

Impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in Food Products-A Study

(A Study Done At Thoothukudi District of Tamil Nadu State, India)

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the relationships between services quality, food quality; one of the basic needs of the human being is food. It is vital for the normal functioning of the body parts and healthy growth. Consumer interest in ready-to-eat and ready-to-serve food is mounting due to their convenience, value, attractive appearance, taste and texture. This paper discusses the relationship between consumer buying behavior and consumption pattern. First, we aim to review the market of ready-to-eat food products and study the factors that affect the consumer's buying behavior in Thoothukudi District. Secondly, we aim to study the consumption pattern of the consumers in Thoothukudi District. The research methodology was exploratory and descriptive.

In the study, the sample was based on purposive or judgment and convenience sampling. The data have been collected for this study. For example, customer satisfaction might be influenced by such factors as price and service variety. These two factors identified customer satisfaction: service quality, service features, food quality, and future intention. ANOVA, T-test and Multiple regressions were applied on food and service quality to determine which has a strong effect on customer satisfaction. Besides, this research finding shows that both food qualities play an important role in customers' satisfaction. It concluded that the food quality dimension had a strong impact on customer satisfaction than service quality. In the study, a survey questionnaire was used as the data collection technique, which has developed to measure the food quality and service quality in food products. This study might be beneficial for future research through its effective contribution in disclosing the significant effect of service quality on customer satisfaction in the food industry. The obtained outcomes in this research will be supportive for researchers in the future.

KEYWORDS: Customer Satisfaction, Customer Expectation, Customer Perception, Food Quality and Service Quality

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I. INTRODUCTION

Service quality and customer satisfaction are main elements in the external relation system for every organization where they highly specify the organization's ability of competition. Under their ability to manage the relationships with the client, the organization starts designing the quality levels. They are reviewing these standards as part of the firm's culture to find an effective method for its implementation and development (Archakova, 2013). Quality has drawn the attention of researchers and practitioners over the previous years, but most of it were in manufacturing segment at first stage since 1980s, despite of that, quality has been recognized with widely in services segment and its performance in business through its significant influences on the variety dimensions of business performance, Many techniques were created in order to study the quality of services such as SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988), SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1992), Synthesized model of service quality (Brogowicz et al., 1990) and others, through these frameworks, researchers illustrated many advantages of service quality, such as its contribution to improve customers' satisfaction as well as customers loyalty, mouth positive words, reduction the costs of operations as well as staff turnover, expand the market share, profitability growth, researchers confirmed the significance of service quality and its direct and indirect impact on customers' satisfaction and their loyalty (Minh and Matsui, 2015).

The importance of service quality provision in the food industry has found significant attention from researchers and operators. Conventionally, service quality is an important factor in consumer loyalty, increased

profits and market share. Previous studies have shown that high quality of service and high food quality could increase customer satisfaction even in the unacceptable world of foodstuffs. Thus, to understand the factors that impact consumers' satisfaction and their loyalty, they must determine the service quality indicators in this industry and the relationship with the client's loyalty (Keshavarz, 2016). Dastane & Fazlin (2017) reinvestigated factors affecting customer satisfaction in the Malaysian fast food industry and found that service quality plays an important role in satisfying and retaining the customers. From an operational management perspective, it is clear that clients play an important role in organizational processes. Before placement Strategy and organizational structure, the customer must be taken into account by the management. The questions formulated in strategic planning come from who should accept these offers, where they are, and how much they can buy to reach customers and give them maximum satisfaction? After that question, the organization will design the product, market segments and create brand awareness. It demonstrates the importance of customers in the business environment and the importance of meeting them (Agbor, 2011). Customer satisfaction has been critical for several previous years in the services sector; it is well recognized that good service quality and customer satisfaction are central to the companies' performance, particularly in the restaurants, tourism, and hotel industries (Sim and Jones, 2006).

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction in food products in the Thoothukudi District. Food products business in Thoothukudi District increased Thoothukudi after the target customer. Although various studies on quality of service and customer satisfaction have been made, studies focusing on hotels & restaurants are minimal. This research aims to establish the impact on customer satisfaction of service quality factors that are tangible and are tangible in five dimensions.

Food business sector, because the evaluations are not made based on the service results but on the delivery services process as well, where the encounter of services in food set comprises of three main items which are: environmental items (music, design, lightning), staff (skills, reliability), and customers (interaction with other customers) (Marković, 2010). Word of Mouth also influences the perceived value and intern satisfaction (Oluwafemi & Dastane, 2016).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Service Quality

The university foodservice sector is considered one of the largest sectors of the foodservice industry (Andaleeb & Caskey, 2007). The sector also has many prospects as the college student market has been growing globally (Garg, 2014; Kim, Moreo & Yeh, 2004). The story is not different in Ghana. The number of university food service establishments on university campuses has been on the ascendancy largely due to an increase in universities and student enrolment.

However, the increase in the number of food on university campuses has also heightened competition, making the delivery of service quality imperative. The provision of service quality is also a source of competitive advantage to food (Chow et al., 2007). Quality service delivery is a vital strategic resource that can leverage a sustained competitive advantage in the restaurant industry (Jin, Line & Goh, 2013). The National Restaurant Association (2009) indicated that 60 percent of new food fails because they cannot satisfy their customers. Thus, customer satisfaction is a major determinant of a company's long-term profitability, customer retention and loyalty (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). University foodservice establishments have peculiar challenges which inhibit the delivery of quality service. One major challenge is the negative perception. According to Kwun (2011), the perceptions of campus food services tend to be unfavorable due to various situational, contextual, and environmental constraints such as captive environment, repetitive consumption of limited and monotonous menu items, mediocre execution of food and service, and facility in general.

Several studies on consumer behavior in food suggest that service quality significantly influences consumers' food decisions (Clemes, Gan & Sriwongrat, 2013).

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1991) defined service quality as the overall evaluation of a specific organization that compares its performance with consumers' general expectations of how the organization should perform. There have been many studies on service quality in general and service quality in food in particular, yet analysis of service quality in university foodservice systems has been neglected (Ruetzler, 2008). Despite the growing competition among campus foodservice operators, research on service quality in the area has been limited. There is empirical evidence that the service quality of food in general in Ghana needs improvement.

Mensah (2009) found a negative gap between customers' expectations and perceptions of service quality of food in Cape Coast. Kwabena, Brew and Addae-Boateng (2013) found out that 30% of customers of selected chop bars in Koforidua were not satisfied with the quality of service. There has been a modicum of studies on service quality in the foodservice industry in Ghana (Kwabena, Brew & Addae-Boateng, 2013; Mensah, 2009). Yet, these studies did not examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in a university campus context even though the campus foodservice market is different.

According to El-Said and Fathy (2015), the campus foodservice market is more complex, diverse and dynamic, rendering the measurement of service quality and identifying the determinants of service quality difficult. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the effects of service quality and customer satisfaction on the repurchase intentions of customers of food on the University of Cape Coast Campus. This paper will explore the determinants of perceived service quality of food on the University of Cape Coast Campus employing a modified DINESERV scale and examine how that influences customers' satisfaction and repurchase intentions.

Food Quality

Food quality plays an important role in the foodservice industry. The quality of food-related to the quality of raw materials, both are helpful to increase the effectiveness of the menu, and they will become the selling tool for the restaurant. Food quality is one of the factors in customer evolution in different categories of restaurants. Many researchers researched various components, including taste, texture, color, presentation, appearance, accompaniment, and garnishes. It is predicted that few customers revisit restaurants due to the good quality of food. In studies, both fast-food outlets and restaurant food quality always rank one position compared to others where guests decide to revisit restaurants (Cairo, 1993). Customers show their willingness to come to the restaurant for a taste of food and do revisit in the future due to food quality. Customers are ready to pay extra if the quality of food is good (Ryu et al., 2012). There are five other dimensions of food quality: food should be served fresh, delicious food, nutritive value in the food, different types of menu, and appealing of food to customers (Ahmad A. Al-Tit, 2015). Food quality has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. The result shows that the relationship between service quality and food quality greatly impacts customer satisfaction, which will help to retain a customer for the future (Young, 2007).

Satisfaction

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) define satisfaction as a customer's judgment that a product or service provides a pleasurable level of consumption-related accomplishment. Determinants of satisfaction include perception of service quality, product quality, price, situation factors, and personal factors (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). The expectancy disconfirmation theory has been described by Oh (1999) as one of the most common and widely accepted theories for the analysis of customer satisfaction in the service industry.

Oliver (1981) employed the expectancy-disconfirmation model to explain that customer satisfaction is determined by comparing customers' expectations and perceptions of performance. The theory posits that customer satisfaction is measured by the gap between customer expectation and perceived performance. Thus, if perceived performance exceeds the expectation of the performance, the expectation is positively disconfirmed, and the customer is satisfied as the actual performance exceeds the customer's expectations. On the contrary, if the perceived performance falls short of expectations, the resultant effect is a negative disconfirmation as the customer becomes dissatisfied with the performance. However, there appears to be a lack of consensus on how best to conceptualize customer satisfaction.

Crompton and Love (1995) view the lack of consensus in the conceptualization of satisfaction, indicating that it remains an elusive, indistinct and ambiguous construct. It directly affects behavioral intent after purchase, such as a changed attitude, repeated purchasing experience and brand loyalty (Johnson & Fornell, 1991).

Jiang and Rosenbloom (2005) explain that customers' overall satisfaction is a better indicator of satisfaction than transaction-specific measures. Many factors, including the physical environment, food and price, have influenced customer satisfaction. Chang (2000) and Chebat & Michon (2003) found out that the physical environment directly influences customer satisfaction. Also, Susskind and Chan (2000) indicate that good food, good service and a pleasant setting are the three components that contribute to overall customer satisfaction with the restaurant.

Johns and Pine (2002) refer to the servicescape as the fundamental factors contributing to customer satisfaction in restaurants. These include the food (hygiene, balance, and healthiness), physical provision (layout, furnishing, and cleanliness), the atmosphere (feeling and comfort), and the service received (speed, friendliness, and care) during the meal experience. Xi and Shuai (2009) found out that students' satisfaction with institutional food service depends on food quality, food variety and price fairness. It is corroborated by the results of a similar study by Ng (2005), which revealed that food quality and price and value are significant in measuring students' satisfaction with university dining facilities.

Effect of service quality on customer satisfaction and repurchase intention Satisfaction is generally viewed as a broader concept than service quality (Bowden, 2009; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). Thus, service quality is a subset of satisfaction. Satisfaction comprises of both cognitive and affective evaluations, while service quality is essentially a cognitive evaluation. Furthermore, perceived service quality a long-run overall

evaluation of a product or service, whereas satisfaction is a transaction-specific evaluation (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

Bitner and Hubbert (1994) point to an emerging consensus that satisfaction is the outcome of individual service transactions and the overall service encounter. In contrast, service quality is the customer's overall impression of the relative inferiority/superiority of the organization and its services. There is enough evidence that service quality is an antecedent of customer satisfaction (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; H. Lee, Lee, & Yoo, 2000; Ting, 2004).

However, Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) hold a different view that satisfaction is an antecedent to perceived service quality. Bitner (1990) developed a model of service encounter evaluation and empirically proved that satisfaction was an antecedent of service quality. Cronin and Taylor (1992) also found out that service quality was an antecedent of customer satisfaction, whereas customer satisfaction was not a significant determinant of service quality. H. Lee, Lee, and Yoo (2000) examined the direction of causality between service quality and satisfaction. The results showed that perceived service quality was an antecedent of satisfaction, rather than vice versa.

Ting (2004) also found out that service quality better explains customer satisfaction and that the path from service quality to customer satisfaction was greater than the path from customer satisfaction to service quality in the service industry. However, other studies have shown that perceived service quality positively affects customer satisfaction (Iglesias & Guille'n, 2004; Lenka et al., 2009). In the same vein, restaurant service quality is an important determinant of customer satisfaction (Kim et al., 2009; Ladhari et al., 2008; Harrington et al., 2011; Ma et al., 2017). Ladhari et al. (2008), in a study on determinants of dining satisfaction and post dining behavioral intentions, concluded that perceived service quality influenced customer satisfaction through both positive and negative emotions.

The study underscores the importance of the responsiveness and assurance dimensions in the determination of service quality. In this study, the two dimensions combined contribute 33% to the variance in service quality. Customers who were mainly students, lecturers and other administrative staff of the university place much premium on responsiveness probably since they have very little time to spare and want prompt service. It is against the background that some previous studies in Ghana have pointed to the lack of responsiveness in foodservice delivery (Mensah, 2009). Assurance is also an important dimension of service quality since customers want to be safe and secure and reassure that staff can deliver quality service. Surprisingly, food did not contribute significantly to the variance in perceived service quality. It is probably because the food offered a similar menu. Given the restaurants' similarities, what puts one restaurant ahead of the other is the service, especially in terms of responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and reliability. Moreover, tangibles only accounted for 4.32% of the variance, which indicates the importance customers of campus food attach to the functional quality.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To assess the food and service quality satisfaction among consumer demographics.
- To find out the association between food and service quality and customer satisfaction.
- To examine the influence of food quality and service quality on customer satisfaction

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Purpose and Importance of the Study

This research aims to find out the relationship between food quality, service quality, and revisit the intention of the customer and find out whether these perceptions affect their satisfaction with the service. Customer satisfaction helps to increase the efficiency that leads to proved profit and positive impact on customers. With the increasing competition in the hotel industry, customers are more demanding, so the hotel industry needs to understand the customer's perception toward the quality service. It must improve the high-quality service, quality of the food, the innovative way of cooking, a prompt response, fair prices and something fresh t in the hotel industry to make customer morale more attractive in the restaurant. In this context, it could suggest that perception of food and service quality positively affects customer satisfaction.

The Sample of the Study and Data Collection

This research is qualitative and was adopted the design for the study. The study's objective was to examine the relationship between food and service quality and customer satisfaction of a hotel. The study design employed two sets of variables: the dependent variables are (food and service quality), and the independent variable is (customer satisfaction). The questionnaire was distributed to customers who had their product in the food. There were around 50 grocery stores in the region of Tamil Nadu. In each city, were selected 50 stores to collect the data for the study. The survey questionnaire was distributed to the grocery store as a feedback form where customers filled after the meal. The research data were collected using the sample random sampling

method, assuming a 93% confidence interval and 7% margin of error, the sample size is calculated as n =150. Two hundred questions were circulated, but 150 samples were compiled and used in the study, considering the probability of accurate and inaccurate or incomplete surveys. The questionnaire general consists of 33 questions in two different sections and used for measuring the food and service quality in grocery stores. It took 5-point Likert to evaluate the claims on the scale, of which 1 was 'severe disagreement' and 5 was 'severe agreement.' In addition, 06 demographic questions on gender, age group, marital status, qualification for school, monthly income and respondent occupation are asked, and these questions in this sample.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDING

Demographic Findings

The demographic structure of the sample was created by using the data obtained from the survey. The percentage values of demographics shown as per the below table.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Sample

	Descriptions	Sample Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	18-24	38	25.3
		25-34	62	41.3
		35-44	33	22.0
		45-54	15	10.0
		Above 55	2	1.3
2	Gender	Male	114	76.0
		Female	36	24.0
3	Marital Status	Single	78	52.0
		Married	72	48.0
4	Education	School	8	5.3
		Bachelor degree	31	20.7
		Master degree	35	23.3
		Professional	68	45.3
		Others	8	5.3
5	Occupation	Business	19	12.7
		Govt.Employee	21	14.0
		Self- employed	20	13.3
		Private Employee	61	40.7
		Others	29	19.3
6	Monthly Income	10k-20k	44	29.3
		20k-30k	16	10.7
		30k-40k	18	12.0
		40k-50k	31	20.7
		Above 50k	41	27.3

As it can see it in Table 1, the male customers are 76% and female customers, 24% of whom 62% of customers are in the age group between 25 to 34 years, and most of them are professional degree holders with high income and most of working in the private sector. If the food outlet restaurant offered good quality of food and service where customers satisfied their service, they often increase their visit and recommend to their friend and relative by word of mouth.

Table 2: Customer satisfaction with Gender of Respondents

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Food Quality	Male	114	4.17	.578	.054
	Female	36	4.07	.661	.110
Service Quality	Male	114	4.16	.641	.060
	Female	36	4.12	.711	.119

Table 3

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-Test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Food Quality	Equal variances assumed	.717	.398	.874	148	.384	.100	.114	-.126	.326
	Equal variances not assumed			.815	53.002	.419	.100	.123	-.146	.346
Service Quality	Equal variances assumed	.579	.448	.314	148	.754	.039	.126	-.209	.288
	Equal variances not assumed			.297	54.127	.768	.039	.133	-.227	.306

Table 4

ANOVA					
Customer Satisfaction					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.148	4	.787	1.533	.196
Within Groups	74.439	145	.513		
Total	77.588	149			

In this part of the study, a sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were applied to define whether there was a significant difference in food and service quality for customer satisfaction. The findings of the analysis differ from those of populations as seen in Table 2, based on the results of the t-test to assess whether, about participant expectations about food quality and service quality and consumer satisfaction, participants related to gender categories. When the mean value is calculated, it is observed that the perceptions of males and females are assumed, there is not much difference in the satisfaction level. It found that gender perceptions towards the quality of food and service do not affect customer satisfaction.

Table 5: Customer Satisfaction with Age Group of Respondents

Customer Satisfaction Descriptive								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
18-24	62	4.22	.650	.083	4.06	4.39	2	5
25-34	38	4.21	.770	.125	3.95	4.46	2	5
35-44	33	4.28	.590	.103	4.08	4.49	3	5
45-54	15	3.76	1.027	.265	3.19	4.33	2	5
More than 55	2	4.15	.919	.650	-4.11	12.41	4	5
Total	150	4.19	.722	.059	4.07	4.30	2	5

Table 6

ANOVA					
Customer Satisfaction					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.148	4	.787	1.533	.196
Within Groups	74.439	145	.513		
Total	77.588	149			

There is no difference between in age group in the One Way ANOVA test in the various categories of the age group.

Hence, there is a P-value of 196, which is more than the P-value, and it is concluded that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no difference in the age group for customer satisfaction.

Table 13: Independent Variables: Food and Service; Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Correlations				
		Food Quality	Service Quality	Customer Satisfaction
Food Quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.800**	.819**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150
Service Quality	Pearson Correlation	.800**	1	.794**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.819**	.794**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is no association with food quality; hence it is concluded that P-value is less than 0.5%, and the hypothesis is rejected. The Correlation value = .800** and P-value is .000; hence there is a strong relationship between food quality and customer satisfaction. It is no relationship with service quality. It is concluded that P-value is less than 0.5%, and the hypothesis is rejected. The Correlation value = .794** and P-value is .000; hence there is a strong relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study have reaffirmed the importance of service quality and customer satisfaction to repurchase intention in the campus foodservice segment. The study found both service quality and customer satisfaction to influence repurchase intention. The coincides with the results of previous studies. (Chow et al., 2007; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Jen & Hu, 2003; Kim et al., 2009), Thus operators of restaurants on campus must put in a lot of effort to improve upon service quality. It is the surest bet to ensuring customer loyalty. The study revealed that customers' perceived service quality is a significant predictor of customer satisfaction while customer satisfaction, in turn, is a significant predictor of repurchase intention. From the study, service quality contributes more than half (57%) to satisfaction, while satisfaction contributes 71% to repurchase intention.

According to Gupta et al. (2007), the link between customer satisfaction and repeat buying is an important contributor to a restaurant's profits. In the end, it is food that meets or exceeds their customers' expectations that will remain profitable because their customers will keep coming back for more, and this will boost their sales and bottom-line. Though results of the study indicate that service quality influences satisfaction and satisfaction in turn influences repurchase intention, there is no evidence to support the assertion that satisfaction moderates the effect of service quality on repurchase intention. Though some studies have proven that satisfaction moderates the effect of service quality on repurchase intention (Bougoure & Neu, 2010; Dabholkar et al., 2000), in this study, there is no evidence to that effect. The interaction between customer satisfaction and service quality on repurchase intention rather had an inverse relationship with repurchase intention.

Thus, managers of campus food service establishments should improve the quality of services to remain competitive in the burgeoning campus foodservice market. They should pay particular attention to the responsiveness and assurance of their staff. Regular training of staff and queue management will help to improve assurance and responsiveness, respectively. A major limitation to this study is that where collected data from a single public university limits the generalizability of the findings for the entire campus foodservice market. It is recommended that future studies should draw samples from both public and private universities in different parts of a country to reflect the entire campus foodservice market. Also, future studies should examine other factors apart from service quality that influences customer satisfaction with campus food services.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study investigated the customer perceptions of service quality and their effect on customer satisfaction based on service offered by the food product in the region of Thoothukudi district and Tamil Nadu. It found that perceptions of the customer towards service were not very high; then the food quality. Therefore, every organization must maintain the basic standard of service in food products. Every food hotel and restaurant has its own food quality's which needs to be followed at the time of service for customer satisfaction. Hotel administrative and managers should pay special attention to improve the hotel's service standard and provide training to their staff members and motivate them to increase the standard of service at the time of serving customers. Finally, this research shows that customer's expectations are beyond their perceptions in all fivefold dimensions of service quality. This research finding shows that all fivefold service quality dimensions have less impact on customer satisfaction than on food quality. The result of service quality correlation shows that the $r=.794^{**}$ and food quality $r=.819^{**}$

On the other hand, food quality has a strong relationship with customer satisfaction. Linear Multiple Regression shows the beta value results that food quality has high effect than service quality. Food quality on customer satisfaction has 61%, and service quality impact on customer satisfaction has only 42%. In addition, the finding shows that there is a positive and meaningful relationship of all food and service variables for the satisfaction of customers. The study results indicate that food and service quality is one of the key factors influencing customers' choice as it makes them satisfied with a particular F&B outlet.

The study's implication: To keep the performance of the star hotel, the hotel should take feedback from their customer related to the quality of food and service and take appropriate action to provide better service and quality of food to maintain a long relationship with the customer. It can also be helpful for the hotel business and growth of hotel. The foodservice operators should continue to improve all the dimensions to exceed their expectations. Foodservice operators should carefully design their menu and set their SOP's in the operation areas to deliver relaxed and comfortable dining. Restaurant managers may develop and measure the benchmark scores for the attributes that would boost customer loyalty and compare them with their competitors.

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