

Hotel Brand Preference and Customer Loyalty In Davao City

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ABSTRACT. The growth of competitive hotel firms in Davao City are chasing scarce new customers. Keeping loyal customers and facing the unrelieved decline of customers fulfillment which may affect loyalty to the brand. Primarily, the purpose of this study is to thrive a model that grasp an understanding and scrutinize the relevance of brand preference and customer loyalty. Using percentage, mean, and Pearson-r as statistical tool to measure the data. The findings revealed that the independent variables in the level of brand preference has significant positive effects relation with customer loyalty. Researchers utilized this study in six selected hotels brand in Davao City and the evaluation of the survey assessment in accordance to the hotel guests' experiences. The findings of the study will patronage future researchers as the reference related to their case subject research.

Keywords: *brand preference, customer loyalty, hotel*

INTRODUCTION

From a global perspective, the hotel industry has strengthened the significance of identifying factors on hotel brand preferences. Hotel firms struggle to fulfil the consumer demands. Eventually, retain them by striving to comprehend the factors that could increase strong brand attachments in line with consumer brand preferences and how to shape customer loyalty (Sharma et al. 2016). That is why they are never ending struggling to sustain their best position in the marketplace. Nowadays, individuals set their minds to accumulate the customer loyalty and strong image between purchaser (Saleem et al. 2014). Consumers inclined to attempt preferable brand of products or services. The brand preference can substitute with others, and to minimize that risk might be linked what the impacts of brand preference and how to assemble it (Kumar, 2014).

In Philippines, more hotels are put up to serve the number of visitors in the country. Hence, creating an effective strategies are essential to sustain the loyalty and subsequently, to boost the interest to visit again in a particular country (Cheng et al. 2015). Thus, innovation navigates technology alters the hotel customer experience dramatically, adopts change, facilities evolution and attached to the design with millennial travelers in guest perception (Villalon, 2018). Hotel Specialists and Researchers have examined insights on consumer attitudes and behaviors in the rapidly converging media and technology landscape (Bothun et al. 2016). By leveraging technology, the company can obtain more consistent data to understand its consumer's needs. They are expecting and satisfying consumers purchasing demand (Siggelkow & Terwiesch, 2019). Consumer's choices, according to the products or services, experience how to compare and evaluate many features. These are features such as price and value for money, quality of services, quality assurance and convenience as well as booking and payment process. It is worth it if they meet their satisfaction may soak up the brand image and capacity to buy (Calif, 2017).

In today's demand, Mastellone's (2018) stated to navigate loyalty and repeat trading is essential. Keeping guest perception, aspire to comprehend the guest's preferences are relevant because, ultimately, guests experience that matters (Hospitality News

Philippines, 2018). Besides, brands diversify rapidly, and brand recognition and the behavior may get a bit weaker since the modern people's emergence in each with divergent experiences, branding adaptation, and culture. And then, where consumers are becoming sensitive with hotel service quality, increasing consumer taste and expectations, thus, the stipulation of the brand have been changing over time. Hotel firm services have revamped phenomenal from traditional to present settings or position (Raja, 2014). The feasible interlinkage between understanding the facts deal with, and experiences are considered crucial in examining client's preference dynamics (Ebrahim et al. 2016). And how does the client's expertise determine their preferences to a brand influence repurchase intentions?

The growth of competitive hotel firms in Davao City are chasing scarce new customers. Keeping loyal customers and facing the unrelieved decline of customers fulfillment which may affect loyalty to the brand. In the report by Austria (2019) at Manila Standard News, the Seda brand charged a gap in respectively in the trades it supplies for a hotel classification. A tactical advantage position within be revealed growth focus. Hotel businesses creates on their organization to sustain customer loyalty to compete in the marketplace.

This study sought to assess and determine the relationships between the four variables namely: service quality, brand communication, brand trust and how this affects customer loyalty. This is to widen a current comprehension of hotel brand management and to reframe their marketing strategy. An online survey shows that most of the hotel guests rated hotel properties they resided as excellent. Hotels such as Waterfront Insular Hotel, Seda Hotel, Go Hotel, Park Inn Hotel, Red Planet Hotel, and Hotel Tropika gained an excellent score from their guests (Expedia Website, 2019). The current researcher's purpose in this study is to thrive a model that grasp an understanding and scrutinize the relevance of brand preference and customer loyalty.

METHOD

In this study, the researchers utilized adapted-modified questionnaire to gather data stemming from the research conducted by Zehir et al. (2011) with the support indicator perceived source by Grace and O'cass (2005); Terill, (1992); Low and Lamb, (2000). Thus, data were gather through the primary survey questionnaires from researchers random surveys done on hotel guests in a selected hotel in Davao City. Accordingly, the five (5) Likert Scale used as rated the independent variables of the study by the respondents answering on the questionnaires. In this research, a descriptive correlation design utilized to measure and to investigate the level of brand preference and customer loyalty. The correlation test used to predict and to determine the interrelationships with the two variables in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Brand Preference

Table 2 indicates the levels of brand preference in hotel. It is measured by the indicators of service quality, brands communication, and trust in brands. In our summary, the level of brand preference rated by respondents with an overall mean score of 4.28 which indicate highly preferred.

Table 2. Level of brand preference

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptive level
Service Quality	4.27	0.359	High Preferred
Communication	4.32	0.421	Very High Preferred
Trust	4.26	0.422	High Preferred
Total	4.28	0.309	High Preferred

In terms of service quality, with the overall mean score of 4.27 and 0.359 standard deviation means highly preferred. Customers highly preferred the quality of services that selected hotel brand render services. Consequently, costumers preferred hotel brands with a variety of architectural sites and excellent ambient features, cultural design and physically attractive environment. Similarly, costumers preferred has a comfortable accommodation with high quality of amenities. According to the analysis by Villalon (2018), today's modern people emergence with hotel brand preferences are learning to anticipate exceptional experience in setting exotic designs. Millennial character designs and fantastic features come up with an acquired feeling for comfortable rooms, and this achievement enables us to retain and increase loyal guests to a particular brand.

Moreover, guests also have preference for superior services that provides sufficient facilities with classes on a variety of new activities. And also, high tech activities for fitness, pools, sports and various dining options with comfortable spaces. The analysis by current researchers is focusing guests' pre-perception deal with customer personalized experiences expected high tech facilities and modern diversity of recreational activities. These activities are made available too for unexpected guests to encounter a surprise that they will enjoy and recognize the certain the hotel brand identity and fonding amused memories emotionally. Other essential aspects of the hotel brand which hotel guests commonly preferred are easily accessible location and reasonable pricing, safe with security, peaceful, quietness, cleanliness with, and good maintenance to achieve an exhilarating atmosphere. Also, customers highly prefer to brand has professional, friendly skilled staff who can offer personalized meditation, possess fair treatments and efficiently in terms of dealing guests' complaints. They also prefer brands that have excellent housekeeping services to guest satisfaction. The analysis stem from Kachan et al. (2017), that there is relevant relationship between service quality organization and guest satisfaction as per their brand preference.

In hotel businesses, the guest satisfaction aspect corresponding with accessibility, attainable, knowledge or company details, events, delivering of service and availability of hotel firm expertise. As well as the major issue is the security and pollution-free surroundings that matter every hotel guest.

In terms of brand communication, it is one of the highest mean value (4.22) and (4.21) standard deviation rated by the hotel guests means are very high preferable. They are concerning the action favorably to the brand advertising and promotions with positive feelings on the advertising and promotions that match the end results expected. As the current researchers' analysis, in advertising and promotions, costumers view brand features of the hotel company attributes, online hotel reviews, price objectivity and reliable information. This is meant purchasers to patronize this hotel in terms of judgment making. Moreover, customers very highly prefer in a dealing with advertising and

promotions for updates. Also, to be in communication with the hotel via messages or and e-mails.

Interrelation with customers who had already experience certain hotel company services, keep updates them, and make them feel special. Company in return to mind-set to repurchase the brand again. Most customers prefer modern advertising with promotions of the product and services. According to Chang et al. (2014), hotels design a modern advertisement website to explore potentials. Focusing on competitive approach on enhancing webpage features navigate consumers to shape purchaser's trust and ultimately keep existing customers.

In terms of brand trust, respondents rated the overall mean score of 4.26 and 4.22 standard deviation means customers are highly preferred. Brand trust is one of the most significant aspects which hotel guests commonly prefer a brand with a good image and reputation. Besides, customers highly preferred to the hotel brand is how the customer expectations are met fully according to their experiences including the confidence in the brand. According to Fathi et al. (2017), trust can be characterized as an expectation that others will not act aggressively and that the trader will provide what has been denoted. Consumers highly prefer a certain brand that never disappointed them of what they expect from the brand. It should guarantee satisfaction as well as would make utmost effort to satisfy consumers.

Additionally, customers highly preferred in terms of addressing their concerns have to be honest and sincere to solve the problems. Compensation could be one of the hotel solutions to minimize the impact some way for the problem with the hotel products/services. Researcher Karmi et al. (2015), thought if a purchasers' experience that superior service from the brand, it might enhance the trust of the brand. And they also inaugurate there is a positive correlation corresponding with distinguishing value and trust, whereas the high degree of distinguishing value can build up the procurement self- assured of a certain brand.

As results computed means and standard deviation for each variable, we may attest that there are needs for improvements and to develop strategies with positive aspects of the level of brand preference between service quality, brand communication and brand trust in hotel towards loyalty. Since the results were highly preferred means customers' expectations were not met according to their experiences to the hotel brand in Davao City. Therefore, customers preferences evolve despite customers became acquainted with different experiences.

Level of Customer Loyalty on Hotel Brand in Davao City

As it shown in Table 3, the level of customer loyalty on hotel brand in Davao City with the overall mean score of 4.27 described as high or agreed. Since the level of customer loyalty is high means, consumers agreed with the hotel products/services provided by hotel brand in Davao City. This provokes those hotel firms associates with the factors of consumer preferences to pilot their loyalty to the brand. Based on the opinion of Researcher Rishipal (2014), in order to provoke customer loyalty, you ought to construct an emotional relationship with the guests.

Indicatively, factors that customers rated very high have shown in the table 3 below. Consider hotel brand as their first choice in the next few years (4.30); get value for their money (4.33); hotel brand has a variety of incentives that will not motivate them to repurchase again (4.30). Some factors that hotel guests rated high or positively their loyalty the hotel brand. Customers loyalty intends to purchase a certain hotel brand in

the near future (4.26). According to Esfahani et al. (2017), customer loyalty is greatly grasp commitment to repurchase a preferable product or service continually in the future, hence, generate repeated buying of the similar brand, in spite of circumstantial impacts and marketing endeavor. Then, intend to purchase other hotel products/services of this hotel brand (4.26); and consider the certain hotel brand as their first choice in the certain brand category (4.27); the next time they need the certain hotel products/services, they will purchase the same hotel brand (4.26). The citation by Xu et al. (2015), sign in the value as a positive evaluation is customers' preference of the all-inclusive products and services of the brand steering to repurchase the brand in the future. In addition, willing to pay a price minimum over competing hotel products/services to be able to purchase the certain hotel brand again (4.21); would only consider purchasing the certain hotel brand again, if it would be substantially cheaper (4.23); commercials regarding to competing hotel firms are not able to reduce consumer interest in purchasing the certain brand (4.26)

Despite that, if the customer satisfied with the specific brand then the customer will purchase repeatedly and may leads to loyalty (Kumar, 2017). And then, say positive things about the certain brand to other people (4.23); recommend this hotel brand to someone who seeks their advice (4.27), intend to recommend the certain hotel brand to other people (4.27); carry hotel products/services that they are looking for (4.28). Loyal purchasers repeatedly façade as reliable patron via social network, naturally connecting websites of friends, family and others future client's (See-To et al. 2014).

Table 3 : Level of Customer Loyalty on Hotel Brand in Davao City

Items	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
1. I intend to purchase this hotel brand in the near future.	4.26	0.59	High
2. I intend to purchase other hotel products/services of this hotel brand.	4.26	0.61	High
3. I consider this hotel brand as my first choice in this category.	4.27	0.67	High
4. The next time I need this hotel product/services, I will purchase the same hotel brand.	4.26	0.63	High
5. I will continue to be loyal customer for this hotel brand.	4.22	0.64	High

6. I am willing to pay a price premium over competing hotel products/services to be able to purchase this hotel brand again.	4.21	0.63	High
7. I would only consider purchasing this hotel brand again, if it would be substantially cheaper.	4.23	0.64	High
8. Commercials regarding to competing hotel firms are not able to reduce my interest in purchasing this hotel brand.	4.26	0.58	High
9. I say positive things about this hotel brand to other people	4.23	0.64	High
10. I recommend this hotel brand to someone who seeks my advice.	4.27	0.61	High
11. I intend to recommend this hotel brand to other people.	4.27	0.63	High
12. I consider this hotel brand my first choice in the next few years.	4.30	0.65	Very High
13. They carry hotel products/ services I am looking for.	4.28	0.62	High
14. I get value for my money.	4.33	0.63	Very High
15. This hotel brand has a variety of incentives that will motivate me to repurchase again.	4.30	0.64	Very High
Overall	4.27	0.38	High

Correlation Between Hotel Brand Preference and Customer Loyalty in Davao City

As shown in Table 4, Pearson r test as the statistical tool calculated the data. Researchers indicate that there is a significant relationship between hotel brand preference and customer loyalty in Davao City. This means that customer loyalty is correlated with hotel brand preference. Some hotel customer preferences today are not easy to cheer. Their speculation is high and their passion, tense and their fingers are immersed with forge on smartphones. Using social media posting every experience primarily unlikable and upsetting ones with anyone that will listen. The guests experience differently then, they have a chance to repurchase again the brand (Villalon, 2018).

Customer loyalty as a greatly constrain loyalty to purchase or engage with preferred product or services continuously potential consumers. That loyalty is a cultivation affair that feature the commitment between outcome and behavior (Quoquab et al. 2014). Researchers assumed that customer loyalty depends on corresponding evaluation as service quality, communication and trust. Despite that, sign in the value as a positive evaluation is consumers' preference of all-embracing with products or services of the brand leads to repurchase the brand ultimately (Roxas et al. 2017) because customer loyalty can be distinguished from consumer behavior such as to entail in positive word

of mouth, not a cost sensitive, determination concerning to purchase the brand again, and allocation of positive evaluation (Ali Alsheikh et al. 2018).

Table 4: Correlation Between Hotel Brand Preference and Customer Loyalty in Davao City

Variables Correlated	r-value	Verbal Description	df (n-2)	p-value	Decision
Hotel Brand Preference vs Customer Loyalty	0.488**	Moderate Positive Relationship	398	0.000	Ho is rejected

Legend: **Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Conclusions

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

The level of brand preference in hotel towards loyalty in Davao City is highly preferred. The findings imply that all indicators are highly preferred by the customers on the selected hotel brand in Davao City. Brand communication is the highest mean value. Therefore, communication is very high preferred by the customers. This means that customers have needed to improve what they expect more to the selected hotel brand in Davao City.

The level of customer loyalty of hotel brands in Davao City is high. This means that the selected hotel brand in Davao City was approximately meet the customer's needs what the hotel organizations rendered services to the guests according to their experiences.

There is a significant relationship between hotel brand preference and customer loyalty in Davao City. This means that the loyalty of a customer depends on what consumer preference to the hotel brand.

Recommendations

In this study is to indicate the independent variables in the level of brand preference has significant positive effects relation with customer loyalty. Researchers utilized this study in six selected hotels brand in Davao City and the evaluation of the survey assessment in accordance to the hotel guests' experiences. Based on the findings, then the conclusion can be drawn, the researchers' sought to be recommend the following actions:

1. Hotel operators should raise the attention in rendering superior service qualities as per guest preferences trends. Researchers suggested that company should upgrade hotel facilities to modern status with variety of activities and high-tech features such as fitness, pools, spas, dining, accommodation and with high quality and attractive amenities.
2. Further, the researchers suggested that employees practices need to be improved especially in housekeeping, personalized meditation and delivering guest request services.
3. Hotel managers ought to be keep monitoring staff performances in each department, regularly staff training and also strictly implementation of standard policies.
4. Researchers also suggested a design and enhance a website into modern advertising with value promotions regularly. Company should always online to monitor their website page for inquiries, concerns and reviews.
5. Moreover, hotel company should keep hotel guests updated regularly on the latest additional modern facilities, prices, incentives and other attractive hotel features in order to attract their potential guests on the latest attractions in their hotel.
6. In addition, organization ought to render superior customer services to captivate the undecided guests by exceed their expectation in hotel services.
7. The hotel should regularly, recheck, determine and measure customer preferences to: DOT Standards. The Philippine Department of Tourism has a new set of accreditation guidelines and standards for hotels qualifications called the Five Star Grading System. This will aid hotel operators as a guide as well as the determinants for hotel facility availability, inventory, condition, quality, usability and overall service.
8. On other hand, researchers highly recommend this measuring system: Diamond Hospitality. It is an experienced quality assurance company with a proven track record. It is based on the qualifications and standard applied by internationally recognized systems, which are the basis for a through measuring system. And it will help the selected hotels in Davao City to guest experiences, to keep monitoring the guest suggestions and concerns.
9. As an ongoing research, the researchers will continue to study randomly by scrutinize the other factors that is not part of this study of consumer preferences affecting their loyalty by the hotel brand establishment rendered services.

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