

Customer Satisfaction on the Quality Services of one Department Store in Batangas City, Philippines

**Asia Pacific Journal of
Academic Research in
Business Administration**
Vol. 1 No. 1, 1-10
April 2015
apjarba@lpubatangas.edu.ph

**Anna Margarita M. Agulo¹, Katrina M. Agno¹, Alex C. Andres Jr. ¹
Hirish C. Carandang¹, Valerie G. Rugay¹, Marco A. Umali¹,
Rogelio Ceradoy¹, Imelda L. An²**

¹*College of Business Administration, Lyceum of the Philippines University,
Batangas City, Philippines*

²*College of Education, Arts and Sciences, Lyceum of the Philippines
University, Batangas City, Philippines*

Date Received: January 13, 2015; Date Revised: April 19, 2015

Abstract - *The study aims to assess the customer satisfaction on the quality service of one Department Store in Batangas City. Specifically, to assess the level of customer satisfaction on the quality service of the Department Store in terms of employee's professional appearance, customer relation , customer service and facilities; test relationship between respondent's profile and customer satisfaction, and propose plan of action to improve the satisfaction of customer. A total of 100 respondents were involved in a descriptive research. The results showed that customers are satisfied on the quality of service of this Department Store. Thus, management may continuously provide orientation and training to employees on customer relations and services to meet the full satisfaction of the customers.*

Keywords: *Customer Satisfaction, Department Service, Quality Service*

INTRODUCTION

“We got it all for you” is the most known tagline from the most productive founding retail center all over the Philippines. From the start of putting up this Department Store, their main goal is unchangeable: “to give customers the best quality services they have.” And from that, it is undeniable that they give the best quality service by the success they gained and had the opportunity to put up more branches in different places all over the country, like in Batangas City. But customers as known have different tastes in terms of buying the product and being satisfied from what they bought. Measuring customer satisfaction is a complicated process. It isn't just providing a customer need but giving them an exceptional service through a highly motivated and well trained team, good quality product, environment – friendly facilities and an expert service provider that will treat them as “guest” not just a “customer”. This Department Store is known to be a store that offers the best quality, from their products, their people, and the services they have. Being one of the top retail store in the country, it is a mere fact that

the store continues to grow bigger and bigger to provide everyone an excellent quality of shopping experience.

According to Phuc Hong Lu (2011), customer satisfaction should be paramount for any firms' marketing strategy. It is through satisfaction of customers that firms remain afloat and prosper. Customers have become an important part of any firm especially those in the grocery retail sector and many researchers have also placed emphasis on the importance of customers.

SIS International Research (2008) covers eight ways to boost customer satisfaction, detailing aspects of the shopping experience that can be improved. One way to combat dissatisfaction is to make indirect buyers happy. The store can offer candy and merchandise that kids will love. Setting up self-checkout machines for long lines is another way to satisfy customers. Customers have an expectation of what service they will receive. Companies that define their level of service quality and can realistically satisfy better monitor their customers' satisfaction. High end stores can build a reputation for outstanding customer service

by promising to go above and beyond the call of duty for their customers.

Dineshkumar (2012) indicated that customer satisfaction is the key factor in knowing the success of any retail store or business; therefore, it is very important to measure it and to find the factors that affect the customer satisfaction. Customers most likely to appreciate the goods and services they buy if they have been specially produced for them or for people like them. It should be always kept evaluated in order to get feedback for the products and services in order to develop it further with wide customization. Customer satisfaction levels can be measured using survey techniques and questionnaires. Gaining high levels of customer satisfaction is very important to a business because satisfied customers are most likely to be loyal, place repeated orders and use a wide range of services offered by a business.

The researchers were prompted to conduct a study on the level of customer satisfaction on the quality services of this Department Store in Batangas City because as customers, the researchers' foremost aim is to reach highest satisfaction level possible in terms of the quality services that they are offered. Customer always wanted to be satisfied not only on the product they buy but also the service that providers can give to them. Not only as customers but also as future entrepreneurs, results from this paper can enhance the preparedness and right attitude. This study will serve as a guide for the researchers in managing own business in the future.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to assess the customer satisfaction on the quality service of one Department Store in Batangas City. Specifically, to describe the profile of the respondents with regards to socio-demographic variables such as: gender, marital status, age, monthly income and nature of work and frequency of patronizing the products of this Department Store in Batangas City; assess the level of customer satisfaction on the quality service of the Department Store in terms of employee's professional appearance, customer relation, customer service and facilities; test relationship between respondent's profile and customer satisfaction, and propose plan of action to improve the satisfaction of customer.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between respondent's profile and customer satisfaction.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Customer satisfaction presents a versatile cross-channel metric to gauge the retailer's strengths and weaknesses from the customer's point of view. Since satisfaction drives behavior, a more thorough understanding of what drives multi-channel shoppers' satisfaction will give retailers the insights they need to influence customer behavior in the short term and long term. In this way, customer satisfaction is harnessed to become a driving force in sales growth and increasing loyalty where each channel is optimized to meet the customer's need and exceed their expectations. Customer satisfaction is a driving force in sales growth, increased loyalty and a strong multi-channel strategy where each channel is optimized to meet customer's need ("Customer Satisfaction", 2005).

There are several reasons why people visit the mall. Some of these reasons may involve the enjoyment of the company of other people, while other reasons may concern the shopping opportunities a mall can offer. Whatever motivated you to visit the mall, though, you're guaranteed to have a good time exploring the establishment's different stores and services ("Reasons Why People Go to Malls", 2013).

Teens comprise a large segment of the population and thus have a strong impact on the economy and the retail market. Many teens shop in malls because they have more free time than other age groups and often see the malls as a social and cultural destination. ("Teens' Mall Shopping Motivations", 2003).

Since higher income customers have more choices to evaluate, they tend to have higher expectations of services. This could cause them to be less satisfied than their lower income counterparts who may have fewer alternatives from which to choose, and they may take longer to commit to a firm even if satisfied. As a result, it is proposed that: The relationship marketing impact on satisfaction is greater for lower income customers than for higher income customers. The impact of satisfaction on loyalty is greater for lower income customers than for higher income customers ("Relationship marketing management", 2008).

According to Kuzak (2012), Customer Service is defined as satisfying customer exceptionally well to make this shopping mall their store of choice. A positive memorable customer service experience is what it takes in attaining customer patronage and loyalty. To be the best retail store committed to providing exceptional customer service for a

memorable experience that fosters customer loyalty is their vision.

Giving excellent external customer service is only possible when there is excellent internal customer service. Internal customer service refers to the well-being and positive group dynamics of staff who can work together to help the shoppers. Service stems from service providers. If staffs are truly happy, they will be motivated and committed to share the same joy with their external shoppers. Therefore, treating internal staff well promotes external customer service excellence. Adopting the Servqual model of service quality, an external survey is conducted to examine the shoppers views on the importance of customer service in their shopping decision and to track the current service performance of downtown department stores. It consists of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (“Customer Service in Retailing”, 2013).

Sriyam (2012) found out that most of their respondents identified tangibility as the most important factor in determining satisfaction. It includes the personality and appearance of the hotel. Cleanliness of uniform and appearance of staff both received high ranking. When front office staff are well dressed and wear smart uniforms, their appearance impresses customers who feel more confident with hotel services. They found that service quality was related to the tangible behavior and appearance of employees. The best predictor of overall service quality was the “tangibility” dimension.

Furthermore, Briones (2007) made a study about “Leadership Styles of Managers and Job Satisfaction of Employees at Metro Lipa” and they noted that good working relationship of the workers with their supervisors is accompanied by the manner by which the managers handle the workers. More than anything else, a peaceful relationship with co-workers and superiors can mean more satisfaction.

Lucas (2012) claimed that enhancing customer satisfaction as a strategy for retaining customers is a big factor for many customers in remaining loyal. In an own organization, efforts could be a deciding factor in customer ratings for the quality of service rendered. Building good relationship in order to increased customer satisfaction is valuable, because it can lead to repeat business – the key to keeping a business productivity and profitable.

De Castro’s (2007) noted that the time it takes for an employee to response to a customer’s request is same as the promptness of the employee in entertaining request or help. Moreover, Perdigon (2008) indicates that in putting up any foodservice or lodging facility,

one of the major factors to be considered is the safety and welfare of not only the guests and customers but also of the employees working in that establishment. People should be made aware of emergency procedures and safety measures to prevent accidents and worse, death. Lastly, concern for the environment should be very much prioritized because the well-being of the people would not mean anything if the environment that they live in is in poor condition.

Moreover, Marasigan, et al., (2010) encouraged the employees of the company to be more consistent in their behavior, attitude and performance in dealing with customers. They also encouraged giving suggestions to the management that they think could help to enhance the training program. Further, the researcher also encouraged the management of Bench to have a regular evaluation regarding the customer service training program to maintain its effectiveness.

In Hague’s (2012) article on “Customer Satisfaction Surveys and Customer Satisfaction Research”, he detailed the factors or attributes of customer’s points of view on staff and service of a company. It includes courtesy from sales staff, representative’s availability, representative’s knowledge, reliability of returning calls, friendliness of the sales staff, complaint resolution, responsiveness to enquiries, after sales service and technical service.

Kuang – Jung, et. Al (2007) recommended on his Study of Chain Department Stores Service Quality in Taipei Chen that the internal service personnel should be cautiously selected and intensive educational training should be provided too as to solve all kinds of customer’s problem in very fast way. Moreover, educational plan for etiquette course should be provided to enhance the affinity of service personnel and to build the image of excellent service personnel in order to enhance consumer’s willing of purchase.

Aguba et al. (2008) indicated that efficient and constant supervision of the employee must be observed to maintain the good impression of the customer. Further, it indicated that customer’s evaluation should be considered to obtain service improvement. Food Court operator may encourage their employees to be more productive and motivate them to attend to customer’s need, request and complaints.

METHODS

Research Design

The researchers used the descriptive method which involved the collection of data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of

the study. The researchers preferred to use this type of research in order to determine the level of customer satisfaction in one Department Store in Batangas City. It is also established concept related to enhance the customer's satisfaction through the result in the perceived quality of service offered by this Department Store.

Respondents

Since the study focused in the level of customer satisfaction on the quality services in one Department Store in Batangas City, only the customers who patronize and visit the Department Store were utilized in this study. The researchers used quota sampling in determining the number of respondents. Quota sampling is a method of gathering representative data from a group. As opposed to random sampling, quota sampling requires that representative individuals are chosen out a specific subgroup. A total of 100 respondents were involved in the study. The distribution of questionnaires was done after the customers had paid in the counter.

Instruments

A survey questionnaire prepared by the researchers and approved by the panelists was used as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire instrument consisted of 2 parts as follows: It is a checklist with four point likert scale as choices.

The first part contained general background of the respondent which included: gender, marital status, age, monthly income and frequency of visiting this Department Store in Batangas City.

The second part assessed the level of customer satisfaction on the quality service of this Department Store in terms of: employee's professional appearance, customer relation, customer service and facilities. The questionnaire was distributed to customers of this Department Store after they have paid on the counter.

Procedure

The researchers frequented the libraries to read books, magazines and unpublished thesis as their course of information in making the questionnaire, as well as for the text enrichment of the study. The researchers were able to construct the final draft and after several revisions, the finalized questionnaire was reproduced.

With the refinements done and with the approval of the advisers, the questionnaire was prepared. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents to complete the statistical procedure. The data were collected and treated for statistical treatment which was done by statistician. Data were analyzed and presented using tables.

Data Analysis

After the collection of the questionnaire, the answers were tallied, tabulated and analyzed. After the answers to the survey question have been recorded different statistical treatment was used.

Frequency and percentage distribution are used in determining the profile of the respondents in terms of gender, marital status, age, and monthly income, nature of work and frequency of visit. Percentage is descriptive statistics that determine what part of the total respondents fall under certain categories. Weighted mean and ranking was used in determining the customer satisfaction in employees' professional appearance, customer relation, customer service and facilities. Ranking is also descriptive statistics that shows positioned importance of an item. The researchers used number 1,2,3,4,5,6... to show the degree of importance where 1 signifies the most important and the last number signifies the least.

The results were analyzed and interpreted using the Statistical Version 17.0 statistical analysis software package. The hypotheses of the study were analyzed using Point Biserial Correlation for the relationship with dichotomous variable like gender and Eta Coefficient or Correlation Ratio for the relationship with nominal variables such as age, marital status, monthly income, nature of work and frequency of visit. Relationships among the rest of interval variables were tested using the Pearson "r" Product-Moment of Correlation. The correlation was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the respondents' profile in terms of gender, marital status, age, monthly income, nature of work and frequency of visit to this Department Store. It can be seen from the table that most of the respondents who visited the store under study are female with a frequency of 58. However, only less than half of the respondents are male or 42. This implies that women enjoyed more going to the malls, window shopping and buying things they want. The fact that women take care of the household needs of every family may support this finding. Women are more interested than men to the department store under study because they find it relaxing especially during paydays. This also serves as their recreational activity. Usually, women often go to mall because most of men are working and they have no time to do shopping. Once men go to malls, that means they need something important compared to women who are always doing the budgeting in the family. Also, they are the ones who are responsible to buy for their

family needs; they buy groceries and toiletries and they are the ones who have time to buy clothes for their husband and children.

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of Respondent's Profile (n=100)

Profile of the Respondents	%
Gender	
Male	42
Female	58
Marital Status	
Single	58
Married	38
Widow/Widower	2
Separated	2
Age	
Below 18 years old	11
18 years old - 21 years old	29
22 years old - 25 years old	19
26 years old above	41
1.4 Monthly Income	
Below P5000	0
P5000 – P10000	15
P10001 – P15000	25
P15001 above	17
None	20
1.5 Nature of Work	
Private Employee	26
Government Employee	14
Self-Employed	32
Student	28
1.6 Frequency of visiting this Department Store	
Always	29
Often	58
Sometimes	12
Seldom	1

Women also have more needs than men especially when it comes to fashion and necessities. Men buy expensive things like clothes and shoes that they can use for a long time while women choose to buy cheaper priced because they always want to buy new but trendy clothes, bags, accessories and shoes. Additionally, most women do not want to go to crowded place and they

choose to shop to the mall because they want to have good time while they are shopping. Men have a different approach to shopping. They know what they want and their goal is to go and get that. Generally, most men do not like the atmosphere of shopping malls or stores. They do not like to spend their leisure time there and do not view shopping as a form of recreation. Widow/widower and separated people have the least numbers of respondents who visit this Department Store with a frequency of 2.

It can be noticed from the table that most of the respondents who visited the department store under study are single with a frequency of 58. Next to the highest number of respondents are married people with a frequency of 38. Widow/widower and separated people have the least numbers of respondents who visit this Department Store with a frequency of 2. Single people want to mingle with others through shopping and hanging out with “barkada” or friends. Sight-seeing and killing their time at mall are another reasons why they tend to stay there and hopefully match their time for dating. They have more time doing activities outside of their house.

Most of the married men and women spent more time in their work and family. They just went to the mall to buy school supplies for their kids and other needs but not so often. Widow /Widower and separated people don't spend much time going out or going to the mall. This shopping Mall is a mall and a place where family gathers, it is a place where people get together, and once a person has been separated or has lost a love one going to the shopping mall under study brings back memories. They undergo a depressing condition that's why they don't enjoy going to the mall instead they want to spend time with their relative or staying in the house.

In terms of age, majority of the respondents belong to 26 years old above. Respondents between 18-21 years old frequently go to this Department Store with a frequency of 29. While those respondents who are 22 years old-25years old with a frequency of 19 sometimes visit. Respondents below 18 years old with a frequency of 11, barely visit this Department Store.

Mostly, respondents who are 26 years old above are working and their office might be near this department store. Weekends are their family time. Some go to church and after the mass; they go straight to this shopping mall because it is not time consuming to go there. Teens shopped in malls for economic (to hunt for a bargain and find good prices) and diversion (getting out of the house and fighting boredom) reasons.

Respondents who are 22 years old-25years old

with a frequency of 19 belong to the people who have their stable job and have no time to shop. Some of them are graduating students who are focused on their studies and not able to stay there.

Respondents below 18 years old with a frequency of 11 are those people who are still young and they go to this shopping mall with their parents. They have no job or work; they don't have their own money to buy the things they want and need. Some of them are working students and their wages are minimum.

Most of the respondents who visit this shopping mall under study have a monthly income of 10001 to 15000 with a frequency of 25. It is the most common salary today for a private and government employees. There are respondents who have no monthly income with a frequency of 20. Customers who are receiving 15001 above monthly income with a frequency of 17, do not frequently visit this shopping mall. Respondents receiving pay with 5000-10000 and a frequency of 17 got the second to the lowest in the ranking. The least number are respondents who receive below 5000.

Most number of customers of this Department Store are the middle class who have a monthly income of 10001 to 15000. They used to buy only the needs of their families like school supplies, clothes and toiletries. Also, most of them often go to mall because they cannot afford to buy luxury items in one shopping day. They use credit card to buy their needs because they don't have enough money so most of the days, they go to mall with their budgeted money unlike the others, they go to mall once a week but they buy varied and expensive items.

Respondents who have no monthly income with a frequency of 20 are groups of students. They have leisure time to go to this shopping mall. Most of them are teenagers who still depends their allowance on their parents.

The respondents who are receiving 15001 above monthly income with a frequency of 17, do not frequently visit this shopping mall; under study but once they go there, they buy expensive and many items needed for their business. Individuals with higher incomes were more innovative and more likely to adopt a new product, service or technology earlier than individuals with lower incomes.

While those receiving pay with 5000-10000 and a frequency of 17 suggest that the respondent's budget is exact for their daily needs.

For the nature of work of the respondents, most of them who visit this shopping mall are self-employed

with a frequency of 32. Next are students who rank 2 with a frequency of 28. Third are private employees with a frequency of 26. Last are the government employees with a frequency of 14.

Respondents who are self-employed with a frequency of 32 have total control on their career and job. They have the freedom to do what they want to do and to go anywhere because there is no limited time and number of leaves. They are the boss- they decide when, where and how to work to get the job done.

Respondents are consisted of students who rank 2 with a frequency of 28. Many schools are near this shopping mall that is why it is easy for the students to commute and go shopping there.

Next are the private employees with a frequency of 26. Their salaries are relatively higher. This Department Store serves them as a melting pot of people who are all looking for relaxation and space out from their busy schedules at work. Many people prefer going to shopping malls instead of going for a walk in a park or going to the gym.

Last are the government employees, their salary is not that big and they have strict procedure and processes that they must adhere to. The path to progression within government is not always easy, and is in fact, very slow so they need to work hard to prove their abilities.

Respondents who often visit this Department Store are the highest in the rank. It implies that these malls offer a wide range of products that individuals or families may need. Not only do people go there to shop, but they also got there for relaxation. Their houses might be near this shopping mall that's why instead of staying at home, they spend their time on window shopping on malls.

It can be noticed that respondents always visit this Department Store with a frequency of 29. It shows that they spend their time on purchasing anything that interests them, while others go there to have fun and enjoy some quality time with their loved ones and friends.

Respondents sometimes visit this Department Store with a frequency of 12. This implies that time and money are both important to them and they're not easy to give up for something, they don't see as being worth it. When they go out and buy something, they give up their time and money in order to gain possession of a particular item.

There is a respondent who seldom go to this Department Store. It can be implied that she/he is not fond of visiting this shopping mall.

Customers' Satisfaction in terms of Employees' Professional Appearance

The respondents are satisfied with employees' professional appearance with a composite mean of 3.34. The entire items yield high to very high means ranging from 3.16-3.53 interpreted as "Very Satisfied" and "Satisfied". As indicated from the results, the customers are very satisfied with the way the employees dressed (3.53) and with the cleanliness of the uniforms (3.50).

Employees present an impeccable outward appearance to customers. They are required to maintain a proper company image and prevent distractions in the workplace. When they dress appropriately, they tend to stand straighter and project more confidence, which customer will respond to positively. First impressions are often long lasting. Like it or not, their appearance is the first thing that people see. Dressing in a professional manner can mean the difference between getting a promotion and being passed over. Assumptions are often made about their ability to perform at a high level or in a certain capacity, based on the way they dressed.

Sriyam (2012) stated that front office staffs are well dressed and wear smart uniforms, their appearance impresses customers who feel more confident with hotel services. They found that service quality was related to the tangible behaviour and appearance of employees. The best predictor of overall service quality was the "tangibility" dimension.

Employees' uniforms are a great representation of where the brand is headed. They make sure that their uniforms are clean because it creates the right impression to customers while at the same time creates discipline for them. Most customers definitely want the employees to look clean and smart and excited.

Respondents are also delighted on how employee provides service with a smile. Smiling really does increase attractiveness and likability between humans. In fact, smiling correlates with greater trust, greater financial earnings, and increased interpersonal cooperation. When an employee smiles at a stressed customer, and exhibits excellent listening skills, most of the time, there is a report of total satisfaction. They also have pleasing personality, approachable and having easy conversation with the customers.

However, among the professional appearance, the least two in which the respondents are satisfied include employees' attractive appearance (3.26) and employees who are well-poised (3.16).

This implies that respondents are still not pleased on the good postures that are maintained by the employees. A good posture contributes to an attractive appearance. It will give support and good balance as

well as preventing backache and muscular pain. In other cases, some respondents are not totally satisfied probably because they discriminate unfairly against employees because of issues they can't -- or shouldn't -- change, like weight, height, physical attractiveness, skin color, looking very young or looking older.

Customer's Satisfaction in terms of Customer Relation

The respondents are satisfied with employees' good relationship with customer with a composite mean of 3.30. All the items yield high to very high means from 3.19-3.35 interpreted as "Satisfied". The results showed that the customers are all satisfied with the way the employees maintain good relationship with them(3.35), treat customer properly (3.34), communicates well(2.5), entertain complaints from customers (3.27), and know how to apologize(3.19).

Customer relations means not only returning the right amount of change and saying "thank you", but it also means exchanging damaged products, giving discounts if necessary and making refunds to stay the day—all with a sincere smile. Focusing on the customer's needs strengthens the company's reputation as a company that provides excellent customer service and that's what this Department Store serves. They truly care about the customer.

According to Briones (2007), good relationship of the workers with their supervisors is accompanied by the manner by which the managers handle the workers. More than anything else, a peaceful relationship with co-workers and superiors can mean more satisfaction.

Treating the customer as if their friend will yield best results is a prime concern. Employees find ways to compliment them. Effective communication in customer service requires a thorough understanding of the needs and perspectives of customers--what is important to them and their expectations in terms of service, product quality, and communication and follow through.

When something goes wrong, they apologize. The customer may not always be right, but the customer must always win. They deal with problems immediately and let customers know what they have done.

Customers' Satisfaction in terms of Customer Service

The respondents are satisfied with customer service with a composite mean of 3.23. All items yield high to very high means ranging from 3.11-3.34 interpreted as "Satisfied." The customers are satisfied with the way the employees perform assigned tasks properly. This is

because they are well-trained by the management. Employees are required to undergo training that is related to customer service and personality development. It depends on the position of the employees on how long will their training be. For the cashier, it takes 8 days, for the counter checker, it takes 4 days and for the sales clerk, it takes only 1 day. Besides training, they also attend different orientations. They also have a performance monitoring where it will be the basis of the increase of their salary rate.

It can be seen that customers are satisfied on being courteous and friendly of employees. Being courteous promotes a positive first impression. Customers appreciate courteous treatment of employees like saying simple, “Good morning Sir/Ma’am, Thank you Sir/Ma’am.” They can make the workplace life much more pleasant than those who seek to cause disturbances or drama. These employees brighten the this Department Store, leave their egos and outside problems at the door in the name of being good workers and trying to maintain a good work atmosphere. While no one is perfect and everyone has bad days, these employees manage to rise above the fray.

Attending to customer needs, request and complaint gives satisfaction to customers. In a customer service situation, a customer seeking help is the most common. Employees give acknowledgement in every customer that enters the department store. They make sure they will be available in timely manner. They actively listen to the customer’s request and problems. After that, they ask clarifying questions when the customer is finished speaking if necessary to get more details that will enable him to solve the customer's problem. Aside from that, employees are handing out feedback form for the customer’s opinion and suggestion in connection on the services they offer.

Customers want to feel welcomed and appreciated by employees. They don’t want to get the impression

that they are just being used by employees for money. Initiating customized service like offering basket, pushing the carts, helping senior citizen can go a long way toward customer satisfaction.

De Castro (2007) emphasized the ability of an employee to show importance to its customer individually even though he/she is entertaining many customers at the same time. The time it takes for an employee to respond to a customer’s request is similar as the promptness of the employee in entertaining request or help.

Customers’ Satisfaction in terms of Facilities

The respondents are satisfied with facilities with a composite mean of 3.40. All items yield high to very high means ranging from 3.18-3.51 interpreted as “Very Satisfied” and “Satisfied. From the result in the customer satisfaction in terms of facilities, the customers are very satisfied on the maintenance of cleanliness and orderliness (3.51). This means that this Department Store have their good facilities and equipment as part of the achieving customer satisfaction. They have cleaning staffs that is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the environment and they play an important role in quality improvement.

It can be seen that respondents are all satisfied on the cleanliness and properly arranged counter (3.48), well-lighted and ventilated facilities (3.47), enough space to accommodate customers on the area (3.36), and cleanliness with tissues, soap , water supply and hand dryer on comfort rooms (3.18). Customers do not feel comfortable in a space that is too crowded and likewise in an area having small space. Ventilation is a system or means of providing fresh and clean air. This Department Store is properly ventilated because fresh air is sufficient for customers to be comfortable.

Table 2. Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Respondents' Profile

	Professional Appearance				Customer Relation				Customer Service				Facilities			
	r	p	D	I	r	p	D	I	r	p	D	I	r	p	D	I
Gender	0.07	0.48	FR	NS	0.05	0.62	FR	NS	0.05	0.65	FR	NS	0.01	0.93	FR	NS
Marital Status	0.24	0.14	FR	NS	0.24	0.01	R	S	0.34	0.16	FR	NS	0.23	0.05	FR	NS
Age	0.18	0.39	FR	NS	0.24	0.13	FR	NS	0.26	0.09	FR	NS	0.19	0.33	FR	NS
Monthly Income	0.2	0.4	FR	NS	0.27	0.12	FR	NS	0.25	0.2	FR	NS	0.15	0.7	FR	NS
Nature of Work	0.28	0.09	FR	NS	0.34	0.02	R	S	0.32	0.04	R	S	0.23	0.25	FR	NS
Frequency of Visiting the shopping mall under study	0.08	0.89	FR	NS	0.07	0.93	FR	NS	0.05	0.97	FR	NS	0.06	0.95	FR	NS

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05; R – Rejected; FR – Fail to Reject; S – Significant; NS – Not Significant

Table 2 presents the relationship of customer satisfaction on professional appearance, costumer relation, customer satisfaction and facilities. It can be noticed from the results that there is low correlation in customer satisfaction when correlated to profile variable. The results also indicated that profile variable does not affect the customer satisfaction on professional appearance and facilities because the computed p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance. On the other hand, satisfaction on customer relation is affected by marital status ($r=0.21$, $p=0.01$).

Marasigan et al., (2010) encouraged the employees of the company to be more consistent in their behavior, attitude and performance in dealing with customers. Aside from that, they embolden them on giving suggestions to the management that they think could help to enhance the training program. Further, the researcher also encouraged the management to have a regular evaluation regarding the customer service training program to maintain its effectiveness.

This means that their experience on the service of employees varies on their marital status. It was found out that the employees' service was very important to the customers while on work. Marital status of the customer affects his time spent in finding the right commodity.

That is singles may gave longer hours in buying because he is not in hurry compare to married ones who have families that are waiting. However, employees

must assure that they will give their best service to the customers whether they are single, married, widow/widower and separated. Satisfaction level is a result of the difference between expected and perceived performance. There is a significant difference on the services rendered by this Department Store because as of the services rendered, there was a difference between all the services in terms of customer relation.

Satisfaction on customer relation ($r=0.34$, $p=0.04$) and customer-service ($r=0.34$, $p=0.04$) when correlated to nature of work shows relationship since the computed p-value on is less than 0.05; thus, the hypothesis that there is relationship between satisfaction on customer-service when correlated to nature of work failed to reject. This implies that their level of satisfaction differs.

It was found out that employees' service varies as the customers visit this Department Store from day to day as well as the customer's satisfaction. Not all employees give their full service to the customers. They have their differences in their services.

Based on the results, customer's satisfaction is low on the areas enumerated below; thus, the researchers are endorsing an action plan to enhance the satisfaction of the customers shown in Table 3. The proposed plan of action has the following key result areas: professional appearance, customer relation and service and the facilities and environment.

Table 3. Proposed Plan of Action to Increase the Customer Satisfaction

Key Results Area	Objectives	Strategies	Persons Responsible Involved
Professional appearance	To maintain good posture of employees	Provide training to enhance the posture of employees	HR Personnel, Finance Department Employees
Customer Relation	To ensure that the expectation of customers will be met	Monthly meeting for monitoring and supervision of performance	Supervisor Employees
Customer Service	To maintain efficient customer service	Conduct customer survey	HR Personnel
Facilities and Environment	To provide a clean and comfortable environment	Regular maintenance and inspection of the facilities will help to meet customers satisfaction	Maintenance Department

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Female dominates the number of customers who visit this Department Store, mostly single, age bracket of 26 years and above, with monthly income of P10001-

P15000, self-employed and often visits this Department Store. Customers are satisfied on the quality of service of this Department Store. The results indicate that marital status and nature of work affect customer

relation while nature of work also affects the customer service. A plan of action is proposed to improve the satisfaction of the customer.

It recommended that the management may create various activities and strategies specifically to attract male customers and increase the frequency of visits. This Department Store in Batangas City may improve and reach the highest standard of quality services offered to its customers. The management may continuously provide orientation and training to employees on customer relations and services to meet the full satisfaction of the customers. The proposed plan of action may be reviewed by the management for proper implementation. Future research using other variables connected to this shopping mall may be conducted.

REFERENCES

- Aguba, Richard., De Las Alas, Rhea., Dimaano, Rhoderick., Laroza, Joana., Pagdonsolan, Precious. (October, 2008). "Assessment of Foodcourt Outlet in Lipa City: Basis to Enhance Customer Satisfaction." Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis. Lyceum of the Philippines University: Batangas City.
- Briones. E.M., Jarilla, J.C., Puri, A.J.J., Silang, M.A.L. (March, 2007). "Leadership Style of Managers and Job Satisfaction of Employees at Metro Lipa Water District." Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis. De La Salle Lipa: Lipa City.
- Chen, Kuang-Jung. (December, 2007). The Study of Chain Department Stores Service Quality in Taipei. The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning. Taiwan. Vol. 3. <http://goo.gl/xdIvvT>.
- Customer Satisfaction. (2013). <http://businesscasestudies.co>.
- Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Buying Behavior in the Evolving Multi-channel Retail World. (Jan. 2005). <http://goo.gl/SwT9Ab>
- Customer Service 101. (2012). <http://callcentercity.com/article/customer-service-101-27.php>
- Customer Service in Retailing : The Case of Downtown Department Stores in Singapore. (February 14, 2013). <http://goo.gl/qfgwI6>
- Customer Satisfaction towards Retailers. (2011). <http://goo.gl/pcxzlm>
- De Castro, C., Garcia, M., Meneres, E., Toribio, J. (March 2007). "An Assessment of the Customer Satisfaction of Panaderia Pantoja in Lipa City." Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis. De La Salle Lipa: Lipa City.
- Dineshkumar, U., Vikkraman, P. (September – October 2013). Customer's Satisfaction towards Organized Retail Outlets in Erode City. IOSR Journal of Business and Management. Vol.3. Pages 34-40. www.iosjournals.org.
- "Documenting Sources from the World Wide Web" About SM Department Store, (Sept 03, 2007).
- Fundamentals of Customer Service on eBay (2013). <http://goo.gl/euMweI>.
- Hague, Paul., Hague, Nick. (2012). Customer Satisfaction Surveys & Customer Satisfaction Research. <http://www.b2binternational.com/publications/white-papers/customer-satisfaction-survey/>.
- Kuzak, Kim. (October 20, 2012). CSMS Handouts.
- Lucas, R.W. (2012). Skills for Success (Fifth Edition). New York : McGraw-Hill.
- Marasigan, H.M. (September 2010). "The Effectiveness of Bench Customer Service Training programs as Perceived by Employees and Customer in Batangas City". Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis. Batangas City: Batangas State University.
- Perdigon, G.P. (2008). Facilities Planning and Design for Lodging and Food Service Operations (Updated and Enlarged). Metro Manila: Merriam and Webster Bookstore.
- Reasons Why People Go to Malls. 2013. <http://www.articlerich.com>.
- Relationship marketing management and satisfaction/loyalty: effects of gender, age, and income. 2008. (<http://www.freepatentsonline.com>, 2008)
- Sriyam, A. (May 2010). "Customer Satisfaction towards Service Quality of Front Office Staff at The Hotel". <http://share.pdfonline.com>
- Shopping for Any Reason-Fun and Exciting Ways to Shop. 2013. <http://goo.gl/jq8YD4>
- Teens' Mall Shopping Motivations: Functions of Loneliness and Media Usage. 2010. <http://goo.gl/njqU15>
- The Importance of Good Customer Service (2007). <http://goo.gl/oudRW9>
- Why People Go to Shopping Centers. 2012. <http://ezinearticles.com/?Why-People-Go-to-Shopping-Centers&id=6839849>