

THE ROLE OF TATTOO CULTURE IN HOSPITALITY: EXPLORING THE INTERSECTION OF PERSONAL EXPRESSION AND PROFESSIONALISM

ABSTRACT

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KEYWORDS

*tattoo culture; hospitality
industry; personal identity;
rapture café bar;
professionalism; customer
perception*

ARTICLE ID

AASGBCPJMRA-B93433

The Role of Tattoo Culture in Hospitality: Exploring the Intersection of Personal Expression and Professionalism investigates the growing acceptance of tattoos within professional environments, with a particular focus on the hospitality industry. Once widely regarded as symbols of rebellion or unprofessionalism, tattoos are increasingly recognized as valid expressions of personal and cultural identity. This evolving perception is especially evident in hospitality settings, where employees' appearances contribute to the overall brand image and guest experience. Despite this shift, debates continue regarding whether visible tattoos compromise perceptions of professionalism or influence customer attitudes and satisfaction. To ensure credible and consistent results, the study employed a quantitative descriptive research design, focusing on 60 patrons of Rapture Café Bar in Quezon City. Purposive sampling was utilized to select participants who were most relevant to the research objectives, specifically, customers with informed perspectives on tattoo-related perceptions within the hospitality setting. Data collection was conducted through a standardized survey instrument, which was carefully developed based on a review of existing literature and refined through pretesting and consultations with academic advisors and data specialists. The study's conclusions are based on data analysis, which revealed that the primary clientele of Rapture Café Bar consists of young adults aged 20–25, predominantly male, and primarily members of Generation Z, with most having attained tertiary education. This demographic profile underscores the establishment's strong appeal to a younger, educated audience. Respondents widely perceived tattoos as a legitimate form of self-expression, emphasizing that body art does not negatively impact the quality of employee service. Moreover, tattoos were viewed as enhancing the venue's ambiance and reinforcing its brand identity, aligning well with its modern and progressive image. The study's results highlight the shifting attitudes toward tattoo culture within the hospitality industry, particularly among younger, college-educated demographics such as Generation Z and Millennials. Findings indicate that tattoos are increasingly normalized and accepted among this group, especially in casual dining and social venues like Rapture Café Bar. A clear consensus emerged among respondents that tattoos function as a form of self-expression and do not detract from the quality of service provided. These insights reflect a growing openness to visible body art in more contemporary, relaxed hospitality environments.

RECOMMENDED CITATION

Adao, M. V., Datul, J. L., Magno, M., Ojeda, F., & Sedillo, L. M. (2025). The Role of Tattoo Culture in Hospitality: Exploring the Intersection of Personal Expression and Professionalism. *Ascendens Asia Singapore – Bestlink College of the Philippines Journal of Multidisciplinary Research Abstracts*, 7(2), 146.