

**SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN RESTAURANT  
SERVICES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF DELHI NCR**

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**Abstract**

The expansion of the restaurant business in the urban areas has led to stiff competition and service marketing has become a key success factor. This research paper will focus on the practice of service marketing of restaurant services in the Delhi NCR area with particular emphasis laid on the way customers perceive service quality and how it affects their level of customer satisfaction and loyalty. The main research aims include determining the customer perceptions of important service quality dimensions, the service marketing elements that drive customer satisfaction and the recommendations on how the service can be enhanced through better service delivery.

The structured questionnaire used in the study based on SERVQUAL framework and including such aspects as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy is used on the sample of 50 restaurant customers. The data were interpreted by means of descriptive and correlation analyses. These results have shown that empathy and responsiveness are the most significant service aspects that influence customer satisfaction and then reliability and tangibles. The research has practical implications to restaurant marketers in Delhi NCR to optimize customer experience and customer satisfaction and customer repeat patronage by undertaking specific service quality improvement.

***Keywords: Service Marketing, Restaurant Services, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction***

**1. Introduction**

Service marketing is the marketing of intangible products that is characterized by both production and consumption in the same time, close contact with the customer and change in service delivery. As compared to tangible products, services demand more customer experience, interaction, and relationship management. Restaurants form one of the high contact service industry whose customer satisfaction is not influenced solely by the quality of food but by the performance of the service and the conduct of the employees.

Delhi NCR is considered to be one of the most dynamic and competitive restaurant markets in India, where there are multiple formats, quick-service restaurant, casual dining, fine dining, and international food chains. As customers continue to raise their expectations and have access to international service standards, restaurants have to constantly upgrade the quality of the services they offer in order to stay competitive. This would be critical in explaining the role played by service quality dimensions in customer satisfaction and loyalty as a way of having an effective service marketing strategies in this region.

## **2. Review of Literature**

### **2.1 Customer Satisfaction and Quality of Services**

The core construct in service marketing is service quality which can be simply stated as the difference between the expectations of the customers and the perceived performance of the service (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1985). The SERVQUAL model has five dimensions, namely, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy and has been widely used in restaurant and hospitality studies (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

The literature also testifies that the level of service quality plays a major role in customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in restaurant environments (Kumar and Anjaly, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2024). The quality of service has been identified as a robust determinant of customer loyalty and a good word-of-mouth in Indian metropolitan settings (Singh and Srivastava, 2021).

### **2.2 Interaction and Responsiveness of people in Restaurants.**

The behaviour of frontline employees is very important in the experiences of customers at the service point. Employees should be responsive and empathetic because perceived value and emotional satisfaction can be improved especially in high-contact services like restaurants (Kim and Baker, 2020; Ali et al., 2023). Individual interventions and polite relationships are known to contribute to the customer satisfaction and loyalty intentions greatly (Lin and Mattila, 2021).

### **2.3 Tangibles and Servicescape**

The concept of services cape emphasises on the role of physical environment factors such as ambience, layout, cleanliness and decor in customer emotions and satisfaction (Bitner, 1992). According to recent studies, the impact of services cape on customer satisfaction is indirect through influence of mood and perception of quality of services (Jang et al., 2022).

### **2.4 Urban service market Consumer Behaviour**

Service industries consumer behaviour is experience based and emotional. City customers have more demands in terms of efficiency of services, individuality, and stability (Hwang and Seo, 2023). Research on the markets of North Indian restaurants highlights that the experience quality of customers is becoming a decisive factor leading to customer satisfaction, and price is not the only variable (FICCI, 2024).

## **3. Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Objectives of the Study**

The study has the following three objectives:

1. To understand how customers perceive service quality in restaurants of Delhi NCR.
2. To identify which service quality factors, influence customer satisfaction the most.
3. To examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The study uses a descriptive research design, as it describes customer opinions about restaurant services.

### **3.3 Sample and Data Collection**

- The study is based on primary data.
- Data were collected from 50 restaurant customers in Delhi NCR.
- Simple random sampling was used.
- A structured questionnaire was used to collect responses.
- Customers filled the questionnaire after their dining experience.

### **3.4 Measurement Tool**

Service quality was measured using the SERVQUAL model, which includes:

- Tangibles
- Reliability
- Responsiveness
- Assurance
- Empathy

All responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree (1)* to *Strongly Agree (5)*.

Overall customer satisfaction was also measured.

### **3.5 Data Analysis Techniques**

The data were analysed using:

- Percentage analysis
- Mean score analysis
- Cronbach's Alpha for reliability
- Correlation analysis

## **4. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

### **4.1 Reliability Analysis**

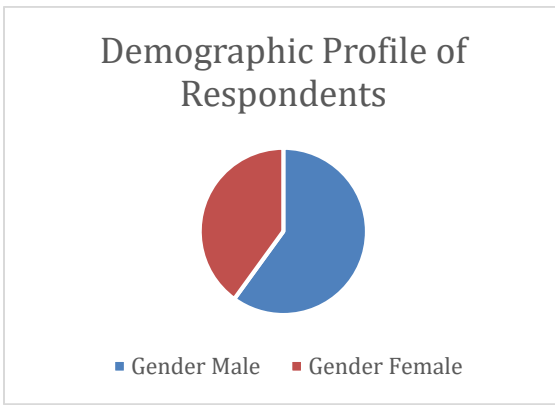
Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to check whether the questionnaire items were consistent. The Cronbach's Alpha value was above 0.70, which indicates that the questionnaire was reliable and suitable for analysis.

### **4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents**

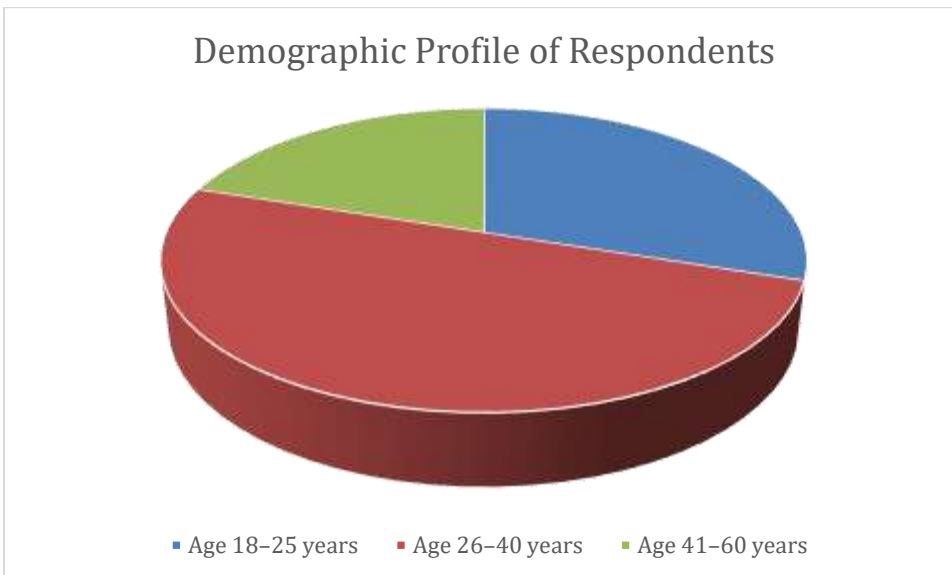
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Gender	Male	60%

Variable	Category	Percentage
	Female	40%
Age	18–25 years	30%
	26–40 years	50%
	41–60 years	20%

Dining Frequency At least once a week 40%



**Fig 4.2 (a)**



**Fig 4.2 (b)**

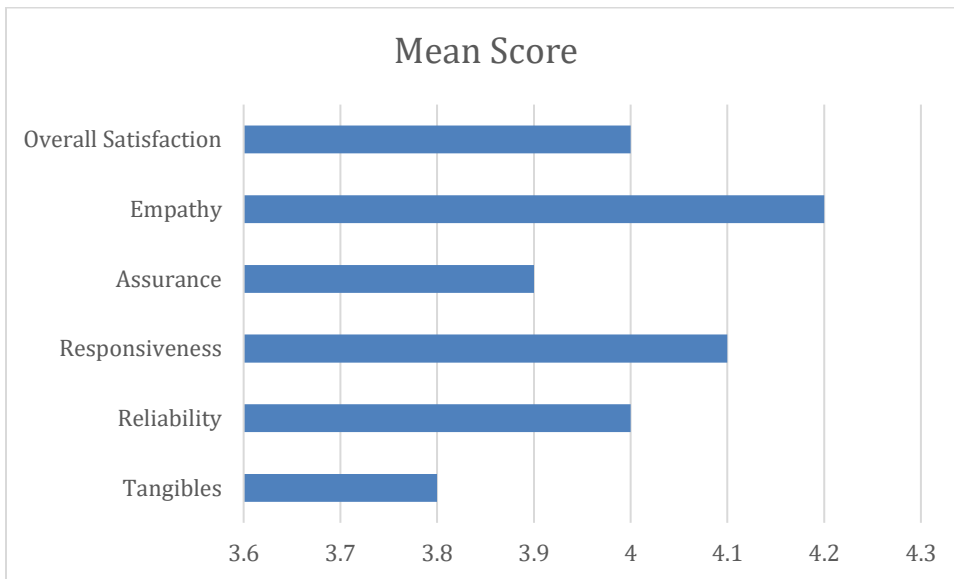
**Interpretation:**

Most respondents were regular restaurant visitors and belonged to the working-age group, making them suitable for this study.

**4.3 Mean Score Analysis**

**Service Quality Dimension Mean Score (Out of 5)**

Tangibles	3.8
Reliability	4.0
Responsiveness	4.1
Assurance	3.9
Empathy	4.2
Overall Satisfaction	4.0



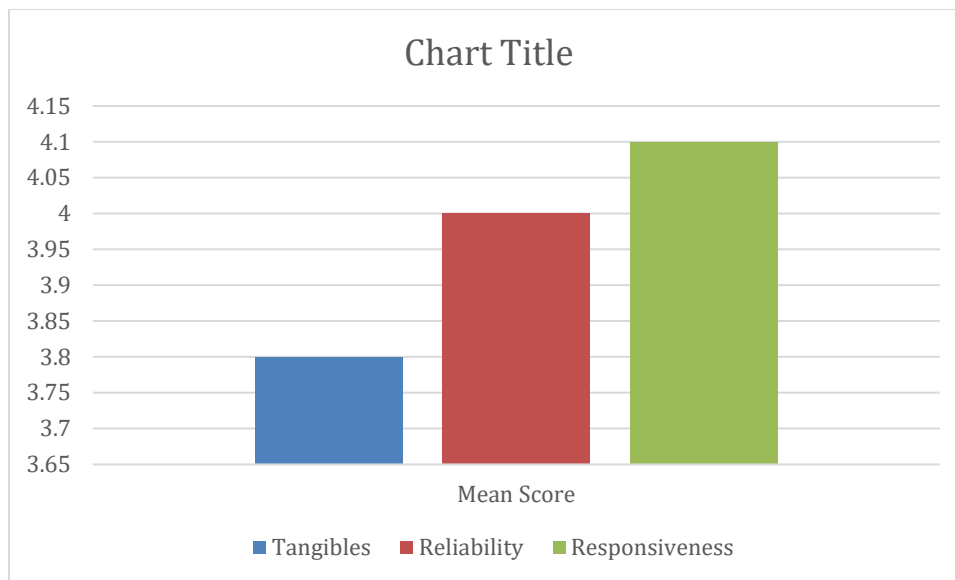
**Fig. 4.3**

**Interpretation:**

Empathy and responsiveness received the highest mean scores. This shows that customers value polite staff, personal attention, and quick service more than physical aspects like décor. Overall satisfaction was high, indicating that customers are generally satisfied with restaurant services in Delhi NCR.

**4.4 Correlation Analysis**

Relationship	Correlation (r)
Responsiveness – Satisfaction	0.63
Empathy – Satisfaction	0.58
Tangibles – Satisfaction	0.47



**Fig. 4.4**

### **Interpretation:**

All service quality dimensions have a positive relationship with customer satisfaction. Employee-related factors such as responsiveness and empathy have a stronger impact on satisfaction compared to physical aspects.

### **5. Findings**

- Customers are generally satisfied with restaurant services in Delhi NCR.
- Empathy and responsiveness are the most important service quality factors.
- Good service quality leads to higher customer satisfaction.
- Employee behaviour plays a bigger role than physical facilities.

### **6. Conclusion**

The study concludes that service quality strongly influences customer satisfaction in restaurant services. In Delhi NCR, customers expect friendly staff, quick service, and personal attention. Restaurants that focus on improving employee behaviour and service delivery can enhance customer satisfaction and encourage repeat visits. Service marketing should therefore focus more on people and processes rather than only on physical facilities.

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