Restaurant Image and Service Quality in Selected Table Service Restaurant

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ABSTRACT. The study was designed to determine restaurant image and the service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City. The study utilized descriptive correlation research design wherein questionnaires were distributed among 400 customers of table service restaurants in Davao City. Data were treated using Mean and Pearson r yielding a result as follows: The respondents very highly observed the image of table service restaurants having their own distinct identity while declaring at the same time that they are very satisfied with the service quality provided by the table service restaurants in Davao City. It is also concluded that the high level of restaurant image is significantly related to service quality rendered by the respective table service restaurants in Davao City. The implication of the study concerns about the importance of the total package of the table service restaurants not only its image, façade, interior design and food quality but the location where customers can enjoy the view of the surroundings giving them unforgettable experience.

Keywords: *Restaurant Image, Service Quality, Table Service Restaurants*

INTRODUCTION

There is a necessity of continually monitoring the service quality, which is an essential aspect for the restaurant to thrive in the market. Customers' return intention almost always depends not only on the taste of food and ambiance of the restaurant but also on the service quality, particularly from the restaurant staff. This is one of most table restaurants' problems, particularly those who continuously change their team because of temporary employment, wherein orientation and training were only done quickly. Improper customer treatment almost always leads to customer turnover (Tan, Oriade, & Fallon, 2014).

On the other hand, Mhlanga, Hattingh, and Moolman (2014) mentioned that the restaurant's image is viewed as a relevant part of the customer's satisfaction, and it could be declared that it is a needed link for the growth of the table service restaurants. The relationship between restaurant success and its effectiveness relies on the proper blending of interior design, food, ambiance, staff's attitude, and food quality. A table service restaurant should concentrate on its image utilizing updated and relevant decorations, interior design, and ambiance to draw customers and set apart from other competing restaurants. Even though restaurants with delicious and unique food offerings, if its image is not that good, few customers would patronize it(Mhlanga, 2018).

In Iran, many restaurateurs believed that service quality is the missing link in providing customers satisfaction and increasing profit, and gaining a bigger share in the market. Indeed, previous studies in Tehran restaurants discovered that offering quality service and quality food in table service restaurants can boost the customer's satisfaction and influence their loyalty even if the restaurant's environment is not so pleasant. Customers perceive and assess the quality of service based on what the restaurant can offer, particularly service delivery. Determining the things that hinder the satisfaction of the customers, as well as their loyalty, needs to pinpoint the factors of the quality of service in the table service restaurants and their customer interaction (Keshavarz, Jamshidi, & Bakhtazma, 2016).

Table service restaurants encounter various challenges in the Philippines, including economic status uncertainty and competition, changes in demographics in the market, and changes in employees' habits. Because of the close competition in the industry of food and beverage, table service restaurants should be effective in providing services and efficient in providing satisfaction to their customers and obtaining brand advocacy continuously and customer satisfaction (Barlan-Espino, 2017). Moreover, based on the 2012 nationwide Census of Philippine Business and Industry (CPBI), the Philippines foodservice amounts to the approximately U.S. $7.2 Billion, with an estimated annual growth of 15% to 20% over the past decades (IFEX Philippines, 2019). The Philippine foodservice industry comprises fast-food restaurants, casual dining restaurants, and full-service restaurants, which has led to the expansion in recent years. However, competition is keen in which restaurateurs keeps to design appropriate strategies to attract customers.

In Davao City, table restaurants are more concerned with their image and brand, mostly offering a specific type of food as their signature cuisine as part of their brand image. However, quality of service varies among restaurants, wherein mostly rely on the taste of their food but seemed neglected the staff's role in entertaining and dealing with customers, which played a vital role in the quality of service of restaurants (Villarreiz, 2015). Various studies were conducted among restaurants in Davao City. Still, restaurants' image and service quality among table restaurants is a rare study, which is worth investigating, determining how customers gauged table restaurants' image and how they deliver quality service

This study aimed to determine the restaurant image and the service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City. Specifically, it aimed to provide answers to the following questions: 1. What is the level of restaurant image in selected table service restaurants in Davao City in terms of Image Quality and Ambiance Quality?; 2. What is the level of service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City in terms of Tangible, Reliability, Food quality, Responsiveness, Assurance; and Empathy?; and 3. Is there a significant relationship between restaurant image and the service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City?

Review of Related Literature

Restaurant Image

Image is a broad issue with numerous interpretations by most researchers and scholars. Image is a vital variable that plays an important role in perceiving expectation and customer satisfaction in which tends to increase intention to be loyal (Han& Hyun, 2017). According to the study of Marinkovic, Senic, & Mimovic (2015), customers perceived restaurant image as the combination of various attributes such as beliefs, impressions, and ideas about the company, service, and product. Table service restaurants can gain an advantage competitively through different features that need to publicize their services and strengthen their ties with the public, creating a unique image that differentiates them from competitors as its reputation. Jiang and Erdem (2017) added that it significantly affects customer-perceived trust, customer-perceived value, and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, research indicates that the quality of food, service, and physical environment has significant implications on restaurant image. However, in this study, the physical environment is giving emphasis.

Image Quality. Table service restaurants are used to distinguish quality food products or services that are high-end and are perceived to attract people in a high echelon of society, which are intended to provide patrons with higher quality food, service, and ambiance. Further, table service restaurants have a suitable image level. The table

service restaurant line's prompt progressively influenced the food service industry over the last period of years. The development has alarmed the competitors in the industry of table service restaurants. Every table service restaurant's success over the number of years in this average restaurant market needs regulated services after consumption assessment and customer retention (Jin et al., 2015).

Ambiance Quality. Consumers' overall perception of satisfaction and intentions depends on various factors, such as food quality and service quality. However, in upscale dining in restaurants, the physical environment or the dining atmosphere significantly impacted restaurant guests (Mguestsovic et al., 2015). Ambiance plays a major role in influencing the restaurant success as it creates a positive dining experience (Dutta, Parsa, Parsa, &Bujisic, 2014). It is defined as the environmental quality within restaurant premises discern by customers' senses. However, it is significant that the restaurant premises' condition is apparent to vision, good vibes, and smell satisfying. In some studies, the ambiance is defined here as feelings that provide impressions towards restaurant patrons' positive emotions (Longart, Wickens, &Bakir, 2017).

Service Quality. It is as relevant as the quality of food. It serves as the main factor in the loyalty of the customers and views positively table service restaurants and how they have tasted the quality of food there. The quality of service is the customers' verdict quality by comparing their expectations and actual experience (Stefano, Filho, Barichello, & Sohn, 2015). The quality of service factors is affirmatively connected to the customers' expectations and the providers' participation. Aspects of the quality of service are separated into two parts: mechanical and human effects. The human aspect is defined as the providers of service efficiency, kindness, enthusiasm, and professionalism (Mhlanga & Machingambi, 2016). These generate relevant expectations owing to the quality of table service restaurants. The effort of the employees and their performance professionally is the most important aspect of service provision. This outcome means that the employees' quaThisof service affirmatively affects the customer's perception of the quality of table service restaurant quality and their motive to return to the table service restaurant (Mhlanga, 2018). As pointed out by Mhlanga andTichaawis2017), the quality of service significantly affects customers' perception and patronizes food quality. It is included as part of the relevant components in selecting the table service restaurant and casual customers' selection criteria.

Reliability. This determinant refers to service providers' ability to deliver the service on what is promise service at standard time dependably and accurately, maintain error-free records in the establishment, and handle customer complaints and problems. Reliability is the core of service quality. Management must use to have a competitive edge and build and practice a "do it right first" attitude yet, considered one of the most crucial characteristics in evaluating the service (Omar, Saadan, &Seman, 2015).

Tangibles. Its definition concerns the factors of providing services that customers seemed to imagine the effect of such services even if they haven't paid the said services yet (Panda & Das, 2017). This determinant refers to the appearance of physical evidence and facilities of the firm. It includes the modernity of equipment, the dress code of the staff, and materials. Tangible product as a determinant of service quality will contribute satisfaction; for it allows the customers to know that certain product is available in the restaurant according to the level of needs and preference (Baumann, Hoadley, Hamin, & Nugraha, 2017).

Food Quality. Different food quality attributes were scrutinized and investigated by various researchers before, including temperature, presentation, and taste as part of quality service. The outcome showed that food quality was the main reason why the customers chose certain table service restaurants. The taste of food falls into the main factor in choosing a table service restaurant—customers considering that delicious food provided an enjoyable feasting process for the customers. Also, satisfaction emotionally during their eating experience in the table service restaurants. Furthermore, because of the customers' awareness of a healthy eating lifestyle, the quality of food was gauged through its taste and the nutrients and safety it gives to the customers (Yi, Zhao, & Joung, 2014). Considering that safe and nutritious food is sought after by customers conscious about their safety and health. Many table service restaurants customers decided to find another restaurant because of menu healthiness (Gheorghe, Tudorache, & Nistoreanu, 2014).

Responsiveness. It designates the employees' willingness and readiness to assist the clients and act on their wishes and convey to the clients the exact time of the provision of services and render the services on-time and efficiently. Moreover, responsiveness is another way of interaction between the servers and the customers; it is a communication to the extent that servers respond directly by providing good, quality, and fast service. In this manner, more likely customers will be pleased for it shows that staff is paying attention and gives importance to customers' presence. It will subsequently establish a better relationship and good feedback; otherwise, it will cause dissatisfaction, which is undesirable for the business (Karatepe, 2016).

Empathy. This shows more than simple sympathy. It shows the magnitude of support, respect, attention, and care provided to the client; the firm understands the customer situation and performs best. It is a dimension that the restaurants are trying to understand the customers' problems, thoughts, emotions, and feelings(Sriram et al., 2015). According to the study of Hamsanandini, Park, and Ryu (2017), it was revealed based on the findings that the influence of empathetic dimensions greatly influences and enhances the overall service experience of the guest.

This study is anchored to Service Quality (ServQual) Model Theory developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985), which is a customer based model (Kotler, Bowen, &Makens, 2014). ServQual is an instrument used in measuring how the customers perceived the quality of service. The development of SERVQUAL consists of five main dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and tangibles (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1998).

This study is anchored to Eliwa (1993) proposition, who proposed that table service restaurants' image must be known as a relevant part of the customer's satisfaction and could be the main basis of the proliferation of table service restaurant. As pointed out by Downs and Haynes (1984), there is a connection between the table service restaurant's success and the management's sufficiency of image. A table service restaurant should concentrate on its image utilizing enhanced ambiance and decorations and design in the interior to draw clients and separate itself distinctly from the competing restaurants.

Furthermore, previous studies disclosed a positive and strong correlation between the ambiance of table service restaurant and the customer's satisfaction; also, the table service restaurant's physical premises positively impacted the customer's behavior. An enhancement of the restaurant's physical aspect would increase the satisfaction of the customers and give the restaurant a higher profit. The atmosphere of the table service restaurant can be an instrument in providing satisfaction to the customers and increasing the profit at the same time (Jin et al., 2015).

Additionally, it was observed that service quality has a strong effect on the customers' satisfaction and loyalty, including the quality of service dimensions such as responsiveness, empathy, reliability, tangibility, and assurance, which has an important effect on the customers' loyalty. Quality service provided by table service restaurant convert a customer into becoming loyal and satisfied (Polyorat&Sophonsiri, 2010). The competition in the world today is so intense, providing satisfaction to the customers is not only the tools and might not be enough for the table service restaurant to survive. Therefore, the table service restaurant management must concentrate on winning the customers' loyalty by enhancing customers' perception on the quality of service (Kandampully, Devi, & Hu, 2011).

METHOD

This study was a quantitative research and was utilized as a descriptive correlation method, wherein the relationship between the two variables was determined in the study. Babbie (2010) emphasized that descriptive correlation research includes present conditions concerning the nature of the group of persons involved in procedures of induction, analysis, classification, enumeration, and measurement and determining the relationship between the variables involved in the study. The said method was used in analyzing restaurant image and the service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City.

The respondents of the study were the customers of selected table restaurants in Davao City. Four Hundred (400) respondents were selected utilizing the convenience sampling method. The study was conducted at 22 selected table service restaurants in Davao City during the 2nd Semester of school year 2019 - 2020.

Presented in this chapter are the analysis and interpretation of the statistically tabulated data. Discussions of topics are depicted based on the following subheadings: Level of Restaurant Image in Selected Table Service Restaurants in Davao City; Level of Service Quality in Selected Table Service Restaurants in Davao City; and, Correlation between Restaurant Image and the Service Quality in Selected Table Service Restaurants in Davao City.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Profile Variables	Group	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	179	44.8
	Female	221	55.3
Age	18-25	71	17.8
	26-35	98	24.5
	36-45	135	33.8
	46 above	96	24.0
Marital Status	Single	165	41.3
	Married	215	53.8
	Widowed	17	4.3

	Others	3	.8
Educational Level	High School Graduate	36	9.0
	College Graduate	148	37.0
	Postgraduate	149	37.3
	Others	67	16.8
	Total	**400**	**100**

This study used an adapted questionnaire. The dependent variable questionnaire was adapted based on Eliwa's (1993) study, while the dependent variable was adapted from the study of Saneva and Chortoseva (2018). The questionnaire was submitted to the research adviser for further comments and suggestions. Afterward, it was forwarded to the expert panel for validation, checking if the mentioned questionnaire is reliable to be utilized as a research instrument for this study. The first part of the questionnaire is the respondents' profile consisting of age, sex, marital status, and educational attainment. The second part is the independent variable, namely the restaurant image of the table restaurants in Davao City, with image quality and ambiance quality indicators. The third part is the dependent variable service quality of the table restaurants in Davao City, with tangible, reliability, food quality, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. A five (5) Likert-scale was used to measure the variables of the study. The scale interprets five levels ranging from five (5) strongly agree and one (1) as strongly disagree. The restaurant image as an independent variable of the study was scaled using a 5-level Likert scaling system

The following statistical tools were used in the computation of data testing the hypothesis. Frequency. This was used to determine the exact number of respondents taken for the study. Percentage. This was used to determine the exact percentile of the respondents taken for the study. Mean. This was used to determine the level of restaurant image and service quality on selected table service restaurants in Davao City. T-test. This was used to determine the significant difference in the restaurant image and service quality on selected table service restaurants in Davao City when respondents are grouped by sex. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). This was used to determine the significant difference in the restaurant image and service quality on selected table service restaurants in Davao City when analyzed by age, marital status, and educational attainment. Pearson-r. This was used to determine the significant relationship between the restaurant image and service quality on selected table service restaurants in Davao City.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of Restaurant Image in Selected Table Service Restaurants

Table 2 presents the restaurant image level in selected table service restaurants in Davao City with an overall mean score of 4.60 or very high with a standard deviation of 0.455, indicating a high level of responses from the respondents for not exceeding 1.0.

Table 2. Level of Restaurant Image in Selected Table Service Restaurants in Davao City

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptive Level
Upscale Image Quality	4.59	0.466	Very High
Upscale Ambiance Quality	4.60	0.498	Very High
Overall	**4.60**	**0.455**	**Very High**

In terms of image quality, it garnered a mean score of 4.59, described as a very high level with a standard deviation of 0.466, showing homogeneous responses: Respondents strongly agree that upscale restaurant with good image depicted that menu price is fair for the quality of items and service; nutritional quality of items; food presentation is appealing; menu choice in line with upscale restaurants; fashionable restaurant name; promotion and advertising matches its theme; employees grooming reflects a rich image; employees' data is in line with the place, and dining place values individuals. This means that the image of table service restaurants is appealing to the customers. The findings are in accordance with the concept of Basri et al. (2016), who accentuated that a positive brand image plays a critical role in stimulating positive emotions in customers concerning the restaurant, which in turn leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty. A positively perceived brand directly affects a customer's decision-making more than any other consumer value (service quality) in full-service restaurant settings.

In terms of ambiance quality, the accumulated mean score rendered 4.60 labeled as very high with a standard deviation of 0.498, indicating homogeneous responses. The respondents complimented ambiance quality by declaring that the menu is engaging and reflects the fine dining restaurant's image. The restaurant's design keeps up with the image; its ambiance demonstrates the theme, comfort level of seating, and the dining area's layout reflects an upscale image. This means that the respondents very highly appreciated the ambiance quality of table service restaurants. The outcome coincides with Marinkovic et al.'s (2015) idea that the physical environment or the dining atmosphere had a significant impact on restaurant guest satisfaction. Dutta et al. (2014) added that ambiance plays a major role in influencing restaurant success as it creates a positive dining experience.

Level of Service Quality in Selected Table Service Restaurants in Davao City

Table 3 shows the level of service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City with an overall mean score of 4.62 or very high and a standard deviation of 0.427, indicating a high level of respondents' responses.

Table 3 shows the level of service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptive Level
Reliability	4.59	0.498	Very High
Tangible	4.58	0.487	Very High
Food Quality	4.65	0.484	Very High
Responsiveness	4.61	0.501	Very High

Assurance	4.64	0.480	Very High
Empathy	4.63	0.471	Very High
Overall	**4.62**	**0.427**	Very High

In terms of reliability, the mean score is 4.59, declared as a very high level with a standard deviation of 0.498, showing that the respondents' responses are homogeneous. The respondents' very high assessment of reliability derived from the statements such as: restaurants provisions of service on time; quickly corrects everything wrong; reliable and consistent in the service; offers an accurate calculation of the guests; serves the food exactly as you have ordered it; and provides the service on time. The result is harmonious with Omar et al.'s (2015) statement elucidating that reliability is the core of the service quality. Wherein, management must use to have a competitive edge and build and practice a "do it right first" attitude yet, considered as one of the most crucial characteristics in evaluating the service.

Based on the indicator tangible, the accumulated mean score is 4.58, described as a very high level with a standard deviation of 0.487, showing homogeneous responses. Respondents declared that the restaurants have visually attractive parking areas and building exteriors, visually dining rooms, appropriate, decent, and neatly dressed employees, have menus that are easily readable, spacious, and comfortable dining space clean and neat. This means that respondents are very much appreciated and very satisfied with the table service restaurants' tangibility. The finding is in line with the declaration of Baumann et al. (2017) insisted that tangible product as a determinant of service quality will contribute satisfaction; for it allows the customers to know that certain product is available in the restaurant according to the level of needs and preference.

Based on the indicator food quality, the garnered mean score is 4.65 or a very high level, with a standard deviation of 0.484 showing homogeneous responses. Respondents indicated their very high satisfaction with the food quality by declaring that offered food has a pleasant taste, served at an appropriate temperature, fresh, food choice is different, and, food is served in good portions. This means that the respondents very highly appreciated the quality of food offered by table service restaurants in Davao City. The result supported Choi, & Zhao (2014), who pointed out that many restaurant evaluators and researchers use food quality as a key criterion of total restaurant quality and customer satisfaction because the food quality attributes can be used to determine the trustworthiness of a restaurant.

When it comes to responsiveness, the respondents rated it as very high with a mean score of 4.61, labeled as very high, and a standard deviation of 0.501, which shows the respondents' homogeneous responses. Responsiveness was best displayed in the restaurants, as evidently seen by the respondents through the restaurant provision of the promised service even during busy hours, quick service, and extra effort to handle customers' special requests. This means that the respondents very highly appreciated the responsiveness of table service restaurants in Davao City. The finding coincides with the concept of Kondasani and Panda (2015), who emphasized that good communication with the customers, prompt attention to the customers, and supports the customers' decision, and by that management and the establishment are gaining a quality service to their customers.

In terms of assurance, the accumulated mean score is 4.64, described as a very high level with a standard deviation of 0.480, indicating consistency of responses among respondents. Respondents assess assurance very highly as they observed that

employees are always ready to help, loyal and honest, polite, able, and willing to give information about menu items, their ingredients, preparation methods, and staff looks educated, competent, and experienced. This means that the respondents rated assurance very high, as exemplified by the restaurant employee among table service restaurants in Davao City.

The outcome supports the statement of Thai (2015) stating that assurance focuses on the ability of employees' knowledge to respond to the customers' queries, the employees' behavior in showing courtesy, confidence in the firm and building trust that the customers will feel safe in their billing transaction process.

In terms of empathy, the mean score is 4.63, described as a very high level accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.471, showing homogeneous responses. The respondents declared that the restaurant has employees who have time for customers' wishes, make customers feel special, provides customers individual needs and requirements, and is sympathetic and calm when something is wrong. Staffs have the customers' best interests at heart. This means that the respondents discern a high level of empathy from the staff of table service restaurants in Davao City. The finding is by the idea of Sriram et al. (2015) accentuating that compassion means restaurants are trying to understand the customers' problems, thoughts, emotions, and feelings.

Correlation between Restaurant Image and the Service Quality in Selected Table Service Restaurants in Davao City

Table 4 shows the correlation between the restaurant image and the service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City. The computed r-value is 0.820, while the p-value is 0.000, lower than the level of significance of 0.01, indicating a very strong positive relationship and the rejection of the null hypothesis. This means a significant relationship between restaurant image and service quality in selected table service restaurants in Davao City. This indicates that the customers' expectation from the image they have perceived and observed was fulfilled. Through the quality of service provided to them aside from the quality food offered. The result confirms Jin et al. (2015) 's findings, declaring a strong and positive relationship between restaurant ambiance and customer satisfaction. The physical environment of a restaurant has a positive impact on customer behavior. By improving a restaurant's physical environment, not only customer satisfaction can be enhanced, but also a restaurant can increase its profit. The ambiance of a restaurant can be a tool for satisfying the customer and maximizing the profit.

Table 4. Correlation between Restaurant Image and the Service Quality in Selected Table Service Restaurants in Davao City

Variables Correlated	r-value	Verbal Description	Df n(= 2)	p-value	Decision

Restaurant Image vs Service Quality	0.820**	Very Strong Positive Relationship	398	0.000	Ho is rejected

Legend: **Correlation is significant at 0.1 level (2-tailed)

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

The respondents very highly observed the image of table service restaurants having their own distinct identity.

They are very satisfied with the service quality provided by the table service restaurants in Davao City.

The high level of restaurant image is significantly related to service quality rendered by the respective table service restaurants in Davao City.

Recommendations
Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

The service of table service restaurants in Davao City, owners, and managers may find continuous strategic ways to maintain such image and service quality, such as online presence highlighting positive promotions.

Employees and staff of the table service restaurants in Davao City must be hired based on their experience and charm that would blend with the restaurant's image, particularly those who are willing to learn and undergo training that would boost their personality and communication skills.

Customers' choice would only be based on the location, wherein view can play a vital role in influencing their choice of table service restaurants knowing full well that table service restaurants offered the same level of image and service quality. The restaurant may boost its social media platform to get their business location known widely to potential customers.

The researchers recommend that the restaurants maintain their image and enhance the same by employing technologies. Offering new menus that would pull more customers while at the same time conducting a semi-annual training for the staff to provide the customers with an all high-quality service.
Future researchers may pursue another study, particularly by comparing the relative importance of customer loyalty and customers' future intentions, such as intention behavior or return intention factor.

Future researchers should also continue to identify what attributes are important when customers evaluate restaurant Image and Service Quality in Selected Table Service Restaurant in Davao City.

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