service for the guests to have a reasonable time waiting. Also, the equipment that employees are using in meeting the needs and request of customers are important to make the pacing of service faster. Enough number of employees must take in to consideration also. Several studies support the findings. Zeithaml et al. [38] reiterated that process comes from an established and usually routine set of

procedures – serving of foods, greeting the guests and operating equipment are examples of processes where the flow is considered. Reasonable waiting time with appropriate speed plays also an important role, but study showed that lengthy waiting time diminished customer satisfaction. Also, study highlighted that prompt and quick service and convenient operating hours ranked highest QSR expectations while clean dining equipment came in last for Chinese restaurants [12].

For responsibility factor, item “Employees are polite and kind and behave rationally”, gained the highest weighted mean. This indicates that majority of the respondents perceive the hotel employees as polite and kind which are manifestations of being hospitable and as expected, this is part of the service orientation. They maintain high quality level of politeness and kindness to customers. Several studies supported the findings of the study. Parasuraman [21] explained that responsibility relates to the performances and response to employees. On the other hand, Su and Sun [32] found out that quality in general is invariably the outcome of care, attention to detail - providing special needs of customers that fit for the purpose intended, allied to a genuine concern for the needs, comfort and convenience. Knowledge about customers is crucial in sufficing their right and special needs. Rahimi [24] recommended gathering customer data to continuously provide the needs of all the segments of market.

C. Customers’ Satisfaction

Table 3 presents the mean and the descriptive rating of the level of customers’ satisfaction that has four (4) variables – reception and service, guestroom service, business center and food and beverage.

Item “Bellman. Carry the guest's baggage and take them to room. Ambassador of goodwill”, for reception and service obtained the highest weighted mean. This indicates that majority of the respondents are extremely satisfied to the performance of the bellman of the participating hotels. Interview with some of the respondents revealed that the service encounter of customers with hotel staff is essential in creating positive experience. Some concepts and studies supported the findings. Chon and Sparrowe [4] highlighted that the reception and service focuses to the service encounter. This explains the interaction of customers with a service – personnel or facilities. Study also revealed that the dimensions of satisfaction with service include service quality, product quality, price and location. Theory suggests that the people factor in terms of SEVRQUAL dimensions [23] may be the most salient in determining over-all satisfaction and repeated purchasing in service industry [37]. Hiring more matured service provider was recommended by

Sebastian [29]. In conjunction, Lundberge [18] found out if employees are motivated, they are eager in developing their competencies in rendering services.

Table 3. LEVEL OF CUSTOMERS’ SATISFACTION – RECEPTION AND SERVICE, GUESTROOM SERVICE, BUSINESS CENTER AND FOOD AND BEVERAGE.

Reception and Service	Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Bellman. Carry the guest's baggage and take them to room. Ambassador of goodwill.	4.68	Extremely Satisfied
2. Receptionist Check-in/ Check-out. Create positive impression. Provide accurate information.	4.60	Extremely Satisfied
3. Room Attendant. Maintain guest's room cleanliness, orderliness and sanitation at all times.	4.37	Almost Always Satisfied
4. Laundry and Valet Service. Process laundry service according to the request of the guest.	4.32	Almost Always Satisfied
5. Telephone Operator. Provide accurate information. Handle calls efficiently.	4.36	Almost Always Satisfied
6. Security. Maintain peace and order in the hotel.	4.33	Almost Always Satisfied
7. Sales and Marketing Staff. Build hotel's good and reputable image by answering guest query accurately.	4.33	Almost Always Satisfied
8. Concierge / Information Officer. Very accommodating in providing accurate information.	4.49	Almost Always Satisfied
9. Convenience / Adequacy of Car Park. Car park is spacious.	4.50	Extremely Satisfied
Weighted Mean	4.44	Almost Always Satisfied
Guestroom Service		
1. Cleanliness and Sanitation. Room is immaculately clean and free from all sources of bacterial contamination.	4.55	Extremely Satisfied
2. Comfort. The room is properly ventilated and lighted. Guest is not disturbed by noise and other form of distraction.	4.52	Extremely Satisfied
3. Guestroom Amenities. There are sufficient amenities like linen, toiletries, drinking glass and the like.	4.53	Extremely Satisfied
4. Bathroom Amenities. Sufficient amenities like towels folded in rack, shampoo, tissue, soap, toothpaste and toothbrush and the like.	4.53	Extremely Satisfied
5. Decor and Lighting. Ambiance is soothing to the eye, no dull or dim. Properly blended colors of interior design.	4.48	Almost Always Satisfied
6. Beddings and Linens. Bed is made up properly. Linens are well fixed and wrinkled free.	4.69	Extremely Satisfied
Weighted Mean	4.55	Extremely Satisfied
Business Center		
1. Facilities. With complete facilities like conference room with audio visuals like LCD projector, speaker, phone recorder and the like.	4.52	Extremely Satisfied
2. Service Accommodation. Provide secretarial services, photocopying, facsimile, room and equipment rental and other services.	4.44	Almost Always Satisfied
3. Equipment / Amenities / Supplies. Equipped with modern equipment like laptop, photocopying machine, mobile phones and the like.	4.49	Almost Always Satisfied
4. Service Efficiency. Services are delivered accurately.	4.57	Extremely Satisfied
5. Accessibility. Services can be availed/ used at any time of the day.	4.54	Extremely Satisfied
6. Rapport. Staff builds good relationship with guest.	4.70	Extremely Satisfied
7. Courtesy. Staff maintains built in smile. Respect guest privacy.	4.67	Extremely Satisfied
Weighted Mean	4.56	Extremely Satisfied
Food and Beverage		
1. Taste and Flavor. Balance of flavors and the natural tastes of foods. Foods are tasty and flavorful.	4.52	Extremely Satisfied
2. Quality and Authenticity. Appearance of foods and theme are tangible and visible. Food orders are correct and complete.	4.50	Extremely Satisfied
3. Speed of Service. The foods and drinks are served promptly.	4.72	Extremely Satisfied
4. Efficiency / Attentiveness of Staff. Servers are patient in taking order. They are friendly and courteous. They know how to listen and serve the order correctly.	4.64	Extremely Satisfied
5. Variety/ Choice of Menu Items. Menu has variety of good items.	4.39	Almost Always Satisfied
6. Portion Size/ Quantity per Order. Foods are served with the right quantity/ portion.	4.36	Almost Always Satisfied
7. Value of Money. Prices of Foods are competitive.	4.53	Extremely Satisfied
8. Ambiance Comfort. The dining area is very relaxing.	4.56	Extremely Satisfied
Weighted Mean	4.53	Extremely Satisfied

For the guestroom service variable, “Beddings and Linens. Bed is made up properly. Linens are well fixed and wrinkled free” obtained the highest weighted mean. This indicates that the respondents perceived the bed is properly made up. Linens are well fixed and wrinkled free. Majority of the respondents are extremely satisfied to the beddings and linens of the hotels. The findings of the study were supported by several studies. Ryan and Humin [25] found out that the core expectations the hotels are meeting involves the bed comfort and cleanliness. Coverage of cleaning guest rooms are

the changing bed linens, making beds vacuuming, scrubbing bathrooms, trash cans are emptied and amenities are replenish; lights, television and radios are checked; restocked mini bars [4].

Item “Rapport. Staff builds good relationship with guest” obtained the highest weighted mean in the business center variable. This explains that majority of the respondents perceive the staff of the hotels build rapport/ good relationship with them. This is the reason why they are extremely satisfied. Also, this explains at this area – business center, customers are extremely satisfied to the services provided to them by the staff who maintain built in smile, rapport, respect and courtesy. The amenities, facilities and secretarial services are also considerations that made the majority of the respondents extremely satisfied. In the study of Ryan and Humin [25] highlighted that having a business center achieved an importance score barely in excess of 4.00. The business center is among a group of items that attracted a middling score, less than 4.60, all of which might gain high ratings from business travelers. Identifying the market segments that the hotel is catering helps the management in innovating the products and services [15].

The item “Speed of Service. The food and drinks are served promptly” under the food and beverage variable gained the highest weighted mean. This explains that the respondents are extremely satisfied for the food and beverage staff serves the orders on time or promptly. In short, there is a speed in service. The four (4) items were considered – the food, the ambiance, the value of money and the service staff affects the dining experience of the customers. Foods were affected by taste and flavor, the quality, portion, appearance, authenticity and availability. Ambiance highlighted the décor and lighting, comfort and appeal. The value of money where food items equated to the money paid by customers and the service staff which dealt to the attitude, skills and knowledge of the server. Specifically, the service staff courtesy, speed and attentiveness influence the dining experience of the customers. Walker [34] explained that Food and Beverage department supplies foods to the different areas of hotel. Ukpebor and Ipogah [33] recommended having good quality product and services such as serving ordered foods accurately and having food quality, good sound system, neat appearance of staff, convenient operating hours and good customer service. Jimenez [14] on the other hand concluded that the high end customers go for maximum value for the money invested.

D. Correlation of Variables

Table 4 shows the correlations of the variables of the study. This was done to see the relationship of the

hotel classification, quality of service and customer satisfaction.

Table 4. CORRELATION ANALYSIS OF HOTEL CLASSIFICATION, QUALITY OF SERVICE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Reception and Service	1											
2. Guestroom Service	.438**	1										
3. Business Center	.266**	.171	1									
4. Food and Beverage	.359**	.326**	.067	1								
5. Hotel's Rank	.216*	.231*	.280**	.178	1							
6. Tangibles	.086	.036	.153	.124	.438**	1						
7. Reliability	.033	.022	.158	.126	.545**	.877**	1					
8. Responsiveness	.044	.091	.142	.083	.571**	.865**	.907**	1				
9. Confidence/ Assurance	.119	.122	.172	.040	.525**	.854**	.759**	.816**	1			
10. Empathy	.249*	.229*	.218*	.158	.623**	.630**	.462**	.635**	.572**	1		
11. Process	.131	.116	.022	-.029	.126	.476**	.276**	.390**	.753**	.432**	1	
12. Responsibility	-.050	-.008	.197*	.056	.536**	.402**	.752**	.625**	.320**	.157	-.227*	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Based on the result of the computation of the Pearson Correlations of the data, the hotel classification correlates positively and significantly to the first three (3) customer satisfaction factors or variables – reception and service, guest room service and business center. This means that at 0.05 level (2-tailed) and with 0.216 correlation, the classification of the hotel affects positively and significantly the satisfaction of the customers with regards to reception of service. At 0.05 level and with .0231 correlation, hotel's classification significantly correlates to the guest room service. The result on the table also shows that at 0.01 level (2-tailed) and with 0.280 correlation, this variable – hotel's classification is highly significant and correlated to the business center. The classification on the other hand appeared not significant to the food and beverage. These findings were supported by previous studies. Ryan and Huimin [25] conducted a study about Perceptions of Chinese Hotels and they found out that Chinese hotels of all rankings (classifications) met clients' core expectations and that star rating influenced guests' ratings of attributes. Core expectations met were bed comfort and cleanliness, security, staff and service, hotel's reputation and the presence of the business center. Based from their findings, they found evidence consistent with the notion that users of lower-rated accommodations attribute importance to hotel service often associated with higher rated hotels as assurance that their chosen hotel is of good quality. On the other hand, they saw no logical reason that low-ranked hotels should necessarily receive lower satisfaction ratings [25]. In other parts of the world back packer hostels, which offer few amenities, still can achieve high satisfaction ratings from their clientele. Dai [6] and Gu and Zou [11] suggested that the evaluations of low rated hotels relate primarily to underinvestment.

Results also revealed that two (2) variables/ factors under the quality of service particularly the empathy and responsibility appeared to have a positive and significant relationship with customer satisfaction. Based on Table 4, at 0.05 level (2-tailed),

the computed correlations for empathy were 0.249, 0.229 and 0.218 that made this variable correlates positively and significantly with customers' satisfaction factors – reception and service, guestroom service and business center respectively. The computed correlation for responsibility was 0.197 at 0.05 level (2-tailed) which made this variable correlates positively and significantly with business center. It is also noted that based on the findings, other quality of service variables did not appear to have significant correlations with the customer satisfaction variables. These findings were supported by previous studies. Su and Sun [32] used the SERVQUAL five (5) dimensions in their study about “Taiwan's Hotel Rating System: A Service Quality Perspective” and revealed that the largest number of criteria items related to assurance as they said, no items covered empathy of service. They suggested including greater representation of empathy, reliability and responsiveness. In this way, the criteria can constitute a better representation of service quality in all five (5) dimensions. The SERVQUAL criteria were the representation of the totality of service and or product offerings in a certain establishment. These offerings must continuously evolve; innovation and development must be observed based from the market preferences for strategic innovation is the soul for the development and becoming stronger enterprise. One of its parts is the implementation of innovation strategy that covers thought innovation — mode of production and operation, system innovation — realization of the entire requirements set in business targets for the employees to work energetically, and scientific and technical innovation — content of the product or services [15]. Ukpabor and Ipogah recom [33] mended the following to enhance the brand of the company: (1) Good quality of product and services such as serving ordered food accurately and having good food quality, good sound system, neat appearance of staff, convenient operating hours and good customer service which is the major priority. (2) Making service delivery process different and unique through physical environment, staffs and service delivery process. (3) Training staff that enhances capability. Staff should be involved in gaining competitive advantage and standardization. Jimenez [14] recommended the following: (1) Carriers, the companies, must exert creative efforts in knowing what the customers feel about their service. (2) The need to conduct ongoing customer satisfaction survey is a must. (3) Carriers must adjust their service standards to conform to what the customers are demanding. (4) More creativity is needed to further improve over-all service rating. (5) Efforts must be based on the demands of the customers that are not met, as particular area can be drawn out. So there is a need to improve the

company's quality products and service for customers' demand is continuously increasing.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

Hotels have different classifications that contributed to the variations or differences of the service offerings. The Department of Tourism classification of the hotels has different requirements with regards to the location, level of service and staff, structure, facilities and amenities, guestrooms classification, features and numbers of food outlets and others.

The classifications of the hotels have significant relationship to the three customers' satisfaction factors - reception and service, guest room service and business center. Hotel classifications on the other hand appeared not significant to the food and beverage.

Empathy and responsibility correlate positively and significantly to customer satisfaction.

The employees as representatives of the different hotels have greatly influenced the quality of services that the hotels provide to their customers, and this affects the customer satisfaction service encounter with hotel staff. This encounter is also essential in creating positive experience of guests. Employees' behavior and performance – rapport with their clients, courtesy, greetings, confidence, service accuracy and transparency, initiative, sensitivity and others, affect the satisfaction of the customers. In other words, people factor is the most salient in determining satisfaction.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based from the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

Hotel management must not stumble perfecting their system and offerings. This can be done through developing their brand and continuously improving their facilities and other service features.

Management and employees of the hotels must be vigilant to the opportunities found within the internal and external environment of the organization for this helps the organization to do innovations to the service offerings.

“You cannot give what you do not have”. This means that hotels cannot offer quality services if these establishments do not have quality providers – the employees. With this, it is highly recommended that hotels must do intensive selection and hiring employees who are service and people oriented.

Having good training program is vital; providing them seminars and updating their competencies regularly must be done to meet the insatiable needs

of the customers and to provide personalized and attention to detail service.

To improve services and to create “moments of truth”, hotel management must conduct surveys about customer's encounter to their staff. This will serve as turning point in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the organization. If happened, this could lead to the improvement of service performance of the employees. In addition, management must discourage employees' poor behavior. Managers who allow poor behavior or misconduct from the employees in performing their assigned tasks create wrong connotation – employees might think that it is acceptable not to follow rules. Employees who do not care about their actions;

To see if the set goals – satisfy customers, improvement of service offerings and the like, are being met, evaluating and assessing the general performance of the organizations particularly service performance of the employees are vital tools.

In view of the aforementioned recommendations, it is implored that an intensive training program for employees be structured to make them more sensitive and responsive to the needs and wants of the different segments of market. To strengthen the program, the right needs of every segment of market must be identified and verified. Since the findings revealed that there were only two (2) dimensions – empathy and responsibility, correlated positively to the three (3) customer satisfaction factors – reception and service, guest room service and business center, there is a need to re-examine the hotels offerings to make the other dimensions responsive to the customer satisfaction variables. The researcher wanted to reiterate that managers of the hotel establishments have significant role in polishing their service quality and in meeting the ultimate goal of every business organization which is the customer satisfaction. With this, managers are advised to keep themselves abreast with the current innovations and trends in the industry thus minimizing the gap between the customers' expectations and to their actual experiences. Furthermore, managers must assure the delivery of quality service to customers. This can be done if the staff competencies are being improved through the training programs the managers have conceptualized.

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