

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ON SERVICE QUALITY OF THEME PARK X: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

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Abstract. Theme parks have been one of the fastest penetrating tourism sectors in the market and one of the great contributors in generating income in the whole tourism industry. However, despite being on the edge of the spotlight, the service quality of theme parks failed to penetrate in the tourism research, leading to lack of studies about the said matter. Furthermore, “Theme Park X,” one of the leading theme parks in the Philippines have received a large amount of bad reviews on their official website about the quality of their service. With both gaps being said, this study aimed to assess the customer satisfaction on the service quality of “Theme Park X” by assessing the customers’ expectations and perceptions and if there is a significant difference between the two variables using a SERVQUAL tool - RATER Model. After evaluating the results of the adapted and validated questionnaires that were distributed to 30 participants in the theme park before and after their experience of the Theme Park X’s services, the researchers found out that there is a significant difference between customers’ expectations and perceptions on the service quality for all dimensions, specifically the Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles, Empathy, and Responsiveness, which indicate a discrepancy in their service quality that leads to dissatisfaction of the customers due to unmet expectations. With that being said, the researchers would like to recommend to the “Theme Park X,” as well as to the other theme parks within the country, to reevaluate the quality of service they provide and to better every areas that needs to be changed, and to consider listening to their customers’ feedback and concerns for them to be able to better and improve the areas in their service quality that needs improvement.

Keywords: *service quality, customer satisfaction, expectations, perceptions, theme park*

Introduction

A theme park, a type of amusement park, is a popular destination for travelers looking for a special place to relax and have a good time with their family and friends. According to Bomediano and Cabaron (2019), theme parks have contributed significantly to the tourism industry and catalyzed economic growth, as it is globally well-known to offer leisure and recreation to its customers. To enhance revenue generation, some Asian countries, such as China and Malaysia, are beginning to invest in these avenues (Albattat and Romli, 2017). In the Philippines, theme parks have also started to catch the public's interest. Theme parks have been helping the tourism of local and regional provinces, which forces the management to cultivate and reshape their services to cater to the demand and needs of their customers. According to previous research, theme parks should observe the quality of their services because it affects the customers' experience and their perception and willingness to revisit the place. The globally popular theme parks have been recording an increase in their revenue since 2014, including Walt Disney Land Universal Studios Japan and Japan Disneyland, because they offer high-quality service to people. The experience of people during their visit to these parks has captured them and left a strong positive impression, which

makes the park enjoyable. Additionally, customers make a standard of a pleasant facility as a part of customer service because their comfort depends on it. If these theme parks provide clean and safe accommodations and places, customers can feel secure during their stay. In the Philippines, limited regions offer theme parks because of their feasibility in location. Some famous theme parks are located in the central Philippines, which the government supports because they bring tourists and livelihood to the locals. The service quality of theme parks has been affecting how customers perceive the business. Although these theme parks have established a good foundation for their name, there are still instances where people would notice their shortcomings regarding service quality. While other similar attractions have already been established in the country, "Theme Park X" is by far the leading theme park when it comes to the services that they offer to its visitors. Furthermore, "Theme Park X" is a theme park that was opened to the public in the 1990s and it is said to be the leader in leisure and entertainment because of its unique rides, attractions, and events. However, despite these theme parks being on the edge of the spotlight, they seem unable to penetrate in modern tourism research.

With regards to Theme Park X's customer satisfaction, their official Facebook page has a lot of good feedback. However, in the span of a year and a half, from January 2021 to the first half of the year 2022, there are also an ample amount of negative feedback about their service quality that might affect the expectations and perceptions of future visitors. Out of 270 total reviews within the said time frame, only 91 of them are about the service quality of the said theme park. 38 (41.8%) of them praised Theme Park X and were satisfied, while 53 (58.2%) of them complained and expressed dissatisfaction. Thus, it is essential to have utmost knowledge and awareness regarding the satisfaction of their customers as well as their expectations and perceptions of them, because the visitors' perceptions of the destination, based on their satisfaction with the quality of service the place offers, can build up the destination's image for future visitors. This is proven as Valčić et al. (2015) asserted that there is a need to conduct studies about the said matter, for the reason that there are only few existing studies on theme parks' service quality. In addition, Xie (2011) stated that customer perception of service quality is vital to the success of tourism destination management, and one essential response to achieve it is satisfying customer expectations. With the said gap, this paper aims to measure the service quality of Theme Park X, one of the leading theme parks in the Philippines, using the R.A.T.E.R model (Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles, Empathy, Responsiveness) of Service Quality (SERVQUAL) associated with their expectations and perceptions resulting to customer satisfaction, with the use of Exposure Therapy as an intervention. Exposure Therapy, according to Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (2017), is a type of therapy in which psychologists form a safe space for people wherein they are being exposed to the things or situations they fear or are afraid of. In the perspective of this study, the utilization of this therapy is for the visitors of "Theme Park X," to experience the theme park's services, which they do not experience on a regular basis, in order to have a perception of its quality affecting their satisfaction afterwards.

Specifically, this study aims to: (1) assess the expected service quality attributes; (2) assess the perceived service quality attributes; and (3) to determine if their expectation has a significant difference on their perception. The results of this study will benefit the theme parks in the Philippines, especially the Theme Park X, as well as its staff, as this study will help promote the theme park's reputation and service quality to other people.

This study will be much beneficial to the whole theme park industry by providing information about the market's expectations and perceptions regarding theme parks. Additionally, this study will benefit the theme park's customers or visitors to have a deeper insight into customer satisfaction after they experience the services of the said theme park. Lastly, this research seeks to give brief information on service quality in general. With this, future researchers in the same field can have a better understanding of the topic.

Literature review and theoretical background

Expectations and perceptions

Lin et. al. (2009) stated that the contrast between customer expectations and customer perceptions is how Parasuraman defined service quality. There is a gap in service quality when expectations are higher than perceptions. The research's findings indicated that the theme park's mean average service quality exceeded what customers expected in all five service quality categories: Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. This has been discovered via the process of measuring service quality. Of the five components, the one with the highest mean score was "Responsiveness and Assurance," which refers to the readiness of personnel to offer services promptly and the fact that they are informed and polite enough to win the trust and confidence of visitors. On the other side, the mean for the dimension of Tangibility was the lowest, reaching 4.55. This refers to the facilities, animal exhibits, marketing materials, and signs found at the theme park, according to the ranking of these three criteria. The visitors only "mostly agree" that the benefits were up to par with their expectations. It gives the impression that it did not meet the consumer's requirements. They suggested that the company enhance the quality of its services to attain greater levels of customer happiness and, ultimately, higher levels of business success, which would ensure its continued presence in the market (Bomediano and Cabaron, 2019). A SERVQUAL research of service quality combined with the expectancy-disconfirmation concept is essential for expanding knowledge of theme park tourism in China, according to Chan et al. (2019). The goal of the research is to understand the level of service quality at the well-known Chinese theme park brand, Zhengzhou Fantawild. A modified SERVQUAL model was used to evaluate the park's service quality and identify significant service quality factors that influence visitors' overall satisfaction. The results of an empirical study of Zhengzhou Fantawild visitors (n=192) showed that the level of service given by the park fell short of visitors' expectations, notably in terms of reliability. Although the findings may represent a widely reported high quality of service reliability, such excessive expectations may have contributed, at least partially, to the unwanted big experience gap maintained by visitors. Intangible quality, reliability, and the responsibility of the employees are all factors that determine whether guests are pleased with the level of service provided. Thirdly, an expectation-perception assessment mapping of service quality reveals that reliability, certainty, and responsiveness are aspects of service that contribute favorably to the perceptions of guests.

According to Li and Song (2011), the purpose of their study is to investigate the service quality expectations and perceptions of theme park tourists using the SERVQUAL instrument, as well as to identify weaknesses in seven aspects of service quality based on tourists' quality ratings. The results of the t-test analysis of a survey of

202 tourists in a theme park in Shenzhen City, China, show that theme park visitors are significantly dissatisfied with the seven dimensions of service quality, which include tangibles, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, empathy, price, and perceived value. The research suggests that Chinese theme park personnel have greater potential and need more efforts to improve service quality among all seven critical service dimensions in order to achieve customer satisfaction. Monitoring visitor satisfaction is essential for ensuring a positive overall experience, customer value, and repeat visits. The researchers look at ten years of customer satisfaction tracking data from a popular theme park in the United States. The study aims to discover important aspects that influence customer perception and satisfaction with the whole theme park experience. The main findings indicate that visitors rate the theme park mostly based on the overall park experience and value, the park food quality, value, and variety, and the park's cleanliness and environment. Satisfaction with the entire cost of the park visit is mostly influenced by entry price/value perceptions, general enjoyment, and customer expectations of the experience. Additional findings are addressed, including the importance of expectations and prior park experiences in customer satisfaction (Geissler and Rucks, 2011). The primary objective of the thesis is to investigate or examine the level of satisfaction of students with the services and to identify a product attributes inventory that can be used to evaluate theme parks from the students' perspective in Melaka theme parks, according to the previous study on the student's satisfaction towards theme parks services. A total of 159 SERVQUAL questionnaires were distributed to the students at Universiti Teknologi MARA in Melaka City as part of the study, utilizing the SERVQUAL instrument created by Parasuraman et al. (1985). The study revealed a difference between respondents' expectations and views of the level of service given by Melaka's theme parks, implying that respondents' expectations were not reached.

The main objective of this research, which was conducted by Kuo and Wu (2014) on the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction in E-Da Theme Park, a well-known theme park in Taiwan, is to investigate the relationship between theme parks' service quality and customer satisfaction as well as whether visitors' satisfaction is influenced by amusement parks' service quality. The findings revealed that characteristics of a theme park's service quality, such as tangibles, dependability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, had a significant impact on consumer satisfaction. Theme park practitioners can use these research findings to guide their management and operation planning, as well as to develop appropriate service quality measures to boost customer satisfaction and theme park brand recognition. Furthermore, As stated in the study by Mendoza et al. (2016), businesses that wish to maintain their competitiveness and continue to expand must understand the significance of service quality and customer satisfaction. Providing high-quality services is the most important factor in achieving and maintaining an efficient market advantage in the current business environment. In addition, customer satisfaction and service quality are critical factors in business, as the growth of a company is highly reliant on how well it maintains its customers through service. Finally, Fotiadis and Vassiliadis (2016), stated that it is crucial to analyze the behavior of customers toward a product. Marketing professionals utilize the SERVQUAL model system to analyze customer demand or to enforce improvements, resulting in better overall customer satisfaction, company reputation, and sales. Thus, it is essential for businesses to understand how to measure

these components from the consumers' perspective in order to fully understand and fulfill their expectations.

Service quality and the RATER model

To address the gaps in previous works, the researchers will employ the Service Quality Model or SERVQUAL Model, developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) (*Figure 1*). The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) is extensively applied to measure considered service quality in several industries including commerce, restaurant, financial services, utilities, transportation, food service, resorts, medical facilities, and universities, national parks, banking industry, automobile industries, and healthcare services. To simply put, it is a mechanism for capturing and evaluating client satisfaction with a service. As Specialist Dissertation Services (2021) indicate the model interpreted service quality as the variation among customer standards and views. The creator of this model observed that the customer's level of satisfaction is determined by the differential angle between the customer's expectations prior to obtaining service in a service firm and what the customer actually perceives after experiencing and utilizing the facility on their behalf (Khan and Fasih, 2014). Furthermore, Haverila et al. (2020) found that the idea of service quality is among the most well-received and abstractly significant additions to the research about services. The model reveals the significant inconsistencies or inequalities between management conceptions of service quality and the duties connected with providing service to consumers.

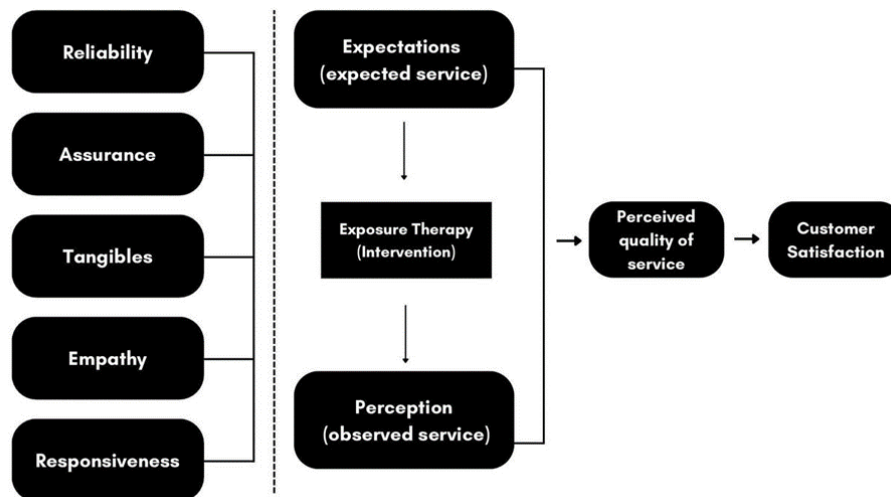


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

This framework would be used to measure the customer satisfaction of the visitors on the service quality of “Theme Park X” using the R.A.T.E.R model based on their expectations and perceptions in accordance to the five dimensions of the said service quality model and to determine if their expectation has a significant difference on perception, while Exposure Therapy is used as an intervention. This model includes five key service dimensions: Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles, Empathy, and Responsiveness. Reliability demonstrates the capacity to offer services precisely, on schedule, and with credibility (Parasuraman et al., 1985). This needs stability in the delivery of services, consideration for obligations, and keeping consumer agreements.

Tangibles are a visual representation of the business's physical infrastructure and how its employees interact (Parasuraman et al., 1985). In other words, tangibles explain the impact of the actual location, infrastructure, employees, and available quality on the client. Assurance is the aspect that establishes consumers' confidence and loyalty (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Empathy refers to the consideration and emphasis given to the wants and demands of consumers by a company (Parasuraman et al., 1985). It entails providing courteous, customized attention to consumers. Finally, responsiveness is the factor that assesses the capacity to fix problems quickly, efficiently handle client complaints, and be eager to assist consumers and satisfy their needs (Parasuraman et al., 1985). To put it simply, responsiveness refers to the feedback businesses receive from consumers regarding their desire.

Moreover, Parasuraman et al. (1985) describe expectations as consumer wants or desires, i.e. what they believe a service provider should offer rather than would offer. Meanwhile, perceptions are defined as consumers' beliefs about the service they received or experienced. In this research, the RATER model is a valuable tool for measuring the "Theme Park X" service quality as expected and experienced by its tourists and making suggestions to improve customer satisfaction. In this regard, the researchers adopted this model since it emphasizes customers' satisfaction and evaluations of the business's service. This will aid the researchers in discovering and analyzing the features and fundamental factors that influence "Theme Park X" service quality resulting to the customer satisfaction. On the other hand, the factor that makes this study unique is that the researchers examined the service quality of a theme park from an operational perspective. The service quality of a theme park is not a one-time event but a continuous process that begins from when the visitor enters the park to their departure. It is based on both the experience and perceptions of visitors before and after their experience in the theme park.

Materials and Methods

A quasi experimental quantitative research design was used by the researchers in this study. The chosen research design is suitable for this study as the researchers aimed to measure the customer satisfaction, of a small population, on the service quality of "Theme Park X" by showing and calculating statistical data gathered. It helps to see what is already there and/or may aid in the discovery of new information and meaning and to specifically help theme parks such as "Theme Park X" know which part of their services they should focus on/further improve. The participants of this study were visitors of the "Theme Park X". The researchers used Convenience Sampling in this study with a total of 30 as the target number of participants, which was determined through Cochran's Formula. This sampling method was a Non-probability which is applicable to this study since data gathering was done on days when the researchers are available or free from other academic duties and responsibilities. A validated survey questionnaire, adapted by the researchers, were personally distributed in the parking lot of "Theme Park X". The researchers looked for (30) participants who have tried at least 2-3 rides and have purchased products, such as food and souvenirs, inside the theme park. Upon conversing with the prospect participants, they have clearly stated that there would be two (2) parts of the survey, which were the pre-test (expectation) and post-test (perception), and that all the information that will be gathered will be used for educational purposes only. Hence, the information of the participants, especially the

ones they have provided in the demographic profile section of the questionnaire, will be kept confidential. The researchers asked them to answer the pre-test before entering the theme park, and have waited on the same location at the end of the day and asked the same participants to answer the post-test survey. The survey questionnaire was mostly answerable using the Likert scale. The responses of the participants have been immediately compiled and prepared for the analysis of data. The researchers have manually, carefully, and thoroughly checked every responses so that the data will be organized. The data were processed and analyzed using weighted mean, percentage, standard deviation, t-test and analysis of variance to sum up the results and show the findings. To represent the responses, the researchers used a table to easily find out the final results. The researchers assured that the respondents' responses and identities will be kept confidential, guided by the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and will only be used for the sole purpose of this paper. The respondents, on the other hand, have the right to withdraw anytime and to access the research findings if they choose to participate. Personal information, as well as the respondents' answers, will be collected and disposed of after the commencement of this research paper.

Results and Discussion

The SERVQUAL model, which is used to measure service quality, is analyzed in this study. This model consists of five (5) Service Quality dimensions: Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles and Empathy, and Responsiveness. The significance of customer expectation and perception on each dimension of service quality are assessed. The degree of satisfaction with Theme Park X's service quality is scaled from 1 to 4 (4 being Strongly Agree and 1 being Strongly Disagree). The following criteria are used in the analysis section (*Table 1*). *Table 2* presents the mean scores of items related to respondents' expectations and perceptions regarding the reliability of service at "Theme Park X". The table reveals that expectations for service reliability range from 3.17 to 3.43 and an overall mean score of 3.28. The highest mean score for the expectation aspect is 3.43, which is all about the provision of useful visitor guides and maps of the park. While the lowest mean score in the expectation table is 3.17, which pertains to the timely provision of services. Moving forward, the table for perceptions reliability dimension of "Theme Park X" shows mean scores that ranges from 2.57 to 3.33. The highest mean score for the perceptions aspect is 3.33, which pertains to the provision of useful visitor guides and maps of the park. On the other hand, 2.57 is the lowest mean score on the perceptions table, and is regarding to the timely provision of services of "Theme Park X." The mean scores of items pertaining to respondents' expectations and perceptions on the assurance dimension of service at "Theme Park X" are shown in *Table 2*. The table reveals that expectations for the assurance of service ranges from 3.00 to 3.37 and an overall mean score of 3.17. The highest mean score for the expectation aspect is 3.37, which is all about making their customers feel safe in their transactions. While the lowest mean score in the expectation table is 3.00, which pertains to the availability of security guards in each zone and parks. Moving forward, the table for perceptions on the assurance dimension shows mean scores that range from 2.50 to 3.13 with an overall mean score of 2.83. The highest mean score for the perceptions aspect is 3.13, which pertains to the security of the provided lockers. On the other hand, 2.50 is the lowest mean score on the perceptions table, and is regarding to the availability of security guards in each zone and parks of "Theme Park X."

Table 1. Verbal interpretation.

Lowest	Highest	Interpretation
1.00	1.75	Strongly disagree
1.76	2.50	Disagree
2.51	3.20	Agree
3.21	4.00	Strongly agree

Table 2. Customers' expectations and perceptions of the reliability and assurance dimension.

Reliability	Level of perception		Level of perception		Mean quality gap score
	Mean	Verbal interpretation	Mean	Verbal interpretation	
Reliability					
1. There are current and accurate information on the website.	3.23	Strongly agree	3.17	Agree	-0.07
2. They use directional signage at the theme park.	3.20	Agree	3.17	Agree	-0.03
3. Useful visitor guides and maps of the park are provided.	3.43	Strongly agree	3.33	Strongly agree	-0.10
4. They provide services as promised	3.27	Strongly agree	2.80	Agree	-0.47
5. They are dependable in handling customers' service problems.	3.37	Strongly agree	2.67	Agree	-0.70
6. They provide services on time.	3.17	Agree	2.57	Agree	-0.60
Total	3.28	Strogly agree	2.95	Agree	-0.33
Assurance					
7. I feelsafe and secure doing the activities.	3.07	Agree	2.63	Agree	-0.43
8. Equipment and machineries are in good condition.	3.17	Agree	2.80	Agree	-0.37
9. Security guards are available at each zone and parks.	3.00	Agree	2.50	Disagree	-0.50
10. Lockers provided are entrusted and safe.	3.27	Strongly agree	3.13	Agree	-0.13
11. Clinic and first aid assistance are available.	3.13	Agree	2.87	Agree	-0.27
12. Briefing on safety in doing extreme activities was held by the staff.	3.07	Agree	2.97	Agree	-0.10
13. The employees instill confidence in customers.	3.17	Agree	2.70	Agree	-0.47
14. They make customers feel safe in their transactions.	3.37	Strongly agree	2.97	Agree	-0.40
15. The employees are knowledgeable to answer customers' questions.	3.33	Strongly agree	2.87	Agree	-0.47
Total	3.17	Agree	2.83	Agree	-0.35

The customers' expectations and perceptions concerning Tangibles in "Theme Park X" are presented in *Table 3*. The mean scores on the expectations table of Theme Park X's tangible dimension range from 2.93 to 3.57 with a total mean score of 3.27. 3.57 is the highest mean score in the expectations table and it pertains to the neat and professional appearance of the staff. Meanwhile, 2.93 is the lowest mean score on the expectations table which pertains to the well-maintained condition of the facilities. On the other hand, the table for perceptions in the Tangible dimension of "Theme Park X" reveals mean scores ranging from 2.43 to 3.10 with a total mean score of 2.87. The highest mean score on the perceptions table is 3.10, which is regarding the visually appealing materials associated with their services. However, the lowest mean score on the perceptions table is 2.43, which pertains to the availability of fun role-play shows inside the theme park. *Table 3* presents the views and evaluations of customers regarding the empathy dimension of service quality at Theme Park X. The mean scores on the expectations table of Theme Park X's empathy dimension range from 2.77 to

3.33 with a total mean score of 3.09. 3.33 is the highest mean score in the expectations table and it pertains to the convenient business hours of Theme Park X. Meanwhile, 2.77 is the lowest mean score on the expectations table which pertains to the availability and usefulness of shuttle services onsite. On the other hand, the table for perceptions in the Empathy dimension of “Theme Park X” reveals mean scores ranging from 1.63 to 3.00 with an average mean score of 2.52. The highest mean score on the perceptions table is 3.00, which is regarding to the friendliness of the staff. However, the lowest mean score on the perceptions table is 1.63, which pertains to the availability and usefulness of shuttle services onsite. *Table 3* shows the customers’ expectations and perceptions concerning the responsiveness dimension on the service quality of “Theme Park X.” The table for responsiveness dimension show mean scores on the expectations table a 3.27 flat scores on every variables. On the hand, the table for perceptions on the Responsiveness dimension shows mean scores that ranges from 2.80 to 3.07, with an overall mean score of 2.96. The highest mean score in the perceptions table is 3.07, which pertains to the willingness of staff to help customers. Meanwhile, the lowest mean score in the perceptions table is 2.80 which is regarding to the prompt service of staff to the customers.

Table 3. Customers’ expectations and perceptions of tangibles, empathy and responsiveness dimension.

Reliability	Level of perception		Level of perception		Mean quality gap score
	Mean	Verbal interpretation	Mean	Verbal interpretation	
Tangibles					
16. The facilities are in well-maintained condition.	2.93	Agree	2.97	Agree	0.03
17. Restaurants and cafes are sufficient.	3.33	Stringly agree	3.07	Agree	-0.27
18. The park provides many diviions and activities.	3.37	Strongly agree	2.87	Agree	-0.50
19. The park is occupied with fun role-play shows.	3.27	Strongly agree	2.43	Disagree	-0.83
20. The adventure activities are thrilling.	3.33	Strongly agree	2.97	Agree	-0.37
21. Modern equipment is present.	3.07	Agree	2.70	Agree	-0.37
22. Facilities are visually appealing.	3.13	Agree	2.73	Agree	-0.40
23. The employees have a neat and professional appearance.	3.57	Strongly agree	2.97	Agree	-0.60
24. They have visually appearing materials associated with services.	3.40	Stronglyagree	3.10	Agree	-0.30
Total	3.27	Strongly agree	2.87	Agree	-0.40
Empathy					
25. The rental facilities and food outlets are sufficient and affordable.	3.00	Agree	2.87	Agree	-0.13
26. Halal foods are available.	3.03	Agree	2.70	Agree	-0.33
27. There are sufficient staff to manage the queue and lines.	3.13	Agree	2.60	Agree	-0.53
28. Role-plays, danceshowes and visual interpretation on entertainment.	3.03	Agree	1.97	Disagree	-1.07
29. Onsite shuttle services are available and useful.	2.77	Agree	1.63	Strongly Disagree	-1.13
30. The employees deal with customers in a caring passion.	3.17	Agree	2.57	Agree	-0.60
31. The employees understand the needs of their customers.	3.17	Agree	2.60	Agree	-0.57
32. The staff are consistently courteous.	3.10	Agree	2.53	Agree	-0.57
33. They have convenient business hours.	3.33	Strongly agree	2.70	Agree	-0.63
34. Staff are friendly.	3.20	Agree	3.00	Agree	-0.20
Total	3.09	Agree	2.52	Agree	-0.58
Responsiveness					
35. They keep customers informed about services will be performed.	3.27	Strongly agree	3.00	Agree	-0.27
36. Staff have prompt service to customers.	3.27	Strongly agree	2.80	Agree	-0.47
37. Staff are willing to help customers.	3.27	Strongly agree	3.07	Agree	-0.20

38. Staff havereadiness torespond to customers' inquiries.	3.27	Strongly agree	2.97	Agree	-0.30
Total	3.27	Strongly agree	2.96	Agree	-0.31

Mean difference between customers' perception and expectation using paired sample t-test

The *Table 4* shows that the half of the values of (“Sig.” column) for Reliability dimension are below 0.05 which indicates that the perceived and expected values has a significant difference as the results are not random. The variables that show significant differences about the reliability dimension are about the provision of Theme Park X of service as they promised and on time, and if the staff are dependable on handling customer service problems. *Table 4* displays that majority, specifically 7 variables, of the values of (“Sig.” column) for Assurance dimension are below 0.05, which indicates that there is significant difference between the expected and perceived service quality. The variables that show significant differences are pertaining to the feeling of safety and security of the customers while doing the activities, good condition of equipment and machineries, availability of security guards at each zone and parks, availability of clinic and first aid assistance, instilling confidence in their customers, making their customers feel safe in their transactions, and the knowledgeability of staff to answer the concerns of the customers. In the *Table 4*, the values of 8 out of 9 variables in the (“Sig.” column) table are below 0.05 which demonstrate that there is a significant difference between customers' expectations and perceptions on the Tangible dimension. The variables with significant differences are pertaining to the sufficiency of restaurant and cafes, provision of many divisions and activities, occupancy of fun role-play shows, thrillingness of adventure activities, presence of modern equipment, visually appealing of facilities, neat and professional appearance of the employees, and the availability of visually appealing materials associated with their service. The (“Sig.” column), on the *Table 4*, shows that majority of the values for Empathy dimension, specifically 8 out of 10 variables, are below 0.05 which reflect that there is a significant difference between the customers' expected and perceived service quality. The variables which show to have significant differences are regarding the availability of halal food, sufficiency of staff to manage line queues, availability of role-play, dance shows, and visual interpretation to entertain the guests while waiting, availability and usefulness of onsite shuttle services, employees dealing with customers in a caring passion, ability to understand the needs of their customers, consistency of staff's courteousness, and the conveniency of their business hours. The table above shows that half of the (“Sig.” column) values are below 0.05, which signifies a significant difference between the expectations and perceptions of customers on the Responsiveness dimension of “Theme Park X.” The variables with significant differences are pertaining to the prompt service of staff and their willingness to help their customers.

Table 4. Paired sample t-test results comparing expectation and perception of reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness for “Theme Park X”.

	Paired differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Reliability						
Pair 1 ER1-Q1-PR1-Q1	.0667	.7849	.1433	.465	29	.645
Pair 2 ER1-Q2-PR1-Q2	.0333	.8899	.1625	.205	29	.839
Pair 3 ER1-Q3-PR1-Q3	.1000	.8030	.1466	.682	29	.501
Pair 4 ER1-Q4-PR1-Q4	.4667	.6288	.1148	4.065	29	.000
Pair 5 ER1-Q5-PR1-Q5	.7000	.8769	.1601	4.372	29	.000
Pair 6 ER1-Q6-PR1-Q6	.6000	.8137	.1486	4.039	29	.000

Assurance							
Pair 1 EA-Q7-PA-Q7	.4333	.8976	.1639	2.644	29	.013	
Pair 2 EA-Q8-PA-Q8	.3667	.7649	.1396	2.626	29	.014	
Pair 3 EA-Q9-PA-Q9	.5000	1.1671	.2131	2.347	29	.026	
Pair 4 EA-Q10-PA-Q10	.1333	.8604	.1571	.849	29	.403	
Pair 5 EA-Q11-PA-Q11	.2667	.5833	.1065	2.504	29	.018	
Pair 6 EA-Q12-PA-Q12	.1000	.8030	.1466	.682	29	.501	
Pair 7 EA-Q13-PA-Q13	.4667	.7303	.1333	3.500	29	.002	
Pair 8 EA-Q14-PA-Q14	.4000	.7240	.1322	3.026	29	.005	
Pair 9 EA-Q15-PA-Q15	.4667	.8604	.1571	2.971	29	.006	
Tangibles							
Pair 1 ET-Q16-PT-Q16	-.0333	.6687	.1221	-.273	29	.787	
Pair 2 ET-Q17-PT-Q17	.2667	.6397	.1168	2.283	29	.030	
Pair 3 ET-Q18-PT-Q18	.5000	.7768	.1418	3.525	29	.001	
Pair 4 ET-Q19-PT-Q19	.8333	.7915	.1445	5.767	29	.000	
Pair 5 ET-Q20-PT-Q20	.3667	.8503	.1552	2.362	29	.025	
Pair 6 ET-Q21-PT-Q21	.3667	.8503	.1552	2.362	29	.025	
Pair 7 ET-Q22-PT-Q22	.4000	.9685	.1768	2.262	29	.031	
Pair 8 ET-Q23-PT-Q23	.6000	.4983	.0910	6.595	29	.000	
Pair 9 ET-Q24-PT-Q24	.3000	.7933	.1450	2.068	29	.048	
Empathy							
Pair 1 EE-Q25-PE-Q25	.1333	.7303	.1333	1.000	29	.326	
Pair 2 EE-Q26-PE-Q26	.3333	.8841	.1614	2.065	29	.048	
Pair 3 EE-Q27-PE-Q27	.5333	.8604	.1571	3.395	29	.002	
Pair 4 EE-Q28-PE-Q28	1.0667	.9803	.1790	5.960	29	.000	
Pair 5 EE-Q29-PE-Q29	1.1333	1.0080	.1840	6.158	29	.000	
Pair 6 EE-Q30-PE-Q30	.6000	.8550	.1561	3.844	29	.001	
Pair 7 EE-Q31-PE-Q31	.5667	.8584	.1567	3.616	29	.001	
Pair 8 EE-Q32-PE-Q32	.5667	1.0063	.1837	3.084	29	.004	
Pair 9 EE-Q33-PE-Q33	.6333	.8899	.1625	3.898	29	.001	
Pair 10 EE-Q34-PE-Q34	.2000	.7611	1.390	1.439	29	.161	
Responsiveness							
Pair 1 ER2-Q35-PR2-Q35	.2667	.7397	.1350	1.975	29	.058	
Pair 2 ER2-Q36-PR2-Q36	.4667	.6814	.1233	3.751	29	.001	
Pair 3 ER2-Q37-PR2-Q37	.2000	.7611	.1390	1.439	29	.161	
Pair 4 ER2-Q38-PR2-Q38	.3000	.7022	.1282	2.340	29	.026	

Conclusion

This study focused on the Customer Satisfaction on the service quality of Theme Park X using the SERVQUAL Tool, particularly the RATER model. The main objectives of the study are to assess the expectations and perceptions of the customers and determine if their expectations has a significant difference in their perceptions. After assessing the results of this study using the SERVQUAL gap model, the researchers found out that, the customers' perceptions in majority of all the service quality dimensions, are below the level of their expectations on the "Theme Park X." Particularly, a significant difference between their expectations and perceptions of Theme Park X's service quality are noticeable, on all dimensions, specifically on the Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles, Empathy and Responsiveness dimensions. In this case, these discrepancies indicate that the expected service quality of the customers are not met leading to dissatisfaction of the customers. Therefore, the significant differences between the customers' expectations and perceptions on all the service quality dimensions reflects that "Theme Park X" must focus on bettering these aspects, specifically on the variables with significant differences shown on the analysis of data, in order to improve the quality of service being delivered to their customers. "Theme Park X" must be aware that the presence of unmet expectations shows a deficiency in the delivered service quality to their customers.

In recommendation, Theme Park X should focus on all dimensions, such as Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles, Empathy, and Responsiveness dimensions. In order to improve their service quality, the management of "Theme Park X" must consider

reevaluating every aspect of the services they provide and to better every areas that needs to be changed, in order to eradicate the discrepancies found in this study. The researchers also recommend that the “Theme Park X,” as well as every theme parks in the Philippines, should consider listening to their customers’ feedback to better the quality of service they deliver to the customers as customer satisfaction leads to more intention to visit and revisit the park. For the future researchers who would also consider focusing on a topic similar to this study, the proponents of this study recommend for them to try other methods to assess both expectation and perception attributes of the customers. Furthermore, the researchers would like to suggest that they may also broaden this topic by assessing more theme parks and not just limited by one. Lastly, they must first consider securing a consent from the theme parks they would be including in their study to avoid unethical processes.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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