

Research Article

Customer Satisfaction towards Igacos Water District's Service Quality in Barangay Peñaplata Island Garden City Of Samal.

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Abstract: IGaCoS Water District was established to provide water for the residents of Samal Island, but there have been concerns about the level of satisfaction of the customers. The study examined the significant influence of service quality on customer satisfaction towards IGaCoS Water District in the Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte. A total of 200 individuals who avail of the services offered by IGaCoS Water District and a resident of Barangay Peñaplata were selected as respondents in the study. This quantitative survey utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationship and influence of service quality on customer satisfaction. The statistical tools used in this study were the Mean, Spearman Correlation Coefficient, and Simple Linear Regression Analysis. Based on the results, it was found that the level of service quality was very high, and the level of satisfaction of the customers was also high. It was revealed that service quality has a positive and strong relationship with customer satisfaction. In addition, all dimensions of service quality have a significant influence on customer satisfaction. The results indicate that service quality is a key factor influencing the satisfaction of customers. This establishes a clear relationship between the two variables, suggesting that any increase or decrease in service quality will likely lead to a corresponding change in customer satisfaction. It can be concluded that improvements in service quality are essential for enhancing customer satisfaction levels.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, Island Garden City of Samal, Water District

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1. Introduction

Access to safe and clean water is essential for human health and well-being, making the quality of water district services a crucial factor in community development and public health initiatives. As Nightingale (2015) notes, a clean water supply is a fundamental community demand. In the Philippines, water districts face challenges such as contamination, supply disruptions, and inadequate customer service, which can impact customer satisfaction. This highlights the need to assess customer satisfaction to identify areas for improvement and enhance the service quality of the IGaCoS Water District. Researching customer satisfaction provides valuable insights into customer concerns, enabling water districts to effectively meet their customers' needs and inform policy decisions. This study aims to determine whether the clients of the IGaCoS Water District are satisfied with the services provided to them and to gather their feedback. By prioritizing customer satisfaction, water districts can promote public health and achieve sustainable development goals in their communities.

Statement of the Problem

This research aims to determine the customer's satisfaction with IGaCoS Water District's service quality in Barangay Peñaplata, Island Garden City of Samal. Specifically, the researchers aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age and gender?
2. What is the level of service quality provided in terms of reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness?
3. What is the level of customer satisfaction in terms of accessibility, services, and personnel?
4. Is there a significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in IGaCoS Water District?
5. Is service quality significantly influenced by customer satisfaction in IGaCoS Water District?

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study was carried out to determine the relationship and impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in IGaCoS Water District in Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte, Philippines.

The data collection focused on the residents of Barangay Peñaplata, Island Garden City of Samal, of legal age, and customers of the services of the IGaCoS Water District. This has limited the number of responders who can participate in the study.

Significance of the Study

The goal of this study was to identify the factors affecting the work productivity of regular employees in the LGU of Island Garden City of Samal. Regular local government employees need to be exceptionally productive in order to provide excellent public services and promote overall community development. This focuses, in particular, on the employees' knowledge and attitude, performance appraisal, and motivation. The findings of this research will be beneficial to several stakeholders, including the City, Students, and Future Researchers.

2. Review of Related Literature and Studies

Service Quality

In any commercial and public services-related activity, service quality is crucial, as is the customer's overall perception of the organization and its services' relative superiority or inferiority (Disaster, 2015). Awuah (2018) defines high-quality service as a company's overall consumer perception of its suitable services in terms of tangibility, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy.

Customer's perceptions of how goods or services are presented evaluate the quality of service provided. In essence, the intention to buy is created by offering outstanding services. To compete in the market, each service provider must offer top-notch services (Anouze & Alamro, 2019). In addition, it can be described as the difference between the services a customer actually understands and what they expect (Islam et al., 2020).

The quality of services is associated with a number of things; customer loyalty, customer contentment, and customer satisfaction are some of these. Gong and Yi (2017) contend that customer satisfaction is a part of service quality. Their research also showed that a

component of service quality is customer satisfaction. Thus, when service quality is delivered effectively, it leads to favorable results that benefit clients.

The majority of the literature discusses service quality in terms of determining the discrepancy between the customer's view and expectations. There is no universally accepted definition of service excellence because of individuality. The SERVQUAL and SERVPERF scales are two examples of the several service quality models that result from this (Ntabathia, 2013).

SERVQUAL

SERVQUAL defined service quality as the difference between the assumptions and views of customers regarding the quality of a company's services. A service quality was constructed for the conclusion based on the desired and expected quality. The SERVQUAL model is the most reliable model to employ for assessing the quality of the services provided, according to numerous research (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

According to Parasuraman (1985), it is an assessment tool for evaluating how clients view the overall quality of a service. Customers' assumptions of how the service should be provided and their experiences of how it is delivered (disconfirmation or confirmation of expectations) are compared in this instrument, which is based on the five determinants previously discussed.

Five quality dimensions have been used to characterize service quality based on this concept. Although multiple authors have altered definitions of these characteristics, these dimensions encompass five areas: responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and reliability (Fitzsimmons, 2014).

Tangible

According to Abdulla et al. (2017), tangibles include items like real buildings, furniture, employees, and resources for communication. Physical appearance includes how the personnel, building, improvements, and equipment seem. The term "tangibility" refers to the presence of actual working buildings, tools, personnel with relevant experience and knowledge, and communication resources that are utilized to provide and advertise efficient services. Tangibles are the most significant aspect for customers, outweighing all other five dimensions (Anwar and Balcioglu, 2016). This provides new customers with a hands-on understanding of service quality.

Even while service providers frequently utilize tangibles to uphold their brand, maintain stability, and communicate quality to consumers, most businesses combine tangibles with other elements to create a service quality plan for the company. According to Moon (2013), the materials used by the organization, the way the employees seem, its physical facilities, its equipment, and its communication facilities all affect how smoothly a service process runs. The capacity to deliver services is influenced by a variety of elements, including the ability to demonstrate the existence of other parties, one's appearance, the functionality of facilities and physical infrastructure, and other considerations.

Reliability

The capacity to provide clients with the necessary services in a timely and accurate manner is known as reliability. Reliability demonstrates how useful something is in the activities and whether a service provider fulfills their claimed claims, according to Hameed & Anwar (2018). It is crucial to immediately satisfy the needs of the customers. Reliability is described as a service provider who provides a service with correctness, consistency, and dependability (Rauch et al., 2015). The capacity of the company to deliver the promised service consistently and precisely is referred to as reliability (Tuan & Linh, 2012). Reliability in the scope of service provision refers to how well the business performs and achieves the promised service, quality, and accuracy within the specified parameters between the business and the client (Delgado & Baluster, 2004).

Responsiveness

Kashif et al. (2015) define responsiveness as the accuracy with which a business responds to consumer concerns. According to Tan et al. (2018), responsiveness is the capacity of the website to handle issues and returns quickly. As defined by Anwar & Wadir (2017), responsiveness is the organization's ability to quickly resolve issues that arise and resolve them. It is imperative to address every inquiry made by customers, failing which the request may become a grievance. As Yousuf (2017) mentions, responsiveness shows how efficiently a company handles customer questions and provides solutions to their problems. In addition, Nambisan et al. (2016) defined responsiveness as the organization's capacity to deliver prompt, high-quality service during that time. Reducing customer wait times during every contact with service providers is essential.

Assurance

While courtesy includes friendliness, honesty, and the ability to rely on staff members, assurance refers to having the necessary knowledge, abilities, and willingness to apply them to improve the demands of the general public in terms of services. As Anwar & Louis (2017) put it, assurance is a measure of "employers' knowledge, civility, and capacity to inspire confidence and trust". Anwar & Abdullah (2021) add that this dimension is especially significant for services where the customer's outcome appears uncertain or for services that they recognize to be high-risk.

Empathy

Empathy communicates approachability, accessibility to providers, and a willingness to listen to a user's question. According to Tamya et al. (2019), the empathy dimension is the extent to which a worker demonstrates consideration and care for their customers. It provides customized or a range of services to better satisfy the diverse needs, wants, and preferences of the clients. Bahasur et al. (2018) define empathy as the capacity to give each customer personalized attention. The service providers go above and beyond during the interaction to provide the client with a sense of special treatment and appreciation. Moreover, empathy is the level of care given to clients, as confirmed by Kashif et al. (2015).

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is important in determining consumer behavioral intentions (Ardani et al., 2019). Customer dissatisfaction or satisfaction is the customer's reaction to the evaluation of the perceived incompatibility between previous expectations and the actual performance of the product as perceived by the weaver (Kencana, 2019).

Customer satisfaction is a critical component of business success, influenced by various factors such as product quality, service quality, and customer expectations. As mentioned by Kotler & Armstrong (2918), customer satisfaction measures how well products and services meet or exceed customer expectations. According to the study, customer satisfaction is the difference between what customers expect and what they receive after using a service or product for a set period. Additionally, it is a sequence of decisions made by customers after they have used goods or services over a period of time (Ismail et al., 2016).

Dimensions or indicators of customer satisfaction can be created through quality, service, and value. The key to generating customer loyalty is to provide high customer value (Sugeng, 2016). This notion is supported by Oliver (2010), who describes satisfaction as the outcome of evaluating perceived benefits from a service.

Research by Agnihotri et al. (2019) highlights that effective sales personnel significantly enhance customer satisfaction, increasing willingness to pay more. Furthermore, Saleem (2017) emphasizes that customer satisfaction serves as a mediator between service quality and repurchase intentions, underscoring its role in fostering customer loyalty. Additionally, Spiteri and Dion (2004) distinguish between transactional and cumulative satisfaction, noting that the latter is based on overall experiences and repeated purchases, which are essential for long-term customer loyalty.

Multi-criteria Satisfaction Analysis (MUSA)

The Multi-criteria Satisfaction Analysis (MUSA) model is a multi-criteria approach that has been developed to measure and analyze customer satisfaction. For the assessment of set marginal satisfaction functions in such a way that the global satisfaction criterion becomes as consistent as possible with customer's judgments, this method is used (Siskos et al., 1998; Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2002; Grigoroudis et al., 2002; Grigoroudis et al., 2008; Grigoroudis & Arabatzis, 2010).

The proposed MUSA method is based on the principles of multi-criteria analysis, particularly on the aggregation disaggregation approach and linear programming modeling. The execution of the method in customer satisfaction surveys can evaluate quantitative global and partial satisfaction levels and determine the strong and the weak points of a business organization (Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2002).

The Multi-criteria Satisfaction Analysis (MUSA) method was used to measure respondents' satisfaction. The multi-criteria analysis and decision-making methods can be utilized in different cases, such as classification problems. The MUSA method uses satisfaction data collected through surveys. The analysis is based on a collective preferences analysis model, expecting that there is a hierarchical structure that governs the satisfaction criteria (Ipsilandis et al., 2008). According to this model, which uses regression techniques, each respondent is asked through a specialized questionnaire to express his satisfaction, which depends on a set of variables (Kalantonis et al., 2014). The MUSA method Is a collective preference disaggregation model following the principles of ordinal regression analysis (inference procedure) under constraints. This

method is used to assess a set of marginal satisfaction functions so that the global satisfaction criterion becomes as consistent as possible with customer judgments. In addition to its ability to properly handle ordinal data, the main advantages of the MUSA method are its flexibility due to the linear programming formulation, as well as its ability to provide a combined set of results capable of analyzing customer needs and expectations and justifying their satisfaction level (Angilella et al., 2014).

Water District

In rural areas, water and sanitation systems must be established, run, and maintained by Water Districts, which are government-owned or controlled organizations (GOCCs). They are crucial to the Philippines' goal of having 100% access to water and sanitation by 2036. According to national data, LWDs' strong and steady income, high debt service coverage ratios, and lower debt ratios all demonstrate improved financial performance between 2009 and 2018. In order for LWDs to meet the 2023 and 2030 targets for universal access to water supply and sanitation, lower debt ratios are required due to the government's ambitious investment program on water infrastructure.

Even though the nation has access to water, disparities in the quality of water services still exist. Additionally, according to the Philippine Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan (PWSSMP) 2019–2030, some households—even those with access to water services—consume contaminated tap water (NEDA, 2019). The construction, operation, maintenance, and expansion of provincial or local government water supply and sanitation systems are within the purview of numerous public and private organizations. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), National Water Resources Board (NWRB), and Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) have supported the national survey known as Listahang Tubig (Water registry), which aims to create a national registry (listahan) of all water service providers. In Listahang Tubig, there were 28,290 registered water service providers as of September 2022.

3. Methodology

Research Design

This quantitative study evaluated customer satisfaction with the IGaCoS Water District's services in Island Garden City of Samal. Using a descriptive correlational method, the researchers aimed to determine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. This approach allowed them to describe the current satisfaction levels of customers and examine how these two variables are connected without establishing a cause-and-effect relationship.

Research Respondents

The study's participants were limited to clients of the IGaCoS Water District who reside in Barangay Peñaplata, Island Garden City of Samal. The researchers focused on this specific area to analyze customer satisfaction in a localized setting.

To be included, participants had to be residents of Barangay Peñaplata, be at least 18 years old, and be willing to give informed consent. The study excluded anyone living outside of this barangay, those not served by the water district, or individuals under 18 or unable to participate.

Sampling Design

For this study, 200 residents of Barangay Peñaplata who are clients of the IGaCoS Water District were selected as respondents. The researchers used a convenience sampling method, choosing participants based on their easy accessibility and willingness to participate.

Research Instruments

The researchers used an adapted research questionnaire. This questionnaire is utilized to get the needed data for the study. The questionnaire has two parts: The first part is about service quality and adapted to the study of Parasuraman et al. (1985). This includes five service quality indicators: empathy, assurance, responsiveness, tangibility, and reliability. The second part is about the modified and combined MUSA (Multi-criteria Satisfaction Analysis) model by Mihelis et al. (2001), Grigoroudis & Siskos (2002), and Ipsilandis et al. (2008), which focused on customer satisfaction. It included the three customer satisfaction indicators: accessibility, services, and personnel. The survey questionnaire was adopted from the survey questionnaire by Navarro, R. and Bacatan, J. (2023) from the thesis titled: Analyzing the Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction on the Power Services Delivery of Northern Davao Electric Cooperative.

Table 1. Evaluation Scale of the Survey Rating

Parameter	Points	Description	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	5	Outstanding	It indicates the highest level, indicating exceptional service quality and high customer satisfaction.
3.41-4.20	4	Very Satisfactory	It indicates a positive response, suggesting customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.
2.61-3.40	3	Satisfactory	It indicates a positive response, indicating customers find the service to be acceptable and meeting their expectations.
1.81-2.60	2	Fair	It indicates a moderate level of satisfaction. The service may meet basic expectations but might have room for improvement.
1.00-1.80	1	Poor	It indicates the lowest rating, signaling dissatisfaction. Customers perceive the service quality as below expectations, highlighting potential areas for improvement.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers followed a systematic seven-step process to gather the necessary data. First, they validated their survey instruments to ensure accuracy before requesting and receiving permission from the IGaCoS Water District to conduct the study. Next, they identified their participants and secured their informed consent, a crucial step before distributing the survey questionnaires. After the participants completed the forms, the researchers personally retrieved them. Finally, a statistical analysis was performed on the collected data to draw the study's results and conclusions.

Statistical Analysis

The researchers used several statistical methods to analyze the survey results regarding customer satisfaction with the IGaCoS Water District in Barangay Peñaplata. The Mean was used to summarize respondent characteristics. To check if the data was normally distributed, a Shapiro-Wilk Test was conducted. The Spearman Correlation Coefficient (rs) was applied to determine if a significant relationship exists between service quality and customer satisfaction. Finally, Simple Linear Regression Analysis was performed to assess the extent to which service quality influences customer satisfaction.

Ethical Consideration

Throughout the study, the researchers followed a strict ethical framework to ensure the integrity of the research and the well-being of the participants. Key considerations included obtaining informed consent from all participants, guaranteeing their confidentiality and anonymity, and taking steps to avoid harm or distress. To maintain objectivity, the researchers worked to minimize any potential researcher bias and sought guidance from their instructor and advisor to ensure competence in their methods. The study also upheld the principle of beneficence, aiming to provide findings that would benefit the community. Finally, the researchers committed to the responsible dissemination of findings, ensuring the results were accurately represented and contributed to the field.

4. Results And Discussion

Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 2. Socio-demographic profile of Respondents

Characteristics	Mean	Std. dev.
Age (Years)	41.1	13.84
	Frequency (x)	Percentage (%)
Male	82	41%
Female	118	59%

n=200

Based on the data taken from 200 selected customers of IGaCoS Water District and residents of Barangay Peñaplata, it is found that the average age of customers was 41.11 years old with a variation of 13.84 years (Table 2). Thus, the age of customers was typically around 27 to 55 years old. According to Hu et al. (2019), the age of family members also had a significant impact on water usage. Moreover, sex also exerts a significant influence on water usage (Zhao, 2015). Female customers constituted the majority, making up 59% (118) of the respondents, with male customers comprising the remaining 41% (82). According to Shi et al. (2022), young women exhibit the highest

household water demand, with ranges of 119–193 Liter per capita per day (lpcd), and elderly men demonstrate the lowest, with ranges of 95–141 Lpcd.

The Level of IGACOS Water District's Service Quality in Barangay Peñaplata Island Garden City of Samal

Table 3. The Level of Service Quality Provided in terms of Tangibility

Tangibility	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description	Interpretation
Modern and sophisticated equipment is enough to respond to immediate concerns.	3.45	0.92	Very Satisfactory	It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.
Equipment and facilities are visually pleasing.	3.35	0.97	Satisfactory	It indicates a positive response, indicating customers find the service to be acceptable and meeting their expectations.
Sufficiency of competent and committed personnel that will provide services.	3.54	1.01	Very Satisfactory	It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.
Personnel appear physically fit to work.	3.61	1.06	Very Satisfactory	
Overall Mean	3.49	0.99	Very Satisfactory	
Legend: 4.21-5.00 Outstanding, 3.41-4.20 Very Satisfactory, 2.61-3.40 Satisfactory, 1.81-2.60 Fair, 1.00-1.80 Poor				

In terms of Tangibility, the IGaCoS Water District was rated very satisfactory, with mean scores varying from 3.45 to 3.61. As stated by Abdulla et al. (2017), tangibles include items like real buildings, furniture, employees, and resources for communication. Physical appearance refers to the visual aspects of facilities, equipment, and staff. With that, the respondents do agree that the Water District has modern and sophisticated equipment enough to respond to immediate concerns and that the personnel were competent and committed to providing services and appeared physically fit for their duties. The result could also be associated with the statement of Moon (2013) that the materials used by the organization, the way the employees seem, its physical facilities, its equipment, and its communication facilities all affect how smoothly a service process runs. With a slightly lower mean score of 3.35, the equipment and facilities were rated satisfactory, as they were visually pleasing.

Overall, the calculated mean score for the level of service quality provided by the IGaCoS Water District in terms of tangibility is 3.49, with a variation of 0.99. This suggested that the tangibility of the Water District is rated very satisfactory in general, as evidenced by the positive feedback on its equipment, facilities, and personnel. The overall variation underscored diverse responses, indicating that the level of tangibility is typically around fair ($M = 2.50$) to outstanding ($M = 4.48$).

Table 4. The Level of Service Quality Provided in terms of Reliability

Reliability	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description	Interpretation
On-time service response and delivery.	3.44	1.03	Very Satisfactory	It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.
Delivery of the instituted and mandated services.	3.48	1.02	Very Satisfactory	
Genuine interest in handling client problems.	3.47	1.03	Very Satisfactory	
Service accuracy and security to the clients.	3.61	0.95	Very Satisfactory	
Overall Mean	3.50	1.01	Very Satisfactory	
Legend: 4.21-5.00 Outstanding, 3.41-4.20 Very Satisfactory, 2.61-3.40 Satisfactory, 1.81-2.60 Fair, 1.00-1.80 Poor				

In terms of the reliability of the services provided, the Water District was rated very satisfactory, with mean scores varying from 3.44 to 3.61 (Table 4). Delgado and Baluster (2004) state that reliability in the context of service provision refers to how well the business performs and achieves the promised service, quality, and accuracy within the specified parameters between the business and the client. The data specifically shows a very satisfactory rating for the accuracy and security of services, as well as for timely service response and delivery. In addition, the delivery of the instituted and mandated services, along with the sincerity in handling clients' problems, were rated very satisfactory.

Overall, the calculated mean score for the level of service quality provided by the IGaCoS Water District in terms of reliability was 3.50, with a variation of 1.01. This suggested that the reliability of the Water District is rated very satisfactory in general, as evidenced by the positive feedback on their performance, which achieved the promised service, quality, and accuracy. The overall variation underscored diverse responses, indicating that the level of reliability was typically around fair ($M = 2.49$) to outstanding.

Table 5. The Level of Service Quality Provided in terms of Responsiveness

Responsiveness	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description			Interpretation	
Precise and appropriate services are offered to the clients.	3.31	0.96	Satisfactory			It indicates a positive response, indicating customers find the service to be acceptable and meeting their expectations.	
Willingness to render services anytime.	3.53	0.91	Very Satisfactory			It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.	
Sensitivity to client's problems.	3.47	0.98	Very Satisfactory				
Prompt service response provided	3.61	0.99	Very Satisfactory				

to the clients.						
Overall Mean	3.48	0.96	Very Satisfactory			
Legend: 4.21-5.00 Outstanding, 3.41-4.20 Very Satisfactory, 2.61-3.40 Satisfactory, 1.81-2.60 Fair, 1.00-1.80 Poor						

In terms of responsiveness, the Water District was also rated very satisfactory, with mean scores varying from 3.31 to 3.61. As defined by Anwar and Wadir (2017), responsiveness is the organization's ability to quickly resolve issues that arise and resolve them; it is imperative to address every inquiry made by customers, failing which the request may become a grievance. The data shows that the IGaCoS Water District achieved a very satisfactory rating in terms of the prompt responses of the personnel, as personnel considered the client's problems with high sensitivity and were willing to render services anytime. It also positively shows that the IGaCoS Water District efficiently handles customer questions and provides solutions to their problems (Yousuf,2017). With a slightly lower mean score of 3.31, the precision and appropriateness of services offered to the clients were satisfactory (Table 5).

Overall, the calculated mean score for the level of service quality provided by the IGaCoS Water District in terms of responsiveness was 3.48, with a variation of 0.96. This suggested that the responsiveness of the Water District is rated very satisfactory in general, as evidenced by the positive feedback on the district's ability to provide fast and good quality service, which minimized the waiting time for all interactions between the customer and the personnel. The overall variation underscored diverse responses, indicating that the level of responsiveness was typically around fair (M = 2.52) to outstanding (M = 4.44).

Table 6. The Level of Service Quality Provided in terms of Assurance

Assurance	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description		Interpretation		
Knowledge of answering client's queries and clarifications.	3.45	1.01	Very Satisfactory		It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.		
Behavior on meeting the clients' confidence and trust.	3.51	0.92	Very Satisfactory				
Being considerate of the concerns of the clients all the time.	3.55	0.93	Very Satisfactory				
Assurance of completeness in every transaction.	3.63	0.93	Very Satisfactory				
Overall Mean	3.53	0.95	Very Satisfactory				

Legend: 4.21-5.00 Outstanding, 3.41-4.20 Very Satisfactory, 2.61-3.40 Satisfactory, 1.81-2.60 Fair, 1.00-1.80 Poor

In terms of assurance, the Water District was rated very satisfactory, with mean scores varying from 3.45 to 3.63. Specifically, there is a very satisfactory rating for the behavior of personnel, which achieved the client's confidence and trust. As Anwar & Louis (2017) put it, assurance is a measure of "employers' knowledge, civility, and capacity to inspire confidence and trust". The personnel are always considerate and knowledgeable about the client's queries and clarifications. Additionally, the services are very satisfactory since customers can be assured of the completeness of their transactions. Similar to the results observed by Tolentino, Abo, Arellano & Romero (2021) in their study, employees in Laguna's dining establishments are consistently courteous to customers and ready to assist them. As a result, patrons increase the management of the restaurant's trust, and the establishment gains prestige.

Overall, the calculated mean score for the level of service quality provided by the IGaCoS Water District in terms of assurance is 3.53, with a variation of 0.95 (Table 6). This suggested that the assurance of the Water District is rated very satisfactory in general, as evidenced by the positive feedback on the knowledge, abilities, and willingness of personnel to improve the demands of the customers. This is consistent with the findings of Wu et al. (2015), which state that employee skills and expertise build customer trust that would make them feel more secure and confident, fostering a sense of reliability and encouraging customers to return. If customers believe in the staff's capacity to do their jobs, they are more likely to return. The overall variation underscored diverse responses, indicating that the level of assurance was typically around fair ($M = 2.58$) to outstanding ($M = 4.48$).

Table 7. The Level of Service Quality Provided in terms of Empathy

Empathy	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description			Interpretation	
Convenience in opening office hours.	3.45	0.99	Very Satisfactory			It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.	
Customized its services to complement the various needs of the client.	3.43	0.93	Very Satisfactory				
Considerations of clients' needs in the first place.	3.61	0.94	Very Satisfactory				
Display enthusiasm in understanding and consideration of clients' specific needs.	3.43	1.03	Very Satisfactory				
Overall Mean	3.48	0.97	Very Satisfactory				
Legend: 4.21-5.00 Outstanding, 3.41-4.20 Very Satisfactory, 2.61-3.40 Satisfactory, 1.81-2.60 Fair, 1.00-1.80 Poor							

In terms of empathy, the Water District was rated very satisfactory, with mean scores varying from 3.43 to 3.61. Specifically, the displayed enthusiasm of personnel in understanding clients' specific needs is rated very satisfactory, as customized services were offered to complement various clients' needs, including convenience in opening office hours. As stated by Tamya et al. (2019), empathy is the extent to which a worker demonstrates consideration and care for their customers. It provides customized or a range of services that aim at exceeding the diverse needs, wants, and interests of the clients. Supported by the data findings, this indicates that the IGaCoS Water District exhibits empathy towards its clients.

Overall, the calculated mean score for the level of service quality provided by the IGaCoS Water District related to empathy is 3.48, with a variation of 0.97 (Table 7). This suggests that the empathy of the Water District is rated very satisfactory in general, as evidenced by the positive feedback on the interaction between personnel and customers, which provides them with a sense of special treatment and appreciation. The overall variation underscored diverse responses, indicating that the level of empathy was typically around fair ($M = 2.51$) to outstanding ($M = 4.45$).

The Level of Satisfaction of Customers in IGaCoS Water District

Table 8. The Level of Satisfaction of the Customers in terms of Accessibility

Accessibility	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description	Interpretation
Convenience of office location for/in case of questions and queries.	3.50	0.97	Very Satisfactory	It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.
Suitability and availability of operating and office hours.	3.44	0.95	Very Satisfactory	
Established programs and activities in different areas of the city enable other clients to be updated and informed.	3.49	1.03	Very Satisfactory	
Provides clear instructions and guidance on how to access services and resources.	3.60	1.06	Very Satisfactory	
Overall Mean	3.50	1.00	Very Satisfactory	
Legend: 4.21-5.00 Outstanding, 3.41-4.20 Very Satisfactory, 2.61-3.40 Satisfactory, 1.81-2.60 Fair, 1.00-1.80 Poor				

The results in Table 8 revealed that with mean scores varied from 3.44 to 3.60; the respondents are very satisfied due to the convenience of the Water District office's location in case of questions and queries; this data is important as location accessibility also plays a role in community satisfaction with public health services (Jorge O.Brusa et al., 2022). Moreover, they were extremely pleased with the operating and office hours of the Water District due to its flexibility and availability. Additionally, the respondents agree that the IGaCoS Water District provided clear instructions and guidance on accessing services and resources, and they established programs and activities in different areas of the city to enable other clients to be updated and informed.

Overall, the calculated mean score for the level of satisfaction of customers in relation to accessibility was 3.50 with a variation of 1.00 (Table 8), which indicated that the Water District received positive feedback from the customers. These data highlighted the positive perception customers had towards the ease of accessing services, likely due to factors such as the convenient locations of facilities and responsiveness of customer support. The overall variation underscored diverse responses, showing strong satisfaction levels of accessibility were typically around fair (M = 2.50) to outstanding (M = 4.50)

Table 9. The Level of Satisfaction of the Customers in terms of Services

Services	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description		Interpretation		
Personnel that will accommodate and entertain complaints and requests after office hours, holidays, and weekends.	3.40	1.01	Very Satisfactory		It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.		
Promptness of response and service delivery.	3.53	0.93	Very Satisfactory				
Keep informing the clients about the possible job opportunities and scholarship programs.	3.48	1.06	Very Satisfactory				
The services provided have positively impacted clients' employment prospects or career development.	3.65	0.99	Very Satisfactory				
Overall Mean	3.51	1.00	Very Satisfactory				
Legend: 4.21-5.00 Outstanding, 3.41-4.20 Very Satisfactory, 2.61-3.40 Satisfactory, 1.81-2.60 Fair, 1.00-1.80 Poor							

In terms of services, with mean scores varying from 3.44 to 3.60, the respondents appreciated the Water District's timely response. That is, its personnel satisfactorily accommodated and entertained complaints and requests even after office hours, holidays, and weekends. According to (Consumer Council for Water, 2023), water sellers should actively help businesses to make customers happier since water bills frequently cause unhappiness, leading to unnecessary communication with sellers. Furthermore, the respondents were very satisfied with the services since they were informed about the possible job opportunities and scholarship programs, which positively impacted their employment prospects or career development.

Overall, the calculated mean score for the level of satisfaction of customers in relation to services was 3.51 with a variation of 1.00 (Table 9), which shows that the Water District is capable of meeting customers' needs effectively. These findings highlighted the positive perception of customers due to the water district's success in maintaining high service standards, transparency, and a customer-centered approach. The overall variation underscored diverse responses, suggesting a high level of satisfaction, typically around fair (M = 2.50) to outstanding (M = 4.51).

Table 10. The Level of Satisfaction of the Customers in terms of Personnel

Personnel	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description			Interpretation	
The behavior displayed in exercising their duties and responsibilities.	3.50	0.94	Very Satisfactory			It indicates a positive response, suggesting that customers are highly satisfied with the service provided.	
Accommodate optimistically on requests, queries, and complaints.	3.54	0.97	Very Satisfactory				
Experience satisfaction and contentment in every transaction done in office work.	3.52	0.93	Very Satisfactory				
Professional and courteous.	3.58	1.05	Very Satisfactory				
Overall Mean	3.53	0.97	Very Satisfactory				
Legend: 4.21-5.00 Outstanding, 3.41-4.20 Very Satisfactory, 2.61-3.40 Satisfactory, 1.81-2.60 Fair, 1.00-1.80 Poor							

Lastly, in terms of personnel, with mean scores varying from 3.50 to 3.58, respondents were very satisfied with the behavior of personnel in exercising their duties and responsibilities. According to (Kiros, 2019), Staff who respond quickly are essential to meeting customer expectations, which may enhance customer satisfaction. Complaints addressed quickly are identified as a significant factor influencing customer satisfaction. The employees displayed professionalism and courtesy, which optimistically accommodated clients' requests, queries, and complaints. This was also observed in the study of (Prasad and Mintesnot, 2020), with results stating that figuring out and meeting customers' needs is important in handling customers efficiently, which also includes guaranteeing them the availability of water while interacting with them respectfully. As a result, respondents expressed high satisfaction with every transaction conducted at the water district's office.

Overall, the calculated mean score for the customer's level of satisfaction in terms of personnel was 3.53 with a variation of 0.97 (Table 10), which indicated that customers expressed high satisfaction towards the Water District's personnel. "They must know

what to do, how to do it, and why they are doing their job. They must also know their relationship with the balance of the organization." In contrast to when customers are served by unskilled staff, well-trained frontline line employees are more likely to provide quality services and satisfy the customers (Ndege, 2020). These findings highlighted the positive perception customers had of the water district's personnel, with the necessary knowledge and abilities to perform their duties effectively. The overall variation underscored diverse responses, indicating that the satisfaction level in terms of personnel is typically around fair ($M = 2.56$) to outstanding ($M = 4.50$).

Assessing the Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in IGaCoS Water District

In conducting correlation analysis, researchers need to consider certain assumptions to maintain the integrity and accuracy of their results. One crucial assumption is the normality of variables, meaning they should follow a normal distribution, allowing the utilization of parametric tests such as Pearson's correlation. Based on the normality test, the p-values are very small, indicating that the data was not normally distributed. This implies that the nonparametric Spearman correlation is the ideal statistical method to study the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

Table 11. Correlation Analysis Results

Table 11 presented the correlation analysis; the correlation coefficient associated with customer satisfaction and service quality was 0.84, which indicates a positive and very

Term	b*	SE	t	p	95% CI
(Intercept)	0.18	0.13	1.46	.146	[-0.06, 0.43]
Service quality	0.95	0.04	26.99	< .001***	[0.88, 1.02]
Residual standard error: 0.3608 on 198 degrees of freedom; Multiple R-squared: 0.7863; Adjusted R-squared: 0.7852; F-statistic: 728.5 on 1 and 198 DF; p-value: < 2.2e-16					

strong relationship between the two variables. The null hypothesis has led to rejection due to the associated p-value being very low ($p < 0.0001$). The result shows that the service quality dimensions, including responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibility, and reliability, significantly impact customer satisfaction (Hanifa Jasin & Ika Sriwahyuni, 2015; Abdullah Murrar et al., 2021). The data suggested that as the level of quality services increases, the level of customer satisfaction also tends to increase.

Moreover, Lascaña and Junsay (2023) found similar results in their study on public services, where service quality dimensions correlated positively with customer satisfaction, reinforcing the idea that higher service quality leads to increased satisfaction levels. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the IGaCoS Water District.

Table 12. Regression Analysis Result

Variable	M	SD	r
1. Service Quality	3.49	0.72	

2. Customer Satisfaction	3.52	0.78	0.84*
Note. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. * Indicates $p < 0.05$.			

The linear regression analysis revealed that service quality was a significant factor influencing customer satisfaction. The estimated coefficient for service quality was 0.95, suggesting that as the level of service quality increases by one unit, there is an expected increase of 0.95 units in the level of customer satisfaction. This was consistent with the study of Carman, J. M. (2012); the study examines the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, and it was found that improvements in service quality led to higher levels of customer satisfaction. The t-value for service quality is 26.99, which was exceptionally high, indicating a solid effect. Furthermore, the p-value was less than 0.001 ($p < 0.001$), confirming that the relationship is significant. This means we can confidently assert that higher service quality leads to higher customer satisfaction, and this finding was unlikely due to random chance only.

Additionally, the 95% confidence interval for the service quality coefficient ranges from [0.88, 1.02], indicating that we are 95% confident that the true effect of service quality on customer satisfaction lies between these two values. Since both bounds are positive, it further reinforces our conclusion that better service quality will likely lead to increased customer satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that service quality had a positive influence on customer satisfaction.

Service quality significantly influences customer satisfaction through the following parameters: Tangibility influences accessibility through the convenient placement of facilities and modern equipment in the workplace that is accessible to its personnel and would help them perform well, leading to very satisfactory service delivery. Responsiveness influences accessibility since information is very accessible, and personnel also respond actively to their concerns. Services became more effective when personnel responded promptly and appropriately to the concerns involved. Reliability significantly influences customer satisfaction through accessibility, services, and personnel since the IGaCoS Water District is showing its reliability in performing and achieving the promised service quality and accuracy of responses to concerns. Assurance significantly influences accessibility by assuring consumers that their needs will be met; with that, the assurance of the services provided is further enhanced, and it can be seen in the results showing that customers are very satisfied with the IGaCoS Water District. There was also a very satisfactory rating on the personnel, which achieved the customer's confidence and trust. Empathy also influences customer satisfaction since the personnel of IGaCoS Water District displayed consideration and care for their customers, enhancing the service delivery and creating a higher level of customer satisfaction. This also allowed for the services to be much more accessible to the customers of the IGaCoS Water District.

Checking assumptions of simple linear regression

In Figure 3, various graphical representations are presented to examine the assumptions of linear regression analysis. The Residuals vs. Fitted graph displays a roughly

horizontal line with no distinct patterns, indicating a linear relationship between the variables. This suggests that the assumption of linearity was met. The Normal Q-Q plot shows that the residuals follow a straight diagonal line, indicating that they are normally distributed. This assumption of normality is important for making accurate statistical inferences. The Scale-Location graph shows a roughly horizontal line, suggesting homogeneity of variance, which is another assumption of the regression model.

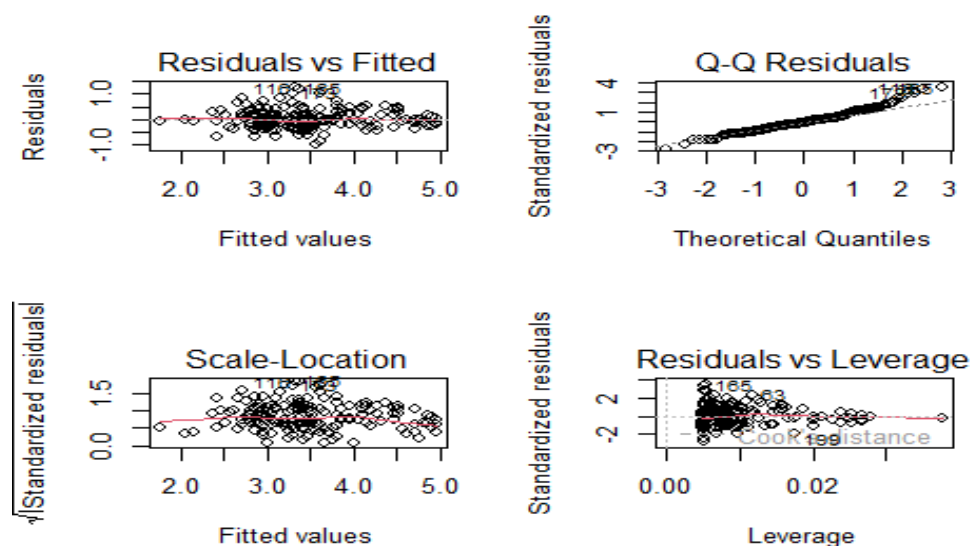


Figure 3: Scale Location Graph

Significant Relationship and Influence Across Variables

Service quality and customer satisfaction have a very significant relationship based on the data, and therefore, they are linked with each other, as service quality also has a significant influence on customer satisfaction. Each service quality dimension (tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy) plays a crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction and clients' experiences towards IGaCoS Water District. Tangibility refers to the physical aspects offered by the IGaCoS Water District, such as its facilities, equipment, and physically fit personnel. This significantly influences customer satisfaction since customers will base their perception of the services on the tangibles that they have seen. Assurance relates to knowledge and how well they behave towards customers. Instilling confidence in customers that they are receiving reliable and safe services. Reliability involves delivering services accurately and genuinely handling customer concerns, significantly influencing customer satisfaction. Lastly, empathy shows the level of concern and consideration towards the customers' needs and the staff's enthusiasm.

These service quality dimensions were rated very satisfactory in the survey, further establishing the significant influence of service quality on customer satisfaction. Customers are more likely to feel satisfied when their expectations are met or even exceeded. For example, if a customer experiences a very convenient service in a clean environment from knowledgeable and compassionate staff, they are more likely to leave a positive impression and feedback. This is shown by IGaCoS Water District in the way they deliver their services, explaining the high levels of service quality as well as customer satisfaction, as customers feel valued and understood.

Moreover, since high levels of service quality were shown, customers were satisfied and will likely develop loyalty and leave a positive word-of-mouth recommendation on the services of IGaCoS Water District. In contrast, if any dimension of service quality fails to satisfy a customer, such as delays in service or unaccommodating staff, it can lead to dissatisfaction even if other dimensions are strong. This further proves the significant influence service quality has on customer satisfaction, which is why maintaining high service quality is essential for achieving high customer satisfaction. Since the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction is evident, if the level of service quality increases, customer satisfaction will also increase naturally. This not only fosters loyalty but also encourages positive behavior that will benefit IGaCoS Water District and inspire them to strive for consistent and quality services.

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

Determining customer satisfaction with IGaCoS Water District's service quality in Barangay Peñaplata, Island Garden City of Samal, was the main objective of the study. Specifically, the socio-demographic profile of respondents was identified, focusing on age and gender. An evaluation of the service quality across dimensions like reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness measured customer satisfaction in terms of accessibility, services offered, and personnel performance. The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction was also explored, determining how service quality influenced satisfaction levels within the district.

It was revealed that 59% of the clients of IGaCoS Water District are female, aged 27-55. High satisfaction levels were received as feedback from the respondents, indicating a strong positive correlation between service quality and customer satisfaction, with a 0.95 unit increase in satisfaction for each unit increase in service quality. The service quality aspects significantly influenced customer satisfaction, indicating that customers are more likely to be satisfied when their expectations are met. This emphasized the need for competent personnel and a supportive work environment in IGaCoS Water District to enhance the quality of services offered and achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction.

Conclusion

The majority of the clients of IGaCoS Water District were revealed to be females, making up 59% (118) of the respondents, with male customers comprising the remaining 41% (82) with ages ranging from 27-55 years old. It was also revealed that the five quality dimensions (tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy) play crucial roles in assessing the service quality provided by the IGaCoS Water District to the residents of Barangay Peñaplata, Island Garden City of Samal (IGACOS). Customer Satisfaction is also measured by its accessibility, services offered, and personnel performance. Very satisfactory responses were received from the respondents, indicating high levels of customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction revealed that changes in service quality will definitely affect customer satisfaction. This was evident and shown in the results, indicating that as the level of service quality increases by one unit, there is an expected increase of 0.95 units in the level of customer satisfaction.

Further, all aspects of service quality proved to be significant influencers of customer satisfaction, indicating that every aspect must be properly practiced to achieve higher

levels of customer satisfaction. With higher service quality, the IGaCoS Water District would naturally receive higher customer satisfaction than every establishment desires. Moreover, creating a supportive and feedback-oriented work environment, along with a strong focus on the quality of service, is essential for enhancing customer satisfaction levels within the IGACOS Water District. The need for personnel fit to work and sympathize with customers was underscored as absolutely necessary, thus helping the IGaCoS Water District foster a more effective and sustainable service delivery.

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