

## Conference Paper

# **Touristic Restaurants In Tagaytay City: A Service Quality Approach**

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**Abstract:** This study examined the service quality of selected DOT-Accredited touristic restaurants in Tagaytay City in terms of the expected and experienced quality. The researchers used SERVQUAL by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry. This study aims to determine what influences the customer perception of expected quality in terms of reliability, attainability, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness during peak and lean season; to determine what influences the customer perception of experienced quality in terms of reliability, attainability, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness during peak and lean season; and to determine the significant relationship between expected quality and experienced quality during peak and lean season. The researchers used quantitative method research. Purposive sampling was used to collect data using survey questionnaire from 150 respondents. The results show that the restaurants have very good service quality for the expected and experienced quality assessment of customers and highly influential factors in terms of reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness regardless of peak or lean season. There was a significant relationship between the expected quality and experienced quality. Specifically, the expected and experience quality has a positive correlation which means the relationship is direct. The expected quality is high, and high experienced quality too, and vice versa. On the other hand, it was based on peak and lean season. The results showed that only the expected quality was affected by the season.

**Keywords:** Service Quality, RATER, SERVQUAL, expected, experienced

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## **Introduction**

The food service industry was considered as one of the most essential and fastest growing in the hospitality industry. Foods connected and associated travellers to a destination by having a perhaps more delightful experience than whatever thing they

could come across. (Peltier, 2015). Typically, a restaurant that offered a particular cuisine enhanced the overall image of a tourist destination. It was because food can be the ultimate reason why people visit a destination. Yet, nowadays simple dining is not just enough. Some customers prefer to dine in a restaurant where they feel a good ambience and a relaxing environment. Thus, it means it's not just the food quality that matters anymore.

The researchers conducted a study which relates to the service quality of selected DOT-Accredited touristic restaurants in Tagaytay City which is considered the 2nd summer capital of the Philippines. Tagaytay as the setting of the study are: it is accessible, convenient and it has the most number of DOT-Accredited touristic restaurants in Cavite and in the whole CALABARZON region. Touristic restaurants, as defined by the researchers, are restaurants that are nearby and/or have a scenic view of a tourist attraction. These restaurants are often visited by tourists. The three chosen selected DOT accredited restaurants in Tagaytay City are: Josephine Restaurant, Concha's Garden Café, and Memory Lane. Josephine Restaurant is a Pinoy classic restaurant where one can enjoy the sight of Taal volcano and the cool climate. It is owned by Alfonso Sarayba Jr. and the restaurant is named after his wife Josephine Sarayba. Memory Lane is a restaurant and souvenir shop with 50's and 60's vibe with a colourful garden located in Magallanes Drive Tagaytay, Cavite. It is owned by Jolina Magdangal's family, named after her album "On Memory Lane". It is near the Taal Volcano and 10 minutes away from Skyranch. Concha's garden is located at Cliffhouse Tagaytay. It is known to serve Filipino dishes and known for its garden inspired theme. It was opened on March 18, 2014.

Furthermore, only three restaurants were selected among the nine DOT-Accredited restaurants in Tagaytay City, those three were the only establishments that allowed the researchers to conduct a study. The DOT standards as for the expected quality, the researchers expect that the three chosen DOT-accredited touristic restaurants are strictly following and maintaining the DOT standards. On the other hand, the researchers observed based on their experience that the three chosen DOT-Accredited touristic restaurants failed to comply with some of the five dimensions of SERVQUAL, which are: the accuracy of serving orders, speed of serving order (reliability) safety and security of the establishment (assurance), cleanliness outside the establishment and insufficient space for waiting lounge. (tangibility).

The researchers used SERVQUAL by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, as a conceptual framework. The researchers chose SERVQUAL that help the researchers to identify the gaps between customer expectation and the actual services provided based on five dimensions which are: Reliability, Assurance, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, or known as RATER. It is also simpler and easier to understand unlike other concepts for measuring service quality. Thus, it aided the researchers to propose an action plan for the selected DOT-accredited restaurants. Reliability this

refers to the ability of the restaurant to carry out their promised services. Assurance this refers to the professionalism, politeness and knowledge of employees that builds the customers' confidence and certainty. Tangibility this refers to the appearance of physical facilities. Empathy observed to the readiness of employee to assist the customers especially customers with special needs. Responsiveness refers to the employees' willingness to provide service and assistance to the customers. (Fisk, et al., 2014).

The researchers used the Total Perceived Quality Model by Grönroos (2015). The expected quality and experienced quality in the Total Perceived Quality Model is used as the main criterion for the questionnaires and the dimensions of RATER is used as the sub criterion. The researchers conducted the study with the aim to create an action plan that could be used in order to improve the service quality of selected DOT accredited touristic restaurants in Tagaytay City.

### **Literature Review**

Restaurants catered to customers whose needs and wants change overtime. Customers are now being selective and it clearly shows that they're also after a good service quality that is provided aside from a great food (Barklon, 2015). Service quality can absolutely affect the client satisfaction and loyalty. Nevertheless, perceived value does not have a huge impact on customer loyalty of the restaurant; it serves as an intermediary between the customer satisfaction and service quality (Lai, 2014). For this reason, service quality should be assessed in order to maintain the fulfilment of customers.

Moreover, it is a good thing that restaurants are aware of service quality and its effect on customer satisfaction, which is why some factors like picking trained and wise staff, is a must in terms of delivering service. (Dhora & Dionizi, 2014). However, evidence also imply that, in spite of the continuous highlight on "service quality" for more than a period of time, it was found that there is still a lack of complete understanding of what really establish quality and how it can be develop and administer. The interdisciplinary and general understanding correspond to service quality has become urgent for tourism, leisure, and hospitality service managers in their attempt to deliver and design a better quality of service (Mok, et al., 2013).

Similarly the study conducted by Carreon, et. al. (2015) also used RATER to assess the customer satisfaction on food quality and service quality of Mang Inasal in Halang Calamba City. The results revealed that customers were contented with the level of service however; researchers suggested that there is a need for additional employees for a quicker delivery of service.

Omar, et al. (2016) also identified the service quality of Arabic Restaurants in Shah Alam, Malaysia by using the five dimensions of RATER and examined the

significance of gender on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. It was revealed that tangibility, assurance, and empathy were the most connected to customer satisfaction compared to the other two dimension. Female customers have also higher satisfaction compared to male customers. In addition, in the previous study conducted by Abu Gharib, et. al (2016) the researchers also used RATER to assess the service quality of food parks. On the other hand, these studies did not use another model as basis for evaluating service quality.

However, it was also implied that there can be shortcomings when measuring service quality based on comparison between expectations and experiences. Expectations are measured after the service experience or during the experiences occur, which for practical reasons they frequently are, then it doesn't measure the expectation but something that has been influenced due to the experience occurring. Notably, the expectation and experience contrast will aid managers and also the researchers to comprehend how customers distinguish the aspect of a given service (Grönroos, 2015).

The study was examined; the service quality of selected DOT accredited touristic restaurants in Tagaytay City. The results from this study were most likely used as a reference for future researchers who might be concerned in this area of study. To the researchers of the study, it provided new information. To the chosen DOT-accredited touristic restaurants, it helped them improve their service quality by knowing in what areas they need to excel more since the respondents were the customers itself. It further helped them to have an idea regarding service quality, its effect to the customers as well as to the image of the restaurant.

To the government of Tagaytay, they gave emphasis on improving the service quality of the touristic restaurants because these establishments were one of the main reasons why tourists visit their place. Also, it was result to better performance of the service of these restaurants. The study was unique because it focused on DOT-Accredited touristic restaurants and aside from Rater Model; two criterias were adapted from the Perceived Service Quality Model of Grönroos. Also the study involved peak and lean season.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives.

1. To determine what influences the customer perception of expected quality in terms of reliability, attainability, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness during peak and lean season.
2. To determine what influences the customer perception of experienced quality in terms of reliability, attainability, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness during peak and lean season.
3. To determine the significant relationship between expected quality and experienced quality during peak and lean season.

The paradigm explained that customer’s expected quality and experienced quality should be measured which helped the researchers to come up with an action plan for the DOT-Accredited touristic restaurants of Tagaytay City.

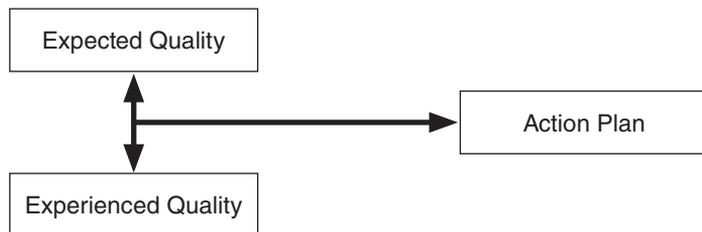


Figure 1

### Methodology

The researchers used quantitative research for collecting data. Furthermore, a descriptive research design was used in this study. The researchers used descriptive research was to classify the source of something that is happening. It used controlled tool and, explicitly it was intended to measure the features defined in the research questions using quantitative approach. (Felix, 2017)

The research participants of this study were the customers from Concha’s Garden Cafe, Josephine Restaurant and Memory Lane. The sample size would be 50 each for Concha’s Garden Cafe and Josephine Restaurant and Memory Lane. The researchers used non-probability sampling method specifically purposive sampling. It was used because it was time-effective since the place where the survey was conducted in touristic restaurants and it was more applicable for gathering primary data.

The data collection method that the researchers used was the survey questionnaire. In order for the service quality to be measured, there were two sets of questionnaires that the researchers distributed one for the expected quality and the other one for the experienced quality in a back-to-back legal sized paper during peak and lean season. The researchers used the expected quality and experienced quality in the “Perceived Service Quality Model” as main criteria, excluding its sub-criteria; instead the researchers used the RATER Model as substitutes. The researchers disregard the sub-criteria of the expected and experienced quality in the “Perceived Service Quality Model” of Christian Gronroos, were broad and were not easily understood if used in the questionnaires unlike the RATER Model which is more specific in terms of its dimensions. The researchers used the Likert Scale ranging 5 as Outstanding, 4 as Very Good, 3 as Good, 2 as Fair and 1 as Poor. The Likert Scale was appropriate because the respondents only selected the best option that was based on their own perspective.

The researchers distributed the questionnaires with the help of the restaurant crews during Friday-Sunday on a lunch to afternoon time for the peak season because it was the usual time when huge numbers of people dine in the touristic restaurants. As for the lean season, the researchers distributed the questionnaires during Wednesdays and Thursdays, because one restaurant is closed during Tuesdays which is the Memory Lane. The researchers conducted the survey for four weeks until the required number of respondents was reached.

During the data gathering, there were respondents who are not willing to answer the survey questionnaires. The researchers respected their decision and waited for other customers who were willing to answer the questionnaire. Weighted Mean and Standard Deviation were used to evaluate the assessment of the respondents regarding the expected and experienced service quality based on the five dimensions of RATER Model. Pearson Correlation was used to test the hypothesis of the study.

### Findings & Discussion

This part of the paper discusses the findings of the study.

**Table 1.** Assessment on the Expected Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Reliability for both peak and lean season

Reliability	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Implementation of rules (No smoking policy, no pets allowed, etc.)	4.33	Very Good	4	4.31	Very Good	2
2. Operating hours (Opening and Closing time)	4.36	Very Good	2.5	4.35	Very Good	1
3. Accuracy of serving orders	4.36	Very Good	2.5	4.19	Very Good	4
4. Speed of serving orders	4.13	Very Good	5	4.13	Very Good	5
5. Availability of receptionist/usher/usherettes	4.45	Very Good	1	4.25	Very Good	3
<b>Over-all</b>	<b>4.33</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.25</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Over-all Interpretation for influence: 1.0-1.49: Not influential 1.50-2.49: Slightly Influential 2.50-3.49: Influential 3.50-4.49: Highly Influential 4.5-5.0: Very Much Influential

Table 1 shows that during peak season, as per the expectation of the respondents, availability of receptionist/usher/usherettes has the highest rank, because during peak season restaurants provide many ushers to accommodate the orders of the customers to avoid complaints. When there are no adequate staffs, everybody has to work faster and longer, meaning one has to do another job, thus it may result to tired employees and will lessen their productivity (Basic Kitchen and Food Service Management, 2014). Some workers at the front can be noticed rushing when assisting customers from one table to another. Kitchen staffs are also working hard to accomplish everything instantly, but slow service will be expected if workers are lacking especially in front of the house (Kanyan, et. al., 2016).

On the other hand, Speed of serving orders has the lowest rank but still interpreted as Very Good. It is expected because when there are a lot of orders from the customers it's hard to accomplish everything quickly. But overall, for the expected quality of reliability during peak season, is highly influential. For a fast-casual restaurant, where one might wait in a longer span of time to have the ordered food, less expectation for speed of serving orders is presumable. It is important yet, it is not always about the speed. In example, customers hate when they get the wrong order, which means speed of serving orders is important but not at the cost of being inaccurate. During rush hours restaurant crews should double check the orders of the customers (Levin, 2013).

As for the lean season, for the expected quality of the respondents, the operating hours has the highest rank, this implies that the restaurants maintain their original opening and closing time. Operating hours can entice customers if chosen carefully. It can be adjusted depending on the season if the owner needs or wants to. Opening at the right time will bring patrons and to make a challenging move, offering limited hours in a restaurant can also cause huge number of customers. Overhead costs and opportunities for profit should be balanced when adjusting the operating hours of a restaurant. When selecting the hours of operation, it should be considered when that particular schedule will take place. When there's a peak and lean season, operating hours can be limited during a time of the year when expecting fewer customers. On the other hand, operating hours can be extended during peak or holiday season to accommodate more customers (WebstaurantStore, 2018). While the speed of serving orders has the lowest rank but still interpreted as Very Good. It is because these restaurants are casual dining restaurants, arranging or cooking the food upon ordering are expected by the customers. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals are peak times when there's a huge demand for food, and because of this slow service are unavoidable (Kanyan, et al., 2016). But overall, for the expected quality of reliability during lean season, is highly influential.

**Table 2.** Assessment on the Expected Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Assurance for both peak and lean season

Assurance	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Employees knowledge of service of the restaurant	4.43	Very Good	2	4.28	Very Good	1
2. Employees manner of serving	4.49	Very Good	1	4.21	Very Good	5
3. Safety and Security of the restaurant	4.27	Very Good	4	4.24	Very Good	4
4. Employees Grooming	4.41	Very Good	3	4.27	Very Good	2
5. Risk Control Management (i.e. first aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency exit)	4.25	Very Good	5	4.26	Very Good	3
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.25</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Table 2 shows that that during peak season, as per the expectation of the respondents, employees' manner of serving has the highest rank. For lean season it has the *lowest rank* but still interpreted as *Very Good*. It is because customers expect that employees are very courteous and hospitable when serving orders given that it is a peak season, where there maybe instances that customers lose patience for waiting. Some employees don't smile when serving the customers and this leaves a bad impression. This means lack of moral encouragement from the management staff. Kanyan (2016) While the risk control management has the lowest rank but still interpreted as Very Good, because customers notice the presence of fire extinguishers, and fire exit inside the restaurants, maybe first aid kits are stored in a different place. Customers obviously value their safety and safety aids should be clearly visible in the area. Even if a restaurant provides good food, any alarming accident may happen anytime and it can destroy a business. Businesses that keep an eye on those areas and have risk management plans are more likely to be successful in the long run. (Monroe, 2013) But overall, for the expected quality of risk control management during peak season is highly influential. As for the lean season, for the expected quality of the respondents, the employees' knowledge of service of the restaurant has the highest rank, this implies that the restaurants' employees are well-informed of their whole operations. Knowledge about the services and product is severely important. If there's complete understanding about the services offered, customers will be more attracted to have decisions on buying or purchasing services. Knowledge will make a team

more look confident and efficient. Whenever employees speak to customers they will have conviction and will lead to more chances of having high customer satisfaction. (Newman, 2014) While the employees' manner of serving has the lowest rank but still interpreted as *Very Good*, possibly because some employees don't serve the foods in the right way. But overall, for the expected quality of assurance during lean season, is *highly influential*.

**Table 3.** Assessment on the Expected Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Tangibility for both peak and lean season

Tangibility	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Adequate Parking Space	4.61	Outstanding	2	4.31	Very Good	6
2. Quality of Air-conditioning/ Ventilation	4.47	Very Good	6	4.84	Outstanding	1
3. Adequate lighting (Lighting in dining rooms, restrooms, corridors)	4.59	Outstanding	3	4.39	Very Good	3
4. Appropriateness of employees' uniform	4.55	Outstanding	5	4.35	Very Good	5
5. Cleanliness and Condition of Restroom (has tissue paper, soap, good quality fixtures and fittings,)	4.15	Very Good	8	4.39	Very Good	3
6. Adequate dining space (size of dining area, sufficient tables and chairs)	4.57	Outstanding	4	4.39	Very Good	3
7. Cleanliness of Dining Area (floorings are kept clean, clean table cloth and napkins, silverwares are clean and polished)	4.65	Outstanding	1	4.27	Very Good	7
8. Provided Waiting Lounge for customers	4.45	Very Good	7	3.97	Very Good	8
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>Very Much Influential</b>		<b>4.25</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Table 3 shows that during peak season, as per the expectation of the respondents, cleanliness of Dining Area has the *highest rank*. It is because employees are more observant and alert to keep the whole dining area clean when there's a lot of customers inside the restaurant. Cleanliness and food safety are top key preconditions for the customer choice of restaurant. The physical environment has an impact on the over-all image of the restaurant; it can be positive or negative. Physical surroundings need to be maintained and improved always in order to keep up with the market. (Mason et al. 2016). On the other hand, the cleanliness and condition of restroom has the *lowest rank* but still interpreted as *Very Good*, because it is expected that there can be long lines inside the restrooms especially for females that is why it is hard to maintain its utmost cleanliness. The washrooms of restaurants should be kept clean and must smell pleasant at all times. The toilets, mirrors, and floor must remain hygienic and trash bins are placed properly. It is because customers notice the cleanliness of the whole restaurant and it makes a big impact Tetreault (2015). As for the lean season, for the expected quality of the respondents, the quality of Air-conditioning/Ventilation has the *highest rank*. Since there are fewer people inside the restaurants, the higher the chance to keep the whole establishment at a fairly low temperature. A proper ventilation is vital for the health of employee and customers, and also for food safety. Once good ventilation is not maintained, it may result to high utility bills, reduced productivity of employee and complaints from the customers. In addition, bad odor may occur when the restaurant is not properly ventilated Allen (2014). On the other hand, the provided waiting lounge for customers has the *lowest rank* but still interpreted as *Very Good*. It can be clearly seen regardless of what season because there are few seats or little spaces for the waiting customers inside the restaurants. The waiting area for guests leaves a first impression. Its design and comfortability already speak so much about the business. It is necessary to have comfortable and proper lounge seating for the guests. The more comfortable it is, customers will not be easily irritated. A modern and comfortable lounge seats will help customers relax while waiting for their turn. (Lioness, 2017).

**Table 4.** Assessment on the Expected Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Empathy for both peak and lean season

Empathy	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Employee's hospitality towards customers (Proper greeting, smiling genuinely, etc.)	4.59	Very Good	1	4.35	Very Good	1
2. Employee's ability to suggest best-seller foods in the menu	4.41	Very Good	5	4.29	Very Good	2.5

**Table 4.** (Con't)

Empathy	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
3. Employee's interpersonal skills (communications skills are clear, precise and understandable)	4.45	Very Good	4	4.27	Very Good	4
4. Employee's ability to tend the needs of the customer.	4.49	Very Good	3	4.17	Very Good	5
5. Employee's readiness to assist people with specific needs (PWD, Elderly, etc.)	4.51	Very Good	3	4.29	Very Good	2.5
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.49</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.28</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Table 4 shows that during peak season and lean season, as per the expectation of the respondents, Employee's hospitality towards customers has the highest rank, this means that the employees portray a decent image by greeting the customers and accommodating them happily. Great hospitality of staff is an additional point for service quality. In hospitality, customers don't just pay for their food, but for the entire experience. For instance, when there is a problem with the food, customers will appeal to the manager or crew but when they experience poor hospitality, most likely they will voice it out in social media or internet (Roubler, 2017). The lowest rank for peak season but still interpreted as very good for the expected quality is the employees' ability to suggest best seller foods on the menu, possibly because during peak season employees recommend just one particular food that is ready and available instead of recommending a list of options. While the lowest rank for lean season but still interpreted as very good for lean season is the employee's ability to attend the needs of the customer. This indicates that the employees are focused on the requests of the customers. Restaurant Employees, just like any type of employee, need and want to be trained beyond the onboarding stage. Not only does it make them feel like a valued member of the business, but it shows that the organization is invested in their ongoing development and advancement. Plus, research shows that 9 out of 10 managers started as entry level employees. If you want to develop a loyal team of key players who may eventually transition into leadership roles, you have to give them the tools to do so (Wormley, 2016).

Table 5 shows that during peak season, as per the expectation of the respondents, Employee's ability to respond to customer's concerns immediately has the highest rank, since during peak more employees are on duty to accommodate the needs of the customers. For a staff to respond to customers' need or problem immediately the staff should have a confidence to decide what he or she thinks right for the customer. If not, the problem should be endorsed right away to the right person. Through this, the restaurant practices staff empowerment (Brown, 2015). On the other hand, the acceptance of customer's suggestions and criticisms has the lowest rank but still interpreted as Very Good. Customers expect that the restaurants are not welcoming with their reviews for improvement, but overall, for the expected quality of responsiveness during peak season, is highly influential. It's never a good feeling to get negative comments from your past guests. With the internet connecting consumers in more ways than ever before, unhappy customers are able to let others know exactly how they feel through bad restaurant reviews. "Customer criticism certainly benefits us from making mistakes in the future by critiquing, by teaching, or re-teaching the staff and the management to make sure they're up to snuff." (Shenkel, 2017). As for the lean season, for the expected quality of the respondents, Employee's alertness during emergency has the highest rank since there are fewer people this implies that employees of the restaurant can make an action immediately whenever there is an emergency. Another area in restaurants that generates problems and liability expenses is when people get injured on the premises. Restaurants handle customer complaints, lost items and injuries, so creating a comprehensive customer service strategy and procedure for handling accidents and emergencies is important. Restaurants deal with various accidents, altercations and incidents that include robberies, loud arguments and physical violence. How restaurants respond to ease tensions and handle accidents is critical for a restaurant's reputation and financial well-being (Matthew, 2017). While providing a quick and prompt service has the lowest rank but still interpreted as Very Good, possibly because when there's fewer people some employees are not very attentive to the customers. But overall, the expected quality of responsiveness during lean season,

**Table 5.** Assessment on the Expected Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Responsiveness for both peak and lean season

Responsiveness	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Employee's ability to respond to customer's concerns immediately.	4.547	Outstanding	1	4.253	Very Good	2.5

**Table 5.** (Con't)

Responsiveness	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
2. Willingness of employees to clean tables and chairs before and after use	4.533	Outstanding	2	4.253	Very Good	2.5
3. Providing a quick and prompt service	4.467	Very Good	4	4.200	Very Good	5
4. Employee's alertness during emergency	4.507	Outstanding	3	4.293	Very Good	1
5. Acceptance of customer's suggestions and criticisms	4.400	Very Good	5	4.240	Very Good	4
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.419</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.248</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

**Table 6.** Assessment on the Experienced Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Reliability for both peak and lean season

Reliability	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Implementation of rules (No smoking policy, no pets allowed, etc.)	4.413	Very Good	3	4.31	Very Good	2
2. Operating hours (Opening and Closing time)	4.480	Very Good	2	4.35	Very Good	1
3. Accuracy of serving orders	4.507	Outstanding	1	4.19	Very Good	4
4. Speed of serving orders	4.200	Very Good	5	4.13	Very Good	5
5. Availability of receptionist/usher/usherettes	4.253	Very Good	4	4.24	Very Good	3
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.371</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.24</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Table 6 shows what influences the customer perception of experienced quality during peak and lean season in terms of *Reliability*. During the peak season, the *Accuracy of serving orders* has been ranked as the highest and interpreted as *Outstanding*. This implies that the employees of the restaurant are paying attention and actively listens each time

the customers place their order. Giving accurate orders are not just about providing good service. It also for the safety of the guests. Customers are being selective of their food because of sensitivity or they have an allergy to a specific food. And allergic reactions can be a life threatening (Service that Sells, 2017). As for the lean season, the *Operating hours* has the highest rank and interpreted as *Very Good*. This means that they do not extend more hours and follow the mandated policy of the restaurant for opening and closing time. There are numerous of studies suggests that overwork does not help a business. Even though the employees love their job and voluntarily work for long hours, when they are exhausted their performance can drop-off (Carmichael, 2015). Furthermore, *Speed of serving orders* for both season (peak and lean) has the lowest rank. Nonetheless, it was still interpreted as *Very Good*. This implies that the orders are being served in a reasonable length of time. Even though during the peak season they are still able to provide prompt service. In the study conducted by Edwards (2018) states that it is not just a great food that matters. Successful restaurants, also offers not only first-class menus but also the best food service that will help create memorable experience for the customers. Generally, the result of the data was interpreted as *Highly Influential*. The customers are very aware of the service given by the restaurant. They are not just after the food quality anymore, they are also seeking for a good service quality even during the lean season. Good thing is that the restaurants where the researchers conducted the survey questionnaires have performed well in providing prompt and good service to the customers. In fact, the overall result of the data shows a very good operation of the restaurant which was interpreted as Highly Influential.

**Table 7.** Assessment on the Experienced Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Assurance for both peak and lean season

Assurance	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Employees knowledge of service of the restaurant	4.446	Very Good	2	4.320	Very Good	2.5
2. Employees manner of serving	4.453	Very Good	1	4.347	Very Good	1
3. Safety and Security of the restaurant	4.000	Very Good	5	4.267	Very Good	4
4. Employees Grooming	4.387	Very Good	3	4.320	Very Good	2.5
5. Risk Control Management (i.e. first aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency exit)	4.067	Very Good	4	4.213	Very Good	5
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.2713</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.2933</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Table 7 shows what influences the customer perception of experienced quality during peak and lean season in terms of Assurance. During the peak and lean season, the *Employees manner of serving* has been ranked as the highest and interpreted as Very Good. This implies that the employees shows knowledge about the proper way of serving foods to the customers. For each and every employees of the restaurants, serving food in a correct manner is a very important task to perform as it can be the reason why customers will come again and even recommend it to other people (Hospitality-School ,2013). Furthermore, *Safety and security of the restaurant* during peak season has the lowest rank. Nevertheless, it was interpreted as *Very Good*. This shows that the safety of the environment of the restaurants adds to the customer's confidence and has a very big impact to them. In addition, a safe workplace can also improve the customer's satisfaction (Walter, 2013). As for the lean season, the *Risk control management* (i.e. first aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency exit) has the lowest rank but the customers considered it as one of the factor as it is interpreted as Very Good. This shows that the restaurant strictly comply with the authorization's mandated policy for the safety of the customers. Numerous of business owners are not fully aware of possible risks within their businesses and the effect these could have. The damage or direct loss is not only the major loss but also the time that will spend on dealing with the outcome which includes the production timetables and interruption to work. The image of the business as well as the customer's loyalty can also be negatively impacted (NZI Risk Solutions, 2016). Generally, the result of the data was interpreted as *Highly Influential*. The employees of the restaurants are following the correct way of serving foods to the customers which results to a very good interpretation during the peak and lean season. They also provide a risk control management and a safety environment that instill assurance and trust to the customers of the restaurant. Furthermore, the overall findings show a high result which was interpreted as Highly Influential.

Table 8 shows what influences the customer perception of experienced quality during peak and lean season in terms of *Tangibility*. During the peak and lean season, the *Appropriateness of employees' uniform* has the highest rank. This implies that the employees wearing distinguishable and proper uniform has a very good impact to the customers and to the image of the restaurant. In fact, it was interpreted in the data as Outstanding. Similarly, in the study conducted by Leach (2017) states that the employees has an impact to the business. Choosing the right employees are very crucial even if it is a small company. In addition, having the wrong people worked at the establishment especially during the holidays can be detrimental. The *Adequate parking space* for peak season has been ranked as the lowest but it still has a Very Good interpretation. This implies that there are sufficient parking spaces provided for the customers of the restaurant. On the other hand, in an article entitled "Lack of parking space in Panvel" by Kurian (2013) it was found that lack of parking

spaces was seen as a hindrance towards the development of the city. Unavailability of parking spaces also caused traffic congestion and caused to impel drivers to break the traffic rules. In fact, it was also identified as a major problem that was seriously affecting the function of the marketplace. As for the lean season, *Provided waiting lounge for customers* has the lowest rank. Regardless, it was interpreted as *Very Good*. This implies that the restaurant provided their customers comfortable and adequate waiting lounges. Waiting lounges directly communicates the company's image. The moment the customers walk through the doors, the reception area or the waiting lounges is usually the one that they immediately notice. People should prioritize this area as it give the first impression about the company. (Pochepan, 2017).

**Table 8.** Assessment on the Experienced Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Tangibility for both peak and lean season

Tangibility	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Adequate parking space	4.120	Very Good	8	4.133	Very Good	6
2. Quality of Air-conditioning/Ventilation	4.307	Very Good	6	4.067	Very Good	7
3. Adequate lighting (Lighting in dining rooms, restrooms, corridors)	4.480	Very Good	2	4.333	Very Good	3
4. Appropriateness of employees' uniform	4.554	Outstanding	1	4.387	Very Good	1
5. Cleanliness and Condition of Restroom (has tissue paper, soap, good quality fixtures and fittings,)	4.467	Very Good	3	4.267	Very Good	4
6. Adequate dining space (size of dining area, sufficient tables and chairs)	4.400	Very Good	5	4.360	Very Good	2
7. Cleanliness of Dining Area (floorings are kept clean, clean table cloth and napkins, silverwares are clean and polished)	4.400	Very Good	4	4.240	Very Good	5
8. Provided Waiting Lounge for customers	4.293	Very Good	7	3.946	Very Good	8
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.3814</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.2183</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Generally, the result of the data was interpreted as *Highly Influential*. The appearance of the employees is one of the factors that positively impacts the restaurant's image. In addition, employees wearing of proper uniforms help the customers to distinguish them easily. On the other hand, waiting lounge creates good impression to the customers of the restaurant.

**Table 9.** Assessment on the Experienced Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Empathy for both peak and lean season

Empathy	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Employee's hospitality towards customers (Proper greeting, smiling genuinely, etc.)	4.427	Very Good	4	4.373	Very Good	1
2. Employee's ability to suggest best-seller foods in the menu	4.320	Very Good	5	4.293	Very Good	3.5
3. Employee's interpersonal skills (communications skills are clear, precise and understandable)	4.440	Very Good	3	4.293	Very Good	3.5
4. Employee's ability to tend the needs of the customer.	4.493	Very Good	1	4.280	Very Good	5
5. Employee's readiness to assist people with specific needs (PWD, Elderly, etc.)	4.467	Very Good	2	4.347	Very Good	2
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.429</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.317</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Table 9 shows what influences the customer perception of experienced quality during peak and lean season in terms of Empathy. The *Employee's hospitality towards customers* (i.e proper greeting, smiling genuinely, etc.) for lean season has the highest rank and interpreted as *Very Good*. This means that employees are very hospitable towards the customers. In the field of hospitality industry, it is vital to hire the right people for the business. Employees that are hospitable, has compassion and attentiveness, with such trait are most likely to perform their job successfully, without exception (Solomon, 2016). As for the peak season, the *Employee's ability to tend the needs of the customer* has the highest rank and interpreted as *Very Good*.

This shows that the employees' attentiveness and willingness to assist the customers' needs has a very big impact to the customers. However, during the lean season it has been ranked as the lowest but it was still interpreted as Very Good. This emphasizes the importance of employees' ability to cater the needs of the customers. Employees' eagerness to attend to the needs of the customers each time they seek for assistance or help is very important. And if properly done, the customer asking for help will not only feel satisfied but will also favorably willing to avail products and/or services from the business (Ward, 2016). Moreover, *Employee's ability to suggest best-seller foods in the menu* for peak season has the lowest rank. Regardless, it was interpreted as *Very Good*. This implies that employees' shows expertise about the foods they offer in that particular restaurant. The employees' ability to provide suggestions in the menu is as important as the appearance and the manner of serving. An employee must be acquaint with the menu to answer all the customer's queries with ease and be able to enumerate and explain daily specials in the menu. (Webstaurant, 2017) Generally, the result of the data was interpreted as *Highly Influential*. The customer like it when they are treated with courtesy and kindness. On the other hand, the employees of the restaurants were very welcoming and friendly. They always greet their customers warmly. They also serve them with a smile on their faces which has a very good impact to the customers as well as to the image of the restaurant.

**Table 10.** Assessment on the Experienced Quality of DOT-Accredited Touristic Restaurants in Tagaytay in terms of Responsiveness

Responsiveness	Peak Season			Lean Season		
	Mean	Interpretation	Rank	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Employee's ability to respond to customer's concerns immediately.	4.440	Very Good	3	4.187	Very Good	3
2. Willingness of employees to clean tables and chairs before and after use	4.493	Very Good	1	4.160	Very Good	5
3. Providing a quick and prompt service	4.400	Very Good	4	4.173	Very Good	4
4. Employee's alertness during emergency	4.347	Very Good	5	4.307	Very Good	1.5
5. Acceptance of customer's suggestions and criticisms	4.413	Very Good	2	4.307	Very Good	1.5
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.419</b>	<b>High Influential</b>		<b>4.227</b>	<b>High Influential</b>	

Table 10 shows what influences the customer perception of experienced quality during peak and lean season in terms of *Responsiveness*. During the peak season, the *Willingness of employees to clean tables and chairs before and after use* has the highest rank and interpreted as *Very Good*. This shows that the employees of the restaurants have the initiative of maintaining the cleanliness of the dining area. However, during the lean season it has been ranked as the lowest but it was still interpreted as *Very Good*. This means that it has a very good impact to the customers. In a study conducted by Bauer (2015) states that a clean restaurant provides customers a good perception and assurance that they are going to dine-in in a safe environment. It can also give a pleasing ambience. Even if the food is great, an unsanitary environment can give bad impression to the customers and can negatively affect the health of the customers as well as the employees of the restaurant. Furthermore, the *Acceptance of customer's suggestions and criticisms* for lean season has the highest rank and interpreted as *Very Good*. This means that the restaurant is always open for improvements from the suggestions and criticisms of the customers. Feedback is a vital information for businesses that can be used for making decisions as well as for improvements. In fact, negative feedback are the ones that is considered as very useful as it can help for continuous services improvements and increase in performance (DeFranzo, 2017). The Employee's alertness during emergency for the peak season has the lowest rank. Nonetheless, it was interpreted as *Very Good*. This implies that the customers have observed the preparedness of the employees or the restaurant when an emergency occur. The readiness of every restaurants is essential for an emergency. And it is important to come up with a realistic emergency safety plan in order to be prepared when a sudden emergency occurs in an establishment (Goodman, 2017).

Overall, the result of the data was interpreted as *Highly Influential*. The cleanliness of the restaurants especially the dining area are their top priority as it can give a good impression and assurance of safety to the customers. The employees ensure that tables are clean before, and right after the customers use it.

**Table 11.** Relationship between the Expected and Experienced Quality during peak and lean season

Quality	Season	N	Mean	r	P-Value	Interpretation
Experienced	Peak	75	4.3743	-0.102	0.212	Not significant
	Lean	75	4.2730			
Expected	Peak	75	4.4616	-0.171	<b>0.036*</b>	Significant
	Lean	75	4.2746			

\*Significant at 0.05 level

**Table 12.** Relationship between the Expected and Experienced Quality

		<b>Experience</b>	<b>Expected</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Expected	Pearson Correlation	1	.465**	Significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	150	150	
Experience	Pearson Correlation	.465**	1	Significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	150	150	

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

Table 11 & 12 shows that there is a significant relationship between the expected quality and experienced quality. Specifically, the expected and experience quality has a positive correlation which means the relationship is direct. Based on the researchers' analysis, if the expected quality is high, it will result to a high experienced quality too, and vice versa. The evaluation of the customers for the expected quality also influenced their evaluation for the experienced quality. On the other hand, if it will be based on peak and lean season. The results show that only the expected quality is affected by the season. On the contrary, the predicted service directly influences the meaning of adequate service. In addition, it is the predicted service that the customers expected to receive. Thus, if acceptable service is predicted the adequate level will be much higher in comparison to poorer service assumptions. (UK Essays, 2013)

### Conclusion

The over-all result of the influence of customer perception in terms of expected quality for reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness is highly influential both for peak and lean season. The over-all result of the influence of customer perception in terms of experienced quality for reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness is highly influential both for peak and lean season.

The results also show that there is a significant relationship between expected and experienced quality. On the other hand, if it will be based on peak and lean season, the results show that only the expected quality is affected by the season.

Moreover, the restaurants have good service quality; it is recommended by the researchers that they focused more on the cleanliness of their dining area and safety & security of the restaurants.

This study is limited in its ability to generalize because there were only three DOT-Accredited touristic restaurants in Tagaytay that the researchers studied out of nine since these were the only restaurants that allowed a study to be conducted in their

establishments and 150 was the total number of respondents. Also, the peak and lean season were not conducted throughout the year, it was based on particular holidays, and days of the week. It is suggested that the future researchers will conduct a study in another place in CALABARZON Region where DOT-Accredited restaurants can be found. Furthermore, it is recommended that the same framework and sampling method would be used.

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