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Cultural sensitivity of food establishments as predictor of company reputation and quality service

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the relationship between cultural sensitivity, company reputation, and quality service in food establishments in the 4th district of Laguna, Philippines. The research focused on the demographic profiles of the respondents and their perceptions of cultural sensitivity, company reputation, and quality service. Descriptive-correlation research design and convenience sampling were used to gather data from restaurant customers. The findings revealed moderate levels of cultural sensitivity and quality service in the food establishments. The study also demonstrated no significant relationship between the demographic profile of the respondents and their perception of cultural sensitivity, except for educational attainment, which showed a highly significant relationship with company reputation and quality service. The researcher recommends food establishments to enhance employees' cultural sensitivity through trainings, create unique strategies, and conduct regular evaluations to improve company reputation and quality service. Engaging with customers through social media and diversifying the workforce can also improve the establishments' image and service quality. Effective communication and the utilization of various statistical methods for future research are also suggested.

Keywords: Cultural sensitivity; Company reputation; Quality service; Food establishments; Demographic profile; Customer perception

1. Introduction

Culture has a handful of definitions, but it affects one's views in life. Culture digs deep into our roots from the early generation's beliefs, values, traditions, and thoughts passed onto succeeding generations, which may play as factor in influencing individual behavior. Based on the culture they were brought up in, people may acquire their understanding of things, beliefs, customs, values, and what they believe to be correct and wrong. Over time, it has become people's way of dealing with other cultures and responding to them subconsciously [1]. Cultural sensitivity is defined as the awareness that specific differences and similarities exist among individuals and recognize them without claiming right or wrong [2]. It is essential to use diversity as an advantage for business establishments, especially the hospitality industry. Cultural diversity has always been rich and will only continue to thrive in the coming years.

Over time, the hospitality industry has only expanded and has become one of the largest earning industries. Generating profit for the businesses and business owners, catering to some of the most talented workers, and providing quality service to its customers – the industry has nowhere to go but up. It has also inevitably become international and intercultural by nature and social interactions between customers and employees happen more frequently than others. [3]. However, in a business world where different people with different beliefs interact more often than any other, problems commonly arise, especially without the proper knowledge and understanding of a hospitality employee towards a guest and vice versa. Having the knowledge of different cultural backgrounds of potential guests and being sensitive to it contributes to guests' experience. That is one of the things they consider whether to return [4].

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The issues and challenges brought upon by the diversity of culture have always been known globally. It is only common in the industry to deal with people of foreign nationality, with some having difficulty communicating using the universal language. Although language is one of the areas people have difficulty in terms of intercultural communication, understanding the concept of differences among cultures is commonly overlooked and has become a more significant issue, especially in a world where individuals from different cultures interact more often than before. [1] Culture also draws a fine line of difference between the West and East's eating and drinking manners. In the Philippines, culture is naturally rich brought by the influences of different nations, and is also composed of different ethnicities. Filipinos are no stranger to foreign influences in their culture. Having been influenced by the Western, they have adapted a sum of foreign customs and beliefs back then that have been passed on as time goes by. Filipinos are also well-known for being hospitable but hospitality alone is sometimes insufficient in dealing with diverse cultures, especially without proper knowledge and sensitivity, and often leads to misunderstandings and unsatisfied guests, reflecting the company's image. In addition to that, different groups of people under different religions, ethnicities, and ages also have a fair share of differences in their perception and evaluation of a food establishment. Culture gaps like what foreigners and fellow Filipinos have, the Muslims' strict beliefs and food preferences, which is one of the most common, and even those living in rural and urban areas tend to have differences in practices. It is primarily up to the employees to accommodate the guests with knowledge, see through their point of view and deliver quality service.

During service encounters, employees are the first to contact the guest, giving them a hint of their experience. Most business establishments' competitive advantage is strong because of their employees - with their set of skills and abilities to provide excellent service. However, not all employees have background knowledge and have not acquired training to communicate well with guests from different ethnicities, ages, religions, and upbringing. Business firms also strongly rely on their managers to implement policies and encourage the employees with service and guest-centered approaches. Recent studies have shown the significance of the employees' participation in cultural training conducted by the hospitality sector that showcases its impact and usage in interacting with guests and improving workers' skills and performance. [5] Communication also plays an essential role in providing good services to the customers. Employees must be knowledgeable and prepared of the distinct differences among their potential customers and handle them accordingly. Cultural diversity also exists inside the workforce. The way the employees communicate with each other and how the managers supervise them may impact the service given to the customers. Cultural sensitivity and awareness may not be acquired. However, there are programs and training that employees can participate in to gain some knowledge and a deeper understanding of the diversity of culture in the hospitality industry. Cross-cultural training programs also open participants' minds with understanding about the influence of culture on an individual's behavior and perceptions to develop sensitivity and understanding [6]. Without having sufficient knowledge and training, employees may face cultural challenges.

The world and the society are only evolving and changing and since then, different groups of people with various cultural backgrounds have co-existed and those including diversity in religion, beliefs, values, practices, ethnic background, sexual orientation, age, etc. Cultural competence is the ability of an individual to assess the differences of people from each other, overlook those differences and instead, recognize and respect it. A culturally competent individual will find it easy to navigate around dealing with different types of customers and develop positive social skills that will be useful in creating harmonious interaction with customers [7].

The development of cultural sensitivity will help an individual, particularly an employee, gain understanding and awareness about the similarities and differences between cultures. The process does not happen overnight. However, when the employee has acquired the knowledge, he/she will know how to act accordingly even when a guest talks aggressively in a manner that is normal to them but might appear startling for others. Furthermore, it will be handled professionally by the employee, knowing that it is only natural in some cultures [8].

It is important to identify that not only do employees interact with clients who are from a different cultural background; they also interact with their colleagues who are culturally different from each other as well. That is why intercultural sensitivity is a great characteristic that is used as an advantage by tourism and hospitality businesses everywhere. In the service industry, it is just commonly acknowledged that the quality of service that the internal customers receive, such as employees, cannot be higher than the actual service provided to the external customers which are the actual customers or clients. This only means that providing quality service is not just for the customers and guests. A culturally sensitive approach must also be applied to all staff members, managers, and employees alike [9].

[10] stated that the more frequently the staff interacts with its guests and learns about their preferences, the greater the chances of providing the best service possible to meet their needs.

Given the fact that cultural diversity also exists in the workplace, it has allowed business establishments to understand more the concept of cultural sensitivity and be more open to the differences of cultures and cultural backgrounds of their clients. That is why it is only fitting to employ people coming from different cultural profiles as well. Not only will it increase the chances of cultural sensitivity of the establishment and create positive customer relations, but it will also promote equal employment opportunity regardless of employees' age, religion, ethnicity, education, sexual orientation, etc. [11].

With the diversity in nature of the hospitality industry as well as the ever-changing world of ours, it has become a must for the industry to keep up with the changes and innovate for the better. By appointing different employees that are also multicultural and understand the different backgrounds, preferences, and needs of others, the results would be beneficial especially to the hospitality industries that are aiming or are already serving internationally. Food establishments must clearly understand that cultural diversity not only applies to their target market but, to their employees well. That is why the search for suitable staff needs to be broadened and the qualifications must also include the cultural profile of the said candidates. This so-called profile must not only include gender, ethnicity, LGBTQ status, and disabilities. Other relevant profiles must be included as well such as age, marital status, religion, educational background, and even possible criminal records. By doing so, the industry will not be having a hard time keeping up with the evolving cultural diversity of its target market because they now have management and employees that are culturally competent, can offer the best services, and render the best results for the company [12] [13].

[14] stated, delivering attention throughout the service encounter implies that frontline personnel make clients feel pampered and special by anticipating or demonstrating an interest in their requirements and comfort, as well as providing additional information. Some experts believe that service businesses should aspire to give ever greater levels of service.

A reading about Cross-cultural service encounters stated the relationship between employees, their work performances, and the perception of customers of service quality during those types of encounters, particularly in the hospitality industry. The research showed that the performance of an employee, as well as his/her behavior at work and the customer's perceived service quality, are all influenced by their culture. The research concluded that during service encounters, intelligence plays a more important role than personality, and in cross-cultural encounters, having cultural intelligence has more of an advantage rather than having only emotional intelligence [15].

In the hospitality world, social interactions between customers and employees happen more frequently than others. The industry has inevitably become international and intercultural by nature as well. However, a particular practice of one culture may not be acceptable to others. Certain differences may create barriers and potential misunderstandings along the way if employees lack the knowledge of responding and dealing with specific situations accordingly [3].

One of the most common intercultural barriers that customers and employees both experience are language barriers and the differences in the expectations of customers and employees. Since intercultural interactions are the encounters that happen between individuals with different cultural backgrounds, it is only common to experience those types of challenges. Research of [16] stated some of the experiences of the people they have interviewed and those include the difficulty of understanding each other because of language barriers, the differences between the values and norms of the customer and employee, the challenges and misunderstandings that arise when the customers disagree with the employee's way of doing things and even in the instances that there is no option for a customer who has a certain type of food preference.

The instances of service staff with one particular cultural background serving a guest from a different one are nothing new in the hospitality industry. However, such differences in beliefs and upbringing, conflicts, and understandings may arise. As much as diversity of the hospitality world is of great advantage, it also brings some hindrances especially to employees who lack certain knowledge or information in dealing with unforeseen situations which involve cultural barriers [1].

Although the language is one of the areas people have difficulty understanding, understanding differences among cultures is commonly overlooked. It has become a more significant issue, especially in a world where individuals from different cultures interact more often than before. Not only does this type of challenge occur between people of different nationalities but can also sometimes happen to people with the same nationality but different dialects [1].

Failure to promote and implement cultural sensitivity in the organization can create serious consequences including loss of profit and damage to the company's reputation. In addition to that, a lack of cultural sensitivity can also have an impact on the employees and business relationships. Especially nowadays that customers are more outspoken and are

even more demanding of cultural respect, cultural insensitivity can often offend people more seriously and could do a lot more damage than tarnishing a company's reputation and it can happen easily with just one click [17].

Gender differences are linked to how male and female consumers judge the quality of a restaurant and can influence their future behavior. According to research, females are more likely to be sensitive and pay attention to details in restaurants (food quality, ambiance and, other restaurant quality dimensions) [18]. They are also more socially active, relationship-focused, and drawn to aesthetic and sensory stimuli. Whereas males are more focused on the technical aspects. [19] The different perceptions of the customers all contribute with how they assess a food establishment's company reputation.

Having a higher educational attainment and more experience can also have an impact in evaluating the company reputation since these people have a deeper knowledge and understanding on how to assess one's company reputation. One of the characteristics of a customer's demographic profile that may influence their decision in evaluating a restaurant is their educational attainment, which is related to their extensive knowledge and understanding of how service is delivered in these types of establishments [20].

There are differences in the level of perception of how quality service is to those who acquired higher knowledge compared to those who did not or not yet. Those who are familiar with restaurant services are more informed since they are aware of the various types of food supplied in these establishments. They also understand the advantages of eating a good dinner rather than going to a food establishment with bad cuisine. One of the characteristics of a customer's demographic profile that may influence their decision in evaluating a restaurant is their educational attainment, which is related to their extensive knowledge and understanding of how service is delivered in these types of establishments [20].

Having the knowledge of different cultural backgrounds of potential guests and being sensitive to it contributes to guests' experience. That is one of the things they consider whether to return or not. With the industry having the characteristic of intangibility, the quality of services provided and how the consumers experience it are of utmost importance for it reflects the company's reputation whether it will continue to thrive or not [4].

Try and reach out to understand and communicate well according to the cultural background regardless of the difference in upbringing is the definition of cultural sensitivity. To ensure a deeper understanding of people, one must know that there are different layers of culture that make up an individual and that some of them are shown and some are not and can only be truly understood if he/she is culturally aware [21].

Generally, diversity in the hospitality industry is not only recognizing but also acknowledging differences and understanding how these differences may affect each individual experience. Employees and customers each have their own background, experiences, and cultural past. By understanding, this will help in improving teamwork and collaboration among staff [22].

People naturally, based on the culture they were brought up, acquire their understanding of things, beliefs, things, customs, values, and what they believe to be correct and wrong. Over time, it has become people's way of dealing with other cultures and reacting to them subconsciously. In instances that people who are culturally different from them, tend to respond negatively just because it is not what they were taught as they grow up [1].

Businesses that understand and accommodate all people, rather than just a few, are simply better positioned to develop and establish a solid reputation than those that do not. Values, expectations, and social conventions differ by culture. Appreciating these differences can help you and your company develop a better reputation, build relationships, and open doors. It also boosts credibility, exhibits empathy, fosters trust and positive connections, and aids you and your company in achieving crucial objectives. It will be evident in everything you do, from hiring to customer service to marketing, if your firm is established on egalitarian principles that consider cultural variations. This will not only bring you great exposure, but it will also help you establish a loyal customer base [23].

The cultural intelligence of an employee is a characteristic that is an advantage to achieve positive results during intercultural service encounters. These so-called encounters are those that occur mostly in the hospitality industry where service providers and customers from different cultures interact often. However, there has been a fair share of arguments whether an employee's cultural intelligence has an impact on the perception of service quality and loyalty of the customers since it has been noted from other researches that culture affects an individual's preferences and point of view [24].

All over the world, businesses are always on a constant hunt on how to gain new customers and how to maintain their regular ones. Other than gaining profit, companies' priority is to keep their customers happy and satisfied, and this is to keep the business thriving and running for a long time [25]. However, over time, as generation passes, with differences in values and points of view in things also came the changes in the perceived quality of service by different generations as well as brand loyalty; recent researches showed that there has been a significant decline in brand loyalty. With that, arguments have been put out that there might be a reasonable relationship between the evaluation of service quality by the various generations and their loyalty to the brand [26].

According to [27] there is a lot of evidence to support the idea that creative restaurants are better at enhancing service quality and company reputation, which leads to increased sales revenue and profit. By continually innovating, restaurants can stay ahead of their competitors and maintain a long-term competitive advantage. As a result, restaurant owners must apply a variety of strategies in order to get such a competitive advantage.

According to a statement in an article by [28] A vision is also required for an organization to fulfil its objectives and maintain reputation. Effective leaders build a picture of how their goal will impact the entire company as well as each individual. "A vision" is defined as "something that helps explain the direction in which an organization intends to move and is relatively straightforward to express, appealing to customers, stockholders, and employees." It must be a common vision that draws everyone in and inspires them to stay motivated and overcome obstacles.

A restaurant's success is determined by the quality of its food and other products and services. Various types of customers have different ideas about how to pay in a restaurant. Some people may be content simply because the price of the food is inexpensive when compared to the service and other factors, whilst others may compare the price to not only the food and service but also the environment. Customers' price perceptions will be more comfortable and satisfactory if they receive higher quality services for less money [29]. The indicators of buying influence in business markets in terms of: environmental influences, organizational influences, situational influences, interpersonal influences and individual influences; and determined the level of influence to the buying decision [30].

The importance of quality service and how well it is given is vital to the growth and survival of the hotel industry. The industry is almost dependent on how the service is being delivered and how satisfied the customers are with the experience. In that sense, the identification of different segments of consumers is important in assessing the quality of service since they interpret services provided differently [31].

It is essential that an establishment clearly understands the perception of the customers of quality service and provides it accordingly. The customer's point of view of the quality of service impacts his/her appreciation of the products and services being offered and, in consequence, reflects on the company reputation, and the level of quality being provided eventually determines the image of the company through the eyes of the customers whether it is positive or negative [32].

According to a customer service survey website, 96% of customers around the world consider the quality of service being provided as a basis whether they choose to stay loyal to a brand or not. 70% of them have already claimed that they keep coming back because of the excellent service. Other 52% of customers have acquired additional products and services from the same company because of the satisfaction from the previous customer service encounters. This only proves that great quality service is one of the biggest influencers to the rise or fall of a business [33].

To ensure the optimum quality of service and loyalty of customers, it is important to assess their needs and wants. Customers often judge the quality service of a restaurant from various angles and the common attributes they commonly look for are the food, the setting or ambiance, and the service. However, some of the most challenging parts are the cultural differences of the customers and the question "how does one perceive service quality apart from the others?" [34].

Cultural sensitivity and awareness might not be acquired. However, there are programs and training those employees can participate in to gain some knowledge and a deeper understanding of the diversity of culture in the hospitality industry. Cross-cultural training also opens participants' minds with understanding about the influence of culture on an individual's behavior and perceptions to develop sensitivity and understanding [6].

1.1. Theoretical Framework

The research is anchored to Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, also known as Bennett Scale (1986, 1993, 2004, 2013), which is a framework used to describe people's experience and encounters with cultural

differences and how people can react to such differences. In this theory, Bennett described the move from "ethnocentrism" to "ethnorelativism". The transition is what Bennett described, an individual starts off thinking there is only one culture that is central to reality which is his own and through experiencing and interacting across cultural differences, his/her cultural sensitivity is improved and a deeper understanding of cultural differences is developed.

The six stages where Denial comes first – one's own culture is the only real one. Next is Defense; one's own culture is the only reasonable way to live. The minimization stage is where the threat from Denial is somewhat neutralized. Next is Acceptance, where differences are disregarded. Adaptation where the empathy and shift frame of reference and last is Integration, where people can experience themselves as beings who can adjust their behavior to the most appropriate context.

The framework mentioned above is a valuable tool for employees and their superiors to progress towards a deeper understanding and cultural diversity appreciation. It increases the effectiveness of intercultural training programs, coaching, team buildings, and organization development.

1.2. Conceptual Framework

This study was conceptualized based on the research paradigm, as shown in Figure 1, presenting the input, process and output. The first box from the left contains the input that includes the profile of the respondents, the food establishments' cultural sensitivity, company reputation and quality service. The box in the middle is the process which shows how the data from input were gathered and analyzed. The third box represents the output in which upon determining the results, a proposed action plan was made for implementation and improvement of cultural sensitivity of the food establishments.

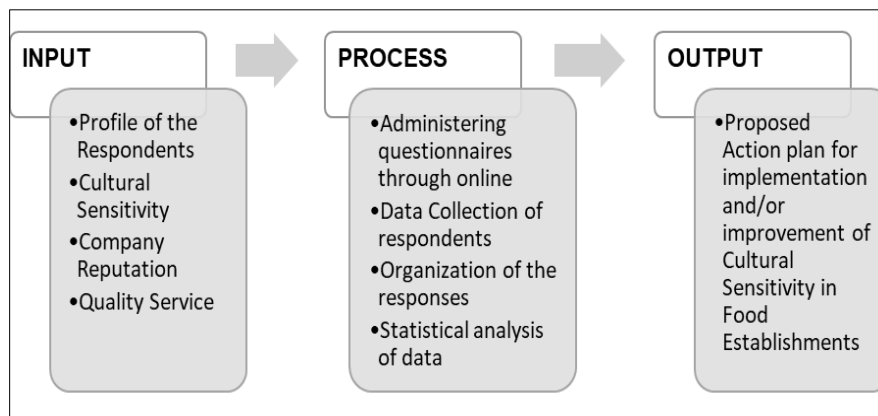


Figure 1 Research Paradigm

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between cultural sensitivity and company reputation, as well as the quality of service provided by food establishments. To achieve this, the study sought to address several key questions related to the demographic profiles of the respondents, including their age, sex, ethnicity/nationality, religion, occupation, and educational attainment.

Furthermore, the study aimed to assess the extent of cultural sensitivity displayed by food establishments in terms of respecting cultural differences, interaction attentiveness, engagement, confidence, and enjoyment. Respondents were also asked to provide their perspectives on the company reputation of the food establishments they visited, focusing on aspects such as customer centricity and empathy, competence and expertise, corporate governance and leadership, products and services, corporate attractiveness, emotional bond, and social and environmental responsibility.

In addition, the study sought to explore respondents' perceptions of the quality of service provided by these establishments in terms of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The research aimed to determine if there were any significant relationships between the demographic profiles of respondents and their perceptions of cultural sensitivity, company reputation, and quality of service within the food establishments they visited. Ultimately, the study aimed to ascertain whether the cultural sensitivity perceived by respondents correlated with the company reputation and quality of service offered by these food establishments.

This study aimed to test the following null hypotheses: Ho1 - There is no significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their perception of cultural sensitivity in the hospitality management they visited; Ho2 - There is no significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their perception of the company's reputation and service quality; and Ho3 - The cultural sensitivity perceived by the respondents does not correlate with the company reputation and quality of service provided by the food establishments.

The significance of this study lies in its potential impact on food establishments, the hospitality sector, customers, and future researchers. For food establishments, the study provides insights into customer perspectives on cultural sensitivity, allowing them to adapt their services accordingly. The hospitality sector can benefit from increased awareness of the importance of cultural diversity and the need for cultural sensitivity training programs for current and future employees. Customers will become more knowledgeable about cultural sensitivity, while future researchers can use this study as a reference for related studies.

The scope of this study is focused on the role of cultural sensitivity in predicting customers' perceptions of company reputation and service quality in food establishments, particularly in the context of the hospitality industry where people from different cultures interact regularly. The study aimed to determine if there is a correlation between customers' cultural backgrounds and their perceptions and evaluations of company reputation and service quality. Conducted during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, the study's respondents were restaurant, resto-bar, and eatery patrons in the 4th District of Laguna. Data collection was primarily through online questionnaires due to the ongoing global pandemic. However, the study faced limitations, such as the inability to distribute questionnaires in person and the need to conduct research activities online. Furthermore, the study only considered customer perceptions and not those of the establishment's employees. Lastly, the interpretation of data concerning respondents' ethnicity could not be analyzed due to statistical errors.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Research Design

The researcher used the Descriptive-Correlation Research Design or Evaluation Method to determine the cultural sensitivity of food establishments as a predictor of company reputation and quality service. This method utilized the necessary data and information needed in the study. The researcher aimed to describe and relate the variables of the study with one another. Descriptive approach is a suitable method for quantitative research. It aims to explore the answers to what, where, when, and how therefore giving a detailed explanation and information to test the hypothesis. It can be done through surveys, questionnaires, observations, and others. The researcher believes identifying the relationship between the cultural sensitivity of food establishments and the company reputation and quality service as perceived by the customers is essential to the distribution of information that will serve as an eye-opener for individuals about the issues and challenges the lack of cultural sensitivity has brought to the industry. In addition to that, the researcher hopes that the results of this study will help improve the quality of service provided by the establishment to maintain a positive company reputation.

2.2. Sampling Technique

The researcher implemented the Convenience Sampling Technique. It is a method that is adopted by researchers where they collect market research data from a conveniently available pool of respondents. It is one of the most commonly used sampling techniques as it is incredibly prompt, uncomplicated, and economical since the respondents are commonly readily available for subjectivity.

The chosen respondents for this study are the customers and the population is 150. The researcher believed that gathering data from customers will generate more accurate results regarding the cultural sensitivity of the establishment as the predictor of company reputation and quality service since they experience cultural sensitivity and services provided by the employees firsthand. The preferred location to conduct the study is the 4th district of Laguna and the selected food establishments within its area.

2.3. Research Instrument

The research instrument the researcher used to conduct this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was made with Google Forms and were sent through online to the respondents. The first part of the questionnaire consists of questions gathering the demographic profile of the respondents including their age, sex, ethnicity, educational background, employment status, and religious affiliation. The second part consisted of statements regarding their assessment of cultural sensitivity of the food establishments and the respondents rated them accordingly. The third

part was an assessment of the company reputation of the food establishments. The last part was also an evaluation but the quality service of the establishments was assessed. The questionnaire was a survey type that determined the independent, dependent, and moderating variables.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

The data gathering procedure of the study began by determining the population of the respondents, which are the customers. The customers were selected using convenience sampling technique. Upon checking of the draft of manuscript and questionnaire, the researcher performed a preliminary conduct as part of the validation process of the questionnaire. A number of 50 respondents were included in this preliminary conduct. The respondents were respectfully asked to answer the survey questionnaire to collect their demographic profile such as name, age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and occupation. The researcher explained how the questionnaires will be answered accordingly and gave ample time for the respondents to answer. The survey was done online sent through Google Forms to ensure the safety of both the researcher and the respondents.

After the preliminary conduct and the questionnaire is validated, the researcher then proceed to the main conducting which included another set of 100 respondents. Same procedure followed same as the preliminary conducting. After obtaining data from the respondents, total response for each time were tabulated.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents included in the study. It was revealed that most individuals who go to food establishments belong to the age group of 21 – 25 (81, 54.00%) and below 21 (33, 22.00%). These particular age groups enjoy going to a variety of food establishments that caters to different food items and has an aesthetic vibe and design. The younger generation has distinct dining tastes than other groups, preferring health and wellbeing and being more receptive to ethnic cuisines, customization, and a variety of flavors. Understanding the intricacies of their dining habits is crucial for restaurateurs and hospitality academics [35]. The distribution, in terms of sex, is dominated by female (95, 63.33%) respondents. Women are more likely to choose to engage in online surveys on their own and are more likely to be active participants and customers [36]. All of the respondents (100%) are from the Tagalog region since Laguna is a province majorly dominated by Tagalogs.

Table 1 The Frequency and Percentage of Demographic Profile of the Respondents.

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Below 20	33	22.00%
21-25	81	54.00%
26 -30	22	14.67%
30 above	14	9.33%
Sex		
Female	95	63.33%
Male	55	36.67%
Ethnicity		
Tagalog	150	100%
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	101	67.33
High School	38	25.33
Post-Bachelor's Degree	11	7.33

Employment Status		
Employed	57	38.00
Self-Employed	24	16.00
Unemployed	69	46.00
Religious Affiliation		
Non-Catholic	21	14.00
Roman Catholic	129	86.00

Most of the respondents acquired a degree in tertiary education (101, 67.33%). In relation to this, the combination of employed (57, 38.00%) and unemployed (69, 46.00%) respondents outmatched their self-employed counterparts. Most of the respondents have entry-level jobs or part-time jobs that enable them to visit various food establishments and enjoy other activities. It is of great notice that the respondents include in the study joined the workforce so they have money to spend.

In terms of religious affiliation, most of the respondents were Roman Catholic (129, 86.00 %) which is dominating religion in the 4th District of Laguna. It is justifiable that most of the respondents are Roman Catholic since the Philippines is a country where Catholicism is dominant with 80.6% in population [37]. Also, unlike other religions such as Islam where there are food restrictions like eating pork, blood and other non-halal foods [38], Catholics have less restrictions which makes them more likely to be restaurant eaters. However, the relationship between the demographic profile which is ethnicity and the variables of cultural sensitivity, company reputation and quality service was not determined since it resulted to error when ran on the statistical tool.

3.2. Cultural Sensitivity of Food Establishments in the 4th District of Laguna

The cultural sensitivity of food establishments in the 4th District of Laguna was determined by this study. It is comprised of 5 components: (1) Respect for Cultural Differences, (2) Interaction attractiveness, (3) Interaction Engagement, (4) Interaction Confidence, and (5) Interaction Enjoyment.

Table 2 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Cultural Sensitivity (Respect for Cultural Differences)

Respect for Cultural Differences	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The employees respect the values of people from different cultures.	4.45	Strongly Agree	1
The employees think people from other cultures are not narrow-minded, they just have different cultural background.	4.09	Agree	4
They think their culture is equal with other cultures.	4.00	Agree	5
The employees respect the ways people from different cultures behave.	4.38	Strongly Agree	2
The employees acknowledge the opinions of people from different cultures.	4.34	Strongly Agree	3
Average Weighted Mean	4.25	Strongly Agree	

3.2.1. Cultural Sensitivity (Respect for Cultural Differences)

In Table 2, results for Respect for Cultural Differences is shown with an Average Weighted Mean of 4.25 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree. The respondents strongly agree that their values (Mean - 4.45) and behaviour (Mean - 4.38) were respected by the employees despite coming from different cultural backgrounds. This means that the employees' respectfulness towards their guests is what the respondents have noticed the most during their stay in different food establishments in the 4th district of Laguna. According to [7] a culturally competent individual is able to assess the differences of people from each other, overlook those differences and instead, recognize and respect it.

Table 3 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Cultural Sensitivity (Interaction Attentiveness)

Interaction Attentiveness	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The employees are very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.	4.21	Strongly Agree	2
The employees try to obtain as much information as they can when interacting with people from different cultures.	4.06	Agree	4
The employees are sensitive to their culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during the interaction.	4.01	Agree	5
The employees tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.	4.07	Agree	3
The employees are able respond to the customers' preferences and provide accordingly.	4.33	Strongly Agree	1
Average Weighted Mean	4.13	Agree	

3.2.2. Cultural Sensitivity (Interaction Attentiveness)

Results for Interaction Attentiveness is shown in Table 3, the Average Weighted Mean is 4.13 with a Verbal Interpretation of Agree. The respondents strongly agree that the food establishment employees are able to respond and provide the customers preferences accordingly during service encounters (Mean - 4.33) They also took note that the employees are being observant when interacting with people from different cultures (Mean - 4.21) (Strongly Agree). This means that the employees are attentive to their guests especially when responding to and providing to customers' preferences and are paying attention to customers during the interaction. [14] stated, delivering attention throughout the service encounter implies that frontline personnel makes clients feel pampered and special by anticipating or demonstrating an interest in their requirements and comfort, as well as providing additional information. Some experts believe that service businesses should aspire to give ever greater levels of service.

Table 4 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Cultural Sensitivity (Interaction Engagement)

Interaction Engagement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The employees seem to enjoy interacting with people from different cultures	4.26	Strongly Agree	2
The employees are open-minded to people from different cultures.	4.35	Strongly Agree	1
They often give positive responses to their culturally different counterpart during the interaction.	4.22	Strongly Agree	3
They often show their culturally-distinct counterpart their understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.	4.18	Agree	4
They engage with situations where they will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.	4.17	Agree	5
Average Weighted Mean	4.24	Strongly Agree	

3.2.3. Cultural Sensitivity (Interaction Engagement)

Table 4 shows Interaction Engagement with an Average Weighted Mean of 4.24 and a Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree. The respondents observed that employees are open-minded even to people from different cultures (Mean - 4.35) and the enjoyment the employees show when interacting with people from different cultures (Mean - 4.26) A research by [21] stated that trying and reaching out to understand and communicating well according to the cultural background regardless of the difference in upbringing is the definition of cultural sensitivity. To ensure a deeper understanding of people, one must know that there are different layers of culture that make up an individual and that some of them are shown and some are not and can only be truly understood if he/she (employee) is culturally aware.

Table 5 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Cultural Sensitivity (Interaction Confidence)

Interaction Confidence	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The employees seem pretty sure of themselves in interacting with people from different cultures.	4.19	Agree	2
The employees feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.	4.19	Agree	2
The employees are sociable when interacting with people from different cultures.	4.22	Strongly Agree	1
The employees find it very easy to talk in front of people from different cultures.	4.15	Agree	4
The employees always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.	4.13	Agree	5
Average Weighted Mean	4.18	Agree	

3.2.4. Cultural Sensitivity (Interaction Confidence)

Interaction Engagement garnered an Average Weighted Mean of 4.18 and Verbal Interpretation of Agree as shown in Table 5. Displaying good social skills during interaction with different cultures was portrayed the most by the employees according to the respondents (Mean - 4.22). They were also being pretty sure of themselves in interacting with people from different cultures (Mean - 4.19) and exude confidence as well (Mean - 4.19). The table shows that the food establishments are generally confident and sociable when interacting with customers. A culturally competent individual will find it easy to navigate around dealing with different types of customers and develop positive social skills that will be useful in creating harmonious interaction with customers [7].

Table 6 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Cultural Sensitivity (Interaction Enjoyment)

Interaction Enjoyment	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The employees do not get discouraged when with people from different cultures.	4.13	Agree	5
The employees prove themselves useful when interacting with people from different cultures.	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
The employees are understanding when interacting with people from different cultures.	4.29	Strongly Agree	1
The employee seems to like to be with people from different cultures.	4.19	Agree	4
They tend to have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between their culturally-distinct counterpart and them.	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
Average Weighted Mean	4.22	Strongly Agree	

3.2.5. Cultural Sensitivity (Interaction Enjoyment)

Table 6 shows the results for Interaction Enjoyment with an Average Weighted Mean of 4.22 and Descriptive Equivalent of Strongly Agree. The respondents strongly agree that the employees are understanding during interactions with people from different cultures (Mean - 4.29). They also agree that the employees prove themselves useful and helpful to customers (Mean - 4.25) and showed a feeling of enjoyment while interacting between their culturally-distinct counterpart (Mean - 4.25). Generally, diversity in the hospitality industry is not only recognizing but also acknowledging differences and understanding how these differences may affect each individual experience. Employees and customers each have their own background, experiences, and cultural past. By understanding, this will help in improving teamwork and collaboration among staff [22].

Table 7 The Mean Score and Verbal Interpretation of Cultural Sensitivity (Composite Table)

Cultural Sensitivity	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Respect for Cultural Differences	4.25	Strongly Agree
2. Interaction Attentiveness	4.13	Agree
3. Interaction Engagement	4.24	Strongly Agree
4. Interaction Confidence	4.18	Agree
5. Interaction Enjoyment	4.22	Strongly Agree
Average Weighted Mean	4.20	Agree

The composite table that shows the total mean score of all the variables of Cultural Sensitivity is shown in Table 7: Respect for Cultural Differences with a mean of 4.25 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree; Interaction Attentiveness with a mean of 4.13 and Verbal Interpretation of Agree; Interaction Engagement with a mean of 4.24 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree; Interaction Confidence with a mean of 4.18 and verbal interpretation of Agree; And, Interaction Enjoyment with a mean of 4.22 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. The total mean score of the variables is 4.20 with a verbal interpretation of Agree. The results indicates that the cultural sensitivity of the food establishments in the 4th district of Laguna is still moderately good but can still be improved.

3.3. Company Reputation of Food Establishments in the 4th District of Laguna

Another variable to be determined by this study is the company's reputation of food establishments in the 4th District of Laguna. The factors included to truly measure company reputation are the following: (1) Customer Centricity and Empathy, (2) Competence and Expertise, (3) Corporate Governance and Leadership, (4) Products and Services, (5) Corporate Attractiveness, (6) Emotional Bond, and (7) Social and Environmental Responsibility.

Table 8 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Company Reputation (Customer Centricity and Empathy)

Customer Centricity and Empathy	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Makes me feel important when I interact with the establishment staff.	4.45	Strongly Agree	1
Makes me feel respected.	4.09	Agree	4
A company that cares about the needs and complaints of its customers	4.00	Agree	5
A company that is honest/ easy to approach	4.38	Strongly Agree	2
Has employees who treat customers courteously	4.34	Strongly Agree	3
Average Weighted Mean	4.25	Strongly Agree	

3.3.1. Company Reputation (Customer Centricity and Empathy)

As shown in Table 8, Customer Centricity and Empathy under Company Reputation has an Average Weighted Mean of 4.25 and a Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree. The respondents seem to feel most important when interacting with the establishment staff (Mean – 4.45). Also, they strongly agree that the company is honest/ easy to approach (Mean - 4.38). Since the employees are easy to approach, it makes the respondent feel cared for when interacting with the staff. [10] stated that the more frequently the staff interacts with its guests and learns about their preferences, the greater the chances of providing the best service possible to meet their needs.

Table 9 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Company Reputation (Competence and Expertise)

Competence and Expertise	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
It is a strong company, a top competitor in the market	4.21	Strongly Agree	2
It is a company I would work for	4.06	Agree	4
Looks to be a strong, financially stable company	4.01	Agree	5
A company that is successful in attracting high-quality employees	4.07	Agree	3
Looks like a lower risk investment, compared to its competitors	4.33	Strongly Agree	1
Average Weighted Mean	4.13	Agree	

3.3.2. Company Reputation (Competence and Expertise)

Table 9 shows Competence and Expertise and its results. It garnered an Average Weighted Mean of 4.13 and a Verbal Interpretation of Agree. The results showed that the respondents strongly agree that the food establishments in the 4th district of Laguna are low risk investment companies compared to others (Mean – 4.33). The establishments also appear to be a strong corporation and a top competitor in the market (Mean - 4.21). According to [27] there is a lot of evidence to support the idea that creative restaurants are better at enhancing service quality and reputation, which leads to increased sales revenue and profit. By continually innovating, restaurants can stay ahead of their competitors and maintain a long-term competitive advantage. As a result, restaurant owners must apply a variety of strategies in order to get such a competitive advantage.

Table 10 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Company Reputation (Corporate Governance and Leadership)

Corporate Governance and Leadership	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
A company that recognizes and takes advantage of market opportunities	4.26	Strongly Agree	2
A company that has a clear vision about its future	4.35	Strongly Agree	1
A company that establishes new trends, rather than follows them	4.22	Strongly Agree	3
A company that is forthright in giving correct and complete information.	4.18	Agree	4
This company is recognized, has excellent leadership, is innovative, and seeks constant overcoming.	4.17	Agree	5
Average Weighted Mean	4.24	Strongly Agree	

3.3.3. Company Reputation (Corporate Governance and Leadership)

Corporate Governance and Leadership is displayed in Table 10. It has a Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree and an Average Weighted Mean of 4.24. A company that has a clear vision for the future is what appealed the most to the respondents (Mean - 4.35). They also strongly agree that the establishments being assessed recognize and seize market opportunities showcasing its capability in leading (Mean - 4.26). This means that the customers see these as companies that are able to grow and sustain their business even with the ever changing trends of today's market and has a vision for the future of the company. According to a statement in an article by [28] A vision is required for an organization to fulfil its objectives. Effective leaders build a picture of how their goal will impact the entire company as well as each individual. "A vision" is defined as "something that helps explain the direction in which an organization intends to move and is relatively straightforward to express, appealing to customers, stockholders, and employees." It must be a common vision that draws everyone in and inspires them to stay motivated and overcome obstacles.

Table 11 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Company Reputation (Products and Services)

Products and Services	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Offers high-quality products and services	4.19	Agree	2
Offers products and services adapted to my needs	4.19	Agree	2
Offers products and services that are good value for money	4.22	Strongly Agree	1
Develops innovative products and services	4.15	Agree	4
This company stands behind its products and services with good prices and good quality that meet consumers.	4.13	Agree	5
Average Weighted Mean	4.18	Agree	

3.3.4. Company Reputation (Products and Services)

Shown in Table 11 is the results for Products and Services. It has an Average Weighted Mean of 4.18 and a Verbal Interpretation of Agree. Being able to offer products and services that are good value for money is a characteristic that customers look for before purchasing in a company and that is what the respondents strongly agree that these selected establishments provide. (Mean – 4.22) The respondents also agree that these establishments are offering products and services that are high quality (Mean – 4.19) and still are adapted to their needs as customers (Mean - 4.19). This means that the selected food establishments offer their products and services with quality and affordability in mind thus making it more appealing to its customers. A restaurant's success is determined by the quality of its food and other things. Various types of customers have different ideas about how to pay in a restaurant. Some people may be content simply because the price of the food is inexpensive when compared to the service and other factors, whilst others may compare the price to not only the food and service but also the environment. Customers' price perceptions will be more comfortable and satisfactory if they receive higher quality services for less money [29].

Table 12 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Company Reputation (Corporate Attractiveness)

Corporate Attractiveness	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Has attractive symbols and logos	4.13	Agree	5
I like the physical appearance of this company	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
Has credible ads	4.29	Strongly Agree	1
Carry out a lot of advertising	4.19	Agree	4
Organization at workplace	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
Average Weighted Mean	4.22	Strongly Agree	

3.3.5. Company Reputation (Corporate Attractiveness)

Table 12 shows Corporate Attractiveness with an Average Weighted Mean of 4.22 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree. Among the statements, restaurant's creating credible advertisements is what appealed the most to the respondent's. (Mean - 4.29) They also like the physical appearance of the company (Mean - 4.25) and the organization at its workplace (Mean – 4.25). This means that in terms of physical aspects of the establishments, the respondents find them attractive. Restaurants have undergone a significant revolution in how they advertise and attract customers. Savvy marketing executives understand that effective advertising not only aids in the development of a positive brand reputation, but also in promotions such as the release of a menu, discounts, and offers, among other things. Restaurant ads can help you boost brand awareness, attract new customers to your restaurant, promote existing and new menu items for sale, and set yourself apart from your competition. Restaurants must manage their advertising strategies properly, not just to stay up with the trends, but also to try to develop new ones with inventive concepts that have the potential to keep customers' attention [39].

Table 13 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Company Reputation (Emotional Bond)

Emotional Bond	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I admire and respect this company	4.13	Agree	5
I trust this company	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
It is a company I can identify better than with other companies	4.29	Strongly Agree	1
This company generates respect, admiration esteem, and confidence.	4.19	Agree	4
I have a good feeling about the company.	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
Average Weighted Mean	4.22	Strongly Agree	

3.3.6. Company Reputation (Emotional Bond)

The results for Emotional Bond can be seen in Table 13 with an Average Weighted Mean of 4.22 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree. The respondents strongly agree that the establishments are ones they can identify better than with other companies (Mean - 4.29) are trustworthy companies (Mean - 4.25) and have a good feeling about them (Mean - 4.25). The consumer-business connection should be built on trust, which is defined as a consumer's trust that a business will act in their best interests and uphold its commitments. Consumers and companies who have built a relationship of trust are more likely to have beneficial outcomes.

Table 14 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Company Reputation (Social and Environmental Responsibility)

Social and Environmental Responsibility	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Looks like a company that respects its legal obligations, follows the law	4.13	Agree	5
Seems to be environmentally responsible	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
Looks like a company that supports good causes	4.29	Strongly Agree	1
This company contributes actively and voluntarily to the social improvement, economy, and environment of society.	4.19	Agree	4
This company is a company with values that obeys the laws, is transparent, and respects people and the environment.	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
Average Weighted Mean	4.22	Strongly Agree	

3.3.7. Company Reputation (Social and Environmental Responsibility)

Table 14 shows the Social and Environmental Responsibility with an Average Weighted Mean of 4.22 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree. The respondents strongly believe that the company seems to support good causes (Mean - 4.29), establishments that seem to be environmentally responsible (Mean - 4.25) and one that obeys the laws, transparent, and respects people and the environment (Mean - 4.25) This result shows that these establishments showcases traits that cares for the environment and supports good causes. Corporate Social Responsibility stems from the awareness that a business establishment must take into consideration not just its investors and customers, but also its employees, society, community, and even the environment. Through that strategy, it leads to profit maximization and the benefit to people, and the environment. The hotel industry has been at the forefront of developing ways to reduce the negative environmental consequences of its operations due to its vast footprint in terms of employment and consumption of natural resources such as food, water, and electricity. Corporate Social Responsibility-focused hospitality organizations also have an easier job finding, engaging, and retaining staff. Employees enjoy working for a reputable company because it drives their motivation [40].

Table 15 The Mean Score and Verbal Interpretation of Company Reputation (Composite Table)

Company Reputation	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Customer Centricity and Empathy	4.25	Strongly Agree
2. Competence and Expertise	4.13	Agree
3. Corporate Governance and Leadership	4.24	Strongly Agree
4. Products & Services	4.18	Agree
5. Corporate Attractiveness	4.22	Strongly Agree
6. Emotional Bond	4.22	Strongly Agree
7. Social & Environmental Responsibility	4.22	Strongly Agree
Average Weighted Mean	4.21	Strongly Agree

3.3.8. Verbal Interpretation of Company Reputation (Composite Table)

The total mean score of all the variables of Company Reputation is shown in Table 15: Customer Centricity and Empathy with a mean of 4.25 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree; Competence and Expertise with a mean of 4.13 and Verbal Interpretation of Agree; Corporate Governance and Leadership with a mean of 4.24 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree; Products & Services with a mean of 4.18 and verbal interpretation of Agree; Corporate Attractiveness, Emotional Bond and Social & Environmental Responsibility all having a mean of 4.22 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. The total mean score of the variables is 4.21 with a verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. The results indicates that the perceived company reputation of the food establishments in the 4th district of Laguna is high.

3.4. Quality Service of Food Establishments in the 4th District of Laguna

Quality service is an essential attribute that any food establishment should possess. The study determined its features such as (1) Tangibility, (2) Reliability, (3) Responsiveness, (4) Assurance, and (5) Empathy.

Table 16 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation and Ranking of Quality Service (Tangibility)

Tangibility	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The restaurant has visually attractive parking areas and building exteriors.	4.45	Strongly Agree	1
The restaurant has visually dining area.	4.09	Agree	4
The restaurant has appropriate, decent, and neatly dressed employees.	4.00	Agree	5
The restaurant has an easily readable menu.	4.38	Strongly Agree	2
Dining space is spacious and comfortable.	4.34	Strongly Agree	3
Average Weighted Mean	4.25	Strongly Agree	

3.4.1. Quality Service (Tangibility)

Table 16 shows the data of Tangibility under Quality Service with an Average Weighted Mean of 4.25 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree. Visually attractive parking areas and building exteriors of the establishment are what the respondents noticed the most while dining in the establishments since it is the first thing that leaves an impression to the customer upon entering (Mean - 4.45) Having an easily readable menu is also strongly agreed by the respondents since they are catering to people both old and young and must be able to understand the menu without difficulty (Mean - 4.38) This result indicates that the respondents observed that the food establishments seem to give emphasis on the exterior of the building more. Tangibility is a quality that is easily judged and noticed from the standpoint of employees and customers. An organization's physical environment can influence customer satisfaction, such as design and layout. e. The physical environment encompasses both tangible and intangible elements, implying that a restaurant can be found both inside and outside. Based on the findings of a study by [41] it was shown in the results that the physical environment or the tangible elements had the greatest impact on consumer happiness.

Table 17 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Quality Service (Reliability)

Reliability	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The restaurant provides the service on time.	4.21	Strongly Agree	2
The restaurant quickly corrects everything wrong.	4.06	Agree	4
The restaurant is reliable and consistent in the service.	4.01	Agree	5
The restaurant offers an accurate calculation of the guests.	4.07	Agree	3
The restaurant serves the food exactly as you have ordered it.	4.33	Strongly Agree	1
Average Weighted Mean	4.13	Agree	

3.4.2. Quality Service (Reliability)

Reliability have an Average Weighted Mean of 4.13 and Descriptive Equivalent of Agree as shown in Table 17. Among the statements, the respondents observed that serving the food exactly as ordered (Mean - 4.33) and providing service on time (Mean - 4.21) are what the food establishments generally possess with regards to its reliability factor. [42] finds that, of all the service quality criteria, reliability has the lowest negative value, particularly a restaurant's ability to offer service on time, with a SERVQUAL score of -0.02, indicating that customers' expectations for the service received are near to their impression of it.

Table 18 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Quality Service (Responsiveness)

Responsiveness	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
During the busy hours the restaurant provides the service at the promised time.	4.26	Strongly Agree	2
The restaurant provides quick service	4.35	Strongly Agree	1
The restaurant gives extra effort to handle your special requests.	4.22	Strongly Agree	3
Employees were willing to answer my questions.	4.18	Agree	4
Employees responded quickly to solve my problems.	4.17	Agree	5
Average Weighted Mean	4.24	Strongly Agree	

3.4.3. Quality Service (Responsiveness)

Table 19 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Quality Service (Assurance)

Assurance	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
Employees are always ready to help.	4.19	Agree	2
Staff are loyal and honest.	4.19	Agree	2
Staff are polite.	4.22	Strongly Agree	1
The restaurant has staff who are both able and willing to give you information about menu items, their ingredients, and methods of preparation.	4.15	Agree	4
The restaurant has staff that looks educated, competent, and experienced.	4.13	Agree	5
Average Weighted Mean	4.18	Agree	

It can be seen in Table 18 that Responsiveness gained an Average Weighted Mean of 4.24 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree. Quick service being provided (Mean - 4.35) or providing the service at the promised time even during the busy hours (Mean - 4.26) are the most observed by the respondents. This result is also partially similar with the results in Reliability indicating that these establishments really do provide fast service. Responsiveness and providing services fast are some of the examples of how providers can accommodate their clients and satisfy them. Customer satisfaction can be achieved by food establishments when employees are happy to assist customers when necessary.

3.4.4. Quality Service (Assurance)

Shown in Table 19 is the result for Assurance. It has an Average Weighted Mean of 4.18 and Verbal Interpretation of Agree. The respondents strongly agree that the employees are polite towards customers which is important when dealing with different people of different culture. (Mean - 4.22). They also took notice of the employees' readiness to help at all times (Mean - 4.19) and their loyalty and honesty (Mean - 4.19). Assurance is described as employees' knowledge and politeness, as well as their ability to reflect the company's confidence and trust in its consumers. Assurance (which includes security, courtesy, competence, and credibility) is linked to good information and staff manners, as well as their features and skills, in order to provide clients confidence and ensure trust. Based on the findings of a prior empirical study conducted by [43], to determine the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction corresponds favorably and considerably with assurance, indicating a positive link

Table 20 The Mean Score, Verbal Interpretation, and Ranking of Quality Service (Empathy)

Empathy	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
The restaurant has employees who have time for your individual wishes.	4.13	Agree	5
The restaurant makes you feel special.	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
The restaurant provides for your individual needs and requirements.	4.29	Strongly Agree	1
The restaurant has employees who are sympathetic and calm when something is wrong.	4.19	Agree	4
The restaurant seems to have the customers' best interests at heart.	4.25	Strongly Agree	2
Average Weighted Mean	4.22	Strongly Agree	

3.4.5. Quality Service (Empathy)

Data results of Empathy which has an Average Weighted Mean of 4.22 with a Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree is shown in Table 20. The restaurant's capability to provide the customers' individual needs and requirements (Mean - 4.29) was strongly agreed by most of the respondents as well as making the guests feel special and having the customers' best interests at heart (Mean - 4.25) which means that the respondents perceived the establishments to have employees that genuinely cares for their customers' welfare and corresponds to their needs. Empathy (includes understanding, access, and communication with clients): It signals to employees that the organization provides individualized caring, attention, and understanding to its clients (Karki, 2018). The results of [43] found that empathy has a positive and substantial link with customer satisfaction, with a correlation coefficient of 0.651 indicating a positive relationship and a significance value of 0.000 indicating that the relationship is significant.

Table 21 The Mean Score and Verbal Interpretation of Quality Service (Composite Table)

Quality Service	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Tangibility	4.25	Strongly Agree
2. Reliability	4.13	Agree
3. Responsiveness	4.24	Strongly Agree
4. Assurance	4.18	Agree
5. Empathy	4.22	Strongly Agree
Average Weighted Mean	4.20	Agree

Table 21 shows the total mean score of all the variables of Quality Service which are: Tangibility with a mean of 4.25 and Verbal Interpretation of Strongly Agree; Reliability with a mean of 4.13 and Verbal Interpretation of Agree; Responsiveness with a mean of 4.24 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree; Assurance with a mean of 4.18 and verbal interpretation of Agree; And lastly, Empathy with a mean of 4.22 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. The total mean score of the variables is 4.20 with a verbal interpretation of Agree. The results indicated the same as cultural sensitivity which means that the perceived quality service of the food establishments in the 4th district of Laguna is moderately good.

3.5. The Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and their Perception of the Cultural Sensitivity in Food Establishments

Table 22 The Significance Table Between the Profile of the Respondents and their Perception of the Cultural Sensitivity in Food Establishments

Variables		X2	df	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Profile	Cultural Sensitivity					
Age	Respect for Cultural Differences	2.185	6	0.902	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Attractiveness	4.262	6	0.641	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Engagement	6.673	6	0.352	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Confidence	10.41	6	0.108	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Enjoyment	7.006	6	0.320	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Sex	Respect for Cultural Differences	4.946	2	0.084	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Attractiveness	1.946	2	0.378	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Engagement	1.133	2	0.567	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Confidence	2.906	2	0.234	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Enjoyment	4.253	2	0.119	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Employment Status	Respect for Cultural Differences	4.373	4	0.358	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Attractiveness	2.080	4	0.721	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Engagement	1.905	4	0.753	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Confidence	2.735	4	0.603	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Enjoyment	5.081	4	0.279	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Religious Affiliation	Respect for Cultural Differences	2.090	2	0.352	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant

	Interaction Attractiveness	1.333	2	0.514	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Engagement	1.843	2	0.398	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Confidence	2.313	2	0.315	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Enjoyment	6.089	2	0.048	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	Respect for Cultural Differences	3.528	4	0.474	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Attractiveness	3.743	4	0.442	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Engagement	4.985	4	0.289	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Confidence	7.814	4	0.099	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Interaction Enjoyment	6.867	4	0.143	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant

Table 22 shows the relationship between the profile of respondents and their perception about the cultural sensitivity of personnel in the hospitality management they went into using the statistical tool, Chi-Square Test of Association. As shown in the table below, age, sex, employment status, religious affiliation, and educational attainment of the respondents all have a p-value of greater than 0.05 level of significance which means these profiles do not affect their perception of cultural sensitivity. Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis with the interpretation as not significant.

Table 23 The Significance Table of Profile of the Respondents and Cultural Sensitivity

Variables		Computed Value	df	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	Cultural Sensitivity	6.397	6	0.380	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Sex		3.641	2	0.162		
Employment Stats		3.281	4	0.512		
Religious Affiliation		0.343	2	0.843		
Educational Attainment		6.648	4	0.156		

It shows that the demographic profile of the respondents do not relatively affect the perception of the respondents in evaluating the cultural sensitivity of the food establishments in the 4th district of Laguna. Parallel to the studies of [44], [45] which also shows that there is no significant relationship between that demographic profile of respondents and their assessment of cultural sensitivity. This could mean that despite of the differences of customers in terms of age, sex, etc., it does not affect how they perceive and assess the cultural sensitivity of food establishments.

3.6. The Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and their Perception of the Company Reputation in Food Establishments

Table 24 shows the relationship between the profile of respondents and their perception about the company’s reputation in the hospitality management they went into with the use of Chi Square Test of Association.

The significant relationship between age and Competence and Expertise has a Computed Value of 14.10 and p-value of 0.029 therefore, the researcher rejects the hypothesis with the interpretation of highly significant.

Table 24 The Significance Table Between the Profile of the Respondents and their Perception of the Company Reputation in Food Establishments

Variables		Computed Value	df	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Profile	Company Reputation					
Age	Customer Centricity and Empathy	6.860	6	0.334	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Competence and Expertise	14.10	6	0.029	Reject Ho	Highly Significant
	Corporate Governance and Leadership	6.404	6	0.379	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Products & Services	6.404	6	0.379	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Corporate Attractiveness	3.248	6	0.777	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Emotional Bond	5.373	6	0.497	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Social and Environmental Responsibility	5.947	6	0.429	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Sex	Customer Centricity and Empathy	2.777	2	0.249	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Competence and Expertise	3.972	2	0.137	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Corporate Governance and Leadership	3.319	2	0.190	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Products & Services	3.319	2	0.190	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Corporate Attractiveness	13.40	2	0.001	Reject Ho	Highly Significant
	Emotional Bond	4.205	2	0.122	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Social and Environmental Responsibility	6.141	2	0.046	Reject Ho	Significant
Employment Status	Customer Centricity and Empathy	5.628	4	0.229	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Competence and Expertise	4.845	4	0.304	Reject Ho	Significant
	Corporate Governance and Leadership	10.37	4	0.035	Reject Ho	Significant
	Products & Services	10.37	4	0.035	Reject Ho	Significant
	Corporate Attractiveness	6.302	4	0.178	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant

	Emotional Bond	5.945	4	0.203	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Social and Environmental Responsibility	4.325	4	0.364	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Religious Affiliation	Customer Centricity and Empathy	0.692	2	0.708	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Competence and Expertise	3.643	2	0.162	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Corporate Governance and Leadership	0.084	2	0.959	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Products & Services	0.084	2	0.959	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Corporate Attractiveness	2.748	2	0.253	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Emotional Bond	0.092	2	0.955	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Social and Environmental Responsibility	1.022	2	0.600	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	Customer Centricity and Empathy	5.718	4	0.221	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Competence and Expertise	9.235	4	0.055	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Corporate Governance and Leadership	14.50	4	0.006	Reject Ho	Significant
	Products & Services	14.50	4	0.006	Reject Ho	Significant
	Corporate Attractiveness	12.99	4	0.011	Reject Ho	Significant
	Emotional Bond	8.706	4	0.069	Reject Ho	Significant
	Social and Environmental Responsibility	5.084	4	0.279	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant

The significant relationship between sex and Corporate Attractiveness has a Computed Value of 13.40 and p-value of 0.001 therefore, the researcher rejects the hypothesis with the interpretation of highly significant. The significant relationship between sex and Social and Environmental Responsibility has a Computed Value 6.141 and p-value of 0.046 therefore, the researcher also rejects the hypothesis with the interpretation of significant.

The significant relationship between employment status and Corporate Governance and Leadership as well as its relationship with Products & Services have a Computed Value of 10.37 and p-value of 0.035 therefore, the researcher rejects the hypothesis with the interpretation of significant.

The relationship between educational attainment and Corporate Governance and Leadership has a Computed Value of 14.50 and p-value of 0.006, same goes with the association between educational attainment and Products & Services. Therefore, the researcher rejected the hypothesis with the interpretation of highly significant. The relationship between educational attainment and Corporate Attractiveness has a Computed Value of 12.99 and p-value of 0.011 therefore, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis and interpreted highly significant. Also, educational attainment was associated with Emotional Bond having a Computed Value of 8.706 and a p-value of 0.069 therefore, the researcher rejected the hypothesis with the interpretation of significant.

Table 25 The Significance Table of Profile of the Respondents and Company Reputation

Variables		Computed Value	df	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	Company Reputation	3.996	6	0.677	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Sex		8.614	2	0.013	Reject Ho	Highly Significant
Employment Status		4.293	4	0.368	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Religious Affiliation		2.034	2	0.362	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment		13.23	4	0.010	Reject Ho	Highly Significant

3.7. The Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and their Perception of the Quality Service in Food Establishments

Table 26 The Significance Table Between the Profile of the Respondents and their Perception of the Quality Service in Food Establishments

Variables		Computed Value	df	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Profile	Service Quality					
Age	Tangibility	6.554	6	0.364	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Reliability	1.913	6	0.928	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Responsiveness	7.221	6	0.301	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Assurance	10.01	6	0.124	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Empathy	7.947	6	0.242	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Sex	Tangibility	5.381	2	0.068	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Reliability	1.370	2	0.504	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Responsiveness	0.309	2	0.857	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Assurance	5.183	2	0.075	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Empathy	1.372	2	0.504	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant

Employment Status	Tangibility	7.637	4	0.106	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Reliability	3.146	4	0.534	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Responsiveness	1.856	4	0.762	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Assurance	5.310	4	0.257	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Empathy	2.380	4	0.666	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Religious Affiliation	Tangibility	1.203	2	0.548	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Reliability	1.394	2	0.498	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Responsiveness	0.565	2	0.754	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Assurance	0.008	2	0.996	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Empathy	4.292	2	0.117	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	Tangibility	11.90	4	0.018	Reject Ho	Significant
	Reliability	14.10	4	0.007	Reject Ho	Significant
	Responsiveness	10.45	4	0.033	Reject Ho	Significant
	Assurance	9.499	4	0.050	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
	Empathy	11.90	4	0.018	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 27 The Significance Table Between the Profile and Quality Service

Variables		Computed Value	df	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	Quality Service	3.571	6	0.735	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Sex		4.705	2	0.095	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Employment Stats		4.874	4	0.300	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Religious Affiliation		1.365	2	0.505	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment		18.69	4	<0.001	Reject Ho	Highly Significant

Using the Chi Square Test of Association, it is revealed that among the profile of the respondents, only the educational attainment showed a significant relationship with Quality Service variables except for Assurance. The significant relationship between educational attainment and Tangibility has a Computed Value of 11.90 and p-value of 0.018 therefore, the researcher rejects the hypothesis with the interpretation of significant. The significant relationship between educational attainment and Reliability has a Computed Value 14.10 and p-value of 0.007 therefore, the researcher also rejects the hypothesis with the interpretation of significant. The significant relationship between educational attainment and Responsiveness has a Computed Value of 10.45 and p-value of 0.033 therefore, the researcher rejects the hypothesis as well with the interpretation of significant. Lastly, the relationship between educational attainment and Empathy has a Computed Value of 11.90 and p-value of 0.018 therefore, the hypothesis is rejected with the interpretation of significant.

In this table, no significant relationship is revealed by utilizing Chi Square Test of Association between Quality Service and demographic profile of respondents such as age, sex, employment status, and religious affiliation. Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis and interpreted not significant. However, there is determined association between educational attainment of respondents and the variables of Quality Service except for Assurance. In relation to the results in Table Number 6.1 which shows that there is also a significant relationship between the respondents' educational attainment profile and their perception of company reputation, there are differences in the level of perception of how quality service is to those who acquired higher knowledge compared to those who did not or not yet. Those who are familiar with restaurant services are more informed since they are aware of the various types of food supplied in these establishments. They also understand the advantages of eating a good dinner rather than going to a food establishment with bad cuisine. One of the characteristics of a customer's demographic profile that may influence their decision in evaluating a restaurant is their educational attainment, which is related to their extensive knowledge and understanding of how service is delivered in these types of establishments [20] [46].

3.8. The Relationship Between the Cultural Sensitivity and Company Reputation & Quality Service of Food Establishments

Table 28 The Significance Table Between the Cultural Sensitivity and Company Reputation & Quality Service of Food Establishments

Variables		Computed Value	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Cultural Sensitivity	Company Reputation	0.803	<0.001	Reject Ho	Highly Significant
	Quality Service	0.773	<0.001	Reject Ho	

In table 28, using the Chi Square Test of Association, it is determined that there is a highly significant correlation between cultural sensitivity, company reputation and quality service. Therefore, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis with the interpretation of highly significant. The significant relationship between cultural sensitivity and quality service can be justified as seen from a reading about cross-cultural service encounters indicating the relationship between employees, their work performances, and the perception of customers of service quality during those types of encounters, particularly in the hospitality industry. The research showed that the performance of an employee, as well as his/her behavior at work and the customer's perceived service quality, are all influenced by their culture. The research concluded that during service encounters, intelligence plays a more important role than personality, and in cross-cultural encounters, having cultural intelligence has more of an advantage rather than having only emotional intelligence. [15] Since an individual's cultural background is what influences most of his/her point of view, wants, decision-making process, and behavior towards different situations, it can be said that cultural factors are essential in assessing the consumer's behavior. The cultural upbringing of a consumer anchors their way of communicating and interpreting the service being provided, hence, it is an important factor to consider in the process of determining the extent of cultural sensitivity and quality of service of an establishment [47].

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher found that the demographic profile of respondents revealed a younger generation with a penchant for eating out and appreciating an establishment's aesthetics. Females dominated the respondent pool, and the majority were from the Tagalog region with Bachelor's degrees. Most respondents were Roman Catholics and either employed or self-employed. The cultural sensitivity of food establishments was moderately good, with factors such as respect for cultural differences, interaction attentiveness, engagement, confidence, and enjoyment playing a role.

Company reputation was found to be strong, with aspects like customer centricity, competence, corporate governance, products and services, and environmental responsibility contributing to this perception. Quality service, encompassing tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, was also deemed moderately good. There was no significant relationship found between the respondents' profile and their perception of cultural sensitivity. However, sex and educational attainment correlated highly with the perception of company reputation and quality service. The study concluded that customers' perceived cultural sensitivity impacts their perception of an establishment's company reputation and quality service, contributing to their overall dining experience.

The researcher offers several recommendations based on the study's findings and conclusions. Employees should undergo more training in cultural sensitivity to improve their confidence and understanding when dealing with situations involving cultural intelligence. Establishments should create strategies and plans that set them apart, such as offering enticing new menus that cater to customers' preferences, while maintaining competitiveness through sustainable trends. Regular training and evaluations should be conducted for employees to ensure their reliability, competence, and experience. Managers and employees should perform routine quality checks on facilities and amenities while fostering effective communication and harmonious relationships. Establishments should engage with customers more in real-time and on social media, as educational attainment and demographics play a significant role in company reputation and quality service. Hiring or expanding the workforce with culturally diverse employees can provide an advantage, as these employees may be more empathetic towards customers and colleagues. Effective communication between staff members should be encouraged, with regular meetings to ensure everyone is on the same page. Lastly, future researchers should consider utilizing other statistical methods to further investigate the significance of the variables.

This study ultimately contributes to the understanding of the significance of cultural sensitivity in the food service industry and provides a foundation for future research that aims to explore these relationships further, benefiting society by promoting inclusive and high-quality dining experiences.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper. No financial or personal relationships with other individuals or organizations have influenced the research and the conclusions presented in this study.

Statement of informed consent

Participants provided informed consent, and their confidentiality and rights were maintained throughout the research process.

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