



Service Quality Dimensions and Guest Satisfaction among Resort Guests in Negros Oriental, Philippines

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Abstract

This study examined five service-quality dimensions—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—and guest satisfaction in the resort sector of Negros Oriental, Philippines. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was employed, and data were collected from 183 resort guests selected through simple random sampling. The study assessed respondents' demographic characteristics, expectations regarding service quality, satisfaction with experienced service quality, expectation–satisfaction gaps, and relationships between demographic characteristics and expectations and satisfaction. The results showed that respondents reported very high expectations across all five service-quality dimensions and very high satisfaction with the services experienced. Assurance received the highest expectation and satisfaction ratings, while tangibility received the lowest expectation and satisfaction ratings. The expectation–satisfaction gaps were minimal, with negative gaps for tangibility and reliability and positive gaps for responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The overall expectation and satisfaction means were both 3.52, indicating close alignment between expected and experienced service quality. No statistically significant relationships were found between the respondents' demographic characteristics and either service-quality expectations or satisfaction. The findings indicated that the participating resorts had generally met the respondents' high expectations. Continued attention to staff service quality, facility conditions, reliability, and guest feedback was recommended to sustain service performance and address areas with relatively lower ratings.

Keywords

customer satisfaction, resort guests, service quality, SERVQUAL, Negros Oriental

How to Cite

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Author Contributions

The authors contributed to conceptualization, methodology, investigation, writing—original draft preparation, writing—review and editing, and supervision. The authors approved the final manuscript.

Ethics Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards.

INTRODUCTION

Service quality and guest satisfaction had remained important concerns in the hospitality industry because guests evaluated both the tangible and interpersonal aspects of their service experiences. Previous research had associated service quality with customer satisfaction and related behavioral outcomes, particularly when customers perceived that service performance had met their expectations (Fida et al., 2020). A review of hospitality research had likewise emphasized the continuing relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction and the importance of examining the different dimensions through which hospitality services were evaluated (Abdulrab & Hezam, 2024). Research on hotel satisfaction had further shown that satisfaction had not depended exclusively on physical facilities, suggesting that other elements of the

service experience had also been important (Baquero, 2023). Similarly, research on hotel service quality had demonstrated that customer satisfaction had involved multiple service-quality dimensions rather than a single service attribute (Perdomo-Verdecia et al., 2024). The hospitality environment had also been shaped by developments in digital interaction, perceived value, and sustainability. Research on tourism had examined digital trust and rapport as increasingly relevant aspects of tourism-related interactions (Elshaer et al., 2024), while research in the hotel industry had examined the use of digital platforms in contemporary hospitality practices (Ashraf et al., 2025). Customer perceived value had also been recognized as an important component of service evaluation, with customers assessing the benefits obtained from an experience in relation to what they provided in exchange (Blut et al., 2024).

Sustainability had likewise received attention in hospitality research, including studies examining hotel guests' responses to green practices (Moise et al., 2021) and the relationships among customer empowerment, environmental corporate social responsibility, and online value co-creation (Badar et al., 2025). These developments had demonstrated that hospitality service evaluation had extended beyond physical facilities to include broader dimensions of the customer experience. Service-quality research had also been conducted across different hospitality establishments and geographical contexts. Research involving selected resorts in the Central Philippines had examined service quality within a Philippine resort setting (Genove & Tayco, 2023). Similarly, research in Dumaguete City had examined service performance and customer satisfaction in coffee shops using the SERVPERF framework (Villanueva & Tayco, 2025). At the international level, service quality had remained an established area of hospitality research, as demonstrated by a bibliometric analysis covering studies published from 2014 to 2024 (Olawuyi & Kleynhans, 2025). Other research had examined combinations of service-quality conditions associated with hotel customer satisfaction, further demonstrating the multidimensional nature of hospitality service evaluation (Perdomo-Verdecia et al., 2024).

Despite these contributions, a contextual gap had remained concerning service-quality expectations and guest satisfaction among resort customers in Negros Oriental. Existing Philippine research had examined selected resorts in the Central Philippines and other hospitality establishments, including coffee shops in Dumaguete City (Genove & Tayco, 2023; Villanueva & Tayco, 2025). However, the available literature had not specifically addressed the expectations, satisfaction, and expectation-satisfaction gaps of resort guests in Negros Oriental. The present study therefore addressed this contextual gap by examining five service-quality dimensions—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—among resort guests in the province.

Accordingly, the study examined guests' expectations and satisfaction across the five service-quality dimensions, compared expectation and satisfaction ratings, and determined whether selected demographic characteristics were significantly associated with guests' expectations and satisfaction. The study provided localized evidence concerning resort service quality and guest satisfaction in Negros Oriental. Because the study employed a cross-sectional design and self-reported data, the findings were interpreted as evidence of respondents' reported perceptions and statistical associations within the study population rather than as evidence of causal relationships.

METHODOLOGY

Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational design. The descriptive component was used to characterize respondents and summarize their expectations and satisfaction across the five SERVQUAL dimensions. The correlational component was used to examine relationships between respondents' demographic characteristics and their reported expectations and satisfaction. The design was appropriate for examining patterns and associations within the cross-sectional dataset without making causal claims.

Sampling

The study involved 183 resort guests from qualified resorts in Negros Oriental. Simple random sampling was reported as the sampling technique. Eligible resorts were required to have at least 10 guest rooms, function facilities, restaurants, legal registration, and daily operations. The study was limited to guests meeting the researchers' eligibility requirements.

Collection

Data were collected using a questionnaire adapted from the SERVQUAL framework developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985). The instrument covered five service-quality dimensions: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The questionnaire consisted of three components: respondents' socio-demographic profile, expectations regarding service quality, and satisfaction with experienced service quality. A pre-test involving 32 customers produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .966, indicating high internal consistency for the instrument as reported by the researchers. The final questionnaire used a four-point Likert-type response scale. The questionnaire was administered to eligible resort guests after the researchers obtained the necessary permissions.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation, were used to summarize the data. Spearman's rho was used for relationships involving ordinal variables, while chi-square tests were used for categorical variables. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level. The expectation-satisfaction gap was calculated by subtracting the expectation mean from the satisfaction mean for each service-quality dimension. Positive values indicate that satisfaction exceeded expectations, whereas negative values indicate that satisfaction was lower than expectations.

Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality and privacy were maintained. Personal identifiers were removed. Access to study information was restricted to authorized researchers. Results were reported in aggregate form to reduce the possibility of identifying individual respondents.

Limitations and Rigor

The study is limited to registered resort guests in Negros Oriental and therefore may not represent guests of unregistered establishments or visitors in other Philippine destinations. The use of self-reported survey data may introduce response and social-desirability bias. In addition, the cross-sectional design captures perceptions at one point in time and does not establish causality or changes in guest perceptions over time. The study nevertheless provides localized empirical evidence based on a standardized service-quality framework and a structured survey instrument.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showed that the 183 resort guests were predominantly aged 18–27 years (51.91%), female (55.19%), single (67.76%), domestic travelers (78.14%), college graduates (45.36%), and professionals (40.98%). Most respondents had traveled for leisure purposes (82.51%), while 35.52% had visited resorts five times or more. The profile therefore represented a predominantly young, domestic, and leisure-oriented group of resort guests. The relatively high proportion of repeat visitors also indicated that a substantial number of respondents had prior experience with resort services, which provided a basis for evaluating both expected and experienced service quality.

The demographic characteristics were considered in the subsequent analysis to determine whether respondents' expectations and satisfaction varied across groups. Previous hospitality research had examined demographic characteristics in relation to guest responses to particular hotel practices, including green practices and gender differences (Moise et al., 2021). However, such findings could not be directly generalized to the present resort context. In this study, the demographic variables were therefore examined as characteristics of the respondents rather than as presumed determinants of their service-quality evaluations.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Resort Guest Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18–27	95	51.91
	28–37	43	23.50
	38–47	21	11.48
	48–57	16	8.74
	≥58	8	4.37
Sex	Female	101	55.19
	Male	82	44.81
Civil status	Single	124	67.76
	Married	58	31.69
	Divorced	1	0.55
Address	Domestic	143	78.14
	International	40	21.86
Educational attainment	High school graduate	38	20.77
	College undergraduate	53	28.96
	College graduate	83	45.36
	Postgraduate	9	4.92
Occupation	Professional	75	40.98
	Clerical/administrative	11	6.01
	Service worker	57	31.15
	Unemployed	40	21.86
Purpose of trip	Leisure	151	82.51
	Business	15	8.20
	Education/training	17	9.29
Visits	Once	53	28.96
	Two times	44	24.04
	Three times	13	7.10
	Four times	8	4.37
	Five times or more	65	35.52

Note. N = 183.

Table 2 showed that respondents had very high expectations across all five service-quality dimensions. Assurance obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.57$), followed by responsiveness ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 0.57$), reliability ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.58$), empathy ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 0.59$), and tangibility ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.63$). The results indicated that respondents had expected resorts to provide dependable services, prompt assistance, professional interactions, individualized attention, and appropriate physical facilities.

The high ratings across all dimensions reflected the multidimensional nature of hospitality service quality identified in previous research (Abdulrab & Hezam, 2024; Olawuyi & Kleynhans, 2025). Research conducted in Philippine resorts had likewise examined service quality through multiple dimensions, supporting the relevance of multidimensional assessment in the present context (Genove & Tayco, 2023). Assurance received the highest expectation rating, suggesting that confidence, trust, and professional interaction had been important aspects of the respondents' expectations. The relevance of trust and rapport in tourism interactions had also been recognized in previous research (Elshaer et al., 2024). Tangibility received the lowest expectation rating, although it remained within the very high category. This finding was consistent with research

showing that hotel satisfaction had not depended solely on physical facilities (Baquero, 2023). Overall, the respondents had entered the resort service experience with high expectations across both tangible and interpersonal dimensions.

Table 2
Guest Expectations Regarding Service Quality Provided by Resorts

Service-quality dimension	M	SD	Verbal description
Tangibility	3.41	0.63	Very High
Reliability	3.53	0.58	Very High
Responsiveness	3.56	0.57	Very High
Assurance	3.59	0.57	Very High
Empathy	3.51	0.59	Very High

Note. N = 183. Verbal description: 3.25–4.00 = Very High; 2.50–3.24 = High; 1.75–2.49 = Low; 1.00–1.74 = Very Low.

Table 3 showed that respondents were very satisfied across all five dimensions of resort service quality. Assurance received the highest mean ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.91$), followed by responsiveness ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 0.58$), empathy ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.57$), reliability ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.58$), and tangibility ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.62$). These results indicated that respondents had generally evaluated the services they experienced favorably across both interpersonal and physical aspects of resort service.

The high satisfaction ratings were consistent with previous research that had linked service quality with customer satisfaction in hospitality and other service settings (Abdulrab & Hezam, 2024; Fida et al., 2020). Research conducted in Philippine resorts had likewise demonstrated the relevance of service-quality assessment within the resort setting (Genove & Tayco, 2023). Assurance received the highest satisfaction rating, corresponding with its high expectation rating in Table 2. This suggested that respondents had generally perceived confidence and professional interaction in their resort experiences. Research on tourism had similarly emphasized the relevance of trust and rapport in tourism-related interactions (Elshaer et al., 2024). The high ratings across all dimensions also supported the view that satisfaction had involved more than physical facilities alone (Baquero, 2023). Overall, respondents had reported favorable evaluations of both tangible and interpersonal aspects of resort service.

Table 3
Guest Satisfaction with Service Quality Provided by Resorts

Service-quality dimension	M	SD	Verbal description
Tangibility	3.40	0.62	Very Satisfied
Reliability	3.50	0.58	Very Satisfied
Responsiveness	3.57	0.58	Very Satisfied
Assurance	3.60	0.91	Very Satisfied
Empathy	3.52	0.57	Very Satisfied

Note. N = 183. Verbal description: 3.25–4.00 = Very Satisfied; 2.50–3.24 = Satisfied; 1.75–2.49 = Less Satisfied; 1.00–1.74 = Not Satisfied.

Table 4 showed that the differences between expectations and satisfaction were minimal across all five service-quality dimensions. Tangibility recorded a gap of -0.01 , while reliability recorded -0.03 . Responsiveness, assurance, and empathy each recorded a positive gap of $+0.01$. The overall expectation and satisfaction means were both 3.52, resulting in an overall gap of 0.00. These results indicated that the respondents' evaluations of experienced service had closely corresponded with their initial expectations.

The small negative gaps indicated that satisfaction had been marginally lower than expectations for tangibility and reliability, whereas the positive gaps indicated that satisfaction had slightly exceeded expectations for responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. This pattern was consistent with the expectation–disconfirmation perspective, in which satisfaction had been examined in relation to the comparison between expectations and subsequent evaluations of performance (Schiebler et al., 2026). The results were also consistent with research that had treated hospitality service quality as multidimensional (Genove & Tayco, 2023; Perdomo-Verdecia et al., 2024). The small gap for tangibility was noteworthy because physical facilities remained part of the hospitality experience, although previous research had shown that satisfaction had not depended exclusively on facilities (Baquero, 2023). The positive gaps for responsiveness, assurance, and empathy suggested that these aspects of service had generally met or slightly exceeded respondents' expectations.

Table 4
Comparison of Guest Expectations and Satisfaction

Dimension	Expectation M	Satisfaction M	Gap (Sat. – Exp.)
Tangibility	3.41	3.40	-0.01
Reliability	3.53	3.50	-0.03
Responsiveness	3.56	3.57	$+0.01$
Assurance	3.59	3.60	$+0.01$
Empathy	3.51	3.52	$+0.01$
Overall	3.52	3.52	0.00

Table 5 showed that none of the examined demographic characteristics had a statistically significant relationship with guests' service-quality expectations. Age ($r_s = .019$, $p = .797$), educational attainment ($r_s = .031$, $p = .681$), and duration of stay or visits ($r_s = .096$, $p = .197$) were not significantly related to expectations. Similarly, sex ($\chi^2 = 0.912$, $p = .340$), civil status ($\chi^2 = 1.188$, $p = .552$), address ($\chi^2 = 0.068$, $p = .794$), occupation ($\chi^2 = 1.103$, $p = .776$), and purpose of trip ($\chi^2 = 1.002$, $p = .606$) did not show statistically significant relationships with expectations.

The results indicated that the respondents had generally reported similarly high expectations across the demographic groups represented in the study. Previous hospitality research had examined demographic differences in relation to particular guest evaluations, including gender and responses to hotel green practices (Moise et al., 2021). However, the present results did not demonstrate statistically significant demographic associations with service-quality expectations. The findings therefore suggested that, within this sample, expectations had been relatively consistent across the demographic characteristics examined. This result also supported the use of the five service-quality dimensions as common areas for assessing resort guests' expectations rather than assuming substantial differences based on demographic characteristics alone.

Table 5
Relationship Between Guest Characteristics and Service-Quality Expectations

Profile variable	Test statistic	p	Decision
Age	$r_s = 0.019$	.797	Not significant
Sex	$\chi^2 = 0.912$	.340	Not significant
Civil status	$\chi^2 = 1.188$	.552	Not significant
Address	$\chi^2 = 0.068$	.794	Not significant
Educational attainment	$r_s = 0.031$	.681	Not significant
Occupation	$\chi^2 = 1.103$	.776	Not significant
Purpose of trip	$\chi^2 = 1.002$	.606	Not significant
Duration of stay/visits	$r_s = 0.096$	.197	Not significant

Note. r_s = Spearman's rho; χ^2 = chi-square test; significance level = .05.

Table 6 showed that none of the demographic characteristics had a statistically significant relationship with guests' satisfaction. Age ($r_s = .021$, $p = .779$), educational attainment ($r_s = .083$, $p = .266$), and duration of stay or visits ($r_s = .061$, $p = .409$) were not significantly associated with satisfaction. Likewise, sex ($\chi^2 = 0.148$, $p = .700$), civil status ($\chi^2 = 0.658$, $p = .720$), address ($\chi^2 = 0.705$, $p = .401$), occupation ($\chi^2 = 1.921$, $p = .589$), and purpose of trip ($\chi^2 = 0.396$, $p = .820$) showed no statistically significant relationships with satisfaction.

The absence of significant relationships indicated that the respondents' satisfaction ratings had not varied systematically according to the demographic characteristics examined. Previous research had associated service quality and perceived value with customer satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of the service experience in customer evaluations (Fida et al., 2020; Blut et al., 2024). Research on hotel satisfaction had also shown that physical facilities alone had not fully accounted for satisfaction (Baquero, 2023). Within the present study, however, the statistical tests did not establish that demographic characteristics explained differences in satisfaction. The results should therefore be interpreted as evidence that no significant demographic associations were detected within the study sample, rather than as evidence that demographic characteristics could never be related to guest satisfaction.

Table 6
Relationship Between Guest Characteristics and Satisfaction with Service Quality

Profile variable	Test statistic	p	Decision
Age	$r_s = 0.021$	.779	Not significant
Sex	$\chi^2 = 0.148$	.700	Not significant
Civil status	$\chi^2 = 0.658$	.720	Not significant
Address	$\chi^2 = 0.705$	.401	Not significant
Educational attainment	$r_s = 0.083$	.266	Not significant
Occupation	$\chi^2 = 1.921$	.589	Not significant
Purpose of trip	$\chi^2 = 0.396$	.820	Not significant
Duration of stay/visits	$r_s = 0.061$	.409	Not significant

Note. r_s = Spearman's rho; χ^2 = chi-square test; significance level = .05.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study examined service quality and guest satisfaction among resort guests in Negros Oriental, Philippines. The respondents had very high expectations across tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy and were very satisfied with all five dimensions. Assurance received the highest expectation and satisfaction ratings, while tangibility received the lowest ratings, although it remained within the very high and very satisfied categories. The expectation-satisfaction gaps were minimal, with slight negative gaps for tangibility and reliability and slight positive gaps for responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The overall expectation and satisfaction means were both 3.52, indicating that the services experienced by the respondents had generally corresponded closely with what they had expected. The study further found that age, sex, civil status, address, educational attainment, occupation, purpose of trip, and duration of stay or visits were not significantly related to either service-quality expectations or satisfaction. These results indicated that the respondents' evaluations had been relatively consistent across the demographic characteristics examined. The findings highlighted the importance of maintaining favorable interpersonal service while continuing to address areas related to physical facilities and service reliability. However, the study did not directly test whether individual service-quality dimensions predicted or influenced guest satisfaction. The findings were therefore limited to the reported expectations, satisfaction levels, expectation-satisfaction gaps, and demographic relationships within the study population.

Resort management should maintain the service practices associated with the high ratings for assurance, responsiveness, and empathy. Regular staff development could help sustain professional, courteous, and timely interactions with guests. At the same time, the small negative gaps in tangibility and reliability should receive attention. Regular inspection of facilities and equipment, consistent housekeeping, clear service procedures, accurate information, and reliable fulfillment of guest requests could help address these areas and support consistent service delivery. Resorts should also incorporate regular guest feedback into their service-improvement activities. Post-stay surveys, feedback forms, and direct communication with guests could provide information for identifying concerns and monitoring service performance. Because demographic characteristics were not significantly related to expectations or satisfaction in this study, improvement efforts could focus primarily on the service experience rather than on demographic differences among guests. Future researchers could directly examine the relationships between the five service-quality dimensions and overall guest satisfaction using correlation, regression, or other appropriate statistical techniques. Such research could provide stronger evidence concerning which aspects of resort service quality were most closely associated with guest satisfaction.

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