

## **CRITICAL REVIEW OF SERVICE QUALITY SCALES WITH A FOCUS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY IN RESTAURANTS**

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### **Abstract**

This study provides a critical review of the instruments developed for measuring service quality in restaurants. However, this study reviews the researches to examine the relationships between service quality, customer satisfaction (CS), and customer loyalty (CL) in restaurants. It is revealed that there are many attempts to develop instruments that aim to measure service quality in restaurants. SERVQUAL instrument, which measures service quality (SQ), has been used in many studies related to the tourism industry. However, the SERVQUAL is directly used as the basis of the SERVPERF and DINESERV instruments. Besides, since the GRSERV and CFFRSERV scales are based on DINESERV, the SERVQUAL plays an important role in the development of such scales. In addition to the instruments developed by modifying SERVQUAL, there are attempts to create different ones. In researches that develop a new SQ scale, the reasons underlying this need are stated as follows: 1) Some service quality components specific to restaurants and tourism sector not included in the current scales 2) Measuring the expectations and performance at the same time is not necessary 3) Current scales are insufficient for the unique types of restaurants, such as Fast Food, Upscale and Green Restaurants. CS and CL are the most common variables in the studies examining the SQ in restaurants. There is a divergence in the literature about whether service quality leads to satisfaction or satisfaction brings service quality. However, it can be said that there is a consensus that these two structures are in a very close relationship with each other. Another consensus in the literature is that CS and SQ are regarded as the determinants of CL. On the other hand, a considerable amount of research has been devoted to service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty, and it will be the case for future studies. However, the changes in business environments reveal the necessity of modification in the instruments that will pave the way to measure these concepts. A pandemic has recently affected the lives of businesses, and people and this new situation may require the addition of a new dimension to service quality instruments, like outbreak measures.

**Keywords:** Service Quality Scales, Customer satisfaction, Customer loyalty, critical review, restaurants.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Different types of businesses in the hospitality, and food and beverage industry trying to deliver their products and services in a competitive environment but also gain an advantage with customer satisfaction and increased loyalty. Businesses adopt different marketing strategies (Namin, 2017) to offer products with high quality for satisfied customers (Shemwell, Yavas, & Bilgin, 1998). Service quality and customer satisfaction are two important concepts addressed

in marketing theories and studies. Satisfaction refers to “a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provided (or is providing) a pleasurable level of consumption fulfillment, including the levels of under or over fulfillment” (Oliver, 1997:13).

Foodservice and customer satisfaction can be evaluated through a range of factors such as food quality (Fanelli & Di Nocera, 2018), hygiene, service quality (Taylor & Baker, 1994), and atmosphere (Yüksel & Yüksel, 2003). The overall dining experience in a restaurant is used to conceptualize customer satisfaction by way of assessing both food quality and service quality (Alhelalat, Habiballah, & Twaissi, 2017; Kaya, 2018).

The service quality is such a factor that affects the satisfaction of the customers (Löke, Kovács, & Bacsı, 2018) and their re-visit intentions (Eren, 2019). Mattila, (2001) puts forward 3 elements affecting the customers' restaurant preferences as follows: service, food quality, and atmosphere. Properly organized food service may increase the service quality perception of the restaurant and have a positive effect on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Choe & Kim, 2018; Ryu & Han, 2010).

Customer satisfaction, on the other hand, is one of the fundamental constructs used to explain the process of establishing customer loyalty (Brida & Coletti, 2012; Brunner, Stöcklin, & Opwis, 2008; Han & Hyun, 2018; Ostrowski, O'Brien, & Gordon, 1993). Similarly, reviewing the studies on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in literature, it is observed that customer satisfaction affects customer loyalty positively (Bolton & Lemon, 1999; Dick & Basu, 1994; Oliver & Burke, 1999).

Customer loyalty is considered as a repetitive behavior which results from psychological decision-making and evaluation processes and is driven by positive behaviors (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973). It is seen that different scales and different attitudinal and behavioral approaches are used to measure customer loyalty (Oliver & Burke, 1999; Zeithaml, 2000). Those who discuss the subject from the attitudinal perspective consider customer loyalty a special desire to maintain a relationship with a service provider.

From the behavioral perspective, customer loyalty is characterized by repeat customers, and it refers to a customer's purchasing the same product or service in a specific category much more than the total number of purchases made by other customers in the same category (Neal, 1999). Loyal customers bring great advantages to organizations by providing constant profit flow and decrease marketing/promotion costs. Increasing and maintaining the number of loyal customers is in the center of the firm's long-term success (TaghiPourian & Bakhsh, 2015). A highly loyal customer repeatedly purchases a product/service and possesses a positive sense of attitudinal loyalty toward the brand (Pritchard & Howard, 1997).

Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty have been studied by many researchers in travel, tourism, and F&B industries (Back & Parks, 2003; W. Kim, Ok, & Canter, 2010; Pizam & Ellis, 1999; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2003). In the study conducted by Line and Runyan (2012: 478-479), it was concluded that satisfaction as the subject was discussed in 8.8% of the studies in total, taking into consideration 278 marketing-oriented researches published between 2008 and 2010 in four leading journals (Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, International Journal of Hospitality Management, Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management). In this period for the studies mentioned above, satisfaction was the most studied subject. On the other hand, the subject of loyalty was discussed in %3.6 of the studies in total. 31.7% of 278 studies in total in the tourism industry focus on restaurants, which is the second most studied subject field after hotels. Another striking point in Line & Runyan, (2012)'s study is that 88% of the papers on satisfaction are about restaurants.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study aims to review critically (1) the main service quality measurement scales and (2) how these scales used in researches to examine the relationship between service quality (SQ), customer satisfaction (CS), and customer loyalty (CL) in restaurants.

For the first part of the study review required studies to be focused on the development of SQ scales for restaurants that follow the methodological steps (1) Item development, theoretical frameworks on the service quality, empirical investigations, or panels of experts (2) Reliability and Validity analysis.

For the second part of the review to identify studies the inclusion criteria was to examine the relationships between SQ, CS, and CL in restaurants. There was one exclusion criteria for both of the parts: the electronic service quality or e-service quality (mainly services provided in digital platforms) researches.

To collect the relevant literature on SQ scale development, and CS and CL the following search terms in title, keywords, or abstracts were used: "Service quality measurements" "service quality scale restaurants" "Tools of service quality in restaurants" "service quality measurement in restaurants". The relevant literature was sought in the most significant electronic databases for tourism: Web of Science and Scopus. The articles were screened for inclusion and exclusion criteria after completing the literature search.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The number of restaurants like the other businesses in the food and beverage industry in the world has increased in the last 20-30 years and the world population spends remarkable time in these establishments apart from the basic living spaces such as workplace, and home (Antun et al., 2010). In order to respond to the demand, it has become inevitable for restaurants to offer a wide range of products and services to increase the value in customers and distinguish the business from its competitors. It will be possible for restaurants to increase the quality of their services by way of determining and fulfilling the factors affecting restaurant preferences of customers, and thus, their satisfaction and loyalty

Success in the food and beverage industry and customer satisfaction (CS) is directly linked to service quality (SQ). There are different perspectives about the dimensions of SQ and linkage between these two constructs. Disagreement on the proposed association between SQ and satisfaction has led to a split over causality, with one side supporting the proposal that quality leads to satisfaction (Woodside, Frey, & Daly, 1989) and the other side supporting the proposal that satisfaction leads to SQ (Bitner, 1990). Cronin and Taylor (1992) concluded that the quality of service can be seen as a determinant of satisfaction, in this wise affects consumer loyalty (Asubonteng, Mcleary, & Swan, 1996). Besides, Heskett et al., (1994) defined SQ as a critical component of customer loyalty. Beyond the disagreement for the relationships, this study firstly focuses on the SQ issue and its measurement instruments for restaurants.

### **Instruments for measuring service quality in restaurants**

In the 1980s and 1990s, the number of researches related to perceived service quality increased due to the research gap of measuring and defining the construct. One of the most important contributions to SQ literature has been done by Parasuraman et al., (1985) which defined service quality as “a function of the differences between expectation and performance along the quality dimensions”. Parasuraman et al. (1985) indicated that the SQ is a result of the variations between expectations and results in terms of quality. They have developed a SQ model based on a gap analysis that identifies SQ as a function of perception and expectations. Parasuraman et al. (1985) in their first attempt used ten dimensions to measure but they refined the subsequent measurement tool named SERVQUAL with the research Parasuraman et al., (1988) and the original dimensions changed to five dimensions with 22 items. These dimensions include tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (the difference of the first version: communication, competence, credibility, courtesy, and security). Parasuraman et al., (1988) defined SQ as "the degree and direction of discrepancy between consumers' perceptions and expectations". SQ can be measured with the gap between a customer's expectations and the

perceptions of what is actually delivered (H. Qin & Prybutok, 2009). Before the SERVQUAL instrument, the idea of a gap model has already used by Grönroos, (1984) as a concept about service quality. SERVQUAL instrument used by different researchers to measure SQ in restaurants (Bojanic & Drew Rosen, 1994; Fick & Brent Ritchie, 1991; Fu & Parks, 2001; Lee & Hing, 1995; Nam & Lee, 2011; Tzeng & Chang, 2011).

After the development of SERVQUAL instrument, a debate discussed between academics about the adequacy of the scale to measure SQ (Brown, Churchill, & Peter, 1993; Cronin & Taylor, 1992, 1994; Dabholkar, Shepherd, & Thorpe, 2000; Teas, 1993). Differentiation of ideas was about the "expectations-performance gap as the basis for measuring service quality" (Cronin and Taylor, 1992, p. 56) and the reliability and validity of dimensions. Cronin and Taylor, (1992) examined the measurement of SQ and the relationship between SQ, CS, and purchase intention. This research discarded the expectations portion of SERVQUAL instrument and just used the performance indicators in the new scale named as "SERVPERF" that originated from "performance-only measures". The new approach prefers to use consumers' perceptions of the performance of the service provider to measure SQ, rather than using the difference between expectations and performance perceptions of customers (Seth, Deshmukh, & Vrat, 2005). In addition to their theoretical contribution, Cronin and Taylor (1992) used SERVPERF instrument for different industries including fast-food restaurants. The dimensions used in SERVPERF instrument same as SERVQUAL dimensions and namely tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. SERVPERF has been used to measure SQ in restaurants in different researches (Namin, 2017; G. Qin & Prybutok, 2008; H. Qin, Prybutok, & Peak, 2009; Ramseook-Munhurrin, 2012; Yesiltas, Zorlu, Sop, & Beydilli, 2014). Qin & Prybutok, (2009) used SERVPERF instrument to measure SQ in restaurants and employed a new dimension namely recovery.

Another attempt to develop a scale to measure SQ made by Knutson et al., (1996) and Stevens et al., (1995). The authors introduced DINESERV instrument in 1995 to measure service quality in restaurants. This new instrument as a questionnaire consists of 29 items and uses five dimensions namely; assurance, empathy, reliability, responsiveness, and tangible (Hansen, 2014). DINESERV was developed with reference to LODGSERV (lodging service) and SERVQUAL. Stevens et al. (1995) emphasize that customers seek restaurants that can meet their quality and value standards. From that point, restaurants need DINESERV instrument to learn about how customers perceive SQ in the restaurant. DINESERV also gives more information to restaurateurs about customers' expectations. DINESERV instrument has been used by different researches for restaurants (eg. Bougoure & Neu, 2010; H. J. Kim et al., 2003; W. G. Kim et al., 2009).

**Table 1** Scales Used to Measure Service Quality in Restaurants

Publication	Name of the Scale	Number of Items	Dimensions
Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988, 1991)	SERVQUAL	22 items on expectation, 22 items on perception	SERVQUAL scale measures the service quality in 5 dimensions in all kinds of service enterprises: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy.
Cronin & Taylor, (1992, 1994)	SERVPERF	22 items on perception	22 perception-related items in SERVQUAL are used. It emerged as an alternative technique to SERVQUAL. It is composed of 5 dimensions as follows: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.
Stevens et al. (1995)	DINESERV	29 items	This scale was adapted from SERVQUAL for restaurant enterprises. Expectation and satisfaction dimensions are measured separately. It is composed of 5 dimensions as follows: material elements, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.
Antun et al. (2010)	DINEX	20 items	It is composed of 5 dimensions as follows: food, service, atmosphere, social, and health.
Ryu & Shawn Jang, (2008)	DINESCAPE	21 items	It is composed of 6 dimensions as follows: facility aesthetics, ambiance, lighting, table settings, layout, and service staff. The most important dimensions are ambiance, service staff, and facility aesthetics.
Raajpoot (2002)	TANGSERV	13 items	It is composed of 3 dimensions. It aims at measuring particularly the tangible/physical elements. The dimensions are layout/design, product/service, and ambiance/social.
Kivela et al. (1999; 2000)	Dining Satisfaction	28 items	It is composed of 5 dimensions as follows: food, service, atmosphere, suitability, and "A restaurant... (Experience)"
Chen et al. (2015)	GRSERV	28 items	It is composed of 7 dimensions. The dimensions are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, environment-focused services, and food quality.
Tan, Oriade & Fallon (2014)	CFFRSERV	28 items	The scale uses 28 items under six dimensions namely; tangibles, cleanliness, food quality, responsiveness, reliability & assurance, and empathy.

Source: own elaboration from literature.

Antun et al., (2010) used various quantitative and qualitative methods in their study to develop DINEX scale. The items in the scale were developed by applying the Delphi method on small groups of professional restaurant managers and owners. The main goal of the Delphi method is to obtain the most eligible and detailed data. In order to clarify and highlight the scale

items, focus group interviews were conducted. Out of 6 focus groups in total, 3 groups were made up of restaurant professionals while the other 3 groups were composed of restaurant customers. As a result of the focus group interviews, the scale items were clearly put forward. The number of the scale items was reduced by the pre-test stage. As a result of factor analysis (explanatory and confirmatory), DINEX scale items became final in a way to consisting of 5 dimensions (food, service, atmosphere, social dependency, and health) and 20 items.

DINEX is a scale that can make all calculations while taking into a consideration dining experience and the most important expectations of customers' which are in reciprocal interaction within a completely complex structure. DINEX scale's greatest contribution to the literature is that it involves new dimensions namely social and health (Antun et al. 2010).

Similar to Antun et al. (2010), Kivela, Reece, and Inbakaran (1999) also benefited from the Delphi method throughout the scale development process. "Dining Satisfaction" was developed in order to measure the satisfaction in full-service restaurants offering a la carte service rather than measuring the satisfaction in fast-food restaurants. For the development of the scale, relevant individuals such as restaurant managers and potential customers were interviewed in groups. In addition, three different group interviews were carried out with these groups in three stages, and a scale construct consisting of 5 dimensions (food, service, atmosphere, suitability, experience) and 28 items was developed finally.

Ryu & (Shawn) Jang, (2008) used quantitative analyses to develop the DINESCAPE instrument and aimed to fulfill research gaps about customer perceptions of physical environments in restaurants, especially in the upscale restaurants. Researchers identified physical environment dimensions for upscale restaurants namely; facility aesthetics, ambiance, lighting, table settings, layout, and service staff. The name DINESCAPE was inspired from to SERVICESCAPE instrument but it is different because DINESCAPE does not contain external environments (e.g., parking and external building design) and non-dining internal environments (e.g., restroom and waiting area). Ryu & (Shawn) Jang, (2008) defined the DINESCAPE as a measurement tool for "the man-made physical and human surroundings in the dining area of restaurants". Due to the target businesses (upscale restaurants), researchers stated that this instrument can be modified for more suitable measurement purposes for different restaurant segments.

Later than other researches Raajpoot, (2002) proposed a new instrument called TANGSERV to measure the tangible qualities in the business of the foodservice industry. This relatively new instrument contains ambient/social factors (e.g., music and temperature), layout/design factors (e.g., location and seating arrangement), and product/service factors (e.g., food presentation). Academia did not pay much attention to this instrument. The importance of TANGSERV

instrument for the literature was the attempt to put forward social factors such as employee behavior, customer compatibility, and crowding. Social factors can be noteworthy for customers and can affect the perceived SQ in a restaurant. One of the author's starting points is the lack of some ambient factors in SERVQUAL and DINESERV such as music, light, and temperature.

Kivela et al., (2000); Kivela, Inbakaran, et al., (1999); Kivela, Reece, et al., (1999) conducted three researches to develop a scale for SQ in restaurants. Authors published the results of the process in three different articles. Authors prepared theoretical background in the first part, in the second part they implemented scale development process and in the third part, they used the scale to measure SQ in Hong Kong restaurants. Authors used the Delphi technique and conducted three semi-structured face-to-face interviews to develop the instrument.

The first section of the questionnaire asks participants the expectations and importance of the attributes when the participants decide to dine in the restaurant. In the second section the same attributes used for measuring if the restaurant meets with expectations of participants. The instrument involves 28 restaurant attributes measured on a weight matrix scale ranging from 1 to 5 (E part: Low E. to High E.; I part Not I. to Very I.; EM part: Not ME to Has ME) listed under five factors. (1. food factors; 2. service factors; 3. ambiance factors; 4. convenience factors; and 5 a restaurant that offers). With the three parts (two sections) of the instrument authors firstly measure Expectations" (E), "Importance" (I), "Expectations met" (EM) and then pre-dining perceptions  $\pm$  "PrDp" (ExI) and post-dining perceptions  $\pm$  "PoDp" (EMxI) are calculated.

In the restaurant service quality literature an important contribution is GR SERV scale which was organized for green restaurants. Chen et al., (2015) used qualitative and quantitative procedures to develop, and test reliability of Green Restaurant Service Quality scale (GR SERV). As Chen et al., (2015) used in their study, a green restaurant refers to one that offers a selection of green food items using locally grown or certified established food, as well as one that implements green practices such as a recycling program, energy and water efficiency, and solid waste reduction. Authors' criticism for past scales was the failure to propose a scale applicable to assets SQ in green restaurants.

Researchers used the DINESERV scale as the basis to develop the GR SERV. There are 28 items in GR SERV under 7 dimensions namely tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, environmental- oriented services, and food quality. GR SERV brings two new dimensions apart from DINESERV to measure SQ. Items of DINESERV revised for GR SERV due to the service characteristics and green practices of green restaurants.



Tan et al., (2014) developed a new scale (CFFRSERV=Chinese Fast food restaurants service quality scale) for measuring quality of services in fast food restaurants' by modifying DINESERV scale. This new scale included twenty-eight items under six dimensions namely; tangibles, cleanliness, food quality, responsiveness, reliability & assurance, and empathy. Authors' criticism for DINESERV instrument is the cultural differences and they stated that it was developed based on the American cultural elements. The generalizability of DINESERV to other cultures so countries is questionable and CFFRSERV with the Chinese context can measure SQ effectively in Chinese fast-food restaurants.

### **Determinants of Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty for Restaurants**

Examining the studies in the literature, it is generally observed that the dimensions of satisfaction are food, atmosphere, service, and social factors (friendship, social dependency, etc.). Similarly, the dimensions of loyalty are discussed in two dimensions as behavioral intentions and customer share of visits. However, behavioral intentions embody the re-visiting intention, positive word of mouth advertising, and recommendation.

**Table 2** Determinants of satisfaction and loyalty

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Determinants (Dependent Variable)</b>	<b>Satisfaction/Loyalty (Independent Variable)</b>
Weiss et al. (2004)	Food quality, Service quality, Atmosphere, and Innovation	Satisfaction
Ryu & Han (2011)	Environmental factors, Disconfirmation (Positive-Neutral-Negative)	Satisfaction and Revisit
Liu & Jang (2009)	Environmental factors, Perceived value, Emotional Responses	Revisit
Han et al. (2009)	Satisfaction and Consumption Feelings	Loyalty
Antun et al. (2010)	Social bonds	Satisfaction and Revisit
Sulek & Hensley (2004)	Food, Atmosphere, and Fairness of wait	Loyalty
Han et al. (2009)	Switching barriers, Emotions	Satisfaction and Revisit
Kim et al. (2010)	Switching cost (Procedural, Social and Lost benefit), Emotions	Satisfaction and Customer share of visits
Han et al. (2009)	Brand preference, Internal drive for variety-seeking, Diversity in alternatives	Loyalty
Kivela et al. (1999a) (1999b)	Importance attached	Satisfaction

Source: own elaboration from literature.

When Tab. 2 is analyzed from a generic perspective, it is seen in each study that the researchers put forward particular determinants of satisfaction and loyalty. To address them in an integrated framework, the determinants of satisfaction can be listed as follows: socio-demographic variables, environmental factors, perceived value (hedonic and utilitarian values), the fairness of wait time, consumption feelings, interaction with service personnel and interaction with other customers. On the other hand, the determinants of loyalty are listed as perceived value, switching costs, attractiveness of alternatives, internal drive for variety-seeking, and atmosphere.

According to Oliver, (1980) customer satisfaction is an outcome resulting from customers' comparing their expectations of service and the perceived performance of the product. On the other hand, loyalty is defined as the image of revisit intention or the action of revisiting or not visiting. Furthermore, the customer share of visits is also considered within the scope of loyalty.

Customer loyalty and customer satisfaction are two parallel issues in the literature. Loyalty is the result of a consumer's constant satisfaction with a product to which s/he attaches importance. Customer loyalty provides an opportunity for businesses to re-sell and brings stability to the market. Market stability is a condition created by satisfied customers (Marangoz & Akyıldız, 2007:200)

In order to better assess customer satisfaction, we need to understand the disconfirmation model. In this context, customers purchase a product with an expectation of the product performance when used. The expected result creates satisfaction. What underlies the satisfaction is the comparison between the expectations about a specific product or service and the actual performance of the product or service in question. Perceived performance may satisfy, go beyond or fall short of the expectations. As a result of the process, it may elevate or reduce the re-purchase intentions on the product or service.

In brief, while positive disconfirmation arises when the performance of a product or service exceeds the expectations, negative disconfirmation emerges in the opposite case. In case that expectations and performance are equal, neutral disconfirmation, which is a positive confirmation, occurs.

Almost in every study on customer satisfaction in restaurants, the possibility to predict the re-purchase action is primarily associated with the dimension of food quality. It is argued that the food quality is the most important determinant factor in ensuring customer loyalty. Similarly, one of the important factors to evaluate customer satisfaction in restaurant enterprises is service quality. Also, atmosphere is another important factor regarding the revisits by repeat customers. Atmosphere includes decoration, music, lighting, and so on. In conclusion, food

and drink quality, service quality and atmosphere are the main factors affecting customer satisfaction.

According to the results of Weiss et al., (2004)'s study, it is seen that the matters from which customers experienced the highest satisfaction were, respectively, hygiene of the restaurant, effective service and food quality whereas a new dining experience brought along the lowest level of satisfaction. In the study carried out in theme restaurants, it was observed that innovation was less effective than the other determinants of satisfaction. Restaurant managers and business owners should focus on other dimensions rather than the innovation dimension only. It was concluded that innovation did not play an important role in loyalty whereas the food quality and atmosphere had remarkable effects.

Although there exist numerous studies in the literature on what the expectation of restaurant customers are, the results are inadequate since the subject has been examined from very limited perspectives. Hence, commonly accepted factors on satisfaction and loyalty could not be put forward. However, the underlying cause is the challenging nature of the dining experience (Antun et al. 2010).

In the study by Weiss et al., (2004) quality of restaurants, food quality, and atmosphere were discussed; however, social aspects of dining experience were ignored to a great extent. Dining experience in restaurants satisfies the social needs of customers. In the study by (Rosenbaum, 2006), it was discovered that friendship and social bonds of customers had a positive effect on the re-purchase and loyalty. Individuals will prefer the same restaurant on the condition that they have a social network and friendships there. The social dependency tendency originates from homophily (tendency towards similar ones).

Restaurants must find out the actual expectations of customers to satisfy and motive them to revisit. Not only the food, service, and atmosphere quality but also the social aspects of dining experience should be explored and taken into notice. In literature, it is quite difficult to explain these three constructs. The subject of food is about the presentation of food. Food quality, on the other hand, can be considered within the scope of food safety and the fact that it pleases the customer. Nevertheless, in the light of this definition, unhealthiness of food can be discussed as a different construct.

The quality of the restaurant atmosphere embodies a multidimensional structure. These dimensions are the atmosphere of dining places, comfort of the decoration, lighting, hygiene, temperature, scent, and music. The restaurant atmosphere includes social components, as well. Within a social framework, social dependency is related to intrinsic feelings and it guides individual emotions, ideas, and behaviors. Individuals develop social dependency emotions in

interaction with family, partners, acquaintances, strangers, community, and society (Antun et al. 2010).

Homophily (the concept of similarity) facilitates the functioning of social dependency. It depends on the idea that the perception of an individual is similar to the perception of another individual. In the context of the perceived similarity; if specific attributes such as value, belief, education, and social status are similar in similar reciprocal periods, a tendency to similarities is observed. Measurement factors of perceived similarity are attitude, history, ethics, and appearance. In the scope of the measurements on attitude, it is seen that social class, economic status, and position are in the background of what type of individuals think and behave similarly. Most people act collectively and maintain this behavior for a long time. Their behaviors affect each other. They are affected more by the collective behaviors and attitudes, compared to the behavior and attitudes they perform on their own (Antun et al. 2010).

The service is consumed in a wide variety of ways. The hedonistic aspect of consumer behavior is based on consumption experience and reflects the need for entertainment and emotional value. Utilitarian consumption by nature is task-related, or functional (Ryu & Han, 2011).

The physical environment is an important determinant of customer satisfaction and revisit. Customers may enjoy the dining experience for a longer time if they are affected by the atmosphere (Liu & Jang, 2009; Ryu & Han, 2011). They do it consciously or non-consciously. Food, service, a satisfying physical environment, for instance, a renovated interior design and décor, pleasant music, dim light, a unique color plan, pleasant scent, a spacious layout, a pleasant table setting, and an attractive service employee affect customer satisfaction and loyalty significantly.

The physical environment has a strong influence on hedonistic services. It is observed that different parts of the physical environment are perceived differently by the first comers and repeaters, and it is observed that there are no studies in the literature that discuss the importance of such difference (Ryu & Han, 2011).

The Mehrabian Russell model, on the other hand, is one of the most powerful models used to explain the impact of physical environment on human behavior. Physical environment can affect an individual's emotional expressions (Liu & Jang, 2009). Satisfaction is considered as a cognitive expression. However, a clear cognitive, namely, the logical approach is insufficient, and for a better understanding of the term, satisfaction should be examined based on emotional elements and within the context of physical environment. In order to understand customer satisfaction in luxurious restaurant enterprises, an emotional perspective should be adopted, and

it should be realized that customer responses mostly result from emotional and hedonist consumption.

Many studies such as (Enrique Bigné, Mattila, & Andreu, 2008; Patterson, 2007; Pizam & Milman, 1993; Wirtz & Bateson, 1999) conclude that disconfirmation affects customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Ryu & Han, 2011). Similarly, Loureiro, (2010) indicate in their study that satisfaction is an important determinant of loyalty. It has been observed that positive disconfirmation affects customer satisfaction and loyalty positively, and it is generally argued in the literature that satisfied customers maintain their loyalty to the enterprise.

Perceived disconfirmation affects customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Positive disconfirmation is a strong determinant of customer loyalty. Disconfirmation is important for both first comers and repeaters. Factors that affect satisfaction can be listed as atmosphere, wait time, hedonistic feelings, service encounter, emotions, food-related personality traits (neophobia, brand preference, etc.). It is seen that positive and negative emotions affect the revisit intentions of customers after the dining experience. Positive emotions are important for the recognition of perceived value (Liu & Jang, 2009).

Atmosphere has tangible and intangible features. Bitner discussed atmosphere in 3 dimensions, which are environmental conditions (lighting, temperature, music, and scent), place layout, and functionality (Liu & Jang, 2009). Atmospheric factors do affect customers' positive and negative emotions.

Emotional response is effective in behavioral intentions. In many studies, positive emotional responses were found to be the most important determinant of behavioral intention. Pleasant and stimulant effects affect behavioral intention significantly. Negative words of mouth have also an impact on behavioral intention. Accordingly, anger, disappointment, regret, and negative word of mouth may alter the decision (Liu & Jang, 2009).

In literature, perceived value is defined as a critical construct to develop a long-term relationship with the customer. Similarly, in another definition, perceived value is described as an outcome of perceived benefit and sacrifice resulting from the cognitive comparison. If the customers believe that the product or service is worth the money spent, they feel satisfied and intend to revisit the place. While perceived value has a direct effect on behavioral intention, it affects satisfaction indirectly. It was found that perceived value plays a mediating role in emotions and behavioral intention, and it has an important effect (Liu & Jang, 2009).

According to Han et al. (2009), the major determinants affecting the revisiting intention of customers are satisfaction and consumption emotion. Multiple dimensions of emotions are used to explain customer behaviors. On the other hand, consumption emotions are not similar to emotional responses. Consumption emotion is less severe, more specific, and narrower in its

scope. Satisfaction plays a mediating role between consumption emotions and the revisit intention.

Switching barriers are the factors that prevent customers from leaving when they think of switching the restaurants. Switching costs have positive and negative forms. While a good relationship with the service provider is a positive switching barrier, no alternative place is the negative switching barrier (Han, Back, & Barrett, 2009).

Unsatisfied customers do not always change the restaurants because the switching cost is an important restrictive factor. Switching costs are very high. Lack of alternative places and high competition may lead the customer to stay in the restaurant. Han et al. (2009) put forward 4 switching barriers. 2 of them are positive and 2 of them are negative switching barriers.

- 1) Preference (Personal preference of food/menu)
- 2) Switching price (value in cash)
- 3) Relational benefits (interest benefits, social and private behavioral benefit)
- 4) Lack of alternatives

It is seen that social switching costs, lost benefits costs, procedural costs, and intrinsic inertia have a direct effect on customer share of visits (Kim et al. 2010). Enterprises that succeed in understanding the re-purchase intentions of customers will survive. Switching costs should be under control, and enterprises should develop their market strategies accordingly. According to Kim et al., (2010) there are 3 types of switching costs: Procedural costs (time, effort, difficulty, adaptation cost), social switching costs (breaking up the friendship with a service provider), benefit cost (special treatment).

Intrinsic inertia is the state of inner laziness, lack of energy, and taking no action. Another potential intrinsic factor related to customers is customer dependency and perceived brand heterogeneousness. Customers prefer one brand rather than many brands and avoid confusion (Kim et al., 2010).

According to Oh, (2000), there is a strong relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty. The relationship between satisfaction and loyalty grows even stronger when low switching costs take over a mediating role.

Han et al., (2009) have concluded that various components of consumption emotions affect customer satisfaction; that satisfaction has a mediating effect on emotional factors in the context of the revisit intention, and that low switching barriers have a stronger effect than high switching barriers on the relationship between satisfaction and the revisit intention.

According to Liu & Jang, (2009)'s study, disconfirmation directly affects satisfaction and loyalty. According to Kivela et al., (2000), customers in high-end restaurants feel satisfied as

much as they are given importance. A high level of satisfaction in line with the importance attached to restaurant customers brings along the revisit intention.

## CONCLUSION

Theoretical implications in our study are as follows: 1) There are mediating factors between satisfaction and loyalty. 2) There is a strong relationship between expectancy disconfirmation and satisfaction. 3) Disconfirmation plays a mediating role between satisfaction and loyalty. 4) It is seen that satisfaction is a determinant of behavioral intentions. 5) Switching costs play a mitigating role between satisfaction and revisit.

Contribution of the current study for practitioners will be ensured as a result of the development of recommendations regarding the factors to be taken into consideration by restaurant managers in order to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. Implications put forward by the current study in accordance with the findings in the literature are important for restaurant managers and professionals.

Today, the food and beverage industry, as in all industries, is affected by the rapid change and competition in the national and international markets. The intense competition among the restaurant enterprises has rendered inevitable to establish much stronger relationships with customers in order to survive in the market and increase the market share. Restaurants which are aware of this situation should try to increase the number of activities aiming at customer satisfaction which is of vital importance for marketing activities, and they should do their best to assure loyal customers.

In the studies aimed at measuring the service quality in restaurant enterprises, food quality has always been an important dimension. The long-lasting survival of restaurant enterprises is closely related to the ability to well-know about the customers and their changing demands and to satisfy them, accordingly. In the food and beverage industry, restaurants have to increase the quality to gain a competitive advantage. To increase quality is possible to the extent you measure it. The necessity of the measurement of the service quality in restaurant enterprises has become an undeniable fact.

Due to the importance of SQ for the restaurant sector, it has been examined in many researches and many tools have been developed to measure. As a result of this research, which performs a critical review of the instruments, it has been revealed that the SERVQUAL instrument is the basis for many of them. Due to the differentiating features of restaurants from other service businesses, researches need to develop new scales to measure SQ correctly in

restaurants. In addition, different service quality scales have been developed for different types of restaurants.

In the future researches, different SQ instruments can be developed for restaurants. Changes occurring in the industry and businesses seem to be the most important reason for this need. It is also inevitable to modify current ones for different cultures and different types of restaurants. Digitalization in restaurant services (e.g. online reservations, mobile application menus, fast food order screens) changes the content of the service provided, and also factors such as epidemic diseases (Covid-19, SARS, MERS, etc.) will change the dimensions SQ in the restaurants.

In order to ensure customer satisfaction, enterprises should identify the customer expectations accurately, develop the products and services in line with customer expectations, investigate how customers perceive the products and services, and endeavor to have the customers perceive the organizational image positively. Furthermore, customer satisfaction on its own may be insufficient in today's competitive environment. As a matter of fact, enterprises can grow by way of retaining their customers and gaining new customers. The key for the success in restaurants is to design the restaurants in line with customers' expectations of social and physical environment, which will drive them to revisit the enterprise. However, it should be kept in mind that the revisit behavior is not always driven by satisfaction. Unsatisfied customers may revisit, as well.

Consequently, the level of customer loyalty is increased by customer satisfaction. Increased customer loyalty brings along an increase in sales, personnel satisfaction, reduced costs, and incorporation of customers into marketing and production processes.

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