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**EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF SERVICE QUALITY
DIMENSIONS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN WESTERN
THEMED RESTAURANTS**

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Abstract:

The goal of the study is to comprehend how customer contentment in Western themed restaurants is influenced by service quality. Research on numerous service dimensions has resulted from this. Respondents are chosen by random selection from a range of demographic groupings. The data are gathered quantitatively, and questionnaires are given to respondents before a random sample is chosen for analysis. A survey was completed by 150 participants, from a total of 200 questionnaires distributed and the respondents have answered all 30 questions. Findings show a substantial correlation between service quality and patron satisfaction in the restaurant industry (tangibles, assurance, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy). This study is specifically carried out in Shah Alam, Malaysia, in order to get fruitful results. The time frame for this research were carried out from end of June 2022 up till early February 2023. The findings will benefit investors, present restaurateurs and entrepreneurs by adding to the body of knowledge in the fields of strategic marketing, entrepreneurship and customer service.

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**Keywords:**

Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Western Restaurant, Customer Service.

Introduction

In today's competitive business environment, delivering high-quality services has become a critical factor for the success of any organization, including western restaurants. As customers become increasingly discerning, their expectations of the quality of services provided by restaurants continue to rise. Customer satisfaction has emerged as an important metric for evaluating the performance of restaurants, and it is influenced by several factors, including service quality and demographic factors (Adriatico et.al ,2022)

The restaurant sector of the global economy is increasing swiftly. Hence, in order to gain a competitive edge in the restaurant industry and provide the best quality and service possible, the sector should aim to establish service quality as a benchmark for every customer (Murad & Ali, 2015). Restaurants are recognized as a significant part of the hospitality sector since they meet the most fundamental needs of their patrons, particularly in the areas of food and drink. Also, patrons may use the restaurant's amenities such as the ambiance and services in addition to eating there. For instance, unsatisfactory service from restaurant staff will have a negative effect and decrease customers' likelihood of returning to the same eatery.

Service quality is considered a critical determinant of competitiveness. Service quality can be defined as a phenomenon that is considered in the context of customers' expectations and views of the service provided. As a result, a customer may think highly of a service while another may think poorly of it (Vu,2021). In other words, customer perception affects service quality (Saglik et al., 2014). High service quality is seen as an important factor in determining the long-term success of both manufacturing and service companies (Ghobadian et al., 1994). Navin (2017) uncovers evidence that customer satisfaction can be raised by higher food and service standards as well as price-to-value ratios, which would indirectly lead to better behavioral intentions in this sector.

Understanding customers' perceptions, as well as the variables affecting how they evaluate and feel about the services they receive, is important for service providers in this situation (Thaw et.al, 2019). They also looked at how perceived service quality affected customer satisfaction and came to the conclusion that improving service quality can boost customer satisfaction.

This research uncovers evidence that customer satisfaction can be raised by higher food and service standards as well as price-to-value ratios, which would indirectly lead to better behavioral intentions in this sector. (Ishak et.al.,2021) mentioned that due to different managerial problems that drive businesses to close, it appears that restaurants in this market have a shorter shelf life'. Additionally, these eateries are overly reliant on fashion fads and will gradually disappear once they pass.

Due to the differences between a product and a service, businesses in the hospitality confront distinct challenges than those that manufacture products. A crucial consideration in the hunt

for a long-lasting competitive advantage has been identified as service quality. Customers satisfaction have been identified as important elements in the hospitality industry (Ali et al., 2021). Nowadays, meeting customer demands continues to be the biggest difficulty. The customer in the restaurant industry not only participates in the actual consuming process, but also frequently has predetermined views about the level of service quality. Customers in the restaurant industry today are increasingly time-constrained, smart and demanding.

Empathy, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and tangible were shown to be the factors that customers consider most significant when evaluating the quality of a service, and as a result, may have a beneficial impact on customer satisfaction. According to studies on service quality and its effects on customer satisfaction, Malaysian customers have the highest expectations for quick service, transaction accuracy, and security-related issues. The issue of insufficient levels of service quality, as evidenced by the remarks of many consumers in restaurants generally, is the primary reason for choosing the topic.

The study's objective is to understand how service quality affects customer satisfaction in Western restaurants. Hence, the objective of this research:

- a) To examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction of western themed restaurant service in hospitality industry.
- b) To examine which dimensions are influencing customer satisfaction.

The following two questions are the main research questions:

- a) What is the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction of western themed restaurant service in hospitality industry.
- b) What are the main dimensions of service quality that lead to customer satisfaction?

In this study, there were five hypotheses:

- H1: There is a relationship between Empathy and customer satisfaction
- H2: There is a relationship between Reliability and customer satisfaction
- H3: There is a relationship between Responsiveness and customer satisfaction
- H4: There is a relationship between Assurance and customer satisfaction
- H5: There is a relationship between Tangible and customer satisfaction

Literature Review

Service quality is considered a critical determinant of competitiveness. Service quality can be defined as a phenomenon that is considered in the context of customers' expectations and views of the service provided. As a result, a customer may think highly of a service while another may think poorly of it. In other words, customer perception affects service quality (Saglik et al., 2014). High service quality is seen as an important factor in determining the long-term success of both manufacturing and service companies (Ghobadian et al., 1994). Understanding customers' perceptions, as well as the variables affecting how they evaluate and feel about the services they receive, is important for service providers in this situation (Nur & Zulkiffli, 2019). According to (Nur & Zulkiffli, 2019), looked at how perceived service quality affected customer

satisfaction and came to the conclusion that improving service quality can boost customer satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction

Currently, the restaurant industry's top priority for success is customer satisfaction. In order to satisfy customers, a business must provide goods and services that cater to their varying levels of value perception. For instance, when the level of service they receive fulfills their expectations, customers are happy (Padlee et al., 2019). If a customer is unhappy, they won't use your service again and won't recommend it to others. All of the business's efforts to improve service standards would have been in vain if the consumers left unhappy. (Ali et al., 2021). This variable is crucial for the hospitality industry since it has been demonstrated that customer satisfaction is the key determinant of service quality.

Service Quality Dimensions

The explanation of several definitions of service quality reveals that there is a significant and positive link between service providers and customers' satisfaction, which is something that almost all service providers nowadays care about (Anwar, 2017). Many studies have been done in an effort to determine the service quality that has the biggest impact on basic quality evaluations in the service environment. It is crucial to differentiate evidence of the components that impact service quality since it will enable measurement, management, and eventually improvement of the customer's perceived service quality (Ali et al., 2021). Service quality is crucial for evaluating, monitoring, and subsequently improving the quality of services provided to customers. (Parasuraman et al., 1985) identified ten factors, including reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, communication, credibility, security, competence, politeness, comprehension, and access, that affect consumers' satisfaction with service quality. The scales were further broken down into five components from the original ten characteristics of service quality (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, communication, credibility, security, competence, civility, knowing the customer, and access) to tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy on the basis of various statistical studies (Wei, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

The following figure is the research Theoretical Framework (SERVQUAL model) (Parasuraman et al., 1985):

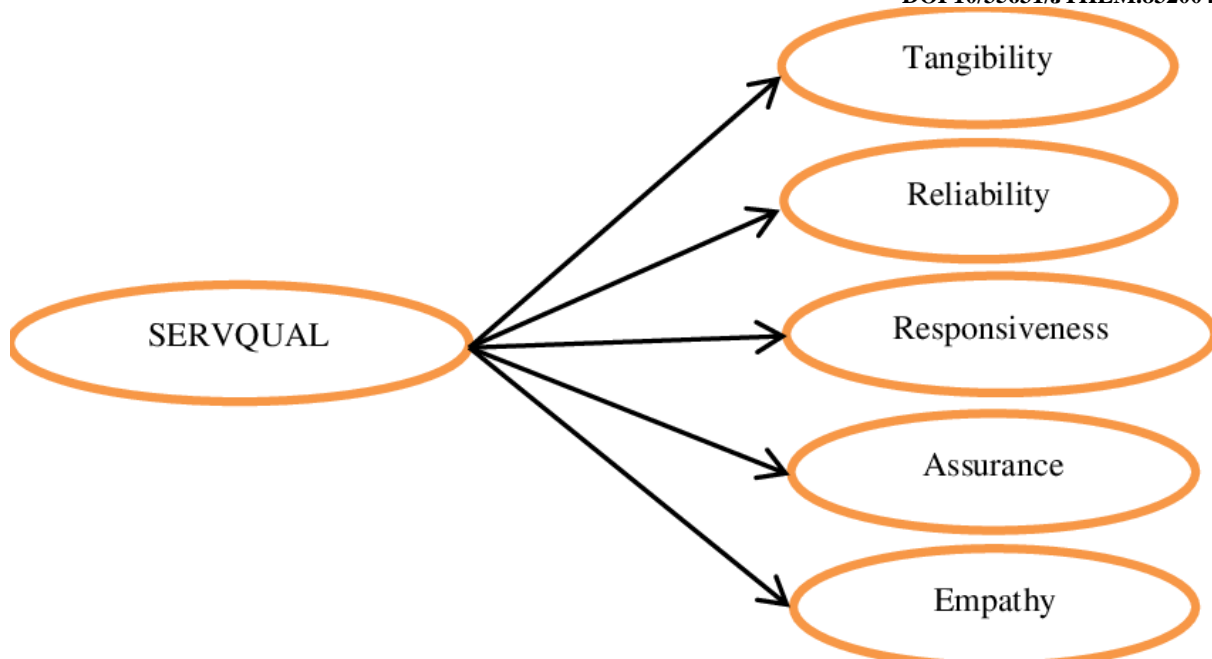


Figure 1 Shows the SERVQUAL Model (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Table 1 Five Dimensions of Service Quality, (Parasuraman, Zeithml And Berry1988).

DIMENSIONS	DESCRIPTION
Empathy	Caring, personalized service that the business offers its customers
Reliability	Ability to accurate and reliable provide the promised service
Responsiveness	willingness to assist customers and quick response in service
Assurance	Employee expertise, politeness, and their capacity to build confidence
Tangible	Facilities, technology and staff appearance

Empathy

Three key elements make up empathy for service quality: customer understanding, communication and accessibility (Wei, 2019). In the hospitality industry, accessibility refers to the ability of a certain hospitality organization to guarantee that its potential customers may reach the service providers easily via phone and email. However, the communication focuses on whether the service providers are able to comprehend the challenges faced by the customers and demonstrate care in order to successfully offer a potential solution (Wei,2019). Managers should set up specific training sessions for their staff members so they can hone their guest-facing communication skills (Rau & Sahu, 2013).

As a result, it became evident that in order to achieve a high level of customer satisfaction, each hospitality organization must carefully select its location, train its staff to deliver an effective communication process, and ensure that all of its employees are properly equipped to comprehend and fulfil the needs and desires of the customers (Eshetie et al., 2016).

Reliability

Reliability demonstrates a service provider's ability to keep its word and how valuable it is in its deeds. The crucial factor is immediately completing the customer's needs (Ali et al., 2021). According to (Bucak, 2014), reliability can be also called as the trustfulness which reveals the reliable and accurate services that a service firm offers to serve its potential customers. Reliability is a crucial component of the restaurant sector that they should pay close attention to because it has the potential to positively impact client satisfaction. Since it is a reliable technique to raise customer happiness when the service providers are reliable to offer relevant replies consistently, reliability tends to build a connected relationship with customer satisfaction (Eshetie et al., 2016).

Responsiveness

The ability of a service provider to quickly assist potential consumers reveals the responsiveness of the service provided (Alhkami & Alarussi, 2016). It is critical to satisfy all customer demands and expectations to prevent complaints about the quality of the service. (Anwar, 2017). Since it can determine whether a service provider succeeds or fails in handling customers' problems and questions, responsiveness can actually be considered one of the crucial service quality factors that is closely related to service providers and has a significant impact on determining overall customer satisfaction (Wei, 2019)

Assurance

The ability of staff personnel to inspire trust and confidence is demonstrated by their assurance. Customer satisfaction may be significantly impacted by assurance, thus organizations must consistently focus on this aspect to comprehend the demands and desires of their customers (Tuan & Linh, 2014). The restaurant needs to show that it is reliable and deserving of the money the consumer is paying. The ability and attitude of service providers to offer faith- and self-belief-based services to potential customers determines the quality of the services they give. Essentially, assurance is comprised of competence, courtesy, reliability, and security (Bharwana et al., 2013). According to (Wei, 2019), if a service provider can effectively resolve and handle the customer complaints and difficulties, the specific restaurant will be able to accomplish and fulfil a high degree of customer satisfaction as well as service quality.

Tangible

"The exterior appearance of physical structures, equipment, personnels and messaging applications" is the definition of tangible in the study context. Customer satisfaction tends to be significantly impacted by the tangible nature of service quality in the hotel business, according to Mazumder and Hasan's (2014). It is essential for hoteliers to upgrade their physical assets and advertise well-maintained facilities, such as creating contemporary-looking room features and making favored television channels available for their potential customers. The physical appearance of a structure includes the way its upgrades and furnishings. Things that are tangible can be include like how the cleanliness of the restaurants are, how presentable the staff's attire are, how they maintain hygienic procedures like using disposable gloves, etc (Ali

et al.,2021). Since the restaurant industry continually produces outcomes that have a substantial impact on consumers' satisfaction, it is necessary to preserve its "physical aspect" (Wei, 2019).

Methodology

The goal of the study is to comprehend how customer happiness in Western themed restaurants is influenced by service quality. Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling approach, was used in this study. Purposive sampling, according to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), will collect the essential primary data from the specific target respondents who are most readily available to give the researcher with the desired data. Analyzing the data and outcomes was done through quantitative research. The survey was distributed to the restaurant's patrons, and the results were compiled. The goals of this study are to clearly explain the statistical approach used to evaluate the data, define the research methodology, make apparent the procedures utilized in this study, and specify the metrics used in planning the instrument.

Research Design

A quantitative method was used to examine service quality and customer satisfaction from the customers' perspective. The study not only focus on gathering and describing data; it also aimed to ascertain whether there were any relationships between the research variables. For this reason, the research strategy was adapted. In this study, it was used to create a connection between the elements affecting customer satisfaction and the level of the services provided by the western themed restaurant. A questionnaire was employed by the researcher to analyze the findings of the current investigation. The gender, level of education, frequency of visits and occupation of the respondent were asked in the first of the survey's two sections. In the second section of the questionnaire, the five SERVQUAL dimensions are described as independent variables and customer satisfaction is discussed as a dependent variable.

Research Sampling

Whether it is a nation or a collection of related people, a population is a separate group of people. A population is the group of people from which a statistical sample is taken for a statistical study. This study will carry out in a few Western restaurants which are located in Shah Alam, Malaysia, the questionnaire will be distributed among people who live in this demographic area and have their food in these restaurants.

The participants' total sample size was determined by referring to G-power technique.

Questionnaire Design

As mentioned, there are several ways to measure service quality and SERVQUAL will be used in this study. The latter, on the other hand, only assess service quality perception, whereas the model helps in measuring both customers' satisfaction of the quality of the service. Given the uncertainty associated with employing both satisfaction and service quality measures and the ongoing support provided by Cronin and Taylor, different scholars have proposed numerous theories on both methodologies (1992). The researcher created the questionnaire, which was composed of multiple-choice questions. The respondents were asked to evaluate each statement on a five-point scale, from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Plans for Data Analysis

The respondents' demographic profiles, factors influencing customer satisfaction and overall customer satisfaction were all assessed using quantitative method. The completed surveys were

modified for consistency and completeness before processing the responses. Using the statistical programmed for social sciences (SPSS), the quantitative data was then examined and interpreted in accordance with the study's goals.

Instrumentation

The research instruments for this study are based on questionnaires that focus on The Impacts of Service Quality on Customers' Satisfaction in The Western Themed Restaurants. This study used a self-administered questionnaire and it designed in the form of a 5- point Likert scale.

Pilot Test

Prior to completing the main study, a pilot study enables the evaluation of the research methodology with a small sample of test subjects. It is crucial to analyse and test before moving on to the research implementation phase because this will help to keep the research strategy up to date. To determine whether the methods used to represent all pertinent parts were adequate, the study's content and construct validity were assessed.

Pilot tests were conducted at random among respondents using a Google Form and distributed over online platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp. Cronbach Alpha measurement will be employed in the pilot test phase because the closer the result was to one, the more stable the test was (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). A reliability tests was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). According to the reliability testing, Cronbach Alpha scores greater than 0.7 are considered acceptable.

Table 2 Alpha Cronbach Value

Variables	Alpha Cronbach Value	Number of item
Tangible	0.89	4
Reliability	0.85	4
Responsiveness	0.95	4
Empathy	0.954	4
Assurance	0.968	4
Customer Satisfaction	0.918	4

Findings

This chapter has been primarily concerned with the conclusions and ramifications of the statistical analysis and data acquisition. The descriptive findings and hypothesis testing were covered in this chapter's section. The data collected from respondents who completed the survey was analyzed using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient test. The output results and a summary of the tested hypotheses were discussed at the conclusion of this chapter.

Reliability and Validity Test

Based on table 3, there are six instruments such as Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Empathy, Assurance and Customer Satisfaction with each instrument showing different Cronbach alpha value and number of items.

To calculate internal consistency for reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used. Table 3 shows that all measured test variables were more than 0.9, with ranges of 0.925 to 0.964 indicating

outstanding results. The results of the initial reliability test, which involved 150 respondents, indicate the Cronbach alpha values for the six subsections, the majority of which had high values, such assurance at 0.964. Alpha Cronbach rating for responsiveness is 0.961, customer satisfaction is 0.956, empathy is 0.954, and tangible is 0.949. Reliability, however, produced the lowest score of 0.925. Thus, it can be concluded that most of the instruments are reliable and valid for the research as it has a high value of alpha Cronbach.

Table 3 Alpha Cronbach Value of Final Data

Variables	Alpha Cronbach Value	Number of item
Tangible	0.949	4
Reliability	0.925	4
Responsiveness	0.961	4
Empathy	0.954	4
Assurance	0.964	4
Customer Satisfaction	0.956	4

Demographic Analysis

For demographic analysis, it consists of Gender, Age, Frequency of visit (Monthly) and Occupation. The participated respondents are around 150 in which comes from many different backgrounds.

Table 4 Frequency And Percentage Of Demographic Profile

Demographic	Frequenc y	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	83	55.3
Female	67	44.7
Age		
18-20 years old	8	5.3
21-24 years old	83	55.3
25-30 years old	41	27.3
31 years old and above	18	12.0
Frequency of visit(Monthly)		
Less than 4 times	27	18.0
4 times	33	22.0
5 times	57	38.0
More than 5 times	33	22.0
Occupation		
Student	74	49.3

Employed	63	42.0
Unemployed	13	8.7

Note: N=150

From the table 4, there are more male respondents compared to female at 55.3%. Meanwhile for age, the highest percentage is 21-24 years old at 55.3%. For frequency of visit (Monthly), most of the respondents visited the restaurant 5 times a month which is 38.0%. Lastly, there are more student respondents who visited western restaurant compared to others respondent at 49.3%. The total of the respondents are 150 respondents.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient

The results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis include independent variables of Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Empathy and Assurance. Meanwhile, the dependent variables are Customer Satisfaction.

Table 5 Correlations (Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Empathy, Assurance) with Customer Satisfaction

Variables	Correlation, r	Sig. (2-tailed)
Tangible	0.883	0.000
Reliability	0.899	0.000
Responsiveness	0.910	0.000
Empathy	0.925	0.000
Assurance	0.937	0.000

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

The correlation coefficient (r), which indicates a relationship between variables, particularly a favourable relationship. According to the table, significant value level is 0.01 and tangible correlate is 0.883. At 0.899 and a significant value threshold of 0, the reliability correlation is 0.01. At a significant value level of 0,1, responsiveness correlates at 0.910. Empathy has a correlation of 0.925 and a significance level of 0.01. The significant value level is 0.01 and the assurance correlation is 0.937.

Discussion

The study's objective is to understand how service quality affects customer satisfaction in Western themed restaurants. Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was presented to demonstrate the relationship between both variables, independent and dependent. It is to measure the strength and direction of linear relationship between the variables. The results of the correlation coefficient, r has been interpreted by the range of the table of correlation coefficient, r guidelines either positive or negative correlation. The results show there is strong positive correlation, which means by the range 0.5 - 1.0. All test variables that were examined had scores of greater than 0.5, with ranges of 0.883 to 0.937 signifying influence strong positive correlation.

According to the findings, we may infer that clients really consider the quality of the service offered by western restaurants. It is advisable to pay special attention to these particulars because, even while a restaurant's food quality, quantity, and dish variety are vital, so is its level of service. Poor service in a restaurant can have an adverse effect on patron satisfaction. In addition to the food's quality, the consumer took note of a number of other elements, including the right lighting, seating arrangements, and food delivery timings. Most of the respondents reported seeing these components while dining in western restaurants.

Table 6 Summary of Hypotheses

	HYPOTHESIS	RESULT
H1	There is a significant relationship between Empathy and customer satisfaction	Accepted and positive (Large correlation)
H2	There is a significant relationship between Reliability and customer satisfaction	Accepted and positive (Large correlation)
H3	There is a significant relationship between Responsiveness and customer satisfaction	Accepted and positive (Large correlation)
H4	There is a significant relationship between Assurance and customer satisfaction	Accepted and positive (Large correlation)
H5	There is a significant relationship between Tangible and customer satisfaction	Accepted and positive (Large correlation)

Empathy and customer satisfaction have a correlation of 0.883. Empathy and customer satisfaction have a high and positive association that is worth 0.883. The number generated for the correlation between reliability and customer satisfaction is 0.899, which indicates that there is a significant and favourably skewed relationship between the two. Third, there is a high and positive association between responsiveness and customer happiness, with the correlation between the two being assessed at 0.910. The result generated for the correlation between empathy and customer satisfaction is 0.925, which indicates that there is a significant and favourably skewed relationship between the two. Last but not least, the correlation between assurance and customer satisfaction is 0.937, indicating a significant and favourable link.

Future Implication

The managers of western restaurants must focus on internal quality issues if they wish to enhance exterior service quality concerns, according to all of the research's conclusions. Managers could, for instance, improve internal collaboration and coordination amongst various departments involved in workflow, assist in resolving misunderstandings, and include all departments in problem-solving. It could be a good idea for restaurant management (i.e., kitchen staff) to be more adaptable so they can cater to particular client wants as external respondents claimed to have gotten standardized services. The results of this study call attention to the notion that while excellent food may delight patrons, subpar services may

nonetheless have a detrimental impact on patron satisfaction.

Conclusion

Businesses that prioritize customer satisfaction and service quality are more likely to achieve long term success. Satisfied customers are more likely to recommend the business to others, resulting in increased revenue and growth.

The findings show a relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality. Customer satisfaction is influenced by the elements of tangibles, assurance, responsiveness, reliability and empathy. This statement is supported by similar findings where it shows that the tangibility, certainty, and empathy of service quality have a substantial impact on consumers' satisfaction levels (Wei, YK 2019). Therefore, it can be said that in order for the restaurant to be successful, the management must assess these elements in a way that increases service quality and customer satisfaction.

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