

Filipino Brand of Service Excellence Towards Global Hotel Service Standards

Nikki Anne V. Bersalona

Philippine Christian University, Philippines

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Email of Corresponding Author: nikkiannebersalona@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examines how global service quality frameworks can be culturally adapted to the Philippine hospitality context through the integration of the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) 7Ms. Anchored in service quality theory and market orientation theory, the research addresses the limited cultural sensitivity of widely used models such as SERVQUAL, SERVPERF, and the Grönroos model when applied in culturally embedded service environments. A qualitative synthesis review design was employed, drawing on peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and conference proceedings sourced from Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Using PRISMA-guided selection procedures, 61 relevant studies published within the last decade were systematically analyzed through thematic and content analysis. The findings reveal that empathy, emotional engagement, employee performance, and culturally grounded values are central determinants of customer satisfaction and loyalty in hotel services. Filipino service values—particularly *Malasakit*, *Makatao*, *Masayahin*, and *Maka-kalikasan*—were found to reinforce and enrich global service quality dimensions by adding relational depth, emotional authenticity, and ethical orientation. The synthesis further highlights the importance of balancing technological innovation with human-centered service delivery, especially in post-pandemic hospitality contexts where safety, resilience, and trust have become critical service quality expectations. The study concludes that integrating the FBSE 7Ms with global service quality frameworks results in a Filipino Global Hotel Service Quality Model that is both internationally competitive and culturally resonant. This model enhances customer satisfaction, loyalty, and brand differentiation while supporting policy-relevant and sustainable hospitality standards. The study aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by promoting workforce professionalism, innovation balanced with human values, and environmentally responsible hotel operations. Overall, the research contributes to socio-economic, institutional, cultural, and environmental sustainability by advancing a culturally informed, resilient, and human-centered approach to service excellence in the Philippine hotel industry.

Keywords: Cultural service values; Filipino Brand of Service Excellence; hospitality industry; service quality; SERVQUAL; sustainability; tourism innovation

1. Introduction

The hospitality industry, particularly the hotel sector, relies heavily on service quality as a primary source of competitive advantage in an increasingly globalized and saturated market (Coronel, 2025). In the Philippine context, service excellence is deeply intertwined with cultural values characterized by warmth, empathy, and relational engagement, which are formally articulated through the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) led by the Department of Tourism (Mendoza, 2023; REAMICO, 2025). While global service quality frameworks such as SERVQUAL and the Grönroos model remain widely applied, their limited sensitivity to cultural nuances necessitates localized adaptation. This study synthesizes global service quality models with the culturally grounded FBSE “7Ms” to develop a contextually relevant and globally competitive hotel service quality framework for the Philippine hospitality industry.

1.1 Service Quality and Cultural Foundations of Filipino Hotel Excellence

Service quality and customer satisfaction are closely linked, directly influencing customer loyalty, organizational performance, and competitive advantage in the hotel industry (Oliveras-Villanueva et al., 2020; Coronel, 2025). Increasing competition has intensified scholarly and managerial focus on evaluating and improving service quality through structured models (Baluyot & Pampolina, 2021). However, service quality perceptions vary across individuals and contexts, requiring culturally adaptive frameworks that reflect local values and expectations (Olowoporoku & Olubiyi, 2023; Candra et al., 2024). In the Philippines, integrating indigenous service values into established global models offers a pathway toward a culturally responsive and sustainable service quality system (Apostol & Matchimura, 2024; Baluyot & Pampolina, 2021).

1.2 Global Service Quality Models, Cultural Integration, and Hospitality Innovation

The literature emphasizes service quality as a multidimensional construct shaped by customer expectations, perceptions, and contextual factors (Thorat & Pagare, 2024; Coronel, 2025). SERVQUAL remains the dominant evaluative framework, defining service quality across tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Franco & Meneses, 2024; Ayvaz-Çavdaroglu et al., 2024). Complementary models such as SERVPERF and the Grönroos model further distinguish performance-based assessment and the interplay of technical and functional quality (Ighomereho et al., 2022; Hussain et al., 2021). Despite their robustness, these models are critiqued for insufficient cultural generalizability, prompting calls for integration with culturally embedded frameworks like FBSE (Thorat & Pagare, 2024; Köseoğlu et al., 2020). Emerging scholarship highlights the growing role of empathy, emotional labor, and human-related service innovation in shaping guest satisfaction and loyalty (Tai et al., 2021; Truong et al., 2020). Simultaneously, technological advancements such as AI and robotics are reshaping service encounters, requiring balanced integration of efficiency and human-centered interaction (Ayvaz-Çavdaroglu et al., 2024; Castillo-Picón et al., 2024). The COVID-19 pandemic further underscored the need for adaptable, resilient service models that integrate health security, digitalization, and cultural sensitivity (Chan et al., 2021; Prabhakar & Gunasekeran, 2024).

1.3 Filipino Hotel Service Quality in Local, National, and Global Hospitality Contexts

Globally, hospitality service quality is increasingly shaped by hyper-globalization, personalization demands, sustainability imperatives, and digital transformation (Oliveras-Villanueva et al., 2020). In the Philippine context, hospitality is culturally embedded, positioning Filipino service values as strategic assets in meeting international expectations (Mendoza, 2023). National initiatives such as FBSE institutionalize these values through structured training and policy support, enhancing the global competitiveness of Philippine hotels (Genove & Tayco, 2024; REAMICO, 2025). The Philippines' reputation for "Eastern hospitality" further reinforces its potential leadership in culturally informed service innovation (Radojević et al., 2019; Gador, 2019).

1.4 Market Orientation, Service Quality Theory, and the FBSE 7Ms Framework

This study is grounded in market orientation theory and service quality theory (Lim, 2024; Phan et al., 2021). Market orientation theory emphasizes continuous market intelligence, customer focus, and competitive responsiveness as drivers of sustained organizational performance (Sampaio et al., 2018; Dąbrowski et al., 2019). Service quality theory, operationalized through SERVQUAL, highlights the role of expectation–perception gaps in shaping satisfaction and loyalty (Susilo & Santos, 2023). These theories are extended by incorporating the FBSE 7Ms—Maka-Diyos, Maka-tao, Maka-kalikasan, Makabansa, Masayahin, May Bayanihan, and May Pag-asa—which function as cultural enhancers within global service quality dimensions (Gumasing, 2025; Mendoza, 2023). This integration acknowledges cultural variability in service perceptions and emphasizes the enduring value of human-centered hospitality alongside technological efficiency (Chiang, 2006; Kandampully & Solnet, 2019).

1.5 Research Gaps in Integrating FBSE with Global Hotel Service Quality Frameworks

Despite extensive research on service quality, existing studies lack a comprehensive model that systematically integrates indigenous Filipino service values with global service quality frameworks in the hotel sector (Coronel, 2025; Baluyot & Pampolina, 2021). The absence of a codified framework linking the FBSE 7Ms to hotel service delivery limits the contextual accuracy of service quality assessment and improvement (Adzinyo et al., 2024). Addressing this gap, the present study proposes a hybrid Filipino Global Service Quality model that enhances understanding of customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention through culturally grounded service excellence.

1.6 Alignment of Filipino Hotel Service Excellence with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This study aligns primarily with SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth by promoting service quality models that enhance workforce professionalism, customer satisfaction, and hotel competitiveness. It also supports SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production through the FBSE principle of Maka-kalikasan, which emphasizes environmentally responsible hotel operations (Makoondlall-Chadee & Bokhoree, 2024; Arshad et al., 2022). Additionally, SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure is addressed through the integration of technological innovation with human-centered service delivery, enhancing service resilience and operational efficiency (Ayvaz-Çavdaroglu et al., 2024; Tai et al., 2021).

1.7 Contribution of Filipino Hotel Service Quality to Multidisciplinary Sustainability

The study contributes to socio-economic sustainability by strengthening culturally responsive service systems that improve customer loyalty, organizational performance, and industry competitiveness. It advances institutional and policy sustainability by informing tourism governance and service standards grounded in local cultural identity (Lim, 2024). The integration of empathy, ethics, and community-oriented values supports cultural and community sustainability, while the emphasis on environmental consciousness and innovation promotes environmental and technological sustainability within hospitality operations. Collectively, the proposed framework fosters a holistic, resilient, and culturally informed approach to sustainable hotel service excellence in the Philippine context.

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative research design in the form of a synthesis review to systematically examine and integrate scholarly works on Filipino service excellence and international service quality frameworks (Apostol & Matchimura, 2024). This approach enabled an in-depth analysis of how indigenous service values, particularly the 7Ms, interact with established global models such as SERVQUAL to inform the development of a unique Filipino hotel service model (Impa et al., 2023; Olowoporoku & Olubiyi, 2023; Susilo & Santos, 2023). The synthesis review followed a rigorous process involving literature identification, selection, critical evaluation, and data extraction to assess the relevance and quality of included studies (Candra et al., 2024). The primary objective of this design was to construct a comprehensive theoretical framework for a Filipino Global Service Quality Model by drawing insights from diverse academic perspectives within hospitality research (Coronel, 2025; Olowoporoku & Olubiyi, 2023; Prabhakar & Gunasekeran, 2024; Razak et al., 2023). The analysis also examined the role of cultural characteristics in shaping service delivery and customer expectations across cross-cultural tourism contexts (Ayyıldız, 2024). By identifying limitations in existing studies regarding the integration of indigenous values with international benchmarks, particularly in Philippine hotels, the synthesis explored the implications of adopting a hybrid service quality model to enhance competitiveness and guest satisfaction (Gador, 2019; Oliveras-Villanueva et al., 2020; Astina et al., 2017; Radojević et al., 2019).

2.2 Locale of the Study

Although no physical field site was involved, the study is contextually anchored in the Philippine hotel industry. The synthesis focused on literature addressing hospitality practices, service quality frameworks, and cultural service values relevant to hotels operating within the Philippine setting, while also drawing comparisons with global hospitality contexts to ensure international relevance.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

As a synthesis review, the study did not involve human respondents. Instead, the units of analysis consisted of published academic works, including peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and conference proceedings that examined Filipino service excellence, global service quality models, and hospitality service delivery.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The literature sample was drawn from academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar to identify relevant studies on hotel service quality and culturally grounded hospitality models (Adekuajo et al., 2023; Costa & Nolo, 2024). A comprehensive keyword strategy was employed, including terms such as “Filipino service excellence,” “7Ms of service,” “hotel service quality,” “SERVQUAL,” “Gronroos model,” and “cultural hospitality” (Kumolu-Johnson, 2024; Saadeh, 2019). The selection prioritized studies published within the last ten years to ensure contemporary relevance and included both empirical and theoretical works related to hospitality and service sectors. The PRISMA guidelines were followed to document inclusion and exclusion criteria and ensure transparency in the selection process (Adeyinka-Ojo, 2021; Prasad & Verma, 2021; Tedja et al., 2024). An initial pool of 61 studies was identified through database searches, all of which met the inclusion criteria and were retained for final synthesis. This comprehensive inclusion ensured broad coverage of global service quality practices, FBSE, and proposed hybrid models relevant to the Philippine hotel industry.

2.5 Research Instrument

The primary research instrument consisted of structured literature review and data extraction protocols designed to systematically capture relevant information from the selected studies. Extracted data included research designs, methodological approaches, findings related to Filipino service values, global service quality dimensions, and proposed integrated models. This structured approach ensured consistency and comprehensiveness across all reviewed sources (Tedja et al., 2024).

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering involved a systematic search, screening, and retrieval of relevant academic literature from selected databases. Each identified study was subjected to a thorough assessment to determine its relevance and quality prior to inclusion. The process was carefully documented to create a transparent audit trail, thereby minimizing bias and enhancing the reliability of the synthesis findings (Dang & Nguyen, 2023). Emphasis was placed on recent and contextually relevant literature to accurately reflect current trends and challenges in Filipino hospitality practices and global service quality standards (Dang & Nguyen, 2023).

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis employed a combination of thematic analysis and content analysis to synthesize findings from the selected literature. Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring themes and sub-themes related to the integration of Filipino cultural values and global service quality models (Oberes et al., 2023). Content analysis further supported the classification

and assessment of the frequency of specific service quality attributes and cultural values across studies (Budeanu et al., 2024; Prasad & Verma, 2021). This integrated analytical approach facilitated the identification of conceptual linkages and practical implications for developing a culturally informed hotel service quality model in the Philippines, revealing both qualitative insights and observable patterns within the research corpus (Albarq, 2023; Prawira et al., 2023).

2.8 Ethical Considerations

As a synthesis review based exclusively on existing literature, the study did not involve human subjects and therefore posed no direct ethical risks. Nevertheless, ethical standards for systematic reviews were strictly observed, including accurate citation, transparency in reporting procedures, and integrity in data interpretation to ensure ethical soundness throughout the research process (Dorji, 2024).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Main Findings from the Synthesized Literature

3.1.1 Overview of Included Hospitality Studies

The reviewed studies were predominantly qualitative in nature and focused on service quality perceptions, cultural influences, and customer satisfaction within the hospitality sector (Alhur et al., 2022). The literature commonly employed thematic and textual analysis methods to explore customer-centered strategies and service quality indicators relevant to hotel operations (Nguyen et al., 2021; Prasad & Verma, 2021). Across the studies, employee performance and physical infrastructure consistently emerged as primary determinants of customer satisfaction in hotel environments (Radojević et al., 2019; Singgalen, 2025). These findings demonstrate a strong scholarly consensus that service quality in hospitality extends beyond procedural efficiency to include human performance and environmental context. The emphasis on qualitative methodologies highlights the importance of subjective guest experiences in evaluating service quality, reinforcing the relevance of culturally grounded frameworks such as FBSE in complementing global models.

3.1.2 International Empathy Standards in Hospitality Service

Empathy emerged as a core global service quality standard and a consistent predictor of customer satisfaction across hospitality contexts (Lam et al., 2021; Wieseke et al., 2012; Yeong et al., 2022). The literature identified both cognitive and emotional empathy as essential components of effective service delivery, with individualized attention significantly enhancing guest perceptions. Within established frameworks, empathy demonstrated stronger predictive influence on satisfaction compared to other service dimensions (Ayvaz-Çavdaroglu et al., 2024; Umasuthan et al., 2017). These results affirm empathy as a foundational element of service excellence and validate its central position within global service quality models. The prominence of empathy provides a strong point of convergence between international benchmarks and Filipino service values, particularly those emphasizing human-centeredness and emotional engagement.

3.1.3 Cultural Affability and Filipino Hospitality

The literature consistently identified Filipino hospitality as being characterized by warmth, friendliness, and personalized interaction, which significantly influence perceptions of service excellence (Mendoza, 2023; Baluyot & Pampolina, 2021). Cultural principles such as Makatao and Masayahin were found to empower hotel employees to deliver authentic and emotionally resonant guest experiences. These findings illustrate how indigenous cultural practices enrich global service quality standards by strengthening relational and emotional dimensions of service. Filipino cultural affability functions not merely as a complementary trait but as a value-generating mechanism that enhances guest satisfaction and differentiation in international hospitality markets.

3.1.4 Malasakit as an Emotional Driver of Service Excellence

Malasakit emerged as a distinct emotional catalyst in Filipino service delivery, characterized by proactive concern, accountability, and anticipation of guest needs (Conwi et al., 2024; Mendoza, 2023). The literature associated Malasakit with elevated emotional satisfaction and stronger customer loyalty. The emphasis on Malasakit highlights the unique emotional depth of Filipino hospitality. By transcending standardized service procedures, this value introduces an affective dimension that strengthens long-term guest relationships and provides a competitive advantage within the global hospitality sector.

3.1.5 Synergy between Technology and Human Interaction

Technological innovation, including artificial intelligence and smart service systems, was identified as a major driver of operational efficiency and personalization in hospitality services (Tai et al., 2021; Truong et al., 2020). However, the literature consistently emphasized that technological efficiency alone was insufficient to ensure guest satisfaction without meaningful human interaction. These findings underscore the necessity of integrating technology with culturally informed human service. While innovation enhances convenience and customization, the emotional and relational aspects of hospitality remain central to memorable guest experiences, particularly in culturally rich service environments like the Philippines.

3.1.6 Post-Pandemic Transformations in Service Quality Expectations

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly reshaped service quality priorities, with cleanliness, safety, and operational resilience emerging as critical determinants of customer satisfaction (Chan et al., 2021; Song et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2022). Health-oriented service features became integral to perceived service quality. These shifts highlight the need for adaptive service models that integrate safety protocols without diminishing emotional connection. The findings suggest that resilience and flexibility are now essential components of service excellence, reinforcing the relevance of culturally grounded values that support trust, reassurance, and empathy.

3.1.7 Filipino Values as Enhancers of Global Service Quality Models

The synthesis revealed that the Filipino 7Ms framework strengthens established service quality models by reinforcing dimensions such as empathy, reliability, assurance, and responsiveness (Baluyot & Pampolina, 2021; Coronel, 2025). Values such as Maka-Diyos, Makatao, and Mapagmalasakit were found to align closely with international service standards while adding cultural depth. These results demonstrate that Filipino values function as cultural enhancers rather than alternatives to global frameworks. Their integration results in a service quality model that is both globally applicable and locally resonant, supporting sustained customer satisfaction and loyalty.

3.2 Integration of Global Frameworks with the Filipino Context

The literature confirmed the widespread application of global service quality models such as SERVQUAL, SERVPERF, and the Grönroos Model in hospitality research (Franco & Meneses, 2024; Nyirangondo et al., 2024; Ighomereho et al., 2022). However, these models were frequently noted to inadequately address cultural variability in service expectations (Ayyıldız, 2024; Kozłowski & Korzeniewski, 2024). These findings support the argument that universal service quality frameworks require cultural contextualization to remain effective. Integrating local values, such as those embodied in the FBSE, enables service quality models to resonate more deeply with guests by aligning operational standards with cultural meaning (Chiang, 2006; Furrer et al., 2000; Guan et al., 2022).

3.3 Alignment with the Theoretical Framework

The synthesized findings aligned closely with service quality theory and cross-cultural service perspectives, particularly the dimensions outlined in SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Filipino cultural values were found to enrich these dimensions through intrinsic qualities such as warmth, respect, and dedication. This alignment supports the proposition that cultural integration enhances the explanatory power of service quality theory. The findings also reflect principles of human-centered service innovation, emphasizing emotional fulfillment and genuine care as key drivers of loyalty, especially in post-pandemic hospitality contexts (Tai et al., 2021; Song et al., 2022; Bonfanti et al., 2021).

3.4 Synthesis Toward Model Development

The synthesis culminated in the conceptualization of a Filipino Global Hotel Service Quality Model grounded in cultural immersion and aesthetic local experiences. The model positions the 7Ms as interconnected behavioral and ethical guides that shape service delivery throughout the guest experience cycle.

This integrated model translates Filipino cultural values into actionable service practices that support ethical conduct, emotional engagement, environmental stewardship, and operational resilience. Consistent with prior research, the model reinforces the role of human-centered service, cultural authenticity, and sustainability in establishing a globally competitive Filipino hospitality identity (Achacoso, 2023; Olivar & Hinlayagan, 2026; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Richards, 2018).

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

This study concludes that Filipino hotel service practices actively integrate the FBSE 7Ms framework and that these indigenous values meaningfully shape employee behavior, guest relationships, and service culture. While global service quality models such as SERVQUAL remain dominant in ensuring consistency and comparability, they insufficiently capture culturally embedded service expressions. By synthesizing local Filipino service values with international service quality standards, the study formulates the Filipino Global Hotel Service Quality Model, demonstrating that Filipino values function as cultural enhancers that humanize and enrich conventional service dimensions. The model offers managerial, theoretical, and policy relevance by supporting culturally authentic yet globally competitive service delivery and by providing a foundation for future empirical and standards-based developments in hospitality service quality.

Based on the study's findings, future research is recommended to empirically examine the proposed Filipino Global Hotel Service Quality Model through longitudinal, comparative, quantitative, and qualitative approaches to validate its operational, emotional, and relational outcomes. Further investigations should assess the interaction between the 7Ms and global service quality dimensions across different hospitality contexts, markets, and hotel categories, while also exploring employee perspectives and advanced analytical methods to strengthen the model's empirical grounding. Extending the model within established theoretical frameworks and examining its application amid digital transformation are likewise

recommended to ensure that technological integration supports, rather than diminishes, the human and cultural dimensions of Filipino hospitality.

This study is limited by its conceptual and synthesis-based approach, as the proposed Filipino Global Hotel Service Quality Model has not yet been empirically tested across diverse hotel settings or stakeholder groups. The reliance on literature analysis constrains the ability to measure direct impacts on service performance, customer satisfaction, and loyalty, indicating the need for future empirical validation to substantiate the model's applicability and generalizability.

Compliance with ethical standards

This study was conducted as a synthesis review based exclusively on previously published literature. As such, it did not involve human participants, personal data, or direct interaction with individuals. Ethical standards for systematic and synthesis reviews were strictly observed, including accurate citation practices, transparency in reporting procedures, and integrity in data interpretation to ensure ethical soundness throughout the research process (Dorji, 2024).

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