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Investigating the Determinants of Recommending and Revisiting to a Vegetarian Restaurant: A Case Study

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Abstract

The competition in restaurant industries is increasing day by day. Remaining in this industry is very fundamental for each restaurant. The success of these industries depends on bringing new strategies to satisfy the customers. Customers are the key to success for every business. So, attracting more customers and retaining the existing customers is the only way to survive in this competitive industry. Therefore, understanding the needs and wants of customers and the factors that influence customers to revisit and recommend restaurants is important to maintain their customer relationship and customer services. A Vegetarian restaurant in Ernakulam city, which serves all kinds of vegetarian food, has been considered for this study. A questionnaire was prepared a data were gathered over a three-week period using convenient sampling techniques. The results revealed that the factors - service quality, food quality and flavor, cleanliness, ambiance, price, and location have a big impact on customers revisit decision. These elements are essential for improving client happiness, loyalty, and return business. By focusing on the above factors, restaurants can successfully boost customer satisfaction, encourage recommendations, and encourage return visits, which will ultimately lead to long-term success in the business.

Key Words: Factors, Revisit, Recommend, Restaurant.

Introduction

Restaurant operators can improve their services and facilities to please their customers by knowing the characteristics that encourage patrons to return. Affirmative word-of-mouth endorsements and greater client loyalty may result from this. Recurring consumers are more likely to make larger purchases than brand-new ones. To boost revenue from repeat customers, restaurant managers might benefit from understanding the elements that influence this behavior. Understanding the variables that cause customers to return to a restaurant can provide owners with a competitive advantage over their rivals in the fiercely competitive restaurant market. They can draw in more clients and cultivate a following of devoted customers by providing superior services and facilities.

Analyzing the elements that influence repeat business at eateries can reveal important details about consumer preferences and behavior. Owners can use this data to spot trends and make educated decisions about their menu selections, marketing tactics, and other business-related issues. This study aims to offer insightful information on the elements that motivate repeat restaurant patronage.

Despite the importance of customer revisitation for the growth and survival of restaurants, a thorough study of the aspects that affect consumers' decisions to return to restaurants is still needed. While some aspects of revisitation intentions have been the subject of prior research, there aren't many thorough studies that consider a variety of variables and how they interact. Additionally, there hasn't been much research done in certain geographical regions or cultural contexts, which can limit how broadly the results can be applied.

As a result, the research problem is to investigate and identify the critical variables that affect consumers' intent to return to restaurants, considering a variety of variables including customer satisfaction, service quality, brand loyalty, word-of-mouth, online reviews, personalization, perceptions of price, cultural and social factors, and the impact of technology. By giving a thorough examination of these characteristics and how they interact, considering various client segments, and maybe looking into differences across various cultural and regional settings, the study seeks to fill a vacuum in the literature.

By addressing this research issue, the study seeks to add to the body of knowledge on consumer behavior in the restaurant industry and offer insightful information that can help restaurant owners, managers, and marketers create strategies that will increase patron satisfaction, loyalty, and intent to return.

The objectives of the study

1. To identify the key factors that influence customers' decisions to recommend restaurants to others.
2. To explore the factors that contribute to customers' intentions to revisit restaurants.
3. To examine the relationship between customer satisfaction and the likelihood of recommending and revisiting restaurants.
4. To investigate the role of service quality, food quality, ambiance, price, and other relevant factors in the decision-making process.

Materials And Methods

In this research, a case study method is used. Case study is done in a vegetarian restaurant, located in Kochi in Kerala. The restaurant has established in 2000 who cook and serve North Indian, South Indian, Jian and Chinese food. The case study is done after receiving approval from the hotel management and with the convenience of their customers.

A rough questionnaire was initially created and approved by the hotel management. The creation of a standard questionnaire followed approval. Data were gathered using convenient sampling techniques. Data were gathered over a three-week period. The restaurant offers service from 12 pm to 10 pm most days and from 8 am to 10 pm on Sundays, therefore data collection took place over the course of three weeks at both lunch and supper with the hotel management's approval.

Hard copies of the questionnaire were distributed among the customers, which they were instructed to fill out whenever it was convenient for them. While some consumers completed the survey prior to eating, others did so after finishing their lunch or dinner. The data were presented using tables, charts, and graphs, and R software was used for data analysis. The data was collected from 150 customers and 102 filled in questionnaires were used for the analysis.

The following is the hypothesis of this study.

H01: There is no association between Quality & taste of food and Satisfaction level.

H02: There is no association between service quality, quality and taste of food, cleanliness, Ambience, price, location of restaurants and willingness to revisit.

H03: There is no association between visit frequency, quality and taste of food, service quality, cleanliness, ambience, price and location of restaurants and willingness to recommend.

H04: There is no association between quality & taste of food, ambience, price of food and satisfaction level.

H05: There is no association between satisfaction level of customers and willingness to revisit.

H06: There is no association between cleanliness of restaurants and ambience and willingness to recommend.

H07: There is no association between quality & taste of food and price of food in a restaurants and satisfaction level of customers.

The reliability of the instrument has been checked using Cronbach alpha reliability measure and the results are found satisfactory. Total alpha reliability is 0.715 and the standardized alpha is 0.8. Based on the reliability results, the constructs visit frequency, satisfaction level, service quality, quality and taste of food, cleanliness, willingness to recommend, ambience, price, location, and willingness to revisit have acceptable to good internal consistency as indicated by alpha reliability and standardized alpha values.

Correlation values has been measured between all the variables used in the study. Results shows that there is a high correlation between the independent variables. Here the correlation between ambience and willingness to recommend is 0.6478035, between price and satisfaction level is 0.656599 and between willingness to revisit and satisfaction level shows 0.6565997 correlation value.

Results

Table 1 shows the demographic details of the respondents. Among the 102 respondents, 41.2 % were male and 58.8 % were female. Out of 102 respondent's majority belongs to the age group 15-25(61.76%). And 9.80% belongs to 26-35, 7.84% belongs to the age group 36-45 and 20.58% is above 45. Out of 102 respondents 47.06 % completed their UG. A considerable proportion of the respondents have completed their postgraduate education (PG), with 26.47 % having a PG qualification. 20.59% belongs to 12th /diploma qualified. Only 0.98% is 10th qualified. And 4.90 % belongs to others. Out of 102 respondents, 30% have a private business and 12.75% of the respondents are working in public/ government institutions. Only 10.78 % is having own business. 46.08% of the respondents were not revealed their occupation. 20.62% having an income of above 45000. 13.40% belongs to the income range 15000-25000 and the other 13.40% belongs to 36000-45000. 37.11% of respondents are not exposed to their income. Out of the 102respondents, 62.74% are single, 36.27% are married and the remaining one is divorced. 34 respondents (33.33) reported that they visit restaurants monthly. This category represents individuals who dine out less frequently, opting for restaurant visits monthly. 28.43% of respondents visit restaurants on a weekly basis ,18.63% visit rarely (Others). And 11.76% visit twice in a week and only 7.84% of total respondents visit restaurant daily.

Table 1: General demographic details of the participants (n=102)

Demographics	Factors	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	41.18
	Male	58.82
Age in Years	15-25	61.76
	26-35	9.80
	36-45	7.84
	Above 45	20.59
Education Level	10 th	0.98
	12 th / Diploma	20.59
	Undergraduate	47.06
	Postgraduate	26.47
	Others	4.90
	Private	30.39
	Public/Govt.	12.75

Occupation	Own Business	10.78
	Others	46.08
Income	15000-25000	13.40
	25000-35000	15.46
	35000-45000	13.40
	Above 45000	20.62
	Others	37.11
Marital Status	Single	62.75
	Married	36.27
	Divorced	0.98

Source: Primary Data

Factors of revisiting and recommending a restaurant

Regarding the friendly service, 59.80% of the total respondents agreed that they received prompt and friendly service during their most recent visit to a restaurant and 18.63% of respondents strongly agreed to this. 21.57% of the respondents are neutral in their opinion. Majority of the respondents agrees that the quality of food is an important factor for customers. Out of 102 respondents 62.75% voted for agree and 15.69% voted for strongly agree and 20.59% are neutral in their opinion. Most of the respondents hold a positive perception about cleanliness. A total of 79.41% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that cleanliness is important. A relatively smaller proportion of respondents, comprising 19.61%, hold a neutral stance for cleanliness. There is no disagreement or strong disagreement with the importance of cleanliness. When the respondents were asked about their willingness to recommend their favorite restaurant to others, 59.80 % agreed that they are willing to recommend it. 29.41% are strongly willing to recommend. A smaller proportion of respondents, accounting for 10.78%, hold a neutral stance. No respondent indicated disagreement with willingness to recommend. Regarding the ambience of the restaurant, 50% agree that the ambience is important, 35.29% of respondents hold a strong positive opinion about the ambience. A smaller proportion of respondents, accounting for 14.71% stance for neutral. No one has shown disagreement with this. 48.04% believe that price is an important factor that leads to revisit and recommend a particular restaurant. Out of 102 respondents 33.33 % strongly agree that price is an important factor. 18.63% of respondents remain neutral. None of the respondents show disagreement with the statement. 54.90% of respondents consider location an important factor for restaurant customers. 30.39% of the respondents strongly agree with this statement and a small portion of respondents (14.71%) remain neutral. None of the respondents hold disagreement with the location factor here.

Association between willingness to revisit and Service quality, quality and taste of food, cleanliness, ambience, price, and location of the restaurant.

Multiple regression analysis is performed to find the association between service quality, quality and taste of food, cleanliness, ambience, price and location of the restaurant. The results from Table 2 shows that p value is 0.0128 which is less than 0.05. Hence H₀ is rejected at 5% level of significance. So, it can be inferred that there is an association between willingness to revisit and service quality, quality and taste of food, cleanliness, Ambience, price, and location of restaurants hence the factors

service quality, quality and taste of food, cleanliness, Ambience, price and location of restaurants can be considered as predictors for willingness to revisit.

Table 2. Association between Willingness to revisit and Service quality, quality and taste of food, cleanliness, ambience, price, and location of the restaurant.

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-5.3003	-1.1287	0.2548	1.3114	3.6169
Coefficients				
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	0.41513	1.76990	0.235	0.815
Service quality	-0.03106	0.41046	-0.076	0.940
Quality & taste of food	0.44076	0.35808	1.231	0.221
Cleanliness	0.34429	0.31010	1.110	0.270
Ambience	0.47415	0.36779	1.289	0.200
Price	0.31451	0.32757	0.960	0.339
Location	0.14617	0.34669	0.422	0.674
Residual standard error	1.971			
Multiple R-squared	0.1537			
Adjusted R-squared	0.1003			
F-statistic	2.876			
p-value	0.0128			

Source: Primary data

Association between visit frequency, quality and taste of food, service quality, cleanliness, ambience, price and location of restaurants and willingness to recommend.

To find the association between visit frequency, quality and taste of food, service quality, cleanliness, ambience, price and location of restaurants and willingness to recommend using Multiple regression analysis and the results are given in Table 3. The p value is 2.819e-13 which is less than 0.05. Hence H₀ is rejected at 5% level of significance. So, it can be inferred that there is an association between willingness to recommend and visit frequency, quality and taste of food, service quality, cleanliness, ambience, price, and location of restaurants hence the factors visit frequency, quality and taste of food, service quality, cleanliness, ambience, price and location of restaurants can be considered as predictors for willingness to recommend.

Table 3. Association between visit frequency, quality and taste of food, service quality, cleanliness, ambience, price and location of restaurants and willingness to recommend.

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-1.8008	-0.1075	0.0270	0.2602	0.8706
Coefficients				
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	0.655175	0.394972	1.659	0.10049
Visit frequency	-0.001893	0.038994	-0.049	0.96138
Service quality	0.027762	0.090067	0.308	0.75858

Quality & taste of food	0.169346	0.078322	2.162	0.03314
Cleanliness	0.226087	0.068622	3.295	0.00139
Ambience	0.365698	0.080451	4.546	0.0000163
Price	0.015691	0.072426	0.217	0.82895
Location	0.059928	0.077166	0.777	0.43934
Residual standard error	0.4309			
Multiple R-squared	0.534			
Adjusted R-squared	0.4993			
F-statistic	15.39			
p-value	2.819e-13			

Source: Primary data

Association between quality & taste of food, ambience, price of food and satisfaction level.

Association between quality & taste of food, ambience, price of food and satisfaction level are tested using multiple regression analysis. From Table 4, p value is 0.03933 which is less than 0.05. Hence H₀ is rejected at 5% level of significance. So, it can be inferred that there is an association between satisfaction level and quality & taste of food, ambience, price of food hence the factors quality & taste of food, ambience, price of can be considered as predictors for satisfaction level.

Table 4. Association between quality & taste of food, ambience, price of food and satisfaction level.

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-6.5145	-0.5645	0.4253	1.2136	3.2136
Coefficients:				
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	1.9364	1.4302	1.354	0.1789
Quality & taste of food	0.5254	0.2979	1.763	0.0809
Ambience	0.3641	0.2926	1.244	0.2164
Price	0.4141	0.2752	1.505	0.1356
Residual standard error	1.798			
Multiple R-squared	0.1268			
Adjusted R-squared	0.1			
F-statistics	4.743			
p-value	0.003933			

Source: Primary data

Association between satisfaction level of customers and willingness to revisit the restaurant.

To find the association between satisfaction level of customers and willingness to revisit the restaurant by using multiple regression analysis. From Table 5, the p value is 6.746e-14 which is less than 0.05, hence H₀ is rejected at 5% level of

significance. So, it can be inferred that there is an association between willingness to revisit and satisfaction level of customers. Hence satisfaction level can be considered as predictors for willingness to revisit.

Table 5. Association between satisfaction level of customers and willingness to revisit the restaurant.

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-4.1373	-0.8570	0.1430	0.8627	7.1808
Coefficients:				
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	2.09948	0.61893	3.392	0.000995
Satisfaction level	0.71969	0.71969	8.705	6.75e-14
Residual standard error	1.575			
Multiple R-squared	0.4311			
Adjusted R-squared	0.4254			
F-statistic	75.78			
p-value	6.746e-14			

Source: Primary data

Association between cleanliness and ambience of restaurants and willingness to recommend.

Association between cleanliness and ambience of restaurants and willingness to recommend are tested using multiple regression analysis. The p value is 2.578e-15 which is less than 0.05. Hence H₀ is rejected at 5% level of significance. So, it can be inferred that there is an association between willingness to recommend and cleanliness of restaurant and ambience. Hence cleanliness of restaurant and ambience can be considered as predictors for willingness to revisit. Results are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6. Association between cleanliness and ambience of restaurants and willingness to recommend.

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-1.79128	-0.08535	-0.08535	0.20872	0.71205
Coefficients:				
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)
Intercept	1.26161	0.30176	4.181	0.00006276625 ***
Cleanliness	0.25166	0.06666	3.775	0.000273***
Ambience	0.45427	0.07230	6.283	0.00000000894***
Residual standard error	0.4381			
Multiple R-squared	0.4927			
Adjusted R-squared	0.4824			
F-statistic	48.07			
p-value	2.578e-15			

Source: Primary data

Findings

Out of 102 respondents 33.33% of customers visit restaurants monthly. 28.43% of respondents visit restaurants on weekly basis, 18.63% visit rarely (Others) and 11.76% visit twice in a week and only 7.84% of total respondents visit restaurant in a daily basis.

It has been identified that 59.80% of total respondents are of the opinion that they receive a prompt and friendly service during their most recent visit to a restaurant and 18.63% of respondents are strongly agreeing to this. 21.57% of the respondents are neutral in their opinion.

Many of the respondents agree that the quality of food is an important factor for customers. Out of 102 respondents 62.75% vote for agree and 15.69% vote for strongly agree and 20.59% are neutral in their opinion.

Most of the respondents hold positive perception about cleanliness. A total of 79.41% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that cleanliness is important. A relatively smaller proportion of respondents, comprising 19.61%, hold a neutral stance for cleanliness. There is no disagreement or strongly disagreement with the importance of cleanliness.

The study also indicated the willingness of customers recommending their favourite restaurant to others. 59.80%, agrees that they are willing to recommend. 29.41% are strongly willing to recommend. A smaller proportion of respondents, accounting for 10.78% holds a neutral stance. No respondent indicated disagreement with willingness to recommend.

Regarding the ambience, 50% agrees that the ambience is important. 35.29% of respondents hold a strong positive opinion about the ambience. A smaller proportion of respondents, accounting for 14.71% stance for neutral. There is no one who disagree with this.

It has been perceived that significant portion of the respondents that is 48.04% agree with the notion related price. Out of 102 respondents, 33.33% strongly agree that price is an important factor and 18.63% of respondents remain neutral. None of the respondent shows disagreement with the statement.

It is understandable that out of 102 respondents, 54.90% of respondents agree with the statement regarding location. 30.39% of the respondents strongly agree that the location is important factor for restaurant customers. A small portion of respondents that is 14.71% remain neutral. None of the respondents hold disagreement with the location factor here.

Total alpha reliability is 0.715 and the standardized alpha is 0.8. Based on the reliability results the constructs visit frequency, satisfaction level, service quality, quality and taste of food, cleanliness, willingness to recommend, ambience, price, location and willingness to revisit have acceptable to good internal consistency as indicated by alpha reliability and standardized alpha values. The results shows that there is an association between quality and taste of food and restaurant satisfaction.

The results confirms that there is a moderate positive correlation between the likelihood of returning and the criteria of service quality, food quality and taste, cleanliness, ambience, cost, and restaurant location. Therefore, these elements—service quality, food quality and flavour, cleanliness, ambience, price, and location—can be seen as reliable indicators of whether or not customers will return to a certain eatery. This suggests that customers' perceptions of the level of service they receive, the overall standard and flavour of the food, the restaurant's cleanliness, the ambience of the dining area, the price they pay, and the restaurant's location all have an impact on how likely they are to return. These results underline how crucial it is to succeed in these fields to raise client satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat business.

It is inferred that there is an association between willingness to recommend and visit frequency, quality and taste of food, service quality, cleanliness, ambience, price, and location of restaurants hence the factors visit frequency, quality and taste of food, service quality, cleanliness, ambience, price, and location of restaurants can be considered as predictors for willingness to recommend.

The results reveals that there is a positive correlation between the level of pleasure and the aspects of food quality and taste, ambience, and pricing. Therefore, the characteristics of food quality and flavour, ambience, and pricing can be thought of as predictors for figuring out the degree of consumer happiness. This shows that the standard and flavour of the food they receive, the ambience of the restaurant, and the cost of their meals all have an impact on how satisfied customers are. These results underline how crucial it is to concentrate on these elements to raise client happiness and enhance eating occasions.

There is a positive correlation between customers' inclination to return and their degree of satisfaction. As a result, client contentment can be thought of as a powerful predictor of their propensity to return. This suggests that customers are more likely to express a desire to return to the business in the future if they are more satisfied with their whole experience. These results highlight the significance of prioritising and improving customer satisfaction to increase client loyalty and promote repeat business.

It can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between the desire to refer and both the restaurant's cleanliness and ambience. Therefore, it is possible to use the restaurant's cleanliness and ambience as indicators of whether guests would return. This suggests that patrons who think the restaurant is tidy and has a good atmosphere are more likely to recommend it to others and indicate a desire to return. These results emphasise how crucial it is to uphold restaurant cleaning standards and foster a welcoming atmosphere to increase patron satisfaction and foster patron loyalty.

It is identified that there is a positive correlation between customer satisfaction levels and both the quality and flavour of the meal as well as the cost of the food in a restaurant. As a result, factors that may be used to predict how satisfied consumers would be with a restaurant include the food's quality and taste as well as its pricing.

Suggestions

The study results suggests that customers' perceptions of the level of service they receive, the overall standard and flavour of the food, the restaurant's cleanliness, the ambience of the dining area, the price they pay, and the restaurant's location all have an impact on how likely they are to return. These results underline how crucial it is to succeed in these fields to raise client satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat business.

The analysis of the report shows that the standard and flavour of the food they receive, the ambience of the restaurant, and the cost of their meals all have an impact on how satisfied customers are. These results underline how crucial it is to concentrate on these elements to raise client happiness and enhance eating occasions.

The results indicates that customers are more likely to express a desire to return to the business in the future if they are more satisfied with their whole experience. The results highlight the significance of prioritising and improving customer satisfaction to increase client loyalty and promote repeat business.

The results proposes that patrons who think the restaurant is tidy and has a good atmosphere are more likely to recommend it to others and indicate a desire to return. These results emphasise how crucial it is to uphold restaurant cleaning standards and foster a welcoming atmosphere to increase patron satisfaction and foster patron loyalty.

Conclusion

According to the results of the study, there are positive correlations between a few variables and customer satisfaction level, willingness to recommend, and willingness to return to a restaurant. The taste and quality of food, the setting, and the cost all showed up as interpreters of satisfaction level. Ambience and restaurant cleanliness were found to be forecasters of desire to refer. Similarly, it was discovered that elements including satisfaction level, restaurant cleanliness, and ambience had an impact on customers' feeling to return. These results underline the significance of taking these variables into account when attempting to improve customer happiness, recommendation, and desire to return to the restaurant.

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