Service Experience and Consumer Satisfaction in Restaurants

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ABSTRACT : *The purposes of this research are: to validate the Otto and Ritchie (1995) instrument in restaurant/Indian setting; to assess service experience of restaurant customers in Delhi; and to suggest working on areas of dissatisfaction. This study was conducted in west part of Delhi. Descriptive statistics were analyzed using SPSS version 20.0 of software. 200 customers were surveyed on basis that they at least visited the restaurant once in ten days and on basis of convenient. The cross-sectional design was employed to collect the necessary data in order to cover the width of the sensitivity that people of different demographic profiles had to customer service. Questionnaire document equipped with 17 questions. Ordinal scale was used test the sensitivity. It also seeks to get data on the respondent's personal information. Judgmental and convenience sampling method were employed. "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin" (KMO), "Bartlett's test of sphericity", cronbach's alpha and exploratory factor analysis was conducted. The investigation has been capable of generating useful implications for the restaurant service providers. This instrument may be considered by the managers of restaurants to know where they stand. The factors and items of the instrument may be helpful for marketers when they decide marketing strategy (segmentation, targeting, marketing mix and positioning). These dimensions are also important when managers develop their competitive strategy.*

KEYWORDS : *Service experience, consumer satisfaction, restaurants, consumer, Delhi*

I.   INTRODUCTION

The restaurant is a service sector, and stresses the need to provide best customer service and improve the quality. Service experience has emerged as one of most important factor for companies to start focusing. As a lifestyle changes and restaurants are becoming more and more common, customers the aspirations of the new tastes, pleasant and happy memories. Moreover, they prefer to great food. The restaurant industry represents a significant market, which until now has been failed to capture the attention of the researchers. "India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world today" (Gunjan, 2007). "The current size of the Indian food service industry is INR 247,680 crore and is projected to grow to INR 408,040 crore by 2018 at 11%" (India Food Services Report, 2013). Restaurants contribute 11.90% share out of all enterprises in Delhi (National Sample Survey 63rd Round, July 2006-June 2007). Restaurants have tested the enlarged competition and growing expectations of clients concerning full quality of service. There was a demand to recommend local consumption, and to recognize desires of clients and to satisfy their requirements. Being capital of India, restaurants have an important role for the customers in Delhi. Every year around 23, 39,287 Foreign and 21, 32,970 Indian tourists visit to Delhi (Tourist Statistics, Ministry of Tourism, New Delhi, 2008). It is required to create positive experience to make it memorable for tourists and residents of Delhi. The purposes of this research are:
(1) to validate the Otto and Ritchie (1995) instrument in restaurant/Indian setting;
(2) to assess service experience of restaurant customers in Delhi; and
(3) to suggest working on areas of dissatisfaction

II.   SERVICE EXPERIENCE IN RESTAURANTS

Restaurant for long was not considered as a service business but rather related more closely to a manufacturing industry. In a restaurant industry you are providing a product but with product you also provide intangible "product" of cooking procedures, table service, and a nice table to eat at. Since the primary source of your income comes from the ability to cook and serve delicious food, then you are offering an intangible product, hence it is considered as a service business. The model developed by Otto and Ritchie (1995) has been employed in this study. This model has been applied to service experience in tourism industry but not widely applied to Restaurant industry. Service experience in restaurant industry in Delhi has not been explored yet. This study explores this industry and tries to fill up this gap. There are five major factors which are outlined in Otto and Ritchie (1995) model.

(1) Hedonic is defined as pleasure, enjoyment, leisure, fun and memorability.
(2) Second parameter which is defined as interaction includes all the people to people interactions which include customer to customer as well customer to employee interaction.
(3) Novelty is defined as something as new and thus include whether customer feels if there is something new for him to learn or whether he could explore new opportunities in life.
(4) The next parameter which has been referred is comfort which takes into account physical comfort surroundings atmosphere, relaxed mind and favourable surroundings to enjoy.
(5) The next and final parameter which has been taken into account is safety. It takes into account privacy of each and every customer as well as safety and security of their belongings.

In this paper, authors have validated the same instrument in restaurant setting in Delhi region. Further service experiences of the customers have been accessed using this validated instrument and finally suggestion to work on areas of dissatisfaction is given.

III.   METHODOLOGY
Setting
This study was conducted in west part of Delhi. In this restaurant, food, prepared meals, refreshments and other snacks are served for consumption. The restaurant has two floors, and there is a maximum capacity of 120 customers at a time. Around 700 customers visit daily. This restaurant was launched 8 years back.
This study was carried taking the case of a local well established restaurant. The restaurant was chosen by comparing no of customer visiting, number of years the restaurant has been established, number of customer visiting the restaurant.

A cross sectional study was carried out from 15 March to 30 May, 2013 on a regular basis. Pre-tested and valid instrument was employed which was developed by Otto & Richie (1995) for tourism sector. This questionnaire was given to the customer visiting the restaurant while they were waiting for their food to arrive. Five point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree) was followed. Descriptive statistics were analyzed using SPSS version 20.0 of software. 200 customers were surveyed on basis that they at least visited the restaurant once in 10 days and on basis of convenient. Customers were assured that privacy and confidentiality would be maintained. Customers were given survey and were requested to fill the survey at very same moment only thus trying to reduce discrepancies. For the convenience of respondents the questionnaire was prepared in two dialects English and Hindi. It was made assured that if a respondent faces any sort of problem or confusion they were clarified right at that moment only. Respondents who were unwilling to fill the questionnaire or did not filled up the questionnaire completely were discarded and at the end only 174 responses were considered.

The cross-sectional design was employed to collect the necessary data in order to cover the width of the sensitivity that people of different demographic profiles had to customer service. The questionnaire was used as a tool to collect data through personal interviews. The questionnaire was organized in a paged, double-sided questionnaire containing closed items. Questionnaire document equipped with 17 questions. Ordinal scale was used test the sensitivity. It also seeks to get data on the respondent's personal information. Judgmental and convenience sampling method were employed. "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin" (KMO), "Bartlett's test of sphericity", cronbach's alpha and exploratory factor analysis was conducted. Statistical techniques were used for data analysis according to the design of the study. Details about data collection are given in Table II. Reliability test was confirmed through Cronbach alpha which was found 0.71. Reliability was found in acceptable greater than or equal to 0.7 (Nunnally (1978).

IV.   ANALYSIS AND RESULTS
Justification of factor analysis
"Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin" (KMO) was measured to test the sampling adequacy which ranges from 0 to 1. The acceptable value for KMO is greater than or equal to 0.5 (Kaiser H., 1970). This is found 0.628 in the present study which is acceptable range (Table II). "Bartlett's test of sphericity" was conducted to see the significant value. It was found highly significant as significant value was below 0.001 (Table II). KMO test (value 0.628>0.5) and Bartlett's test of sphericity (highly significant as .000<.001) justified the relevance of factor analysis as given in Table II. Variables with loading greater than or equal to 0.45 were considered. The dimensions were named as Ease, Novelty, Learning, Comfort, Personal, Relax and Involvement. Some of the dimensions' names have been considered from Otto and Ritchie (1995) paper.

Factor extraction

Factor extraction was examined through eigenvalues. The value of eigenvalue has to be greater than or equal to 1 to be considered as a factor. Principal component analysis was considered. Factor loadings with .45 were appraised to be a part of a factor. Items with high cross-loadings were not considered. Factor loading is given in Table IV.

Variance explained

Seven factors were extracted through Principal Component Analysis method (Table III). Total variance was found 60.325 percent (Table III). This shows that all dimensions represent 60.325 percent of variance. This also shows the eigenvalues of each item.

Table I. Data collection (descriptive analysis)

Method	validated Instrument
Sample size	Instrument was distributed to 200 respondents and received from 174 with the response rate of 87 percent
Sample composition	Demographics: Sex: 113 were Males and 61 were Females Age groups (Numbers): 18-28 (69); 29-39 (57); 40-50 (34); 51-61 (14) Qualification (Numbers): Post Graduate and above (84); Graduate (64); below Graduate (26) Occupation (Numbers): business (32); government service (46); private service (63) and student (33) Total monthly household income (frequencies): Below Rs. 10,000 (11); Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 20,000 (37); Rs. 20,001 to Rs. 30,000 (46); Rs. 30,001 to Rs. 40,000 (66); 40,001 to 50,000 and above 50,000 (14) Marital status: Single (46) and Married (128)
Purpose/ stage/res earch hypothes is	To see the applicability of Otto & Richie (1995) instrument in restaurant services
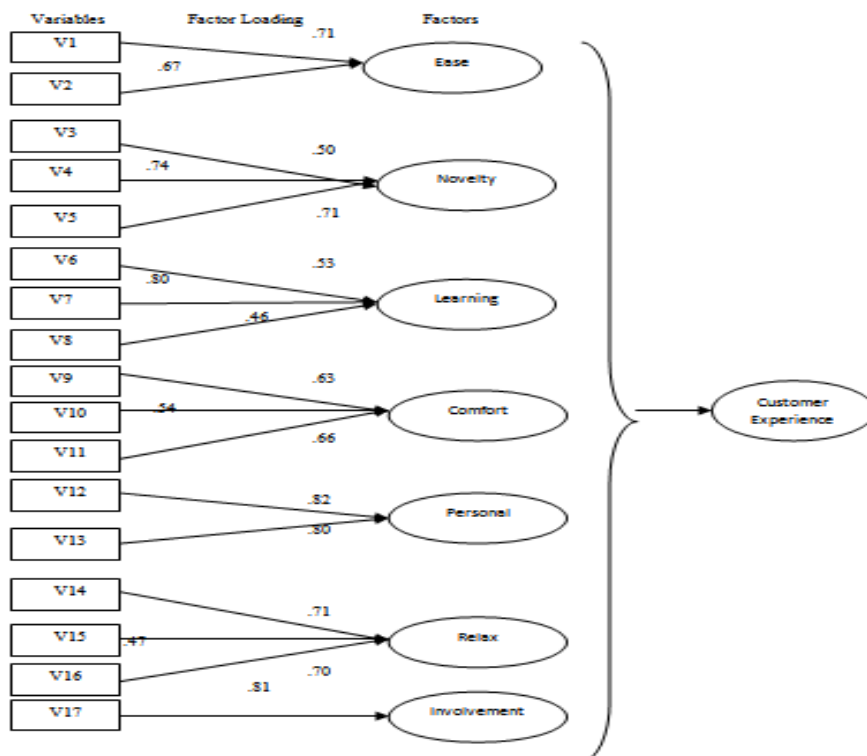
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization
Notes: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling = 0.628, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity [$p < 0.001$]
Figure 1: Instrument Validation

Compo nent	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.164	17.579	17.579	3.164	17.579	17.579	1.784	9.914	9.914
2	1.711	9.504	27.083	1.711	9.504	27.083	1.607	8.930	18.844
3	1.395	7.752	34.835	1.395	7.752	34.835	1.605	8.917	27.761
4	1.246	6.921	41.755	1.246	6.921	41.755	1.569	8.716	36.476
5	1.219	6.774	48.529	1.219	6.774	48.529	1.505	8.360	44.836
6	1.082	6.010	54.538	1.082	6.010	54.538	1.440	7.998	52.834
7	1.042	5.787	60.325	1.042	5.787	60.325	1.348	7.491	60.325

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table III. Total Variance Explained

Of all the respondents we can see that highest percentage of respondent has neutral point of view as going to restaurant has become a part of their life and is no more a new place for them to explore and have fun. As higher number of respondents disagree with the fact that going to restaurant is equal to having fun for them there is need for restaurant to make some arrangements so that people visiting can enjoy and have a feeling of fun. Restaurant worker need to be more interactive so that the time spent by customer can be remembered by customer only one fourth of customer do not share their experiences with others later on. Around 50% of the respondents agree to share their experiences. Customer share their experience with others mostly because their experience was good and hence this provide insight into service and experience provided by restaurant one to be remembered and cherish which is forwarded by customers to their friends and other closed one's. Only 26% of respondents don't want to share their experiences as they did not had an experience which they expected. Though, In this case the response has been more on positive side.

Most of the customer visiting restaurants come over to have a good meal with their family members or friends. They want to have good relaxing time as they are stressed with number of tensions in their life and stress of work. Thus, restaurants provide them with good opportunity to come and relax and provide them with a feeling of escape. Only 28% of respondents do not agree with this but more than 37% respondents agree to this. Most important aim of any business is to retain customer. As we can see with that with experience and services provided by the restaurant more than 40% of respondents agree coming back to restaurant once again but only 20% disagreed to come back to restaurant once again. This could only be possible due to the services provided by restaurant and its employee's which will make customer's experience one to remember. Treatment provided by the employee and quality of food provided would be the most important factor which leads to customer coming back here once again and hence, they should be considered

Most of the customers visiting the restaurant agree that they have lot of fun coming to restaurant. They have a good time and enjoy a lot during their stay at restaurant which could be due to services provide, quality of food and choices available with them. No of respondents which agree that they have fun is double to the no of people who doesn't agree to this fact. Around 45 % of respondents have fun during their stay whereas only 23% do not agree to this. As we visit restaurant we have an opportunity to explore and learn new things. But with reference to this survey, a respondent doesn't seem to have got many opportunities to explore and learn new things. As around 45% of respondents feel that they were not able to learn something new, one of the main reason could be as restaurant staff also have to attend other customer as well as option of exploring the kitchen and having a talk with chef would again seem impossible. Thus, restaurant may need to work on this factor and make some steady improvements as only 25% of respondents came in their support

In response to this question respondents have given a very mixed type of reply. Whereas 38% respondents does not find the seating to be physically comfortable, 30% of respondents find it very much comfortable and other remain neutral. Making customer feel physically comfortable is very important and very much in hands of restaurant owners. Thus, restaurant owners must work on improving the standards of seating availability and try and make environment more comfortable so that customer could feel at home.

When a consumer visits a restaurant he would like to be sure that his property, his belongings are safe so that he can enjoy his meal. Thus, restaurants have been able to make sure that property and belongings of consumer are safe and protected but still enough measures are not taken as 40% of respondents agree that their property is safe but 31% respondents also disagree to this fact. As more number of people agree hence makes their experience good and thus, create a good impression on customer and increases the chance of them returning. As we have already mentioned that feeling relaxed is one of the most important factor, restaurant have made sure that they take appropriate measures to make customer feel relaxed. The environment is very conducive and restaurant manager and employees also try and make person feel relaxed by talking gently and politely. More than 40% of respondents agree that they feel relaxed as oppose to just 20 % who don't agree to this. This helps consumer to enjoy his meal as well as enjoy at same time and hence makes his experience more satisfying.

Respondent have been equally distributed in each category in this question. Around 32% respondents don't feel sense of personal security just because the environment is as such that it becomes sometimes difficult for employees to take care of situation. But as many people also feel sense of personal security which shows that restaurant employees are working towards this problem. This can't be considered as big factor for customer experience but certainly if customer feels satisfied can enhance his experience. Privacy was and will always remain one of the biggest problems that restaurant industry would face. As restaurant do try to make some changes in environment and seating arrangement but still will always lack because it is not feasible as well as possible to assure a high level of privacy. This is quite visible from response of respondents also as only 22% respondents agree that their privacy is assured is every time they visit the restaurant whereas 44% do not agree to this fact and rest remain neutral.

Respondents have very critical view in regards to being involved in the process. As in restaurant generally or we can say many a times all the specific demands are not met with accuracy. Sometimes customers feel being let down as they can't make changes according to their wishes. Thus, they feel that they are not as much involved in process as they would have wished. In comparison to 38.7% of respondents who don't feel that they are involved in the process there are only 24% respondents who believe that their choices and thoughts are taken into consideration Having enough choice for customers to choose from is very critical issue which is being faced by restaurant at this moment. Around 32% of customers have agreed that they have enough choices in restaurant to choose from but at the same time 29% of customers do not agree with this and feel that not enough choices are available. Rest of consumer remains neutral in this case. In this case difference is very negligible. In restaurant industry one of most important factor for which it has always been criticized is that consumer mostly does not have any control over outcome. They just order and their food is delivered. Here even though more no of customer feel that they don't have control over the outcome, the difference in customer who feel that they are involved and who feel they are not is very less. In comparison to 27% consumer who feel that they are involved in process 36% of customer disagree to this fact.

Most of customer feel that restaurant staff has been very co-operative. In comparison to 24% of customer who do not feel sense of co-operation 41% of customer feel otherwise. This is one of the very important factors which effect the relationship between customer and service provider. Restaurant staff plays a very important role in this are the one's which co-operate with customer and make them comfortable.
Most of the people visiting restaurant feels that they are not being educated. Being educated and acquiring new knowledge would obviously help in improving the experience of visitors. Only 22% of respondents feel that they are being educated in comparison to 44% who did not felt the same way. Getting educated in a restaurant would mean that knowing how the food is being prepared, what all ingredients are being used and in what all quantity which is very difficult due to shortage of time. People while visiting this restaurant feel that they are been taken seriously as around half of the visitors have responded with a positive reply. This is surely due to services provided by restaurant staff and constant efforts of improving the experience of customer. Only around 16% of respondents came out with a negative reply but surely these many people can be counted less in front of the people with positive reply. Restaurant should still make an effort to overcome these small problems.

V.   CONCLUSIONS
An attempt was made to explore the service experience of customer in restaurant industry by studying the various parameters which are involved in this process. Each parameter was studied by making use of set of questions under that particular parameter. On most parameters restaurant received a positive especially in case of having fun and enjoying restaurant is able to meet the expectations of customers which make customers more willing to share their experiences with others and coming back to restaurant once again. But at the same time customers are not satisfied as they think that they did not learnt something new which they are willing to learn.

This could be the problem with restaurants as it is difficult with restaurant to help each and every customer learn about dishes. Similarly, customers are not satisfied as they mostly feel that they do not have any control over the outcome and sometimes feel that they are not involved in process as they can't make each every change they want in the dishes according to their will. Even though restaurants are unable to meet these requirement customers seems to be happy with service provided to them. Most of customers agree that they feel comfortable and feel relaxed in the restaurant. They also feel that enough measures are in place to keep their belongings safe and secure. They also feel that restaurant staff is very much co-operative. But at the same time they face problem of privacy as in restaurant it becomes difficult to maintain privacy and also feel that they are not being educated anything about food prepared. In most parameters restaurant was able to satisfy and make customer service experience better but still there is need for some changes so that customer's service experience can be improved and made much better.

VI.   MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The investigation has been capable of generating useful implications for the restaurant service providers. This instrument may be considered by the managers of restaurants to know where they stand. The factors and items of the instrument may be helpful for marketers when they decide marketing strategy (segmentation, targeting, marketing mix and positioning). These dimensions are also important when managers develop their competitive strategy.

VII.   LIMITATIONS

The finding of this research is restricted to restaurant services. This study was conducted in the national capital region of New Delhi which shows that the finding is restricted to this region only. Another limitation is about its sample size.

VIII.   FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research may be considered to see the customer experience in restaurants in other parts of the country/world. The applicability of the same instrument may be assessed in other services or in other part of the word.

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Table IV. Scale with its respective dimensions, drivers, loading, mean, standard deviations and Result of survey of consumers' levels of satisfaction with restaurant services

Dimension	Items	Consumers' responses (percent)					M	SD
		SS	S	N	D	SD		
Ease	feel you are physically comfortable	12.0	18.0	32.0	23.3	14.7	2.89	1.21
	feel you get enough choice in process	11.3	20.7	38.7	18.7	10.7	3.14	1.84
Novelty	feel you are doing something you really like to do	7.3	20.7	30.7	24.7	16.7	2.77	1.17
	share your experience with others later on	15.3	32.7	26.0	20.7	5.3	3.32	1.12
	doing something gives you a feeling of escape	14.7	22.7	34.0	21.3	7.3	3.36	1.14
Learning	consider coming back here once again	10.7	32.0	36.0	17.3	4.0	3.28	1.00
	feel you are having fun	13.3	31.3	32.0	18.7	4.7	3.30	.98
	you feel you learnt							

		SD	D	N	S	SS	M	SD
	something new	4.0	20.7	30.7	31.3	13.3	2.70	1.06
Comfort	feel you have some control over outcome	2.7	24.7	36.7	26.0	10.0	2.84	.99
	feel sense of co-operation	7.3	33.3	35.3	20.0	4.0	3.20	.97
	feel you are being educated	1.3	20.0	34.7	29.3	14.7	2.64	1.00
Personal	feel that your privacy is assured	9.4	13.3	32.7	25.3	18.7	2.80	1.97
	feel you feel you are being taken seriously	10.7	38.0	32.7	16.0	0.7	4.02	4.29
Relax	feel that your property is safe	9.3	30.7	28.7	22.0	9.3	3.08	1.12
	feel relaxed when you are there in restaurant	9.3	32.7	35.3	18.7	4.0	3.24	.99
	feel sense of personal security	9.3	24.7	34.0	24.7	7.3	3.04	1.87
Involvement	feel you are involved in process	5.3	18.7	37.3	29.3	9.3	2.81	1.01

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization
Notes: SS= strongly satisfied, 5; S= satisfied, 4; N= neutral, 3; D= dissatisfied, 2; SD= strongly dissatisfied, 1;
M= Mean; SD= Standard Deviation