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A Study on Consumer Perception and Satisfaction of Restaurant Services in Coimbatore City

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Abstract
The restaurant industry plays a significant role in the service sector by meeting the changing food preferences and expectations of customers. Customer perception and satisfaction are important factors that influence customer loyalty, repeat visits, and the overall success of restaurant businesses. The present study, titled "Customer Perception and Satisfaction of Restaurant Services in Coimbatore City," aims to examine customers' perceptions and their level of satisfaction with restaurant services in Coimbatore City. The study focuses on key factors influencing restaurant selection, including food quality, price, cleanliness and hygiene, service quality, ambience, and staff behavior. It also seeks to understand customer preferences, expectations, and overall satisfaction with restaurant services. The study adopts a descriptive research design, with primary data collected from respondents through a structured questionnaire using Google Forms. The collected data are intended to be analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to identify customer preferences and satisfaction levels.

Keywords: Restaurant Services, Service Quality, Customer Preferences.

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1.INTRODUCTION
The restaurant industry is an important part of the service sector, providing food and dining experiences to customers with different preferences and expectations. In today's competitive business environment, customer perception and satisfaction play a vital role in the success of restaurant businesses. Factors such as food quality, price, cleanliness, service quality, ambience, and staff behavior influence customers' dining experiences and their decisions to revisit a restaurant. Coimbatore City has a diverse range of restaurants catering to different customer needs. Therefore, this study aims to analyze customer perception and satisfaction regarding restaurant services in Coimbatore City and identify the major factors influencing their preferences and satisfaction levels.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
The restaurant industry has become increasingly competitive due to changing consumer preferences, lifestyle patterns and expectations. Consumers today consider several factors while selecting a restaurant, such as food quality, price, cleanliness, service quality, staff behaviour, ambience and overall dining experience. Although restaurants provide various services to attract consumers, their level of satisfaction may differ depending on individual expectations and experiences. Understanding consumer perception is therefore essential for restaurant management to identify areas of strength and weaknesses in their services. In Coimbatore City, the growing number of restaurants has increased the choices available to consumers. However, it is important to understand how consumers evaluate restaurant services, which factors influence their restaurant selection, and whether the services provided meet their expectations. Therefore, the present study aims to analyse consumer perception and satisfaction towards restaurant services in Coimbatore City, with particular reference to food quality, pricing, cleanliness, staff behaviour, service quality and overall dining experience. The study also seeks to identify the factors influencing consumer preferences and provide suitable suggestions for improving restaurant services and enhancing consumer satisfaction.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
1. To study the perception of customers towards restaurant services in Coimbatore City.

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2. To investigate the factors influencing restaurant selection and customers' online cuisine preferences.
3. To examine the relationship between restaurant service quality and customer satisfaction.
4. To identify the major problems or difficulties experienced by customers while availing restaurant services.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on understanding customer perception and satisfaction towards restaurant services in Coimbatore City. It examines customers' perceptions regarding important aspects of restaurant services such as food quality, price, cleanliness and hygiene, ambience, staff behaviour, and speed of service. The study also covers the factors influencing customers' restaurant selection and their preferences while ordering food online. It examines the relationship between restaurant service quality and customer satisfaction, including customers' satisfaction with price, food variety, and overall service. In addition, the study identifies the major problems and difficulties faced by customers while availing restaurant services. The findings of the study may help restaurant owners and service providers understand customer expectations and identify areas where restaurant services can be improved.

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is restricted to customers in Coimbatore City, and therefore the findings may not be generalised to customers in other districts or regions.
2. The study is based on the responses provided by the selected respondents. Their opinions and perceptions may vary depending on their personal experiences and preferences.
3. The study is conducted within a limited period, and customer preferences and expectations may change over time.
4. The accuracy of the findings depends on the honesty and understanding of the respondents while answering the questionnaire.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a descriptive research design to understand customer perception and satisfaction towards restaurant services in Coimbatore City. The study focuses on various factors influencing customer satisfaction, such as food quality, price, service quality, cleanliness, ambience and customer service. The study follows a descriptive research design to analyse the opinions, preferences and satisfaction levels of customers regarding restaurant services. The study is conducted in Coimbatore City, Tamil Nadu. Primary Data: Collected directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire using Google Forms. Secondary Data: Collected from journals, research articles, books, websites and other published sources. Convenience sampling method is used to collect data from respondents who are easily accessible and willing to participate in the study. The study is based on a sample size of 50 respondents from Coimbatore City. A structured questionnaire consisting of multiple-choice questions and rating-scale questions is used to collect information from respondents. The collected data are analysed using the following statistical tools: Percentage analysis, Frequency distribution, Chi-square analysis, Anova.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Murthy and Kumar (2023)

In their study "A Qualitative Analysis of the Customers' Perceptions of the Restaurant Services in Bengaluru," the researchers examined customer expectations and perceptions of restaurant services among 250 respondents. The study focused on reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and physical facilities. The findings highlighted the importance of error-free service and prompt customer attention.

2. Ayoub, Hamid and Kachru (2023)

The study "Impact of Price, Taste and Ambiance on Consumer Satisfaction" examined the influence of restaurant pricing, food taste and atmosphere on customer satisfaction. Data was collected from 300 consumers in Jammu district. The findings established that price, taste and ambience significantly influence customer satisfaction.

3. Zanetta et al. (2024)

In their research, "How Does the Consumer Choose a Restaurant? An Overview of the Determinants of Consumer Satisfaction," the authors reviewed 111 research articles and identified 117 factors influencing restaurant selection and customer satisfaction. The study found that food quality was one of the most important factors, followed by service quality, atmosphere and price.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Customer Perception: It refers to how customers think and feel about restaurant services based on their experiences and expectations.
2. Food Quality: It refers to the taste, freshness, quality and presentation of food served in restaurants.
3. Service Quality: It refers to how well restaurant employees serve customers, including their behaviour, speed and responsiveness.
4. Price: It refers to the amount customers pay for food and services and whether they feel the price is reasonable.
5. Cleanliness and Hygiene: It refers to the cleanliness of the restaurant, dining area, kitchen and food-handling practices.
6. Restaurant Ambience: It refers to the atmosphere of the restaurant, including seating arrangements, lighting, decoration and comfort.
7. Customer Satisfaction: It refers to the level of happiness customers experience after receiving restaurant services.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 DATA COLLECTION

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
GENDER	MALE FEMALE PREFER NOT TO SAY	22 25 4	43.1 49.0 7.8
AGE GROUP	BELOW 18 18-25 26-30 ABOVE	5 26 10 10	9.8 51.0 19.6
MARITAL STATUS	MARRIED UNMARRIED	26 25	51.0 49.0
MONTHLY INCOME	BELOW 20000 20001-30000 30001-50000 AVOVE 50000	21 14 7 9	41.2 27.5 13.7 17.6
OCCUPATION	STUDENT SALARIED EMPLAYEE BUSINESS OTHER	19 13 6 13	37.3 25.5 11.8 25.5
TOTAL	**ALL RESPONDENTS**	**51**	**100.0**

4.2. DATA ANALYSIS

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

The Chi-square test was applied to examine the distribution of respondents across different demographic and behavioral categories. The analysis was conducted using 51 responses at a 5% level of significance.

1. Demographic Distribution Analysis

Gender: The Chi-square value is 14.51 with 2 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.0007. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant. The findings indicate that the respondents are distributed unevenly across gender categories, with female respondents (49%) forming the largest group, followed by male respondents (43.1%). Age: The Chi-square value is 22.18 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.0001. The result is statistically significant. More than half of the respondents (51%) belong to the 18–25 age group, indicating that young adults form the major segment of the study population. Monthly Income: The Chi-square value is 10.25 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.0166. Since the p-value is below 0.05, the result is statistically significant.

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The largest proportion of respondents (41.2%) belongs to the monthly income category below ₹20,000, indicating a considerable representation of lower-income groups.

2. Consumer Behavioral Analysis

Dining Frequency: The Chi-square value is 8.06 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.0448. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant. The findings show that 39.2% of respondents visit restaurants occasionally, while 27.5% visit very frequently. This indicates that restaurant dining is a regular part of the lifestyle of many respondents. value of 0.0001. The result is statistically significant. Family outings account for the highest proportion of restaurant visits (51%), suggesting that restaurants are important places for family gatherings and Primary Purpose of Dining: The Chi-square value is 22.18 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-social interactions. Marketing and Awareness Channels: The Chi-square value is 7.12 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.0682. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant. Word-of-mouth (37.3%) and social media (29.4%) are the major sources through which respondents become aware of restaurants. However, the differences among the awareness channels are not statistically significant at the 5% level.

4.3 SUMMARY OF CHI SQUARE RESULTS

VARIABLES	CHI SQUARE VALUE	P- VALUE	RESULT
GENDER	14.51	0.0007	SIGNIFICANT
AGE	22.18	0.0001	SIGNIFICANT
MONTHLY INCOME	10.25	0.0166	SIGNIFICANT
DINING FREQUENCY	8.06	0.0448	SIGNIFICANT
DINING PURPOSE	22.18	0.0001	SIGNIFICANT
AWARENESS CHANNEL	7.12	0.0682	NOT SIGNIFICANT

4.4 ANOVA ANALYSIS

VARIABLES	ANOVA PURPOSE	HYPOTHESIS
AGE	Compare satisfaction among age groups	No significant difference
MONTHLY INCOME	Compare satisfaction among income groups	No significant difference
GENDER	Compare satisfaction among gender	No significant difference
DINING FREQUENCY	Compare satisfaction based on dining frequency	No significant difference
DINING PURPOSE	Compare satisfaction based on dining frequency	No significant difference
MARKETING CHANNELS	Compare satisfaction based on dining frequency	No significant difference

4.5 HYPOTHESIS

H_0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in customer satisfaction based on demographic and consumer behavior factors.

H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant difference in customer satisfaction based on demographic and consumer behavior factors.

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4.5 INTERPRETATION

The Chi-square analysis reveals that significant differences exist in the distribution of respondents based on gender, age, monthly income, dining frequency and primary dining purpose. The study indicates that young adults and lower-income groups form a considerable portion of the respondents. Family outings are the leading purpose of restaurant visits, while occasional dining is the most common dining frequency.

However, the analysis of marketing and awareness channels shows no statistically significant difference among the categories. Word-of-mouth and social media remain important sources of restaurant awareness among respondents.

If p-value is less than 0.05: Reject the null hypothesis. If p-value is greater than 0.05: Accept (more precisely, fail to reject) the null hypothesis.

H_0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference in customer satisfaction based on demographic and consumer behavior factors.

H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant difference in customer satisfaction based on demographic and consumer behavior factors.

5. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 FINDINGS

1. The study was conducted among 51 respondents to understand customer perception and satisfaction with restaurant services in Coimbatore City.
2. The study indicates that food quality and taste are important factors influencing customers' restaurant preferences.
3. Cleanliness and hygiene play an important role in building customer trust and satisfaction.
4. Price and affordability influence customers when choosing a restaurant.
5. Good staff behavior and prompt service help improve the overall dining experience.
6. Customer preferences may differ according to age groups and individual needs.
7. Ambience, seating arrangements, and the availability of different food varieties can influence restaurant selection.
8. Overall, customer satisfaction depends on the combined effect of food quality, service, cleanliness, and reasonable pricing.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS

1. Restaurants should maintain good food quality and taste to improve customer satisfaction.
2. Proper cleanliness and hygiene should be maintained in the restaurant and food preparation areas.
3. Restaurants should offer reasonable prices to attract more customers.
4. Staff should provide friendly, polite, and prompt service to customers.
5. Restaurants should improve ambience, seating arrangements, and overall comfort.

6. CONCLUSION

The study on Customer Perception and Satisfaction of Restaurant Services in Coimbatore City concludes that customer satisfaction depends on various factors, including food quality, taste, cleanliness, price, staff behavior and service quality. The preferences of customers may vary according to their age groups and individual expectations.

The study highlights the importance of maintaining hygiene, providing quality food at reasonable prices, and improving customer service. Collecting regular feedback and understanding customer needs can help restaurants improve their services and attract more customers.

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