

Abstract

Service quality plays a significant role in determining and influencing customer satisfaction (Parasuraman, 1995; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; and Lamb et al., 1996). In recent years, faced with fierce competition, firms have increasingly been putting emphasis on customer-driven quality (Williams and Buswell, 2003; and Krajewski and Ritzman, 2005). Customer satisfaction has thus become a central component in assessing a firm's past performance and, moreover, in assessing its future financial success (Kotler et al., 1996; Davis et al., 1999; and Presbury et al., 2006).

Also, service quality is a strong determinate of customer retention; develops loyalty; and increases profits (Webster, 1991; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Parasurman et al., 1994; Gundersen et al., 1996; Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000; and Wong and Sohal, 2003).

The hyper-competitive business environment of the new millennium has forced organizations to increase their emphasis on service quality. The result of this, the quality of services in the hospitality industry is receiving the most attention in the form of planning; implementing; and controlling service quality that focus on the needs of customers and that support the achievement of product and service quality based on strategies and programs (Canziani, 1996; Farner, et al., 2001; and Lewis and Spyrapoulos, 2001).

The true measure of company success lies in an organization's ability to satisfy customers continually and this is leads to improved employee satisfaction; increased productivity and profits. This is particularly true in hospitality industry including food service sector, where failure to satisfy customers will quickly lead to an early termination of the business (Gabbie and O'Neill, 1996; and Tucci and Talaga, 1997).

Therefore, the present study was designed to shed the lights on the relationship between service quality and the hotel industry, with emphasis on the foodservice sector to evaluate the quality of food and beverage service that offered in restaurants. This research is concerned to improve the measurement of service quality in foodservice operations. It examines the customers' expectations and those factors that influence their decisions to return to a restaurant. The results of a survey are discussed and suggestions made for ongoing research.