SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS TO INVESTIGATE RESTAURANT DINING EXPERIENCES

THESIS

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DECLARATION

I, Leon van Achterbergh, declare that this thesis entitled 'SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS TO INVESTIGATE RESTAURANT DINING EXPERIENCES' is my own work; that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this thesis has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at any other university.

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Signature   Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

One relishes the chance of being given a blank canvas on which to create one's artwork. How frequently in life are we able to compose an eloquent original? This research opportunity has subjected me to a progression of personal growth events, a quest for knowledge frequently accompanied by introspection. I was not always sure what to expect throughout this project. It certainly turned out to be an epic adventure.

I would like to thank Stenden South Africa for affording me the means to pursue this research. I am also grateful to my colleagues, Wouter Hensens and Juliet Chipumuro, who have encouraged me during my studies.

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I am truly blessed being able to share the outcomes with my mother, Iris.

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ABSTRACT

Restaurateurs often assume that customers' online reviews of their dining experiences are a reflection of their dining preferences. This study finds this assumption not to be true. Online written reviews do not explain diners' preferred dining experiences. In this study post-experience reactions captured in reviews are shown to be contextually different to established dining preferences. Results show online reviews to be most important in facilitating customer dining expectations, but not influencing customers' preferences in dining experiences.

Evidence gathered during the secondary research shows that in general, social media has become the great marketing equaliser in commerce. In the dining industry, restaurants cannot solely rely on traditional media in the initial attraction and retention of dining customers. Continuous interaction between the business and customers is increasingly necessary for restaurateurs to remain competitive and in-touch with customers' needs. This study concentrates its research area on the post-experience evaluation phase as found on review websites, like TripAdvisor. TripAdvisor has especially become a popular means to perpetuate word-of-mouth opinions of dining experiences among prospective customers. Research shows clear evidence of the importance of other's online opinions in the consumer decision-making process. The main variables of the study, namely customer experiences, restaurant dining and social media, are theoretically explored within the disciplines of service management and customer behaviour. These theories have laid a sound foundation for the subsequent research methods followed.

The main purpose of the study was using social media reviews from TripAdvisor to investigate dining experiences in the restaurant industry. The outcomes desired were: firstly to advise the restaurant industry about superior customer practices, secondly emphasising the importance for industry of social media use in the dining experience, and thirdly rendering clarification on the experience perceptions of customers about factors that might lead to 'delight' and 'frustration'. This research centralises the constructs of delight and frustration factors, which are typically extremely emotional dining experiences for the customer, that have the common element of surprise.

Methodologically, the research required two phases: firstly, the qualitative analysis of online user-generated content by content analysis. The global sample consisted of seven international cities, which included the best, worst and average-rated TripAdvisor restaurant reviews. The

content analysis produced the theoretical base for the dining perception variables used in the empirical survey. In the second phase of the study, the global surveys administered resulted in measuring the general public's perceptions of the delight and frustration factors of dining experiences. Subsequently, the research process required various quantitative data analyses to reach substantial results with inferences. The results and interpreted findings achieved were twofold:

Firstly, from the content analysis: customers regard service quality as relatively unimportant in relation to the holistic dining experience. Customers regarded food and beverage quality as crucial in the dining experience. Value for money increasingly becomes an issue as customers become more frustrated, more so than when the dining was generally experienced as pleasant.

Secondly, from the empirical data: mood and aesthetics are essential, especially when diners chose between their favourite restaurants. Further results show managing the service basics for restaurants is essential; this included welcoming, professional, attentive and friendly service. Service consistency has also proven to be imperative in customers' perceptions. Results further show that different nationalities could perceive food quality and service reliability differently. In addition, men and women could perceive food quality, mood and aesthetics, and value for money differently.

This study recommends various findings to the restaurant industry: most importantly that the post-experience reviews are contextually different to customers' dining preferences. The factor determining the reputation of a restaurant is food quality and not so much service quality. Value for money should be associated with a specific service or product feature for it to be of meaningful consequence to the restaurateur.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Social media has developed into a communication and marketing phenomenon that requires attention in any industry. Traditional media such as newspapers, radio, television and magazines have had a limited one-way information sharing value. With the onset of web-based social networking sites in the late 1990s, the interactive nature of 'user-generated content' has made multiple and simultaneous communication possible through various media channels. Social networks, besides providing individuals with social means, have also levelled the playing field for new business entries in competing for market awareness with big business. This has notably increased the 'transparency factor' between suppliers and customers, and everybody else that might be interested (Stokes, 2008).

With the introduction of social media, customers who have had a highly positive or negative experience have increased means to share this with anyone prepared to listen (or read), be it friends, family, colleagues or companies (Hotel News Resource, 2010). This could work exponentially (either positively or negatively) for the business's reputation, with immediate effects. It could also be very unforgiving in perpetuating customer sentiment, referred to as 'viral marketing' (Stokes, 2008). Current social media technologies have contributed extensively to the ease, speed and method of communicating multimedia messages to others. Information is created, communicated and knowledge is shared amongst many people. Opposed to traditional media, social media is inter- and exchangeable and flexible in content, able to be commented upon, and be altered in real-time. The main forms of media include amongst others, weblogs, forums, message boards, podcasts, chat rooms, social networks and micro-blogs (Phillips and Young, 2009).

Effective managerial decisions are based on sound strategic choices (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington, 2008). Strategic choices pertaining to social media contain a multitude of complex choices that would need informed decision-making criteria, knowledge and specific industry-related understanding. If it comes to a specific restaurant's customer relationships and sustained brand-building, there should be clearly identified factors with related competencies

to strategically plan, implement, and respond to their customers. These factors are therefore necessary to attain success in the industry, underpin competitive advantage, and add value to the strategic outcomes.

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) have conducted a study on the profit impact of marketing strategy research and found a positive relationship between profits and superior service. Customer satisfaction goalposts continuously change as their tastes are reaching higher levels of sophistication. Their degrees of met expectations directly determine a business's expected financial rewards, and consequent stakeholders' perceptions. The customers' perceptions need to be increasingly maintained, their opinions heard, and their experience shared. In the realm of social media, however, customers send out messages via various media platforms to share their experiences with whoever would like to listen. As a result customers are able to do this effortlessly and cheaply (Stokes, 2008).

Combining customer perceptions, which rely on expectations and customer-generated content, opens channels of participation never previously realised. Metcalf's law states that "the value of any network is proportional to the square of the number of users" (Doyle, 2008:328). The possibilities of simultaneous multiple online connections fundamentally change the way businesses create value for their customers. With the phenomenon of value comes preconceived expectations, and these expectations are expressed through various methods of communication to stakeholders.

Expectations are, in turn, translated into the perception of desired quality within a personal 'reference framework' (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). This expectations framework is relative to each individual. A clear understanding of how these reference points relate to the service and product experience is crucial, especially in the interconnectivity dynamics of social media.

The restaurant industry will be the main focus for this study, because of the traditional 'word-of-mouth' marketing power associated with it (Longart, 2008). Social media, and especially online review websites like TripAdvisor essentially being an electronic 'word-of-mouth' phenomenon, are rightly appropriate for further exploration in terms of customer perceptions (Safko and Brake, 2009).

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1 DEFINING AND UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPTS

Within this study various topics will need to be explored. Reviewing literature for this research needs to be congruent with the systematic research process of this document. The researcher's approach to the relevant literature is to determine its value in contributing towards the theoretical framework, by critically evaluating each of the concepts' contribution in terms of validating the variables to be used in the primary research (Veal, 1997).

Initially, the concept of 'social media' needs to be understood as within the context of the hospitality industry, and specifically within the restaurant industry. Stelzner (2009) provides one example of similar types of research which places the media type into an American context. An insightful conclusion found in this research is that 88% of marketers surveyed are actually using social media to market their businesses, but as much as 72% have only been doing so for a few months or less (since 2009). This shows the current prevalence of the media. This also reiterates the 'viral' nature of the media channel and uncertainty of its future developments (Stokes, 2008). One could assume that these figures are not reflective of what is happening in South Africa, but these trends are most likely to spill over locally, technology permitting.

In addition to the exploratory research required to gain the groundwork knowledge to create a valid context, descriptive research has also had to be undertaken (Parasuraman, Grewal and Krishnan, 2004) by describing the motivations behind social media participation and whether the managers' and customers' needs are being attended to, and to what degree. Literature in contemporary marketing research adds valid context to the constructs created. Some social media technology practices and processes require simplification.

The complex relations between concepts also need additional explanation to make them further understandable for the purposes of the study. The importance of the different forms of social media is often confusing with each having its own channelling characteristics. The market data (Econsultancy Compendium, 2009) address these different channels by qualifying and quantifying the current ratings between the media.

1.2.2 EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONGST THE CONCEPTS AND VARIABLES

The concepts and variables described within the proposed framework of the study (see Figure 1.1) have relations that need to be qualified. The main concepts identified are social media's online user-generated content; the empirical dining experiences of global customers; and the perceived delight and frustration factors of dining experiences. Central to these variables is the concept of interactive marketing, where Shankar and Malthouse (2009: 1-3) describe some issues that are relevant within the customer relationship paradigm, including 'non-push marketing contacts', 'customisation', managing 'different media' channels, 'effective delivery', gaining 'customer trust' whilst also maintaining 'privacy'.

These issues arise from social media users' needs in being able to voice their comments, views, opinions and evaluations. By analysing these participative behaviours, one has to look at the outcomes desired to be able to assess the expectations (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009). In customer-generated content, one should distinguish between 'co-production' and 'co-creation' of content, where each would contain its own criteria of expectations. The former indicates some degree of transference of work from organisation to customer, whereas the latter indicates a participating role in the creation of the core product itself. Both are present in varying degrees within social media channels. Social media customers participate by spreading the 'word', thereby disseminating traditional marketing roles for the restaurant. Similarly, a restaurant's recipe can be tried at home and commented on via social media channels. The expectations and experiences reflected by both these outcomes are considerably different and further research is imperative to differentiate the constructs fully.

Noteworthy is that the emergence of the Internet has facilitated the electronic 'word-of-mouth', especially within the customer communities (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009). The apparent ease of connecting and the low financial outlay have huge advantages. The desire for social interaction and obvious financial incentives also rate high on their motivational level to participate. Altruistically, the concern for other customers and expressing their self-worth also feature strongly.

1.2.3 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE IDENTIFIED VARIABLES

Familiarising one with the newer Internet technologies and accompanying media context is important. For example, the correct identification of 'conditions' conducive to social media

participation, from both the managers' and the customers' perspective, is obligatory. Understanding the ideal environmental context is necessary for social media participation to occur. The McKinsey Web 2.0 surveys from the McKinsey Quarterly (2009) have many identified variables to consider in understanding the ideal social media context. Apparently the 'high-tech' status of a business has a large influence, as well as progressive management capabilities on the rate of social media adoption. Further findings have related the effectiveness of social media positively with a significant lack of internal staff usage barriers. Another result found that an increased competitive environment, and other factors such as size and location, is conducive to a positive social media context.

Safko and Brake (2009) have found that content is crucial in participating effectively on social media sites. They identified various behaviours that are exhibited towards social media content, most notably that participants become content contributors by becoming engaged as a stakeholder. Comments may also serve to endorse or promote content. Content will be referred to others, often causing a 'viral' value. An example of this phenomenon was during the Barack Obama presidential campaign in 2008, where the social media campaign amassed a database of 10 million followers, which could all be addressed directly on a first-name basis.

1.2.4 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The current status of a relevant literature review indicates that hardly any similar research has been conducted thus far. However, wide-ranging searches were continuously conducted in order to identify all possible influences that pertain to the combined elements of social media, online review websites, restaurant dining experiences and expectations of customers. Much research has however been done on the scope of the identified variables.

Supporting secondary data on social media is extensive. Jones (2009) reviews the value of social media and the impact on small and large businesses. Trends are extensively researched in the Econsultancy Compendium (2009), but more channel specific blogs and reviews can be seen as a tool of importance in all social media domains regarding how customers and managers interactively communicate (Thevenot, 2007).

Secondary data on customer experiences and expectations are equally extensive. Matilla (2002) describes the way story-based appeals work with customers. Parallel arguments could be drawn from this research to relate to similar social media contexts. Litvin, Blose and Laird,

(2004) discuss tourists' usage of different restaurants' web pages and questions the effectiveness of the web in marketing restaurants. Litvin *et al.* (2004) concluded that little research had been done to determine the meaning of 'patronage'. The inferences drawn, although not specific to social media channels, have valuable constructs to develop and support the study further.

In analysing the dining experience from a customer's point of view, there is much research available. Anderson and Mossberg (2004) explore the 'multidimensional' experience the customers go through in dining. In their quest for the answer to the question "do restaurants satisfy customer needs?" they asked the customers to evaluate the ideal dining experience and established that 'social needs' are especially important at evening restaurants. This and similar studies have undoubtedly contributed to the understanding of the relationships between the main variables.

1.3 PROBLEM DEFINITION

The purpose of this study is to use social media reviews from TripAdvisor to investigate dining experiences in the restaurant industry. The research uses content analysis of online reviews as a basis to evaluate empirical dining experiences. The intention is to inform restaurateurs about exceptional factors to incorporate or avoid in their daily business priorities.

Contemporary views on business priorities confirm the customer as dictating the essence of product quality (Heskett, Sasser and Schlesinger, 1997; Walker, Backman, Backman and Morais, 2001). Judgements of quality customer experiences are inundated with numerous variables that necessitate contemplation. The contexts from which these product-value judgements are made are very important (Cant, Brink and Brijball, 2002). This is especially so in terms of time, internal and external environmental influences, as well as the personal and market characteristics involved. Customers' dining experiences can generally be categorised as positive, negative or indifferent. This research seeks to advise the restaurant industries on superior customer practices, by only focusing on the experience factors that lead to 'delight' and 'frustration'. Identifying delight and frustration factors from TripAdvisor has the advantage of taking global contexts into consideration that include all types of restaurants, markets, locations and cultures.

This study will further investigate whether customers' restaurant dining contexts are more accurately represented by social media review sites, than from the general public's collective memory of dining experiences in restaurants. One could argue that on social media sites reviewers record their actual dining experiences soon after the occasion, thereby decribing the experiential context while it is fresh and detailed in their minds. Internet-based social media review sites, being regarded as real-time communication platforms, have infinite content capacity available at all times. This is noteworthy because the study attempts to verify that online review sites are more trustworthy sources of 'best practice' feedback to the restaurant industry than any other available sources. The relevant research questions would be:

i. Why do customers participate in social media?
ii. What is the relationship between dining experiences and social media?
iii. Does participation in social media enhance the customers' experience of dining and their respective perceptions of quality?
iv. What is the relationship between customers' expectations and experiences of dining?
v. What are the delight and frustration factors of customer experiences?
vi. What is word-of-mouth (WOM) and e-WOM?
vii. How does customer behaviour influence dining experiences?
viii. What factors influence online and off-line context of customers' dining experiences?

1.4 PROPOSED FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Figure 1.1 outlines the proposed framework to be used in this study.

Figure 1.1:   Proposed Framework of the Study
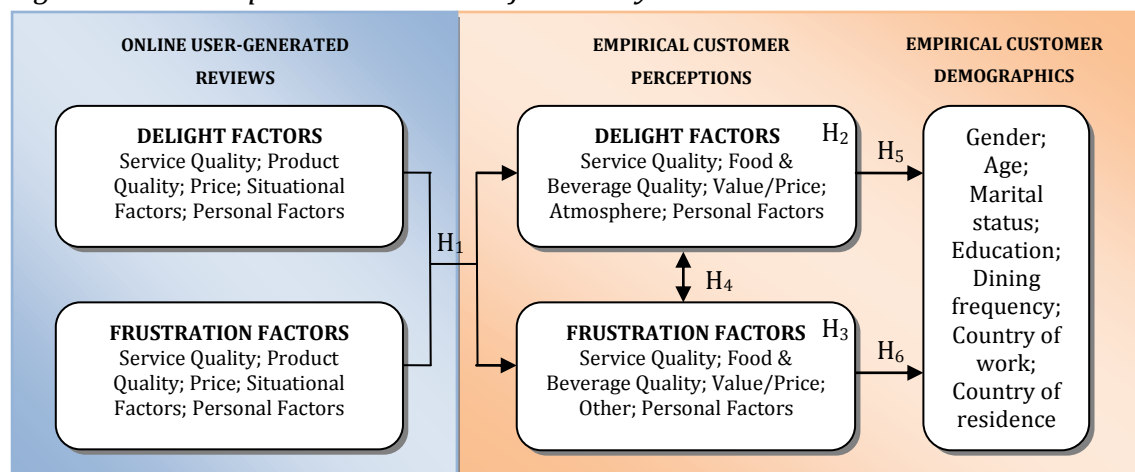
Source: Researcher's Own Model

From Figure 1.1 one can see the relationship between the identified variables and the associated hypotheses. There are two identified spheres of the framework, delight and frustration factors from online sources, and those from empirical sources. Online user-generated content is to be analysed by content analysis. Empirical customer perceptions are to be administered and analysed by surveys; so too will the demographics be covered.

The various research hypotheses illustrated in Figure 1.1 are articulated as follows:

H_1:   The delight and frustration factors from social media review sites and the delight and frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences are similar

H_2:   There is a correlation among the delight factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

H_3:   There is a correlation among the frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

H_4:   There is a correlation between the frustration and delight factors of the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

H_5:   There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive delight factors in restaurant dining experiences

H_6:   There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive frustration factors in restaurant dining experiences

1.5   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this research is to investigate restaurant dining experiences; how they influence social media reviews, and vice-versa. The intention is to identify the delight and frustration factors in restaurant dining by means of content analysis of TripAdvisor reviews. The study will then further empirically test whether these identified frustration and delight factors are indeed applicable to restaurant dining.

The secondary objectives are:

i.   To investigate literature on social media, customer experiences of restaurant dining, services marketing and consumer behaviour

ii.   To develop a theoretical framework to conduct content analysis and empirical research

iii.   To analyse the customer reviews on the social media platform of TripAdvisor

iv.   To identify the delight and frustration factors of restaurant customers from the customer reviews

v.   To empirically test whether these reviewed delight and frustration factors identified are applicable to the restaurant industry by relating them to delight and frustration factors in general dining experiences

vi.   To make recommendations on the research findings that relate directly to the restaurant industry

1.6   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Methodologically, the research philosophy would require a combination of positivism and some qualitative interpretation in this research (Money, 2005). The study focuses its methodology on gathering evidence by:

i.   Investigating secondary literature sources in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th chapters of the thesis. This research is exploratory where key variables are being investigated and constructs formed in preparation of the next phases. This will expand the researcher's understanding of relations between the constructs, and aid in acquiring the correct outcomes of primary research methods.

ii.   Designing a theoretical framework [covered by Chapter 5 of the thesis] in order to link the variables identified, explored, and interpreted to the outcomes anticipated in the empirical data gathering.

iii.   Gathering of primary data using TripAdvisor's user-generated content that validates variables used in the empirical survey study phase of the research [covered by Chapter 6 of the thesis]. Content analysis is used to determine delight and frustration factors of dining experiences.

iv.   Gathering of primary data using empirical surveys of global customers about their perception of dining experiences [covered by Chapter 6 of the thesis]. A cross-sectional convenience sampling at a single point in time on the identified variables is proposed. (This is discussed further in paragraph 1.6.3)

1.6.1 PHASE 1: CONTENT ANALYSIS TO PRODUCE EMPIRICAL SURVEY

In order to define the different variables for establishing the empirical survey, content analysis needs to be completed at one point in time with a representative sample of global diners. A sample was drawn from the 'best wired cities of the world', which comprised seven diverse locations, including Cape Town in South Africa (see Empirical Survey Design, paragraph 6.3). The best, worst and average restaurants were selected and 10 of their most recent reviews analysed for delight and frustration factors. A total of 210 reviews were analysed, which yielded 893 separate delight and frustration responses about dining experiences. Subsequently from those responses, 219 delight and frustration variables were identified. Further triangulation was prepared by using a customer experience model from the literature (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler, 2008).

The major 45 variables (out of 219) obtained from the content analysis then contributed to the structuring of the measuring instrument to be used in the empirical survey.

1.6.2 PHASE 2: EMPIRICAL SURVEY

The web-based survey was conducted focused on dining customers globally. Surveys are ideal as a communication approach in research, because dining perceptions can be gauged without interfering perceptions from the researcher (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). Sample respondents are also more comfortable sharing their opinions and views via electronic means.

Based on the findings of the content analysis done in phase 1 and substantiated by constructs formed from secondary sources, the measurement instrument design was completed. In light of mostly producing interval data, the researcher proposed a 6-point Likert type scale as a suitable response method to gather perceptions of dining experiences (Cooper and Schindler, 2006).

1.6.3 SAMPLING

Table 1.1 outlines the measuring instrument, methodology, the sample size and eventual outcomes of the two primary phases in this study.

Table 1.1: The Main Type of Survey, Sample Size and Respondents

MEASURING INSTRUMENT	SAMPLING METHOD and SIZE	METHODOLOGY	OUTCOMES
Online reviews	Structured sample: 210 global reviews analysed on TripAdvisor	Content analysis	Empirical survey questions
Empirical surveys	Convenience sample: 166 global survey respondents analysed	Statistical methods: factor analysis, correlation, MANOVA, alphas	Testing of hypotheses

Source: The Researcher's Own Design

In Table 1.1, both measuring instruments are seen in the context of the study. One would notice that the content analysis required structured sampling, whereas the surveys were subjected to a convenience sample. This was because of geographical and logistical limitations to structure the samples similarly. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

1.6.4 DATA COLLECTION

In the framework of the study, certain online factors were identified that included service quality, product quality, price, situational factors, and personal factors (see Chapter 5). These factors lay the theoretical foundation to analyse the TripAdvisor content. The analysis of review content required the interpretation of review content into variables of delight and frustration factors. Judging the correct factors from TripAdvisor required careful analysis. They were categorised either as 'delight factors' or 'frustration factors', depending on positive or negative reactions.

As stated, from the 210 TripAdvisor reviews 893 separate delight and frustration responses about dining experiences were identified. This resulted in the development of the Code Book of Review Variables (see appendix G), which subsequently produced 45 delight and frustration variables.

In the second phase, online surveys were submitted via e-mail or social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) to potential respondents to be completed anonymously to ensure privacy and confidentiality. The respondents completed the online surveys referring to their general

perception of restaurant dining experiences according to given descriptive factors derived from the content analysis results.

The survey responses were scaled from 'dislike extremely' (0) to 'like extremely' (5). The survey's variable descriptors contained dining perceptions with 21 positive factors and 24 negative factors. Their responses were general recollections of their restaurant dining likes and dislikes.

The validity and reliability of the surveys were ensured and tested by sending out three sets of pilot surveys to convenience samples before they are approved and initiated. Experts also commented on the measuring instruments before they were used.

1.6.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In analysing the content on TripAdvisor, frequency analysis with histograms was used. Online and off-line comparisons were also made by using histograms and descriptive statistics.

Factor analysis will be used in establishing whether there is any difference between the delight factors in online user-generated content and the general public's perceptions. This requires the running of multiple variables simultaneously.

Correlation coefficients are used to illustrate the differences between the frustration and delight factors of the general public's perceptions. In this study the delight and frustration factors are the variables to determine the strength of association.

Then MANOVA (controlling for multiple factors) was used to determine if there were no statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive delight or frustration factors in restaurant experiences. Establishing critical minimum levels of Alpha was incorporated to measure the internal consistency and reliability of the variables (Research Consultant, 2010).

In conclusion, the overall research design was exploratory in order to formulate the problem, develop hypotheses, develop constructs, and establish priorities for the research. On the other hand, it was descriptive on the subject of dining experience. Descriptive research analyses the experiences of customers and how their expectations are satisfied, exceeded or diminished. Directional predictions are made as to their various perceptions, attitudes and belief systems. The research is also multivariate, to investigate how the offline and online contexts have

reciprocal effects on word-of-mouth communication. This provides evidence of the relationships between similar variables in different contexts.

1.7 THE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The population scope of the study is global. The samples have been predetermined to represent a multi-cultural spectrum of restaurant diners to avoid bias.

As mentioned previously, the only limitation of interest to the reader would be the researcher's use of convenience samples in the pilot and survey studies. However, the results were not compromised in the process and similar results were to be expected with other sampling methods.

Throughout the research clear distinctions between fact, opinion, interpretation and speculation were made and concepts explained within the required reading context. When extrapolating historical trends to future expectations, for example, the candidate attempted to forecast such trends based on expert opinion as far as possible, and sourced additional views for due diligence and critical assessment.

1.8 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Table 1.2 outlines the definitions of the concepts used in this study:

Table 1.2: Conceptual Clarification

CONCEPT	DEFINITION	APPLICATION TO STUDY
1. Social Media	Internet-based applications based on foundations of Web 2.0, and that "allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010: 59)	Social Media seen from the restaurateurs' and customers' perspective within the hospitality industry.
2.Online	Referring to any form or channel of communication via the world wide web and Internet	Shortened for reading convenience throughout the report
3. Quality	Perception of quality, as derived from the discrepancy between expectations and perceived delivered service/product/goods (Money, 2005)	Simplified for reading convenience throughout the report
4. Social media expectations	Expectations of online users about the extent of their needs that can be fulfilled by means of social media	Refers to customers' expectations of the use of social media (what it should do for them).

CONCEPT	DEFINITION	APPLICATION TO STUDY
5. Dining experience	Consisting of all tangibles and intangibles that make up the product and service delivery of an occasion at a restaurant	Simplified for reading convenience throughout the report
6. Viral value	It becomes evident when a message is spread exponentially across networks (Stokes, 2008)	Social media has inbuilt viral potential, by virtue of their interconnectivity between participants
7. Validity	It is the degree to which what is observed or measured is the same as what was purported to be observed or measured (Money, 2005)	Especially of relevance in the methodological considerations in this study
8. Reliability	It relates to the stability of the instrument used to measure the latent concept (Money, 2005)	Especially of relevance in the methodological considerations in this study
9. Electronic word-of-mouth	The means of spreading messages person to person via online channels (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009)	Integral and fundamental occurrence pertaining to social media

1.9 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Phillips and Young (2009) assert that the web has become 'writable' by illustrating how participants are able to contribute to social media conversations. The tools of communication have also evolved, making the world closely connected on various platforms. The possibilities that have presented themselves via user-generated content have made marketers re-evaluate their traditional approaches to reaching the target market (Stokes, 2008). A sustained continued involvement with customers requires a paradigm shift. Social media has become generally accepted emerging channels of communication that have dynamically affected businesses in hospitality. Besides general socialising amongst interested parties, buyers and suppliers are using these channels increasingly to determine each other's needs, and to express their own needs in return. Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) argue that meeting customer expectations in addressing these needs is of principal importance in building successful businesses. This would explain the restaurant industry's imperative success factor by highlighting the important relationship between customers and managers and the role of using social media.

Only a few previous studies exist to determine whether the customer dining experience will be enhanced by the use of social media. Exploring customers' social media reviews and their empirical perceptions of quality helps to explain the intricacies of the restaurant industry. The industry would surely benefit from findings that the customer perceptions are enriched by

social media participation. To substantiate this, Longart (2008:127) suggests further research is needed in what motivates people to engage in word-of-mouth through social media. He quotes this as being of 'extraordinary importance'.

The benefits of social media marketing are extensive according to Stokes (2008):

- 'viral marketing' can have exponential growth and reach
- potential managerial insights into the target market demographics are extensive
- appropriate channels can be selected which are preferred by the audience
- capitalising on the creativity of the customers to spread the restaurant's message at low cost
- establishing direct and personal contact between managers and customers are some of the results that were not previously accomplished in traditional marketing

Being able to capitalise on online reputation and ensuring a quality experience are essential for sustainable competitive advantage in the restaurant industry. Insights reached in this research will contribute substantially to the field of marketing.

Additionally, this research provides new insights on social media reviews in the restaurant industry. Analysing why customers participate in 'user-generated content' on review sites about their dining experiences has wide-range appeal. The study has an interesting mix of 'old-world' experience paradigms and theories that, through this study, were related to Web 2.0 interconnectivity in expressing human expectations.

Contributing to the restaurant industry from customers' perspectives on proven approaches to properly utilise online reviews, is the general value of the study. The conclusions of this study will demystify, clarify, and motivate most of the commonly regarded assumptions surrounding social media use, internationally and locally.

1.10   OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 provide a literature overview that sets the contextual basis around the main variables. These major variables include social media, customer experience, and the restaurant dining industry.

Social media, and specifically online review websites are explored in terms of applicable consumer dining behaviour in restaurants. The relationship between social media and the customers' dining experiences are analysed. Services marketing's contribution to the restaurant industry is discussed, with emphasis on customer dining experiences and expectations. For reference purposes, the restaurant industry is analysed for contemporary trends, thereby enabling the reader to appreciate the extent of the dining context. The concepts of delight and frustration factors are defined and extensively referred to throughout the study. Additionally, consumer behaviour is brought into the equation, exploring the theories surrounding the motivations of the customers' buying process and their relation to customers' dining context. Online versus off-line contexts are discussed, as they are of importance within the framework of the study.

Chapter 5 summarises the major points of the literature review, the logic of the research process, and proposes a framework for investigation. Chapter 6 shows the methodology in step-by-step detail, illustrating the process of methodological phases followed. Chapter 7 discusses the results and analysis of each of the statistical methods employed. All of these results are interpreted and discussed. The findings as related to the revised hypotheses are discussed.

Chapter 8 concludes the study by answering the research questions and synthesising the theoretical, content analysis and empirical findings.

CHAPTER 2

A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1 an overview of the study was presented to create a background to the project. The primary objective of this study is to investigate social media reviews of dining experiences. This chapter will focus on social media.

Pitt (2010) states that if one had researched the phenomenon of social media in 2004, it would have been found that the critics were trying to convince society that they were just another trend of the times. It would be found that the phenomenal growth and potential of Web 2.0 and its popular application, social media, were acknowledged (Aguiton and Cardon, 2007; Friedman and Friedman, 2008). The widespread popularity of social media was gained especially in the midst of the Barak Obama election. By continuously informing his followers and engaging them in his election progress, his success became an example of the influence of social media (Pitt, 2010; Chi and Yang, 2010).

In this chapter 'social media' will first be defined. Thereafter the developments in social media and the participation of customers in social media are discussed. The role of social media in the restaurant industry is subsequently discussed, and reference is made to online review sites, such as TripAdvisor. To conclude, customer dining experiences are brought into relation with social media. Specific attention is also paid to social media platforms.

2.2 DEFINING SOCIAL MEDIA

Safko and Brake (2009) differentiate between social networking and social media, by stating that the former is a variable of the latter. They explain that social networking consists of tools that promulgate information about the person concerned and his/her interests with friends and other personal and professional connections. Zarrella (2010:1-2) like many other experts generally defines social media as 'new web technologies' that enable users to generate and

distribute their personal content, in contrast with traditional media which are 'one-way static broadcasting technologies'.

Jones (2009) describes social media, and specifically social networking, as online interaction that takes place with no restraints on time, place or space. Bolton and Saxena-Iyer (2009) see social media in the marketing context as consumer-to-consumer based networks and the building of consumer communities. Social networks are customer-driven; moreover the most loyal and engaged of the customers are also the most participative in the marketing process (Jones, 2009). Sanaktekin and Aydin (2010) categorise social media into social networking sites, blogs, and the rest as 'social media applications'.

Social media is creating online communities, attracting large numbers of users by exchanging thoughts, ideas and information on a multitude of topics that appeal. Social media provides an Internet created forum that facilitates the meeting of minds via social networks, mutually benefiting participants in creating an experience where individuals and businesses can contribute with content to interested online communities. These communities' individuals are then free to express themselves to each other about the content delivered, or create some of their own, or change whatever has been published by various means. Friedman and Friedman (2008) call social media 'the new media' and an analysis of the definition has led them to believe there is no single approach in trying to define them. General inherent confusion exists within the conceptual relationships of message, medium, technology, time period and the social context. Especially amongst the classical media experts, there has been an ambiguous discussion of the relative importance to society of 'medium' (i.e. technology) versus 'message' (i.e. content). This has led to some of the confusion around the extent and scope of social media. Research into the literature, substantiated by many authors, has indicated that the definitions of social media are wide and perspectives are plentiful (Aguiton and Cardon, 2007; Floridi, 2008; Kushin and Kitchener, 2009). Table 2.1 summarises the main thoughts on the definitions of social media:

Table 2.1: Overview of Definitions of Social Media

Source	Main Defining Thoughts	Operationalisation
Safko and Brake (2009)	Social networking is a variable of social media	Tools that spread information about users' interests
Zarrella (2010)	New web technologies vs. traditional one-way static broadcasting technologies	Enable users to generate and distribute their own personal content
Jones (2009)	Social networks are customer-driven	Online interaction, with no restrictions on time, place or space

Source	Main Defining Thoughts	Operationalisation
Bolton and Saxena-Iyer (2009)	Consumer-to-consumer based networks and the building of consumer communities	Peer interactivity and participation in user-generated content
Kushin and Kitchener, (2009)	Online communities; exchanging thoughts, ideas and information	Facilitating the meeting of minds and mutually benefiting participants
Friedman and Friedman (2008)	'The New Media'	Conceptual interrelations of message, medium, technology, time period and social context

Source: The researcher's own table

Taking the summary of definitions of Table 2.1 into consideration, most of the literature sourced indicates that social networking is a subset application of social media. The content is user-generated by anyone connected on the Internet. The interactive connections are potentially instantaneously performed and received. Content includes all electronic media which involve the human senses: photos, video, audio, print, and graphics amongst many others (Phillips and Young, 2009). These are often used in combination to communicate the message to the target audience, the Internet device or mobile phone user. These users, in turn, have the power to reciprocate in similar approach. In some circumstances, some content possess a viral capacity to spread to millions of users.

2.3 DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Web 2.0 technologies represent developments in marketers' communication paradigms, whereby individual consumers became publishers of information (Chaney, 2009). During the 1990s and early 2000, Internet users were predominantly consumers of information. With the onset of social media, customers become producers of information.

Friedman and Friedman (2008) differentiate between the different generations of Internet applications, known as Web 1.0, Web 2.0 and Web 3.0. The initial Internet phase known as Web 1.0 was typically static, and was represented by Internet web pages and sites. Web 1.0 had an 'anonymous dimension', which assured the Internet user of a degree of privacy (De Notaris, 2010).

Subsequently Web 2.0 characteristically was user-interactive and typically contains 'user-generated content' (Schweidel, Rindfleisch, O'Hern and Antia, 2010). Phillips and Young (2009) typify Web 2.0 as enriching on-line experiences and making communications more exciting. They consequently pointed out that 'Web 2.0' had been named by O'Reilly in 2003 because he believed that the media ensured equal opportunities in online conversations, facilitating interactions amongst online communities. Web 3.0 refers to the futuristic 'Semantic Web', when logical reasoning will be integrated into the Internet to enable computers to interactively interpret, infer and comprehend data (Floridi, 2008).

Whereas the Internet originally promised the world knowledge sharing, according to Safko and Brake (2009), social media has superseded this by promising the world interactive and rich communicative content via users creating knowledge that can be shared amongst millions (Stokes, 2008; Elkin-Koren, 2010). Stokes (2008:125-126) simply defines social media as 'the ways that we create, connect and share online', and social networking as 'using a type of website model where individual members become part of a broader virtual community'. Thus, he sees social networking as a primary function of social media. In line with the concept of networking, Stephan and Galak (2009) mention the concept of online 'word-of-mouth' as a form of social media. It includes referrals and forums where user-generated content is shared and evaluated.

Chaney (2009:xxvii) illustratively states that social media is 'more than a toolset; [it is] a mindset as well'. The statement illustrates his view of how the recent changes in communication have shifted the marketing paradigm. Customers have become increasingly suspicious of traditional forms of marketing. Being bombarded by elaborate monologues filled with promises frequently suggests a fake understanding of individual needs. Consequently, expectations increase but often reality does not deliver on the promised experiences.

 In social media, apparently the opinion of the average user is much more valuable than that of a professional critic (Onishi and Manchanda, 2009; Thevenot, 2007). This is explained by evidence of a lack of trust in the traditional media, whereas it seems more reliable sources of accurate information have been found by peer-to-peer dialogues in social media. Customers and employees have become increasingly credible advocates of their valued businesses online. This has further necessitated the new required 'conversationalist' skill-set in the development and success of social media (Chaney, 2009; Safko and Brake, 2009). This is substantiated by Safko and Brake (2009:25) in describing primary ways to effectively engage people with social media – 'communication, collaboration, education, and entertainment'.

Illustrating the scope of Facebook as the most popular current communication medium in social media, the following extract applies:

'There are far more people on Facebook than live in the United States. On July 21, Facebook announced it had reached a milestone: signing up its 500 millionth user. In addition to adding more than a half billion users in the six years since its launch, Facebook is also now the most-visited site on the Internet.' (Time Magazine, 2010)

In addition to this, the Facebook statistics page proclaims that there were more than a 100 million users as at July 2010 accessing Facebook through their mobile. Similarly, LinkedIn is also topping 70 million users worldwide (Econsultancy, 2009). Social networks in total are frequented by three quarters of the global consumers that go online and have raised consumer expectations in regard to collaboration, sharing and participation in online conversations.

To demonstrate the contextual shift in social media marketing development, Phillips and Young (2009) draw opposing comparisons between mass and micro communications: differentiating between a characteristic static and deliberating text for the former and rich, dynamic content but limited in reach, for the latter. The deeper dynamics of the relationship between 'old media' (mass communications) and 'new media' (micro communications) has not yet fully been determined (Onishi and Manchanda, 2009). This important relationship provides scope for further study.

Web 2.0 brings the old and new media together in allowing all business stakeholders to interactively communicate without restraint, with the added potential that dialogues can be spread exponentially (Phillips and Young, 2009). It can thus be seen as an open system of collaboration. More importantly, the social media environment has diffused the confines and distinctions between customers and businesses with the creation of consumer-generated content. In further illustrating this point, Chaney (2009:3) refers to the 'insurgent consumers' who currently identify their freedom of expression in making virtual impacts by creating content for the masses. This content is expressed and subsequently received by all interested parties who can digitally connect and appreciate it.

In describing the development of social media, Band and Petouhoff (2010) have come up with an illustration that depicts the communication shift from old to new media, as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1:   The Old Customer Relationship Model versus The New Model
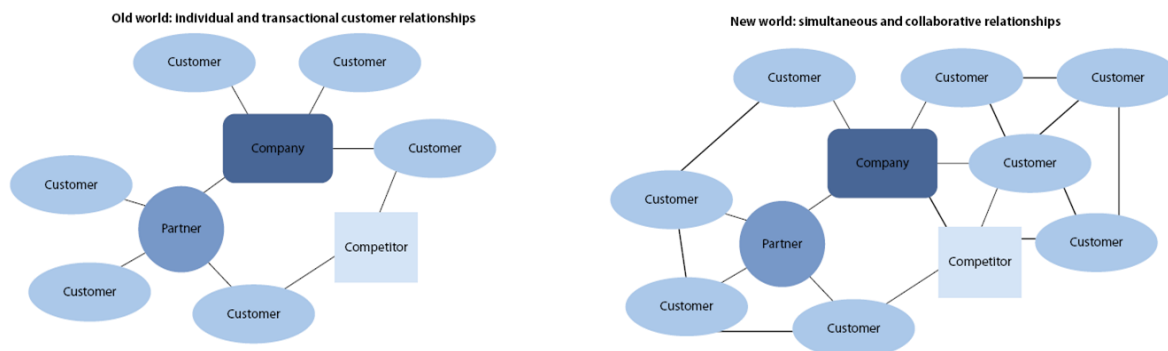
Source: Band and Petouhoff (2010)

Figure 2.1 illustrates how the information era has moved past the immediate business interest of the parties (i.e. traditional relationships in commerce) to more of a participatory role of providing information (i.e. interactive and interdependent contemporary). Customers are increasingly connected, as are competitors and business partners (i.e. intermediaries, suppliers and other stakeholders). In fact they are all directly interconnected in being able to create information content, as much as they are in receiving it.

Besides online communication becoming interactive, marketing attempts at mass customisation to reach target markets have given way to individual customisation with the advent of social media (Phillips and Young, 2009). One-on-one communications have enabled the recognition of a customer's specific needs in adapting their products and services according to consumer requests. This subsequently leads to stronger customer relations, satisfaction and subsequent positive experiences.

Gaining customer knowledge from social media makes credibility a crucial variable to be considered regarding a business's reputation (Phillips and Young, 2009; Jones, 2009; Peterson, 2010). People gain knowledge from their on-line experiences and their peers' on-line experiences and expertise. The extent of Web 2.0 claims a wider evidence of experiences, ideas, insights, values and judgements than ever seen before on the Internet (Phillips and Young, 2009). The sharing of knowledge is fundamental to social media expectations. Expertise as a subject form has consequently become a commodity within the community of knowledge-seekers, and as such, risks losing credibility. Alternatively, the open collaboration with experts in the creation of new knowledge changes these initial threats into potential new-found opportunities.

It is useful to elaborate on Safko and Brake's (2009) identified social media variables to identify some of the social media tools available. Table 2.2 gives to some extent an idea of the tools available:

Table 2.2: Social Media Variables

Variable	Description	Tools
Social networking	Establishing an online profile and posting content on areas of interest/expertise	Facebook; LinkedIn; Bebo; MySpace
Publish	Incorporates content for public relations, like e-mail campaigns, blogging, wikis	Wikipedia; WordPress; SlideShare
Photo	Archiving and sharing photos to communicate, collaborate and educate	Flickr; Photobucket; Twitxr
Audio	Sharing music or voice audio for entertainment, information, news or education	iTunes; Podbean; Podcast.net
Video	Creating and sharing of video content by computer or mobile phones or devices	YouTube; Google Video; Metacafe
Micro blogging	Communicating meaningful messages within 140 characters	Twitter; Twitxr; Plurk
Livecasting	Internet radio and other live-stream applications for entertainment or education	BlogTalkRadio; SHOUT cast; TalkShoe
Virtual worlds	Creating a persona in a virtual community to connect with others with similar goals	Active Worlds; Kaneva; Second Life
Gaming	Cooperation and competition within virtual online worlds	Halo3; Entropia Universe; EverQuest
Productivity applications	Variation of applications that enhance business productivity by sharing	AOL; Google Alerts; Google Gmail; ReadNotify
Aggregators	Accumulation and management of information for easy access	Digg; Google Reader; Reddit; Yelp
RSS	Rich Site Summary – feeds current content to the user from websites identified	FeedBurner; Atom; RSS 2.0
Search	Internet search sites which require SEO (Search Engine Optimisation)	MetaTube; Google Search; Technorati
Mobile	Application to use most of the social media tools on a mobile phone	airG; SMS.ac; CallWave
Interpersonal	Applications that facilitate communication and collaboration	Acrobat Connect; iChat; Skype

Source: Safko and Brake (2009)

Table 2.2 summarises the various social media variables, describes them and indicates some of the tools that relate to the variable. The average global user would be able to identify only a few of the tools available mostly by virtue of popularity. However, social media is much more extensive in scope than is generally perceived. It was found that four out of five US online adults were participating socially in online networks (Band and Petouhoff, 2010). Surveyed American respondents were on average aware of 20 to 30 specific social media tools, although they only had limited experience [i.e. 5 to 10 out of 80] of the most popular social media tools (Safko and Brake, 2009). The 2010 USC Annenberg Digital Future Study found that the Internet use in the USA is one of the highest globally with 82% of the population online (Digital Center, 2010). This finding illustrates that although the US population has an obvious high exposure to the Internet and social media, people are generally not familiar with the variety of social media tools. As the US is regarded as the social media front-runner, this is not necessarily the case for most global users.

From a business context, most contemporary literature and research emphasise the rapid growth in social media. The University of Maryland's The State of Small Business Report found that during 2009, social media usage in the US has increased from 12% to 24% (Van Grove, 2010). Additionally, one in five businesses uses social media as part of their marketing strategy. Further findings conclude that professional service firms, and more specifically restaurants, rely more on e-mail marketing as a form of social media than any other businesses.

In conclusion, there seems to be sufficient evidence to suggest that social media is rapidly transforming the way communication take place in commerce. The new media have brought many opportunities for a richer customer experience. Social media provides many available interactive tools for various customer applications. Next, in paragraph 2.4, the discussion proceeds by bringing the customers' social media participation into focus.

2.4 PARTICIPATION OF CUSTOMERS IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Research (Visual Economics, 2010) indicates that of the total time spent online globally, 22% is used to connect to social networking sites, whereas 42% is viewing Internet content, and 36% is contributed by other functions, such as e-mail, searches and e-commerce.

Conversely one observes the traditional media to be gradually losing their effect on the increasingly discerning consumer in modern times. Consumers are actively demanding

participation in the assessment of the consumer process (Zarella, 2010; Doyle, 2008). Commercially sponsored communications, such as advertising and marketing messages, are perceived as biased, and that the direct effect of these media seems to be small. Social media has permeated every sector of commerce, from big corporate brands to small entrepreneurial concerns (Zarella, 2010). There are various tools suitable for most types of business, whatever type or style of communication their client-base might prefer (see paragraph 2.3).

Social media has also redefined the way business looks at transparency of communication, information sharing and business cultures (Pitt, 2010). Cornell School of Hospitality Administration has launched a marketing roundtable to focus on the implications of social media, especially regarding the hotel and restaurant industry (Hotel News Resource, 2010c). Their findings include that 80% of online travellers use social media for reviewing (e.g. TripAdvisor) and that hospitality guests place more weight on consumer reviews (other peers/users) that they do on ratings from organisations. It thus seems that social media has not changed the virtues of old-fashioned listening, regardless of new developments in technology.

Besides online review sites which are often driven by customers, other commercial experiences of customers can be expressed via social media by using 'blogs', often administered by provider companies. Thevenot (2007) defines blogging as a recurrent and sequential publication of individual opinions, frequently accompanied by Web links to other sites. It is a popular means to creating an online forum (i.e. over 70 million counted in 2007), whereby a person or business posts an online article, and readers can then react to it by, in turn, posting comments. A blog's success is dependent on the amount and quality of comments received and the intensity of the discussions taking place (Thevenot, 2007). Blogs can contain photos, videos, and other interactive tools besides text. In turn, the reactive comments themselves become community postings. Because of open discussions, blogging subsequently has potential to become part of mainstream news amongst other forms of exposure. The rapid adoption of social media not only means creating internal opportunities for businesses, but also possibilities for external relations with customers, suppliers, partners, and outside experts. Indications are that businesses are indeed deriving benefit from Web 2.0 technologies (McKinsey Quarterly, 2009; Stokes, 2008; Chaney, 2009).

US consumers believe that businesses have a noteworthy part in influencing social media's direction. In a study on social networking by Invoke Solutions, online social media users contributed to the following statistics: 65% follow a business via Facebook; 31% follow a business on Twitter; 47% indicated that they posted comments on company Facebook pages;

32% have posted comments about businesses on their own Facebook page; and 30-32% shared new product and sales information with their social network (Invoke, 2010). Further confirming these findings, Doyle (2008) revealed that satisfactory experiences and subsequent purchasing habits of customers are more important than the effect of one-way marketing or communications, especially in maintaining sales. The decision that the customers make in purchasing is reliant on their buyer's role, their socio-cultural background, product-specific experiences, or product information sources. Social media's most inherent quality is connecting the consumers on the basis of being informed about products and services (Safko and Brake, 2009; Phillips and Young, 2009; Chaney, 2009).

Marketers also often believe that the message content contained in marketing material is the main factor influencing customers' purchasing behaviour (Freiden, Goldsmith, Takacs and Hofacker, 1997). Arguably it is indeed important to build the relationship that demands retention or loyalty by promoting products or features. However, for sustained sales it becomes less important as customers become more knowledgeable and participative in the consumer process. Other marketers would rather believe that it is the content's source that is most important (Jones, 2009). Acquiring new business referrals is vital for business's survival. Focusing attention on the customers (i.e. influencers) that do referrals is similarly vital. Consequently in constant repeat business, the customer's experiences and purchasing habits become positively entrenched, and thus the customer requires less attention and knowledge input to maintain loyalty. This would often remain until a viable purchasing alternative may present itself.

Social media has brought the consumer voice into the equation by creating a forum for feedback, hence the increased participation in assessment and knowledge gathering (Doyle, 2008; Safko and Brake, 2009; Chaney, 2009; Gale, 2009). Customers' experiences are enhanced by being informed even before the consumer process starts, not just during and after the service delivery. Noteworthy, the customer's after-sales service and product participation does not end until the customer confirms it, which is very unlike traditional marketing approaches.

Traditionally value is added by relating to the customer in a business environment that substantiates rapport, informing and creating sales. With the advent of social media the customer is often prepared, informed and knowledgeable about the product prior to being approached by the sales person. The business environment has become digitalised, remote or even mobile. Service is no longer specifically located. Grönroos (2003) further describes how important direct contact is in sharing pertinent data which familiarise the customer with the

product. The development of an efficient customer-orientated service system is necessary to back the transaction of goods. Such personal contact has in many cases been successfully implemented by social media, as the media are real-time and interactive (Philips and Young, 2009; Chaney, 2009). Whereas in the past (potential) customers would passively have to be subjected to one-way 'push' advertising and promotions, the online consumer has an increased discriminative demeanour regarding what to be involved in (Shankar and Malthouse, 2009; Rubinson, 2009). Additionally the user-generated content that is created online has the advantage of being expressive, without the complex considerations of non-verbal communication.

According to Zarella (2010), 70% of consumers trust customer opinions posted online, compared with 62% that trust TV ads, 61% that trust newspaper ads, and 59% that trust magazine ads. Trust in a product relates strongly to customer loyalty and sustained satisfaction. According to Strauss, El-Ansery and Frost (2003), increased customer loyalty is the most essential driver of a business's long-term performance. In the same argument they refer to the term 'relationship capital' in describing the importance of having a future orientated view of customer loyalty to businesses.

One might well ask from whose perspective a business relationship might be defined; the provider or the customer? The fact that a customer returns to a business does not necessarily indicate that a relationship has been formed or that a customer is loyal. It is the customer who dictates if and how a relationship has been formed with the business. Grönroos (2003) gives various reasons for this – it could be for cheaper prices, convenience, and/or familiarity with a specific product, amongst others. He further indicates that a relationship is closely linked with attitude.

Attitude indicates being able to respond to a bond that is earned, and specially earned in case of the business. This means communication and interaction are fundamental in forming the bond between parties, and both bear a positive attitude to be receptive of beneficial dealings. The attitude factor is important when analysing the context where content is created in social media (Phillips and Young, 2009). Exchanging information requires an attitude of openness to mutual benefits, to inform and to participate. In turn these attitudes are a prelude to customer experiences and related expectations.

A suitable definition of the development of a relationship is 'when a customer perceives that a mutual way of thinking exists between customer and supplier or service provider', thus enabling both parties to think 'win-win' (Grönroos, 2003:33). Being loyal means not just loyalty

to the business from a customer's side, but reciprocally from the business's side as well. That leads to two-way commitment, which forms and strengthens the bond of a relationship. 'Sharing' is a concept that seems to be central to the phenomenon of social media, be it content such as photos, videos, articles, views, religious beliefs or goods for sale (Stokes, 2008).

As the media technology accelerates, it so seems the interfaces and tools become more effective, actually accomplishing a degree of naturalness in the communication process. Grönroos (2003:34) interestingly uses the same term 'collaboration' as do O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998:163). He equates the term with both parties feeling like winners, or at least gaining value in some way. This makes the customer feel as though he contributes to the consumer process in a constructive way, enriching not just his own experience, but those of the other customers, businesses and other third parties involved as well. Stokes (2008:133) otherwise uses the term of 'crowdsourcing' to illustrate a similar point: the businesses invite the online public to submit ideas and innovations for new or existing products in return for some form of incentive or compensation. Here the customer actively contributes to collaborating on the mutually beneficial aspects of product sustainability.

This further poses the question of whether all customers are actually interested in forming relationships with their providers. It seems possible to take a relationship approach, even if the product is regarded a commodity (Grönroos, 2003). However, a relationship approach will not be an ideal approach in all circumstances and in many cases might not be a feasible or suitable strategy to follow (Doyle, 2008; Peppers and Rogers, 2004; Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). Often a purely transactional contact-base is preferred, especially where additional interaction might be counter-productive, intrusive or even offensive. Social media creates options to control contact to the extent of what is preferred by the customer (Stokes, 2008). Grönroos (2003) distinguishes between active and passive relational modes, where the former type of customer requires and imposes some 'wanted' direct interaction, whereas the latter relies more on the customers' expectancy of accessibility to communication and interaction with the provider. Taking the argument a step further, social media users are not inclined to meet their online friends in person. The trend has been set though, where in 2000 less that 1% conversion was achieved to turn online 'friends' into offline meetings, in 2009 it grew to 2.5% (Stelzner, 2009). This suggests that the opportunity to socialise and connect is there, but that the motivation to do so is minimal. Social media requires communication without being at face distance, thus many of the non-verbals that sometimes complicate communication are avoided. The various tools of social media have made it possible to expect and experience both active and passive modes simultaneously and interactively.

Relationship marketing resonates well with the ideals of effective social media practices from the content generated from the interactions created in public forums. It is potentially accessible to millions of participants in real-time, and thus has the potential to become 'viral'. However, using social media is not relationship marketing; it is merely a useful means of practising relationship marketing, and is only as useful as a loyalty programme or direct mail campaign might be. Relationship marketing is value-creation in relationships, whereas using social media is generating content in interactive online relationships. Relationship marketing, in conclusion, is a business attitude that should be infused throughout the organisation; the value should be driven and derived from within, but appreciated and interactively responded to from the outside. Using social media could be utilised as an expression of this fundamental strategy, but as a tool, it is more specific in its objectives and opportunities of scope.

Jones (2009) found that social media present a unique opportunity to generate and convert leads into business and revenue. However this takes some form of expertise, effort and 'old-fashioned' marketing tactics. This finding is generally shared by many similar research projects conducted on social media in recent years (Corruthers, 2010; Stelzner, 2009; Floridi, 2008). The expectations of social media effectiveness should be manifested within a proper strategic plan, and contemplated by managers who are somewhat experienced with the media's tools. Therefore it is prudent at this stage to briefly discuss the managerial perspective on social media. This creates a balanced view into the customer context.

Corruthers (2010) found several contemporary studies highlighting certain trends relating to business's expectations of social media. Very few (10%) businesses have applied proper marketing methods or outsourced accordingly in efforts to manage their social media use effectively. This shows the underestimation of the media as a tool and the expertise needed to administer them. The effort, time and value needed to create quality content are frequently underestimated. Further it was found that there was a direct relationship between time spent online and network interactivity, thus more and better quality connection time made possible more and better following and online customer support (Corruthers, 2010). Social media is often seen by business as a marketing means to minimal effort, time, and costs in creating a quality experience for customers. Many do not realise that maintaining a popular company blog, for instance, is a constant function of creating informative and entertaining content. The most effective content needs consistent and regular updating, responses, and relating to the users' needs and expectations.

Noteworthy from the manager's perspective is that a high correlation exists between social media expertise and return on investment (Corruthers, 2010). The expertise relates to the effectiveness in communicating online, and the experience curve is a factor that enhances learning for both the customer and online presence of the business. Once again, the necessary level of customer trust is created by sharing content that is credible and is of added value (Stokes, 2008).

In this section the analysis has conveyed the importance and extent of social media within the consumer process and their application to the customer's perspective. The preceding discussions have laid a sound base for contemplating the effect of social media on customer's expectations and experiences specifically.

2.5   DINING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Using social media in the restaurant industry creates an opportunity to recreate and develop brands, build community and facilitate word-of-mouth. Social media gives the customer a view behind the scenes, the human side of the business dynamics, and the chance of developing personal relationships with the personalities that exemplify the brand (Levy, 2009). According to the US National Restaurant Association 2010 Industry Forecast, social media will become more critical for marketing efforts during the year (Hotel News Resource, 2010a). Proper use of social media tools is necessary in taking advantage of online or electronic word-of-mouth by promoting menus, assisting in reservations, and reviewing restaurants' performances. Furthermore Benchmark Hospitality has also announced that one of their 2010 top five dining trends is the revolution of social media in establishing service quality and menu awareness (Ehotelier, 2010). Technological innovations within the restaurant industry have been shown to be instrumental in maximising customer satisfaction, increased market share, and greater profitability (Dixon, Kimes, and Verma, 2009). Additionally, customers using self-service technologies like online reservations are less price-sensitive and more satisfied, as well as more likely to repeat their experiences and promote them to others. Traditionally, large businesses have had an advantage over small businesses if it comes to marketing resources (Hubspot, 2010; Doyle, 2008). Social media has levelled the competitive set amongst all sizes of businesses (Phillips and Young, 2009). Traditional marketing budgets have declined, especially as managerial expectations have increased pertaining to perceived free online word-of-mouth connections.

Dining experiences frequently drive customers to speak out for or against the restaurants visited (Longart, 2008). Word-of-mouth has a powerful influence in the marketing of restaurants in the offline world, whereas social media has a similar function within the online environment, hence the term 'electronic word of mouth' (Berta, 2009; Stokes, 2008). Longart (2008) found that with a cross-sectional study of over 500 respondents of a particular restaurant, positive word-of-mouth highly correlated with increased levels of the customers' satisfaction with food and beverages. Thereafter high correlation levels were found with the extent of implicated intangibles that were unique or distinctive in creating the product. These results reverberate with many other similar research findings (Berger and Schwartz, 2009; Menon and Bansal, 2007). More specifically, and of more convincing purpose regarding the use of social media, Longart's research results were as follows:

i. intentions towards eating out at a restaurant increase when positive recommendations are made

ii. electronic referrals have become an important phenomenon within the industry where interested people can market the preferred establishment to each other; viral marketing becomes possible if such marketing grows exponentially

iii. restaurant customers compare their actual dining experiences with their expectations, which Longart (2008:123) calls a 'confirmation paradigm' – where consumers substantiate a product's actual performance levels by using an assessment process

iv. Longart (2008) states the importance of a tipping point, where the power of context as external determinant affects a customer's inner state at a level where action is stimulated, thus promoting the word-of-mouth phenomenon

v. communal sharing of emotion, where customers interact emotionally with those who want to share their feelings, and this can potentially be intensified by the emotion of surprise. The intensity of surprise is directly correlated with the frequency or intensity of word-of-mouth

Social media is dynamically entrenched in rich media content abilities, and therefore form a natural technological extension of probably one of the most effective marketing methods available, namely word-of-mouth (Brownell and Newman, 2009), or as Pantelidis (2010:483) puts it, 'word-of-mouse'.

In conclusion, one realises that social media has made progressive entrances into the world of business, and into the restaurant industry. Restaurants are inherently a social environment for people to interact and share in, so it seems especially fitting for the utilisation of social media

applications. Besides the marketing function for businesses to connect and improve relationships with their customers, the media have great potential in informing and managing dining expectations and experiences. Additionally, diners are able to internally market the restaurants of their choice to each other, and to get the personal 'behind the scenes' view of the businesses they care enough about.

2.6 SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS

Travel and tourism are ideally suited to Web 2.0 technologies, as the real-time interconnectivity advantage is substantial for customers' demand for product/service information. Important too is influential user-generated content in the form of peer reviews. Travel and tourism related sites on social media account for much of their popularity; Miguens, Baggio and Costa (2008) have determined that about 19.4% of the total European market on the Internet is involved with this sector. As traditional marketing's credibility has been criticised increasingly during the rise of user-generated content on social media, travel and tourism sites have recognised the importance of enriching customer contact, especially in the case of customer feedback and peer communication on product quality. Research has concluded that online review sites, like TripAdvisor, have become a preferred source of information on products and services relating to hotels, destinations, hospitality related services and, more specific to this study, restaurants (Miguens *et al.*, 2008). New business models are required to take advantage of Web 2.0 technology reviews; thus being able to effectively participate in user-generated content by monitoring and analysing customer sentiments, and by consistently communicating appropriate feedback.

Research by the Opinion Research Corporation specifies that 82% of consumers examine online sources before considering travelling; a further 80% agree that online word-of-mouth influences their decisions (Tourism Queensland, 2010). The greatest commercial success of user-generated content is found with reviews and recommendations on sites such as TripAdvisor and Amazon (Wu, Greene, Smyth, and Cunningham, 2010). Review sites like TripAdvisor generate enormous amounts of review information based on other reviewers' contexts. These, in turn, are moderated by other reviewers (Gretzel, Yoo and Purifoy, 2007). Pre-existing liaisons are not required with review sites; they only share connection via discussion forums about a common interest or issue. With social networking, normally some

former relationship is required, or at least a similar strong interest or curiosity that determines a liaison (Miguens *et al.*, 2008).

Examples of travel review sites with virtual communities are TravBuddy.com, VirtualTourist, LonelyPlanet, Travellerspoint, WAYN, Woophy, Passportstamp, and TripAdvisor.com (Gretzel *et al.*, 2007; Miguens *et al.*, 2008). TripAdvisor is the largest online travel website globally and has in excess of 40 million unique visitors to its site per month; it has 35 million reviews with 20 million registered members that contribute (TripAdvisor 2010). Additionally there are 551,000 restaurants reviewed. Besides travellers doing reviewing, there is additional content giving information, rates, education on destinations and leisure and related activities to consider.

The influence of TripAdvisor reviews is far-reaching – review readers state they learn most of a destination, product or service (94.6%), also evaluating alternatives (91.9%), or avoiding places or services they would not enjoy (91.8%). A noteworthy 96.3% of respondents said that helping others by sharing their experience was their largest motivational factor in writing reviews online. Additionally, top motivations apart from extraversion and self-enhancement to share reviews online ranged from sharing excellent experiences (92.8%), expressing joy about a great experience (91.1%), and sharing travel experiences (87.3%) (Gretzel *et al.*, 2007).

Being reliant on user-generated content has a considerable disadvantage for TripAdvisor; it professes the site to be for 'unbiased travel reviews', but as such it can be abused by deviant parties, which could prove to be its key downfall (TripAdvisor 2010). Reliability on review sites has been a contention as to how the participating product reviews can be 'shilled' or can be cheated on to skew the overall ratings (Wu *et al.*, 2010). Hensens, Struwig and Dayan (2010) found that TripAdvisor mostly provided reliable and trustworthy sources of information for online peers enquiring as to the quality of a product or service. In a Wall Street Journal article on the reliability of user-generated content on TripAdvisor as it relates to the context it was written in, Keates (2008) states that the 'wisdom of crowds are dangerous(sic)'. Skewed opinions include factors like the reviewer's purpose of travel, geographical location, perceptions of quality, cultural exposure, just to name a few. Extremely positive and negative reviews should also be assessed with suspicion. Additionally, according to Keates (2008), there are a myriad rationales why reviewers would enhance some content more than others.

TripAdvisor is used by this study as the platform to analyse the content contained in review reports to determine and illustrate the delight and frustration factors that pertain to restaurant dining. The value of the review content on TripAdvisor is highly dependent on the reviewer's context . Being a cross-board sample of dedicated reviews to a restaurant establishment, it does

promise an unbiased quality to the research. It further promises pragmatic and definable user-generated content by dedicated reviewers to effectively distinguish between the mediocre and the required delight and frustration factors. Dedicated analyses in this regard will be made in Chapter 4 of this study.

2.7 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DINING EXPERIENCES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Dining experiences can be analysed in relation to social media: firstly in terms of how customers experience social media use; secondly how the dining experience is conveyed and shared in social media; and thirdly how the dining experience is enhanced by social media.

2.7.1 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Shankar and Malthouse (2009) see interactive marketing as understanding customer experiences in terms of communication through media channels. When one defines experiences in the context of social media, communication is actually made up of collaborative experiences by users that accompany responses. One needs to realise that experience is collaborated in that the parties involved affect each other, as do the social media community.

From the business' perspective the experience is creating the original posting of content to share with customers. This is generally done to inform, offer, share with, initiate or provide some content to customers (Thevenot, 2007). The interested customer would find some affinity with the message, and be tempted to participate in discussions, commonly expecting a response in return, not just from the business, but from other customers (often called peers) as well (Sanaktekin and Aydin, 2010). Interestingly, memetics is a science that studies the 'infectiousness' of certain ideas and behaviours, rather than assuming the more traditional customers' conscious choice theories (Marsden, 1998). It follows a doctrine of human behaviour being affected by a mind 'virus', which has content virtues that infect human minds. Still in its infancy, this science certainly is controversial in its approach to marketing and has interesting issues associated with the use of social media.

Blogging as an example has had interesting effects: the more advanced technology became by naturalising the communication process, the more powerful online communities would grow, and subsequently, the power of the businesses (or providers of content) would decrease (Thevenot, 2007). Power in the hands of customers in the form of peer reviews, opinion sharing, and product feedback, levels much of the consumerism playing field (Stokes, 2008; Chaney, 2009). Customer experiences are additionally much enhanced by peer feedback and the exposure to authority figures and expert advice.

Social media has an array of purposes for online communities, such as the networking sites for friendship purposes [Facebook] or business/professional connections [LinkedIn], blogs or other applications for hobbies, unions, news, sports and special interests (Safko and Brake, 2009). The experience potential for the social media user is unlimited, and that frequently becomes the problem: as humans are subjected to increasing amounts of stimuli and environmental noise, what optimal parameters of experience need to be adhered to for customers? As discerning content is important for capturing attention and warranting reciprocation, there is only so much information that a user can read, hear, view and comprehend (Gaudeul and Peroni, 2010; Meyer, 1998). Demanding the attention of online communications requires effort in understanding the expectations of the audience. Too much information and one would risk a diminishing attention span from the intended audience. This can happen by online customers knowing what experience is to be expected, or simply out of boredom (Wu and Huberman, 2009). Apparently, having fresh and novel content with the right degree of attention creates the best experience.

Creating a 'culture of listening' adds a dimension of lasting quality to a business's products (Gale, 2009). This ensures a 'guest-centric' experience that contributes to sustained satisfaction, which should be initiated by the management. This means management should be involved at a basic level of customer interaction, and have regular access to fundamental qualitative feedback from customers. Kimpton Hotels and Restaurants CEO, Mike Depatie, is of the experienced opinion that social media tools are an ideal method of keeping track of basic customer expectations and needs (Gale, 2009). Apparently the guests' experiences are enhanced by the hotel group's receptivity to feedback, which in turn increases their receptivity for response and eagerness to share valued information. Additionally management realised how important it was to actively engage the guests to convert them to spending more and becoming loyal, especially when research proved this so. Guest feedback is described as the crucial link for engagement and subsequent commitment. As an example to indicate the value of customer feedback, one

could look no further than the customer review site TripAdvisor where an estimated 60-70% of aspiring hotel travellers look at peer reviews sharing their experiences (Gale, 2009).

Besides analysing social media experiences as a culmination of situational contexts, content and technical expertise; one tends to overlook the personality disposition involved in the experience paradigm. Sanaktekin and Aydin (2010) quite rightly confirm that this area has been neglected in social media studies. They have studied the effects of extraversion, neuroticism and self-esteem on social media use and preferences. Human emotions are a powerful experience factor in determining our actions and reactions in life, and more specifically in the consumer process. Results of Sanaktekin and Aydin's (2010) research indicate that:

i. 'extraversion' correlates positively with Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter use, probably because introverts would feel inhibited in displayed self-portrayal

ii. 'neuroticism' correlates positively with YouTube use, probably because the anxious users are usually able to express their 'true' self via the Internet

iii. 'self-esteem' correlates negatively with blogging use, probably because lower self-esteem inhibits use of blogging (conversations of views and opinions)

This useful analysis of psychological factors makes one realise that one view of an experience from social media is often insufficient. What Sanaktekin and Aydin (2010) effectively did in their study is demonstrate that personality effects were moderated by different social media tools or applications. The actual experiences were dependant on what the users thought the tools could do for them. The occurrence of multiple profile maintenance is a further manifestation of participating online for different purposes, with different personas and varied expected experiences (Stutzman and Hartzog, 2010).

In conclusion, if it comes to the experiences of customers, businesses in general agree that timely, effective and efficient attention is essential for retention of customers (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Doyle, 2008; Kotler and Armstrong, 2008; Gale, 2009). There are various communication tools available on social media to create the necessary experiences for the customer and to consider their needs. It is not just about content or context of the message or site, but also very much dependant on the personality disposition of the customer. Social media is but one of numerous tools, though a powerful one, that could be utilized to increase the intensity and dimension of experiences successfully.

2.7.2 DINING EXPERIENCES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

General trends in dining are important to consider, because customers' current experiences are inherently dependent on their prior exposure to and knowledge of the industry (Shoemaker, 1996). Here one should consider the environmental drivers responsible, and how they are facilitated by social media. The top five dining trends for 2010 are all clearly driven from a consumer perspective of expectations (Ehotelier, 2010). They include:

i. Culturally diverse and authentic cuisines, which are truthful and unpretentious, presupposing the foreign food fads that have proliferated in Western societies

ii. The emphasis on health and wellness with accompanying transparency demanded from suppliers and restaurants

iii. Biodiversity, sustainability and organic methods of farming and the expected conformity by restaurants to purchase accordingly

iv. Natural variation on spices and flavours in food – discovering taste experiences

v. Social media as a revolutionary communicative tool, being able to create content about dining experiences

Most noticeable and particularly relevant to this study is point 'v' in the previous paragraph – social media applied to the dining experience as a revolutionary communicative tool. Technology trends, and especially social media technology, are attached to industries where a relational interface is required – thus the social context of the industry should act as driver for the technology to become successful. The restaurant industry is such an industry where sharing, caring and word-of-mouth promotion are innermost (Chalmers, 2010; Clow, Kurtz, Ozment and Ong, 1997; Rashid, 2003).

Restaurant RX released a new survey in the USA that fine dining has changed over the past few years (Hotel News Resource, 2010b). Some of their findings include:

i. Contemporary fine diners prefer more plain prepared meals in a casual atmosphere (63%), than richly prepared meals within formal settings (11%)

ii. The fine diners prefer new, varied and exotic cuisine (61%), and very few (11%) preferred traditional 'steak and potatoes' type dishes

iii. The most desired fine dining factors are found to be food quality (9.6/10), service (9/10), and 'VIP' treatment (8.9/10)

iv. Interestingly, fine diners seem to prefer frequenting independent establishments over chains, claiming more perfect evaluation scores (40% versus 26%) over a period of six months

Concisely interpreting the previous results, it seems that a market shift has occurred away from the traditional, reserved and high touch establishments to the more comfortable, contemporary and authentic. This supplies additional evidence to back up Hanefors and Mossberg's (2003) view that, currently, holistic restaurant experiences are increasingly demanded by customers. Matching this thought within the context of social media, it follows that increased naturalistic online connectivity contributes positively to the realm of holism. The more seamlessly and user-friendly social media envelops, the more interactive and holistic the experience-sharing would become.

In restaurant experiences, some studies emphasise the performance drivers of customer satisfaction: i.e. employee greeting, speed of service, and responsiveness (Grupta, McLaughlin and Gomez, 2007; Yüksel and Yüksel, 2003). Many other studies rather emphasise the product and service features associated with dining experiences, i.e. menu variety, value-for-money, food prices, food quality, food-quality consistency, ambience of facilities, and convenience factors (Carbone and Haeckel, 2005; Pantelidis, 2010; Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003).

Determining customer satisfaction levels cannot be equated to the likelihood of repeat customer experiences or loyalty, according to Grupta *et al.*, (2007). This is because customers' reasons for intending to return to a restaurant differ between types of restaurants; also because of the different customer profiles (Sparks, Bowen and Klag, 2003; Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor, 2004). An example would be the importance of food quality in full-service restaurants; however convenience would be more critical in fast food restaurants.

Within the social media context, questions arise as to what online content is most likely to be of most importance for diners to discuss; would it be about the food quality or service, the establishment, or would it be about the socio-cultural dining environment? Thus far the study has suggested that customers' online social media experiences positively affect offline dining experiences. The descending importance of content topics would depend on their online audience and reason for communication – e.g. one can assume that the motive of sharing information amongst peers is different to customers responding to a restaurant's blog. Some relevant studies to illustrate the diversity of the main drivers of ideal dining experiences and the accompanying motivation to talk about it are as follows:

- Titz, Lanza-Abbott and Cruz (2004) found that restaurant reviewers concentrated their comments mainly on food quality, ambience and atmosphere. Reviewers as a source are usually a reliable indication of what is deemed important for customers – they do it for a living

- Interestingly, secondary data results by Grupta *et al.* (2007) found that first and last impressions have the greatest impact on repeat-purchase intentions, followed by excellence in service and food quality

- Menon and Dubé (1999) require management to connect and converse with customers appealing to their emotional state in the service experience. They maintain that emotionally proactive scripts fulfil fearful and risk-adverse informational needs and expectations of customers

- Hanefors and Mossberg (2003) in researching 'extraordinary' meal experiences found that five dimensions distinguish them as such: motivation, expectation, interaction, involvement, and satisfaction. The first two are before the dining experience, the next two during, and the fifth is the outcome

- Schoemaker (1996) emphasises the knowledge structure scripts that can be manipulated to achieve satisfactory experiences

In summary, general drivers of satisfaction cannot uniformly be established for the restaurant industry; the multi-faceted dimensions include a complex web of contexts, psychological factors, premeditated manipulation, initial and lasting impressions, and various degrees of (in) tangibility. Similarly, the web of contexts is as extensive in the use of social media, the effectiveness of the medium depending on many variables. It is primarily part of this study's quest to address these shortcomings in the contemporary social media literature.

In taking one of the research examples further, Grupta *et al.* (2007) conducted a large-scale survey amongst more than 80,800 respondents to distinguish the links between customer satisfaction, repeat-purchase intentions, and restaurant performance. They created models that show food quality, appropriate cost, and attentive service have the greatest effect on customers' intent to return to that restaurant. The researchers recommended that in order to get customers to return, the managers should concentrate on the core business for restaurants, namely delicious food, appropriate cost, cheerful greeting, and attentive service. This confirms most research being done on the topic – that doing the basics right is imperative – the rest is an augmented cause (Weiss *et al.*, 2004). Doing the basics consistently, 'nearly' guarantees the

customer's intent to return. Failure on any of these attributes diminishes the probability of customer's intent to return. More importantly, their study confirms the strong relation between 'intent to return' and the realisation of higher seat turnover. This raises the question of whether the customers' intent to return equates to their intent to return to the specific social media site, in order to experience more of the same, offline and online.

One should consider the effect of previous knowledge when experience is analysed. Prior knowledge has proven to be an influence when customers evaluate products and services (Mattila, 2002). Customer expertise is seen as the quantity of experience a customer has accumulated over a lifetime of consumer processes (Wang, Cheng and Huang, 2004). It is valuable to consider how this expertise customises the way the customer perceives the dining experience. If the customer perceives the restaurant itself as ambiguous for some reason by not being able to fully evaluate the quality, the expectations have a direct negative effect on the experience outcome, i.e. dissatisfaction (Wang *et al.*, 2004). Patterson and Johnson's (1995) research findings included that customer experience acts as moderator in their customer satisfaction evaluations. Where no experience framework was present, there were similar low expectations, and most of the customer's satisfaction judgement had to be based on perceived performance factors, with little consideration for fairness in the context. Building further on this construct, Kivela, Inbakaran and Reece (2000) found that dining satisfaction in turn moderates the relationship between dining experiences and post-dining intentions to return to the restaurant. This indicates that the more that customers return to the restaurant, the more sensitive they are to satisfaction levels, because of their heightened expectations. A similar reasoning can be as applied to social media whereas the informed online customer will have correspondingly higher expectations, and subsequently their evaluations on satisfaction will be moderated accordingly.

In a restaurant setting, customers' prior knowledge structures extract meanings of the dining value experienced, which are compared with preconceived expectations. According to Matilla (2002:381), processing of information takes on two forms, namely 'matching' and 'holistic' processing. The comparison between new and existing information is seen as 'matching'. An example would be the customers' experience of eating 'fusion' food, which in some ways could seem somewhat familiar, but in other ways strange and exotic, especially for the uninitiated. When successfully completed, 'holistic' processing takes place whilst mismatched information gets internalised and accepted within the total knowledge structure. Once this fusion dish is appreciated and absorbed within the realm of the experienced mind, and for that matter, disliked and unappreciated, it will form part of the customers' expertise according to their

fusion food variable. When previous knowledge is lacking, the customer often fragments the information according to the attributes of the product or service (Matilla, 2002); or only attributes it to perceived performance factors (Patterson and Johnson, 1995). When this prior knowledge structure is lacking, the customers are not able to process information holistically. Accordingly, they become increasingly familiarised with using social media for sustaining relationships, and confident and efficient in screening information pertaining to building their knowledge structures (O'Toole, 2003).

The framing of product attributes by restaurants is effective when the customers' prior knowledge is low – they are easily focused on, and impressed with specifically emphasised attributes without seeing the bigger picture. Customer experiences are therefore highly dependent on customers' expertise. High expertise will most likely result in informed expectations that relate to a holistic consumer process. Low expertise will most likely result in uninformed expectations that have increased reliance on critical incidents of the consumer process. As an example, naive restaurant customers will have a greater tendency to 'nit-pick' the insignificant details, whereas the experienced and informed will increasingly focus on the integrative result of their dining experience.

By using different tools of communication such as social media, it is in the best interests of managers of restaurants to facilitate the selective learning of their establishment, products and service by their (potential) customers. This would enhance the dining experience of the customers in a way where needs are recognised and met, and expectations are set accordingly. Providing customers with incentivised easy access to information before, during and after dining experiences will inevitably lead to future marketing success (Edwards and Meiselman, 2005; Wang *et al.*, 2004). Expectations are thus actively managed.

Some intangible attributes, for example service attitude, are difficult to convey via a knowledge structure or learning experience to customers. Sophisticated media technologies, such as social media, are already quite useful in conveying abstract qualities such as service attitude via communicative narrative content, supported by photos and videos. Rich interactive content has mind-set undertones which can enhance customer learning and participation (Stokes, 2008). Social media, second only to face-to-face encounters, comes into its own by contributing the necessary experience to the customer in order to effectively shape their expectations. Social media possibly creates the accessible communicative space needed to socialise and share this content about restaurant experiences.

On the surface it might seem as though the environmental characteristics of social media and restaurants are not that far removed. Williams and Dargel (2004) and Shankar and Malthouse (2009) reflect on the holistic experiences that customers feel when they are totally involved in a 'cyberscape', i.e. a conceptual online environment. They all refer to the concept of 'flow', where the relevant prerequisites include experiencing instant responses, a fusion of action and awareness, a sense of self-command, increased intrinsic motivation, and a perceived loss of time. Add in social media's sense of belonging, then upon suggestion Anderson and Mossberg's (2004) 'needs' are well represented. Besides being subjected to these prerequisites of 'flow' when effectively using social media, it is likewise comparable to the experiences of dining enjoyment. Anderson and Mossberg (2004) further distinguish satisfying dining experiences as obtaining a state of arousal in the psyche of the customers. Dining is essentially seen as seeking a sense of well-being, which involves stimulation and excitement. The parallels can clearly be seen.

The level at which customers is satisfied but not excited, is a middle area of experience called comfort. This differentiates the upper level as 'positive hedonistic tones', like joy. One finds the lower level called the 'negative hedonistic tones', like satisfying basic human physical needs. Correspondingly, one would respectively find: (a) spontaneous expectations with moderate to high arousal and involvement; and (b) more entrenched expectations, with low to no arousal and involvement (Anderson and Mossberg, 2004). Once more, parallels can be suggested to occur within social media behaviour, where increased user-involvement up the Social Technographics Ladder [Figure 3.4, Chapter 3] has similar suggested qualities.

Alternatively, patrons for lunch are more focused on satisfying their physiological needs (Anderson and Mossberg, 2004). Here the restaurant facilitates the customers' expectations in terms of:

  i.   quality of product, where the core product becomes more of a priority, with an accompanying higher precedence of, for example, freshness, flavour and presentation ,

  ii. convenience of service becoming more important, with accompanying preferences of speed, responsiveness and locality.

Generally the Internet can be seen as a source of information, specifically when it comes to informing consumers about products and their features; more so with the rich information awarded by means of social media. Core product availability and the tangible aspects derived from the experience can be researched. The convenience of comparative shopping eradicates

unrealistic expectations. Moreover, the ability to search for locality is also a functional convenience requisite.

Usually customers in restaurants are relatively forgiving of any service-related mistakes made, although not so lenient concerning the core product quality, i.e. food (Susskind, 2008; Baraham, 1995). Customers are further unlikely to return to a restaurant that is perceived as uncomfortable, noisy, displaying environmental failures, or structural issues. Whereas satisfaction is a common and seemingly useful measurement to gauge performance, Susskind (2008) emphasises the 'intent to return' to the restaurant as a more reliable measure of service recovery. His results indicate that in order to successfully lure a disgruntled customer back to a restaurant, the nature of the complaint needs to be considered. The customer will be most likely to return if the failure was service-related, less so if it was food (and service) related, and even less chance if it was to do with the dining environment. Exceeding expectations in customer experiences, which is the common proclaimed quest of most restaurant managers, could potentially be elusive, according to Williams (2010).

In conclusion, exploring and articulating major service 'touch points' during a typical dining session will clarify expectations. This articulation can be properly facilitated if the customer is involved online via social media. The minimum dining service standards should be set to achieve customer satisfaction by defining to customers exactly what is meant with 'meeting expectations'. As such, clear and consistent online feedback informs and manages customers' expectations of the dining environment and of community networking.

In restaurants, a different set of service standards are needed in approaching the area of 'exceeding expectations' that result in 'very satisfied' customers. The various identified 'touch points' should periodically be discussed with all restaurant staff in meetings. They should be encouraged to do role-play (scripts) and there should be recognition of staff efforts. Peer-to-peer recognition and innovative ways to exceed expectations should be encouraged.

2.7.3 SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE EXPERIENCE OF DINING

In general, restaurant experiences include the accumulation of emotions, attitudes, expectations, sensory inputs, and social participation in a structured context. Frequently, product quality suffers because of failures on the side of the restaurant. According Susskind

(2008), various studies show the cause of service or product failures in restaurants to have a direct influence on how customers communicate these failures to others. He found that restaurant customers that complained directly to the manager or front-line staff achieved greater satisfaction with the outcomes. This usually involves some form of appropriate remedy that should be instituted almost immediately, preferably whilst the customer is on the premises. Those that voiced or wrote their concerns after leaving the restaurant had a much lesser rate of having their complaints resolved.

The latter case of course would be very much comparable in expressing complaints via social media, especially concerning the time constraint aspect (i.e. fresh content) and the responsible manager (i.e. effective decision-maker). There is one very important exception to the recovery experience in the restaurant: the potential communal and viral affect that social media content has within the customer communities (Gale, 2009). Customers have actively started to claim the attention of businesses for feedback. Rubinson (2009:8) refers to them as the 'activist consumers'. Peers found online that have common interests can influence real opinions which could severely damage the profit margins of any restaurant. No restaurant can choose to be immune to this, irrespective of whether they decide to participate in social media or not.

Once a customer has decided to leave without a complaint immediately being dealt with, it becomes complex to deal with later. It follows that social media might be remedial in remaining interactive with the restaurant customer community. Being able to connect instantly by using rich media in terms of electronic content is ultimately for the most part comparable to face-to-face communication. It has shown to be instrumental in the recovery from service failures and effective in managing complaints (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009). Thus both experiences in the restaurant and using social media are compatible in the dining recovery process. This is an illustration of how these critical success factors collaborate in promoting enhanced customer communication.

Why would customers actually create content about their restaurant experiences? What motivates them in making the effort to do so? Murphy (2010) found differences in the customers' tendencies to evaluate high-end and low-end restaurants with online review sites. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 identify the main motives of customers to review online:

Figure 2.2: Motivation of Reviews of 'High-End' Restaurants in Consumer Review Sites
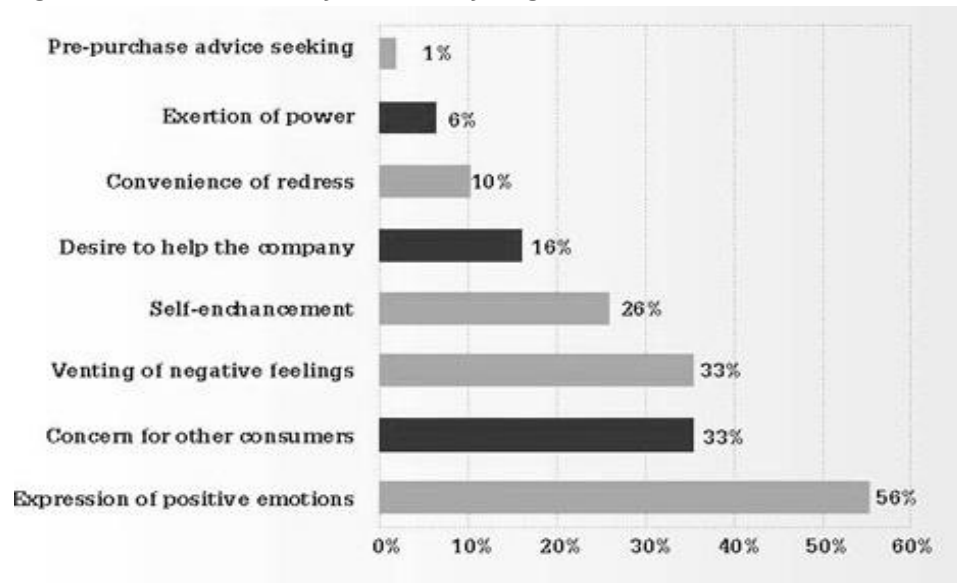
Source: Murphy (2010)

Figure 2.3: Motivation of Reviews of 'Low-End' Restaurants in Consumer Review Sites
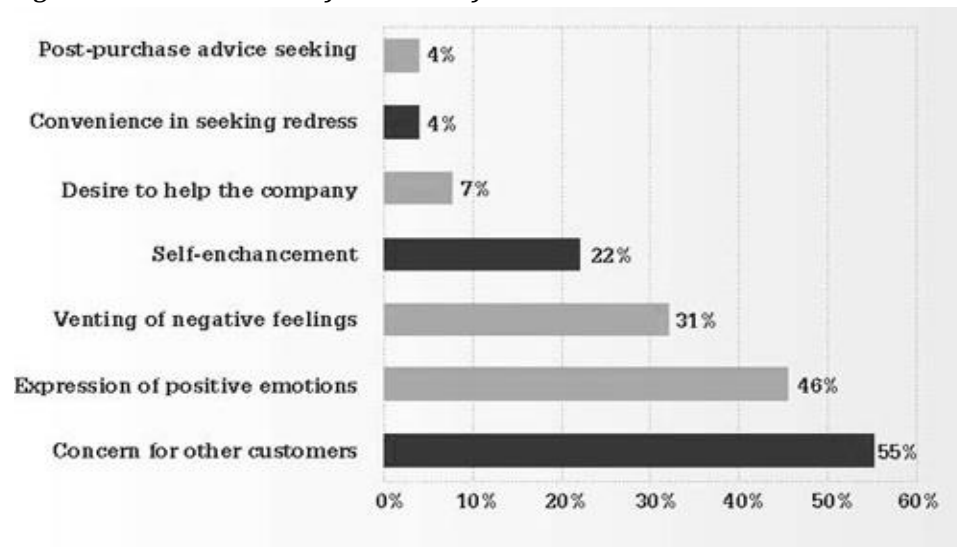
Source: Murphy (2010)

Figures 2.2 and 2.3 illustrate the main motivational differences of the different expectations of high-end (HE) versus low-end (LE) customers. Most apparent is the 'socialistic' approach of low end customers' concerns for other customers [55%], whereas the high-end customers recognise and appreciate good service and product quality more readily [56%]. 'Exertion of power' is a significant motive that is only found amongst high-end customers, supposing that the ego-related expectations should be more present within this group (Murphy, 2010).

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Educating and incentivising a customer base is advisable in achieving online participation (Kimes, 2009; Dixon *et al.*, 2009). Besides using other additional media, it is advisable to encourage customers to link up on social media sites with the restaurant as focal point of facilitation. York (2009) illustrates this well with a case study where social networking followers are encouraged to recommend a restaurant based on offline comments collected after dining experiences. Being able to electronically restate and recommend what they have written on the initial comment cards, reinforces their feelings and spreads the positive sentiments amongst peers, namely their 'friends' on Facebook. These customers develop a partiality to become loyal and have a greater chance of recurring positive dining experiences at the restaurant.

For customers' needs to be met, they first have to be recognised (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). Recognising customer needs is to be informed in some way either from the original source of the needs (i.e. online user) or from an informed third party in the form of research data or expert opinion (i.e. interactive forums in social media). As such, online review sites are good examples in customers' social media assessment experiences; they also convey the offline motives and underlying (dining) expectations (Titz *et al.*, 2004). Meeting dining expectations continually has to do with effective complaint management. The way complaints are lodged and handled by the restaurant has a direct bearing on the customers' dining experiences. Lodging complaints and the subsequent allowance for the process of service recovery is crucial for the overall customer perception of quality. Susskind (2008) emphasises the importance of 'media richness', where face-to-face interaction is preferred and most effective. To what extent do these types of experiences carry over to social media use?

Customer dining expectations are often not realistically attuned to social media environment. Richness is dependent on the capability and desire to provide feedback, the complexity of the message content, the flexibility to tailor messages, and establishing the proper directed source of the message. For example, referring a complaint to line employees or a manager during the consumer process often makes for a positive outcome, but often online the proper recipient and appropriate context cannot be sourced (Pantelidis, 2010). Much of the rich quality of communication is inherently diluted technologically.

Setting up an appropriate contact agent for the restaurant's social media function is a possible solution to the previous dilemma. Kimes' (2009) study in restaurant online reservations finds differences in effective handling of reservations by using (a) non-dedicated agents, (b) dedicated agents, and (c) dedicated call centres. Correspondingly (from a-c) the participants'

degree of involvement, reliability and costs increase, and the processing time decreases. Thus, driving quality social media participation requires consistent content generation, necessitating some type of dedicated agent. Depending on human resource capacities, the choice is either using existing restaurant staff who are available at any given time, or one could appoint an existing staff member to do the function as part of their job description. The other costly option is to utilise a full-time employee which has using social media as a sole function. Alternatively the function can be outsourced to an outside consulting company. Each option has its advantages, cost concerns, degree of effectiveness, and is business-type specific. Committing to a social media strategy requires much forethought and planning (Stokes, 2008; Phillips and Young, 2009). Setting clear objectives should be quantified as far as possible with metrics. Realistic restaurateur's expectations need to accompany informed decisions.

Marketing opportunity could be hidden in the restaurant's weaknesses. Anderson and Mossberg (2004) argue that the solving of persistent product or process problems could facilitate the required social media attraction. If, for example, the menu has over the years become stale and dull as result of the preferences of traditional customers, and change is necessary because of profit declines, then new approaches need to be taken. By communicating exciting new menu options via, say Twitter, the restaurant informs the online 'followers' of contemporary dishes and creates new dining experiences. Flamberg (2010) found that peer pressure certainly exists online and can be harnessed to convey customer expectations and subsequent positive dining experiences. Using online peer pressure is particularly useful to educate and inform, whereby customers in turn are effectively managing peers' expectations. Informed customers also seem more tolerant towards deviations from the service or product norm, creating that necessary flexibility for restaurateurs to improve the dining experience.

Allison (2009) refers to social media 'lessons' that should enhance the restaurant experience by staying true to the uniqueness of the customers' expectations. Illustrated with a fast food outlet, 'convenience' is mostly the desired experience required and the customer expectations are correlated to food that is quick, cheap and easy to find. Allison argues that emphasising the restaurant's strengths in social media communication reiterates the purpose and priorities of the business, thereby relating directly to the needs of the specific target market. This implies that the restaurateur should know his market well, by virtue of continuously obtaining customer information in order to know what the customers really want. Knowing what they want, leads to being able to manage their expectations accordingly, and in turn, creating the desired dining experiences.

In conclusion, customised services are increasingly required by restaurant customers. Equivalently, customised interaction and engagement is an inherent feature of social media. Restaurant product attributes that matter most to customers can be pre-empted by using social media to convey pertinent information and to entice product involvement (Floridi, 2008; Brownell, 2009). In turn, those events that create exceptional social media experiences positively affect the restaurant's consumer process, and moreover enhancing customer dining experiences.

2.8 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the phenomenon of using social media was introduced. Social media consists of online interactive connections that are potentially instantaneously performed and received. The content is user-generated by participating users connected on the Internet. Social networks are customer-driven; moreover the most loyal and engaged of the customers are also deemed the most participative in the marketing process of businesses. Customised online communications in social media have made possible the recognition of a customer's specific needs in businesses and adapting products and services according to consumer requests. This leads to stronger customer relations, satisfaction and subsequent positive experiences. Most contemporary literature and research emphasise the rapid growth in social media. Social media has brought the consumer voice to the forefront by creating opportunities for feedback, also increasing participation, knowledge gathering, and peer-related engagement. Travel online review sites, such as TripAdvisor, are notably described as indispensable as a research tool for fellow travellers. This too, seems to be true in the case of restaurants that are reviewed. Social media as a platform to review and inform has undoubtedly been beneficial to consumers. Social media also creates the means for management to be involved at a basic level of customer interaction; thus to have regular access to fundamental qualitative feedback from customers. Contributing to the experiences of customers, social media is an effective and efficient way of getting required consumer attention. Additionally, a high correlation was found between social media expertise of businesses and return on investment.

Community connection and interaction are of primary importance in social media use. Socialising, concern for others' information needs, and being able to receive some added-value seem to be further popular motivators for online customers. Findings indicate that online participants generally trust information most when it was generated by friends or people they

know. This is not surprising as "word of mouse" works the same way as in offline word-of-mouth.

The restaurant industry is an industry where sharing, caring and word-of-mouth promotion are important. Dining expectations of customers require an interpretation process which analyses a combination of their prior restaurant experiences and their anticipated environment. Being able to interpret customers' expectations accurately is crucial to delivering the right dining experiences.

Research results show that the consideration customers give the core product in evaluating restaurants are the most difficult for customers to overcome. There is a paradox of being encouraged to feed the customers information so that they know what to expect or else to surprise them so that exceeded expectations are increasingly achievable. Providing customers with information before, during and after dining experiences will inevitably lead to future marketing success. Known expectations can thus be actively managed. Dining satisfaction moderates the relationship between dining experiences and post-dining intentions to return to the restaurant.

In Chapter 3 services marketing within the restaurant industry will be outlined and discussed, mainly concentrating on customer experiences. Also contained in Chapter 3 will be an analysis of the delight and frustration factors of the customer experiences and this in turn will be related to dining experiences. An analysis of the final important process in the consumer process, i.e. word of mouth (WOM), and its online equivalent, e-WOM will be provided. Additionally, by putting dining in the restaurant industry in the context of the study, it is possible to analyse the influence that e-WOM has on the customers' experiences.

CHAPTER 3

SERVICES MARKETING IN RESTAURANT DINING

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 the phenomenon of social media was analysed in terms of customer experiences. It was concluded that there is much scope for the new media to gain ground in business, especially in terms of contributing to the overall marketing strategy. Social media has been identified as some of many tools a manager can utilise to reach and engage the potential and existing customer base necessary for competitive advantage. Social media supplies the means to interactively connect in real-time, and being able to share stories and visual content. Social media has also proven to be effective in engaging communities.

In this chapter services marketing in the restaurant industry will be introduced to familiarise the reader with the main theories applied to the industry. Thereafter the customers' experiences of dining are to be discussed to further identify the most important delight and frustration factors. Subsequently the phenomenon of 'worth of mouth' will be explored in detail and brought into the online review context.

3.1.1   THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

The original meaning of the word 'restaurant' in 1708 relates to a French health tradition to 'swallow a consommé' (broth) as a 'restorative bouillon' (Finklestein, 2004:64). It also meant 'a food that restores' (Dorf, 1992:12). Thereafter "restaurants" were referred to either as chocolate, red meat or consommé which practice lasted until the nineteenth century. Subsequently the term has formally been used in its current context as a 'fashionable and convenient place to eat and drink'.

The National Restaurant Association predicted that on an average day during 2003 in the US, the restaurant industry would record $1.2 billion in sales; the industry was growing fast because of the substantial demographical shifts in lifestyles (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006).

More women had entered the work force in the past decade, and increasingly busy lifestyles required reorganising of dining priorities. More people were consuming their meals outside their homes than ever before in history (Brookes, 2004). Recently [2009-2010], the global restaurant industry has been improving after the global economic downturn (Hotel News Resource, 2010a). The industry's contribution to gross domestic product is substantial in global terms, e.g. US restaurants represent 4% of total GDP and the industry comprises 9% of the total workforce. The industry alone contributes $1.5 trillion to the total US economy.

Earlier scientific analysis on sociological issues of dining has been meagre, and usually related only to domestic environments. Very recently, there has been an emergence of literature pertaining to research into restaurant dining in particular. As contemporary research ponders what is required to meet customer expectations and add value to their experiences, few studies question what actually influences customer choices. (Sloan, 2004; Wood, 2004; Litvin *et al.*, 2004)

Ranging from fast-food outlets to fine-dining establishments, there is an array of restaurant experiences for each and every culinary expectation. Brookes (2004) questions if the industry has shaped the consumers' tastes and subsequent demand, or vice versa; have menu products been developed in line with consumer tastes? After he consulted various literature resources on the issues, he concluded that it is 'not an either/or proposition; rather that there may be a continuum of possibilities on the demand led versus the supply driven argument' (Brookes, 2004:111). Hereby he suggests that both market-driven and social forces impact on consumer choices in restaurants. The market-driven forces create scope for restaurants to influence the customers' tastes and educate them as far as to benefit their business ideals.

Macro-environmental forces that drive the trends of outside-home dining are not merely based on financial means, but also on other socio-cultural factors (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003; Brookes, 2004). This is of particular importance in this study; it is similar socio-cultural factors that gain prominence regarding the use of social media in the restaurant industry that determine dining delight and frustration. People eat at restaurants to congregate and share communion, taking time out of a private life to become discernible in public, and occasionally to have a change of scenery beyond the replenishment of hunger and thirst.

Brookes distinguishes restaurant experiences between 'dining out' and 'eating out', by the accumulation of the research findings (Brookes, 2004). He indicates that in 'dining out', performance factors primarily influence purchase decisions. Food quality and variety are important too; however quality does not necessarily only reflect the taste of the food.

Furthermore, the customers' need to experience new dishes and new restaurants drives the overall consumer behaviour trends in the industry. Then again, in 'eating out', cost and availability are the predominant aspects that drive the market, instead of dining performance factors. Thus 'eating out' gives the businesses greater opportunity to exploit consumer taste.

In the restaurant industry hyper-competition has been identified as an important catalyst driving trends affecting tourist destinations in general, and branded restaurants in particular (Sparks, Bowen and Klag, 2003; Brookes, 2004). Brands in general reduce the experience risks involved in customer choice. The element of food is increasingly found to be of diminishing importance as more holistic restaurant experiences evolve in the modern society (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003). The dining experiences demanded in the modern age are increasingly being 'made to order', where the many different factors determining success are established by getting the balance, quality and intenseness of many variables 'just right'. One of these factors is acknowledging the role of technology – restaurateurs currently are no longer primarily operationally focused (Hotel & Restaurant, 2007). They are now enticed to become increasingly and interactively involved in the marketing of their businesses, firstly because of the competitiveness of the industry and, secondly, because of the innovation in systems and technological processes. Social media has been identified as a strong precursor to dining experiences, informing and creating expectations. Additionally, Pantelidis (2010) refers to research results that confirm that restaurant websites add value to positive dining experiences, moreover convincing customers to visit a particular restaurant.

Constantly adding value in other facets of the customer experience, other than the core product of food, seems to be on the prerequisite list for critical success factors of restaurants. These 'other facets' give contemporary restaurants many alternative opportunities to achieve competitive advantage, increasing the quality of the experience for customers (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington, 2008). Gaining competitive advantage in a hyper-competitive market is never easy, but being able to inform restaurant diners about the consumer process before, during and after their experiences contributes greatly to the management of expectations and resulting success (Wang *et al*., 2004).

3.2 DEFINING SERVICES MARKETING

In order to understand the context of social media marketing in the restaurant business, one is compelled to understand the relevant services marketing perspectives available. Even though

restaurant dining generates products (food items) that are very important as tangible results in the consumer exchange process, the importance of the service aspect cannot be denied. Conçalves (1998) indicates that service businesses have a higher perceived service component available for the customer to consume than the product. She further characterises services by the following features:

- they are intangible
- with a lack of process separation between buyer and provider
- cannot be stored or backordered
- involve ability to customise and personalise
- have difficulty in measuring or assessing

Lovelock and Wirtz (2004) importantly include the feature that customers are most likely to become participants in the service process. Kasper, van Helsdingen and de Vries (2000) describe service delivery as making the intangible as tangible as possible so that customers can then assess the quality of their experience. Perceiving higher quality service would then lead customers to be less reluctant in investing their time and money in a worthwhile product. Kasper *et al.* (2000) further point out that buying services does not necessarily lead to material possession. Additionally Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) assert that when business activity does not have a physical product outcome, and is generally consumed as it is produced the activity should be termed part of the service industry. They broadly describe services as 'deeds, processes and performances' (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003:2).

Technology is described as the key driver of service innovation, according to Lovelock and Wirtz (2004). They see technology in this context as processes and tools applied to innovate, expedite and decrease costs of the service process. Besides regulatory policies, socio-cultural factors, business trends and globalisation, technology very often has a foremost effect on customer experiences and subsequent satisfaction, especially in terms of information technology and communication. The Internet is profoundly important in terms of usefulness in all industries, especially in competitiveness relating to innovation (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004).

The differentiation between customer service functions and the marketing function often complicates the required control for quality (Conçalves, 1998). There are many critical points which can be identified when it translates into quality customer experiences. These points can normally be controlled by various employees and/or departments throughout the consumer process. These critical points are also identified by Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) as 'moments of

truth' and will be discussed later in this chapter. For the marketing department to be fully in sync with the customer service side of a business, effective and efficient communication is required. One can thus differentiate between services marketing and traditional marketing by concentrating on accumulating customer knowledge and facilitating the consumer process. Conçalves (1998) aptly describes it as 'consumer-driven marketing'. Research has found that there is an ever-increasing consumer demand for convenience across industries (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004), which brings services marketing centrally into the experience equation.

In contemporary services marketing, the Internet and communication technology will be playing a major role in driving customer-centred marketing in future, especially considering the opportunities in customer feedback forums and peer-reviewing networking websites available, like TripAdvisor. Evidence of this was found in the content analysis study of ten leading services scholars conducted by Grove, Fisk and John (2003). Nearly all panel members stipulated the important relationship between the Internet and services marketing, specifically the role technology plays in satisfying customers' service demands. In restaurant dining, the service component (i.e. intangibles) is substantial in its contribution to overall quality customer experiences. How substantial this and the related tangible products are to customers' experience perceptions will be explored in the following paragraphs on customer experience.

In conclusion, several service marketing definitions are quoted in Table 3.1, which clarifies the scope of services marketing in this study:

Table 3.1: Definitions of Service Marketing

AUTHOR	DEFINITION OF SERVICE MARKETING	RELEVANT CONCEPTS TO STUDY
Grönroos (2003:51)	*"It is how the service process and the service consumption process match each other, so that consumers and users perceive good quality service and value, and are willing to continue the relationship with the service provider."*	Matching of service process and consumption; continuing customer relationship
Kasper *et al.* (2000:34)	*"Originally intangible and relatively quickly perishable activities, whose buying takes places in an interaction process… do not always lead to material possession…, managing the relationship between customer and service provider."*	Interactive; managing customer relationship

Wilson *et al.* (2008:5-9)	*"Services are deeds, processes and performances…. (with) a need for effective services management and marketing strategies..."*	Effective services management; marketing strategies
Zeithaml and Bitner (2000:13)	*"Quality depends on many factors that cannot be fully controlled by the service supplier, such as the ability for the consumer to articulate (their) needs, the presence of other customers, and the level of demand for the service…"*	Service quality; consumer needs, - demand and - environment
Lovelock and Wirtz (2004:8)	*"All products… deliver benefits to customers; goods (by) ownership of physical objects, and with services, benefits created by actions or performances." "Marketing is a strategic and competitive thrust from management; a set of functional activities, product policy, pricing, delivery, and communications…"*	Benefits created by actions or performances; Marketing is a set of functional activities, product policy, pricing, delivery, and communications

Source: The Researcher's Own Table

Table 3.1 formulates many different definitions for services marketing. By combining the relevant concepts from the third column, the researcher has compiled an appropriate definition: 'Service Marketing is a set of functional activities, including product policy, pricing, delivery, and communications to ensure service quality by means of managing consumer needs, demand and environment'.

3.3 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

Kotler, Bowen and Makens (2003:13) define marketing as a 'social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others'. As broad as this definition is, it already infers certain expectations of importance in the consumer process, and the perceived value attached to them.

Perceived value is determined by the quality of the experience of the customer. Moreover, understanding the needs of customers and what commercially creates value is not enough – one also needs to consider the associated human attributes and behaviour variables present throughout the consumer process (McDonald and Alpert, 2007). Maximising marketing efforts in businesses requires the study of human behaviour as a means to commercial ends. Consumer behaviour needs to be understood, as well as influencing customers for the purpose of maximising revenues and sustained market share. Business relationships throughout the value chain are imperative for sustained competitive advantage; this is all the more true in the primary relationship of the customer and the provider (Johnson *et al.*, 2008).

Wherever trade is involved, customer 'expectancy' is created because of the quality of value hoped for (or looked forward to). It is therefore necessary in this study to contemplate the contexts of 'expectations' and 'experiences' and their relation to each other within a business environment. In exploring the concepts of expectations and experiences one needs first to describe the relevant context. This is best done initially by a general approach to the conceptual analysis, thereafter progressing to more specific perspectives.

Expectation according to the Collins Concise Dictionary (1989:434) is 'the act or state of expecting', 'something (to be) looked forward to...whether feared or hoped for', 'an attitude of expectancy or hope', and the 'probability that an event will occur'. Most of the classic marketing literature sources make a point of analysing customer expectations, as they are seen as of paramount importance in fulfilling customer needs and creating customer value and satisfaction (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Grönroos, 2001; Solomon, Bamossy and Askegaard, 1999). Especially within the service industry (which includes the restaurant industry), it is essential to know that the customer purchases a solution at the same time as consuming it. This occurrence makes customer expectations unique in contrast to other industries, such as the retail trade. Thus the occurrence of customer expectations becomes directly linked to the experiencing of the product. Once the decision to consume is made upon preconceived expectations, it most often cannot be undone.

An experience, however, according to the Collins Concise Dictionary (1989:435), is a 'direct personal participation or observation', or a 'particular incident or feeling someone has undergone', also it represents 'accumulated knowledge'; while the verb means 'to participate in' or 'undergo'; 'to be moved by' or 'to feel'. Experience, as indicated in the definition amongst other meanings, refers to accumulated knowledge. Futrell (1990) describes how perceptions are formed by learning. He defines learning as 'acquiring knowledge or behaviour based on

previous experiences' (Futrell, 1990:73). As such, knowledge is based on 'individual judgements, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs', encouraging the buyer's learning process by enhancing the experience created about the product or the related service.

Smith's (2003) research results further illustrate examples of the customers' experiential learning process. Customers develop an immediate interest in recent purchases associated with the advertising of a specific product. They compare what they were able to buy with what they were not able to buy. Customers rationalise this by validating what they have spent their money on, but also by comparing their decisions with alternative possibilities. Thus they reassure themselves about their purchases. However, those customers that were unhappy about their experiences and not reassured, were most unlikely to repeat the process at the same business. Additionally, as customers become motivated by trying out a product, they are most likely to respond to some form of information that was received, either via advertising, word-of-mouth, online review, or some other method of communication (Smith, 2003). Effective marketing, public relations, advertising and brand management are dependent on prior customer experiences. They aid in educating the customer about what they can expect from new experiences, based on previous experiences.

'Attitudes' relate to predispositions toward something. These can either be positive or negative, or 'indifferent' where no attitude exists. These attitudes are formed by past and present experiences. A 'belief'', on the other hand, is, according to Futrell, a state of mind where 'trust or confidence is placed in something or someone' (Futrell, 1990:74). It is necessary that a belief should be formed that a certain product will fulfil a need or function, based on customers' expectations. It is necessary to view these various concepts as integral to and influential in the general concept of experience in this study; they will be elaborated on further in paragraph 3.4.2.

Experience definitions include the concepts of 'direct personal participation' and 'a feeling that someone has undergone'. Smith (2003:63) describes the buying process as an 'emotional route map' which the customer proceeds upon. He then talks of an engagement occasion where the customer experiences what the provider has to offer, called the 'moment of truth' [MOT]. This is the crucial point where the product and/or service convenes with the customer and gets consumed. It sets the tone of expectations for the rest of the process based on the feelings of the customer, as well as the provider. This is the interactive stage of the route where the customer expectations are formed based on the relationship at that MOT point. Insightful to the study is the emphasis on the 'co-creation' of the consumer process, and the attributing extent of

customer knowledge (Rowley, Kupiec-Teahan and Leeming, 2007). Coincidently, consumer co-creation in social media review sites is parallel in contributing to the emotional route map and MOT depicted in this paragraph (Safko and Brake, 2009; Pitt, 2010).

Thus it can be concluded that within the discussed definition of experience it is important for this study to know how experiences influence people's judgements, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs in recognising buying behaviour. These human attributes are central to the analysis if it comes to why social media users engage with each other via online review sites like TripAdvisor. The theories surrounding the concepts of expectations and accompanied experiences are fundamental to further insights in this study. The theories pertaining to customer experiences will be discussed in more detail in paragraph 3.4 of this chapter.

3.3.1 CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS OF DINING

Shoemaker, Lewis and Yesawich (2007:23) introduce their 'expanded trade-off model' where the components of problem, solution and sacrifice are illuminative to the conceptual clarification of customers' expectations. Figure 3.1 indicates that expectations are brought into the relations of value and risk, which poses a somewhat alternative approach to most of the other sourced literature used in this chapter.

Figure 3.1:   Expansion of the Trade-Off Model
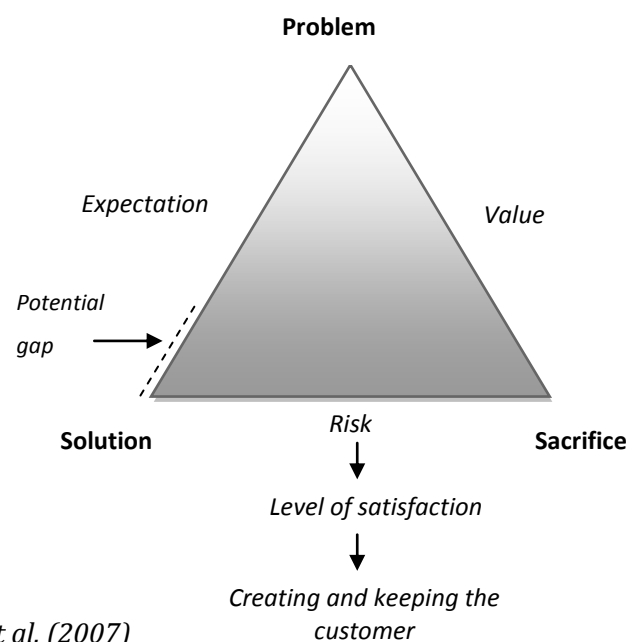
Source: Shoemaker et al. (2007)

From the trade-off model in Figure 3.1 it can be seen that as expectations grow, the triangle expands accordingly, thus the risk of disappointment and perceived value of the product involved will also proportionally increase. This model illustrates how these two variables are closely associated with expectations. The evolved related experiences of 'satisfaction', 'commitment' and 'loyalty' (from 'creating and keeping the customer') indicated at the lower part of Figure 3.1 are to be discussed in more detail later.

Shoemaker *et al.* (2007:24) describe the link between management and customers' expectations as 'intertwined' – managing customers' expectations effectively would lead to the 'creating and keeping of customers'. In the same argument, it can therefore also be assumed that managers' expectations would also unavoidably be interdependent on customers' expectations. To create a comprehensive business context in this study, it is imperative to appreciate that there are numerous stakeholder entities surrounding customers, and their contribution will be discussed wherever appropriate.

Further clarifying the duel relationship in the consumer process, the trade-off model (Figure 3.1) illustrates that the initial definition of the 'problem' (need) is often different for management than for customers. A restaurateur's need would for example be for sustained profits, whereas the customer's primary need would be perhaps for a cheap and convenient meal 'on-the-run'. A coincidental mutual need in the same example could be fast and efficient service to ensure satisfaction of patrons' expectations. Looking at the 'sacrifice' needed to obtain the 'solution', they are once again very different for the customers and for management. This is simply because of the different origins of their needs (problems) that are to be satisfied. The solution might correspond with their mutual mission by providing excellent (fast and friendly) service with the value of wholesome and convenient food, but the risks and sacrifices associated are frequently vastly different.

The experience outcomes for both customers and management should be a desired 'win-win' equation, the needs that lead them there are often poles apart (Doyle, 2008). What can be concluded from this analysis is that expectations are as individual as people are; and they are especially different from both the management's and customers' points of view. However, one should also recognise the seemingly parallel needs that exist and they would probably prove to be interdependent. It is prudent to take this into consideration as both parties are very much present during the consumer process; further they are required to be participative in online reviews.

Hesket *et al.* (1997) emphasise that it is not the provider (i.e. management), but the customer that ultimately establishes product value and quality. This can be seen to be the case when one looks at the wide-ranging popularity of online review sites such as TripAdvisor. Perceived value and quality are fundamental in creating expectations in customers. These authors further state that customer expectations are important in the perception of the delivered product and the experience associated with it. Thus the management of these expectations is deemed crucial within this customer relationship. As the consumer process is participative, active management of mutual perceptions can be controlled to some extent (Grönroos, 2001). The customer manages his/her expectations by referring to prior experiences, be they from his/her own knowledge formed, or from other sources. Rowley *et al.* (2007) refer to numerous studies that confirm the importance of customer knowledge being central to businesses' successes in responding to the needs and expectations of customers. For the purposes of this study it is necessary to comprehend the important link between the experience of satisfaction and expectations (Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998).

Kotler *et al.* (2003) link the concept of customer satisfaction to expectations by how dependent product performance is on the expectations of the same delivered product. The degree of satisfaction is directly related to the extent of the difference between the perceived performance and expectations. For example an 'exceeded' expectation derived from a high performance product will most probably produce highly satisfied customers (Mohsin, McIntosh and Cave, 2005; Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998). This in itself could create 'loyal' customers that would expect even more, as they associate their experiences with a similar product and additionally a similar context the next time around. This becomes a perpetuating upward or downward spiral of expectancies that could become unmanageable (i.e. beyond the business's control), and thus have the potential to adversely affect subsequent service performances.

As satisfaction levels reflect the need for different information sources and require different actions, so do expectations require active management from businesses (Doyle, 2008; Harridge-March, 2006). Some illustrative examples where management can manage expectations in the restaurant industry are: basic expected tangibles (e.g. cleanliness, food temperature, and acceptable service intervals), basic support services and assistance (e.g. condiments, credit card facilities, and toilets), a recovery process (e.g. replacing a meal) by rectifying bad customer experiences (e.g. online review response), and extraordinary services (e.g. a birthday wish choir) that are beyond usual customer preferences (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007:25). With each of

these satisfaction variables, there are identifiable expectations associated based on the performance levels experienced before, or information gathered.

An important consideration in this literature study is the concept of intangibility of the service process, and the consequences for customers' expectations (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007; Grönroos, 2001; Solomon *et al.*, 1999). With the intangibility factor, the expected service could most easily be experienced as inconsistent because of the many variables that determine quality. Customers are not always informed as to what they are purchasing or how product/service delivery will take place. The variables involved necessarily presuppose numerous outcomes - even the same service requested at the same business but at a different time can be notably different. Illustrating this further with a relevant restaurant example – ordering and consuming the same dish at the same restaurant at a different time could produce a totally different experience. This could be because of various factors: different service personnel attending, a different table setting, the availability of fresh produce, managerial supervision, weather, operational procedures in the kitchen to mention only a few impacts on service delivery (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007). When customers have not experienced the product or service yet, the expectations are reliant on similar previous experiences, or information gathered from other external sources or third parties (Mohsin *et al*., 2005). For example, if customers have previously experienced a Michelin star restaurant, they would expect a similar quality, value and performance at another. Thus a comparative assessment will inevitably be made to decide whether expectations have been met, exceeded or else overrated.

Expectations are founded on past buying experiences, where beliefs play an important role in shaping customer behaviour (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.,* 2007; Kotler *et al.,* 2003). These expectations are widely formed by various different channels of communication. Most obvious are the traditional marketing methods, which include advertising, public relations, and promotional events. Word-of-mouth endorsements are frequently quoted as a powerful source of forming expectations. This is also quite obvious because of the multi-dimensional medium of expression that is involved in conveying messages amongst peers. For the purposes of this study it is notable that social media reviews would qualify as very similar in nature, also often being seen as 'electronic word-of-mouth' (Phillips and Young, 2009; Invoke, 2010).

Third parties are often instrumental in creating expectations; more so within the world of marketing where expectations frequently do not match the delivered product. Kotler *et al.* (2003) elaborate that creating low expectations may lead to a higher level of satisfaction, but would be risky in not attracting enough customers. Setting too high expectations would

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invariably lead to disappointment, with diminishing results which fuel accompanying negative belief systems. Shoemaker *et al.* (2007) state that all first experiences create expectations for future experiences. This presents the logical route to argue that marketing efforts should be directed at customer experiences and providing satisfaction in terms of quality, value and performance. Only then can customer expectations be accurately plotted against their experienced (established) paradigms. Throughout the consumer process, the gauging of customer experiences provides the business with the means of managing customer expectations and related experiences.

For the purposes of this study, this argument seems somewhat conclusive in that customers' initial experiences indeed precede their expectations. It can thus most likely further be ascertained from the literature discussed that experiences determine expectations, but also consequently that expectations also determine experiences.

3.3.2 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES OF DINING

In section 3.2.1 there are certain references implicitly linking expectations to the complex environment of the purchasing process in a business. Where the experiences of customers are concerned, it would be prudent to evaluate how strong the relationship of expectations is to their experiences as the customer relationship develops.

Customer satisfaction is a reaction to an experience that is perceived as 'quality' when it is positively associated with the degree of expectations that have been met (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998; Mohsin *et al.*, 2005). Alternatively, wherever a gap appears in what is expected and a product delivered falling short in value, the perception of value diminishes, and the experience is subsequently perceived with dissatisfaction (Mohsin *et al.*, 2005). Additionally, there should be a distinction made between the concepts of satisfaction and service quality, as they can often be mistaken as to their connotations in customer experiences. Wilson *et al.* (2008) differentiated between these concepts and others contributing to favourable customer experiences and loyalty, as shown in Figure 3.2:

Figure 3.2: Customer Perceptions of Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Reliability
Responsiveness
Assurance
Empathy
Tangibles

Service Quality → Situational Factors → Customer Satisfaction → Customer Loyalty

Product Quality

Price

Personal Factors
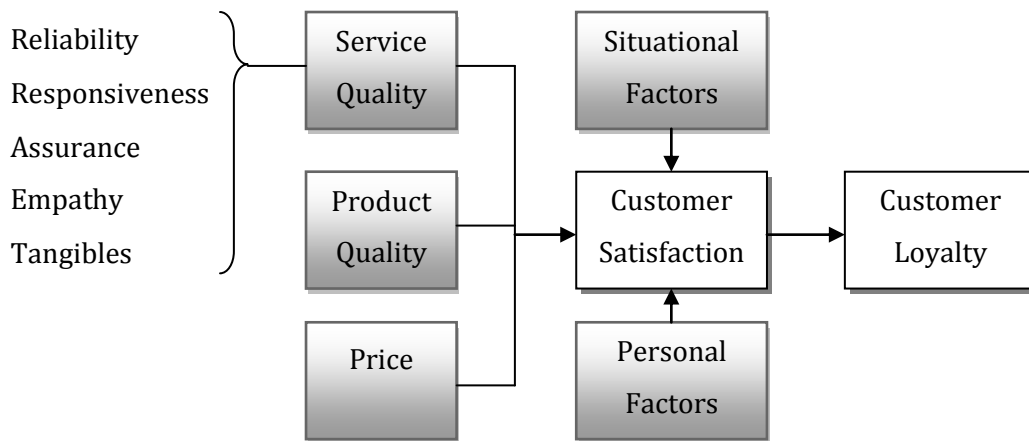
Source: Wilson et al. (2008:79)

Figure 3.2 illustrates the evaluative quality descriptors of customers' perceptions of service, which consist of the variables 'reliability', 'responsiveness', 'assurance', 'empathy', and 'tangibles'. Wilson *et al.* (2008) further include the factors combination of 'service quality', 'product quality', 'price', 'situational factors' and 'personal factors' as important contributors to customer experiences of satisfaction leading to loyalty. This clearly illustrates the more inclusive nature of satisfaction, as opposed to service quality.

Because of the relative nature of value and quality perceptions, effective service delivery requires the specific needs of customers to be noticed (Heskett *et al.*, 1997). This in turn enhances the experience that the customer goes through by having his needs met to some greater or lesser degree. More to the point, Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) describe the level of expectation that has been met as an experience that enters the 'zone of tolerance'. This is discussed later in this chapter under paragraph 3.5.

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) further elaborate, as do O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998), on leveraging the customer experience: customers tend to judge the 'service quality dimensions' of responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles during the service delivery process. These dimensions can also be termed delivery or process dimensions. Reliability, which is usually experienced following the service, could be seen as an outcome dimension. As reliability is an implicitly required product feature of all businesses, it is often difficult to exceed as an expectation. Thus the delivery dimensions are dominant in meeting expectations by providers directly interacting with customers during the service process. The conclusive consideration here is that the reliability service core needs to be somehow augmented by other service skills that could differentiate and thereby create competitive advantage.

According to O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998), the experience industry is an important part of the modern-day economy. They argue that some form of experience can be found in all commercial trading. Experiences themselves could be traded as well. They describe an experience as:

- the involvement of the individual in the consumption of the product

- being in a state of engagement, whether in a physical, mental, emotional, social or spiritual means

- being involved facilitates changes in knowledge, skill, memory, and emotion

- being cognisant of having deliberately come upon, gone to, or lived through an activity or event

- being focused at attending to an emotional need of the co-contributor

O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998) further argue that an experience is very different to buying a product or arranging a service, because of the level of participation and the prominence of personal needs. The individual paradigm and responses involved make it a personal experience. Participation also requires responsiveness and receptiveness from both parties (Solomon *et al.*, 1999). By being participative in the experience of customers, managers in turn would most likely absorb and reflect a certain amount of the customers' responses in terms of their (customers') levels of satisfaction. This is because customer experiences are also derived from managers' needs, which fact in turn creates several parallels between customers' and managers' needs.

To use a relevant restaurant example - customers are not participative when preparation of their dishes during dinners is being performed. They are also not participative with the staging of the décor, atmosphere, nor the table settings. They might be aware of these activities, but they are not interactively involved. Their participatory experience however includes all the processes, products and environment that culminate within their frame of preference. Conversely, the provider's frame of preference also has an impact on the customer's experience. Expectations, attitude and how value and quality are conveyed or communicated to the customer, will be reciprocated by the customer with his/her own set of expectations and attitude. When these frames of preference are in synergy [i.e. emotionally connected], satisfactory experiences are the norm with the added prospect of loyalty (Hansen, 2005).

Loyalty needs to be explained within the experience equation to get a holistic idea of the relational construct. A certain degree of loyalty displayed is subject to customers having

repeated satisfactory experiences and then deciding to repeat the process (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). Customer loyalty is generally expected from managers, mostly because of the degree of their input effort (sacrifice) and the perceived substantiality of the product (value and risk) and its features (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007). Alternatively, in some unfavourable context, loyalty is not expected because of the premonition that customers' needs will not be met.

It is important to note that Hesket *et al.* (1997), the developers of the service-profit chain, have found that the link between customer satisfaction and loyalty was actually the weakest relationship in their model. Thus, although sustained satisfaction is necessary for loyalty, satisfaction does not mean that they will necessarily be loyal and become repeat customers. A satisfied customer might not repeat his or her dealings with the same business for many reasons, e.g. finding a better price elsewhere, finding improved convenience, moving to a new address, just to mention a few. From this it can be concluded that customer loyalty cannot always be expected by a business in providing satisfactory experiences. There is a positive relation however – that a high degree of satisfaction is necessary for the possibility of loyal behaviour.

O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998) take the conceptualisation of customer experience further in describing the 'customer continuum' as levels of strategy that illustrate the level of participation of the customer in the consumer process. Figure 3.3 depicts how the levels of attention increase with intensity (below the line) with the sophistication of the sales environment (above the line).

Figure 3.3: The Experience Continuum

Product		Services	Experience
Service	Care	Connection	Collaboration
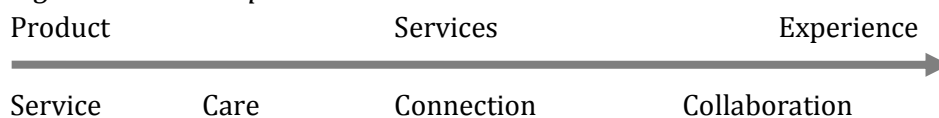
Source: O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998)

The approach in Figure 3.3 is also termed 'customer-centred', by which it progressively centres the increasing amounts of components of customer care on the customer (O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998:164). Components of care are dimensions of customer quality that are defined within five factors: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness. These factors are ever-present in various proportions with all products, services and experiences. The more customer-centric they become (i.e. their factor quality intensifies), the greater the customer experience, be it positive or negative.

O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998:15) state that a customer's experience needs are a manifestation of an individual's 'psychic needs'. They also mention that values and subsequent needs are

increasingly determined by a shift in goals from being 'well-off' to 'well-being'. Apparently people's priorities most prevalent in consumerism have given way to personal freedom and self-actualisation, or 'trading wealth for health' (O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998:16). The variety of emotional and psychological needs have become extensive in fulfilling the contemporary needs that have arisen within modern-day economic demands. Notably, the experiences that have been offered commercially have currently become the norm in the customers' quest in maintaining stabilised and balanced lives.

O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998) emphasise the shift from outer-directed conformity to an inner-directed way of life where psychic needs become part of the consumers' higher priorities. The customer experiences requested to fulfil these needs are becoming increasingly complex to understand, analyse and apply throughout the consumer process. It is thus important to comprehend the experience factor in the customers' paradigm, especially as discussed in the following chapter where the focus will be on the phenomenon of social media use.

3.3.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF DINING

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) state that brand equity is realised from direct customer experiences with the brand. Public relations companies help manage brand experiences across all products and services, often reaching the customer base via many media channels. Managing customer expectations requires forward thinking as the expectations frequently change as a business or customer progresses with the product. Whereas a customer would have received undivided attention whilst requesting a new product or service for the first time, the same customer might receive less attention on consecutive visits because of the increased familiarity with the product, product features, services and the service environment. Peppers and Rogers (2004) also find that new customers display a greater vulnerability to business relationship mishaps than existing customers. Longer and satisfied relationships seem to require less maintenance, less attention, less cost and less subsequent effort in maintaining the required level of commitment. It seems as though first impressions do count more than generally first anticipated. The business might also be required to prioritise their customers' needs as they grow in business, because of the change in the nature of the product, or in the parameters of available resources. An example in the restaurant industry would be the introduction of healthy

alternatives to the traditional McDonald's fast-food menu line-up. Experiential customer needs and current available resources would require the provider's reappraisal.

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) stipulate different approaches in managing customer expectations. They are insightful as to what it takes to create favourable experiences and control expectations for business purposes:

i.   Offering choices (i.e. Options of trade-offs between time and money)

ii. Creating various variables of service offerings (offering different variations on products/services)

iii. Communication of the expected criteria and of levels of service effectiveness (i.e. The training of customers to effectively evaluate service levels)

iv. Negotiating unrealistic expectations (i.e. Presenting their offerings in terms of value and not price alone)

It is important to educate customers to improve chances of meeting expectations and creating a valued experience, according to Zeithaml and Bitner (2003). Some ways of approaching this are:

i.   Preparing customers for the service process and what they can expect from the product

ii. Confirming the business's performance standards and approach to customer expectations. Reinforcing actions with consistent communication is imperative to confirm favourable results. This becomes especially important when:

   - The customer cannot evaluate the effectiveness of the service because of a lack of experience

   - When the decision-maker is different from the users/patrons; when the service is invisible to the direct customer experience

   - When the business depends on others to achieve the desired customer expectations

iii. Clarifying expectations after the sale, by making sure that customer expectations have not been set unrealistically

iv. Training customers to avoid peak demand periods and look for low demand periods; for example: if delays are expected, customers will accept the situation more easily

Elaborating on the types of expectations that can and should be exceeded, Zeithaml and Bitner (2003:469) make a distinction between adequate service (minimum accepted to stay in business) and desired service (hoped to receive). The latter is rarely achieved, whereas the former is achieved three out of four times, according to the authors' research on 'Alternative Scales for Measuring Service Quality'. The results further suggest that exceeding customer expectations is frequently more unrealistic than is typically anticipated; exceeding adequate service is mostly 'possible yet unimpressive' according to Zeithaml and Bitner (2003:469). It frequently leads to managerial frustration and to the business overpromising. It also does not hold promise to 'delight' the customer consistently either.

This poses the question: are some customer groups or segments more susceptible to exceeded service quality standards than others? Some customers are higher maintenance than others, and some take more investment, time and effort to do business with. Frequently these high maintenance relationships are strained, and efforts to exceed expectations of these customers will often have a negative effect on the desired outcomes. Resources needed for other profitable segments would in such cases often be channelled towards those on whom they would have the least effect. Observed inequality in service quality standards would necessarily lead to dissatisfaction in general, and would have adverse repercussions on the business (Carbone and Haeckel, 2005).

Expectations and experiences have cyclical consequences involved as previously found in this study. The question now arises as to what impact exceeding expectations would have on future expectations? Is 'delighting' a customer a sustainable practice? Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) explain that the best way of exceeding expectations (i.e. to delight) is when the expected service experience is low to mediocre. Expectations can often not be met, not by the willingness, but often by the capacity or capabilities of the business at a certain point of time towards random customers. In other words, despite a business's good intentions, expectations might not be exceeded nor even met, because of factors beyond managerial control.

Businesses can prioritise to meet or exceed customer expectations, but only when it is feasible, suitable and reliable to do so (Johnson *et al.*, 2008). It is required by the business to comprehend the customers' expectations, in so doing leveraging the delivered experience, thus exceeding the expectations of particular customers, under-promising but also over-delivering, thereby positioning extraordinary and exceptional service standards (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). Fundamental for this relationship to work is the 'requirement to know' and 'communicating back' the expectations of customers. Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) conclude that

the mere fact of trying to understand expectations usually exceeds them. Thus the action of caring usually has the basis of delighting a customer. Unless expectations are known, all efforts to meet those expectations will risk being presumptuous and unfocused.

Looking at the consumer process holistically, one needs to analyse the levels of relationship commitment required for superior service experiences (Berry, 1999). The simplification of the process is illustrated in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4:   Levels of Relationship Commitment [adapted]

1. Interest in alternative	2. Acquiescence	3. Cooperation	4. Enhancement	5. Advocacy	6. Ownership
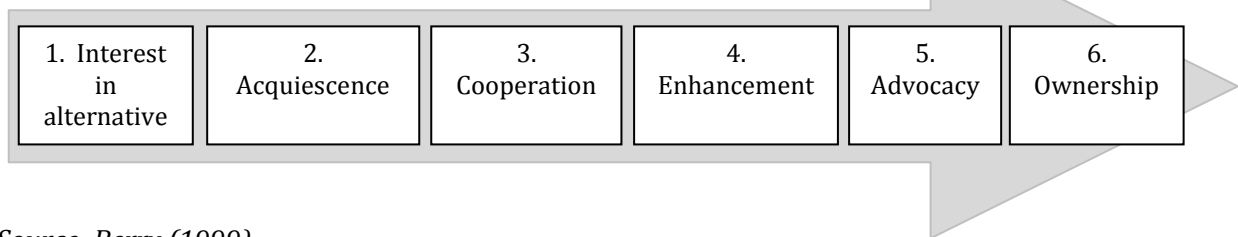
Source: Berry (1999)

Figure 3.4 illustrates the escalation and intensification of the customers' experiences and expectations throughout. With each level both customers 'experiences and expectations are enhanced. Additionally, needs are also seen as paramount in distinguishing expectations and experiences.

Doyle (2008) has come up with an illustrated process in his 'Product Hierarchy'. Figure 3.5 depicts the managerial response obligations in relation to the overall business needs and shows the possible parallel relations between their views.

Figure 3.5:   Management Continuum of Response - adapted from The Product Hierarchy

1. Meeting core needs	2. Meeting basic product needs	3. Meeting expected product needs	4. Meeting augmented product needs	5. Meeting potential product needs
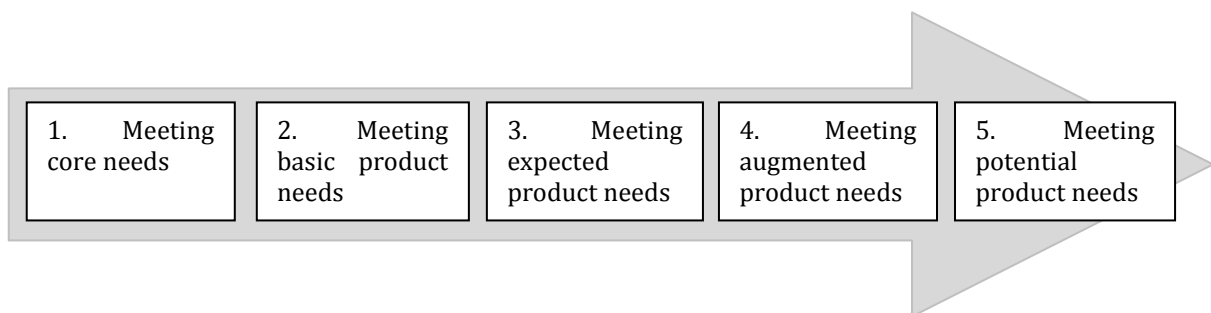
Source: Doyle (2008)

With each of the stages of the continuum in Figure 3.5 a specific need is identified, which warrants a specific set of expectations, with corresponding desired experiences as outcomes. It can be noted that in each progressive stage the participation and involvement between the parties become more intense and increasingly 'customer-centric' (O'Sullivan and Spangler,

1998:164). For example, the fifth stage presupposes proactive involvement from managers, anticipating factors that might derail the exceeding of expectations, and thereby contributing to the subsequent 'delighted' customer experience.

Management could and definitely should expect the outcomes of 'the moment of truth' to exemplify the rest of the service process with the customer (Smith, 2003). If the emotional route of the customer is in any way negative, then sustaining the relationship for any length of time becomes much more difficult. Emotional memory is a powerful force in experiencing a product (Smith, 2003). Brand image builds attitudes and expectations, and experience moulds them into customers' personal perceptions about the business concerned.

3.4 AN OVERVIEW OF THEORIES ON CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

An overview of the most accepted theories on customer experiences and related variables is discussed in this section of the chapter. These discussions mostly build and elaborate on the existing constructs created in the chapter thus far.

Kotler *et al.* (2003), Grönroos (2003) and Walker *et al.* (2001) define customer value and satisfaction in terms of the customer's assessment of product features that meet specific needs. To clarify this Kotler *et al.* (2003) illustrate how delivered value is derived by using an equation. Total customer value (includes product, service, and intangibles) less total customer cost (includes money, time, and effort) determines the 'delivered value' which depicts a 'value profit' to the customer. Notably, many of the variables in this equation are 'perceived' and therefore subjective.

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) otherwise define the quality of service delivery within the paradigm of expectations which originate from beliefs. Value according to them is the extent of the discrepancy between customers' expectations and their perceptions of the delivered product. Expectations function as 'standards or reference points' which are constantly judged by the customer. This could be comparable to Kotler's 'profit measure of value' (Kotler *et al.*, 2003).

Alternatively Hesket *et al.* (1997:40) emphasise that 'customers buy results, not products or services'. Their value equation is as follows:

Value =   Results produced for the Customer + Process Quality

           Price to the Customer + Costs of Acquiring the Service

The difference in this viewpoint is that the value is determined according to results amidst the inevitability of effort and/or costs. Quality here is seen as a distinctive part of value, but is ultimately dependent on the results added to the customer experience, in light of costs accumulated (Hesket *et al.*, 1997).

Probably the most popular study in the line of perceived quality received is the SERVQUAL instrument created in the 1980s by Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (Grönroos, 2003; Walker *et al.*, 2001; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). Initially they found 10 determinants of service quality, which defined the extent of quality perceived by customers. These have been reduced to five to include tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These perceptions of quality are central to the essence of experiences and expectations of the product and its features.

Customer satisfaction is indispensable for loyalty to occur. Customers' expectations must either be met or exceeded for them to become loyal (Kotler *et al.*, 2003; Mohsin *et al.*, 2005). Quite interestingly, it is not necessarily a consistent transition. The buyer's behaviour is dependent on many variables that do not include going to the same place for the same product in similar circumstances. For example, many customers are adventurous in trying new places and new products even though they might have been very satisfied at a specific business. They might be 'transient' and not return to the area. Some are looking for different deals as the opportunities arise. An example apt for the study: as a restaurateur, by getting many satisfied customers historically your business has already accumulated many satisfied experiences. The satisfied customers have not necessarily become loyal – they did not necessarily return to patronise your restaurant numerous times.

Relationship theory is squarely based upon fulfilling expectations and creating the subsequent experiences (Peppers and Rogers, 2004; O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998). The business relationship can be likened to a marriage, where the parties agree on a beneficial exchange for as long as there is added-value to those concerned. The analogy further is appropriate for demonstrating the similarities and differences in expectations and experiences of the parties concerned. Buyer-seller relationships, either between businesses (B2B) or business to

individual customer (B2C), are similar to personal relationships when it comes to expectations and experiences. This is important to realise within the context of this study, where much of social media communication remains personal and individually directed.

Elaborating further on the types of exchanges in business, Peppers and Rogers (2004) describe a continuum similar to that of O'Sullivan and Spangler (1998). From the mere 'transactional' to the collaborative 'relational', the expectations escalate and the experiences intensify accordingly. The differences on this continuum are the quality of the exchange: the features of the delivered product become less obvious, necessitating progressive in-depth managerial considerations and, most importantly according to the researchers, trust.

Trust as an important value in a relationship is based upon the customers' perceptions of previous experiences (Peppers and Rogers, 2004; Harridge-March, 2006). Customers also tend to evaluate previous experiences more rigorously than new experiences. Berry (1999) discusses the levels of relationship commitment needed to foster trust. He refers to dedication and not constraint as the main variable behind the progressive levels of commitment he identified. Either the customer desires a commitment from a business, or perhaps perceives that there is no alternative available. The first level of commitment finds that customer constraints predominate in that the choices in alternatives are low, but the interest in removing these constraints is high. This means that a customer basically stays with a business because there is no viable alternative.

Berry (1999) refers to 'acquiescence' (the second level) when describing the susceptibility of a party's compliance with another party's requests. At least passive agreement is a prerequisite for this relationship to be of added-value to parties. An expectation of cooperation can be assumed to experience the resolve of mutual goals.

'Enhancement' refers to the third level, where the bonds deepen and become more extensive (Berry, 1999:154). Other descriptions for this relationship-building phase are 'investing', 'improving', 'strengthening' and 'intensifying'. Here both parties effectively raise the exit barriers to invest in the sustainability of the relationship by supporting the exchange process in some way. 'Advocacy' is actively promoting the business and is required in certain circumstances, defending it from critics.

Berry (1999) then states that the final level of relationship is 'emotional ownership', whereby the parties are so aligned with each other that they feel practically responsible and accountable

as owners. They collaborate and cooperate at the highest level, and they tell everyone about it. They might be seen as fanatical lobbyists for this fortunate business.

In light of the aforementioned arguments it becomes evident that maximising customer satisfaction is strategically undesirable. Considering the various sources of cost efficiency, getting customer satisfaction at all costs is not advisable in terms of holistic business and sustained strategic sense (Johnson *et al.*, 2008). Whereas an exceedingly satisfied customer will possibly become loyal, and in turn optimistically ensure consistent return revenue, there will be a point of cost where the input effort, time and value will not be worth it. There is a threshold unique to all business where the satisfaction level of a customer becomes unproductive. Seen in the light of various stakeholders' interests and power, the proposed investment is not worth the return (Johnson *et al.*, 2008). Pressure is very much on contemporary marketing efforts to generate high levels of satisfaction and value, but not to detrimentally affect the delicate balance of business priorities.

As customers become more sophisticated and informed during contemporary times, expectations are set to rise exponentially even more in future. Customers are consequently becoming more in tune with their own personal needs and individual requirements. Four freedoms in contemporary living have been identified: 'freedom to know, go, do, and be' (O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998:15). Experiences are defined by those that become involved and participate in the process of buying and selling. Those experiences can be momentary or last a lifetime. Heightened experiences in turn drive needs and consequently, expectations.

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) expressed their reservations about exceeding customer expectations, not just meeting them. This sets high standards and prompts companies to continuously delight, excite, surprise, and amaze. Therefore it also promotes the potential to overpromise and to inevitably frustrate and disappoint.

3.5   DELIGHT AND FRUSTRATION FACTORS IN SERVICE MARKETING

Kotler and Armstrong (2008) refer to the overall goal of customer relationship management as not just a quest for customer satisfaction, but ultimately delight. Delighted customers have more

reasons to remain loyal, and therefore this leads to favourable word-of-mouth marketing. Losing a customer means not just losing a sale, but exponentially may even lead to losing more potential customers. As described in the previous part of the chapter, the favourable experiences of customers are dependent on their level of expectations. Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) have identified different levels of expectations which identified a 'zone of tolerance', as partially depicted in Figure 3.6.

Figure 3.6:   *Frustration Factors and Delight Factors in Relation to the Customer Expectation Framework*
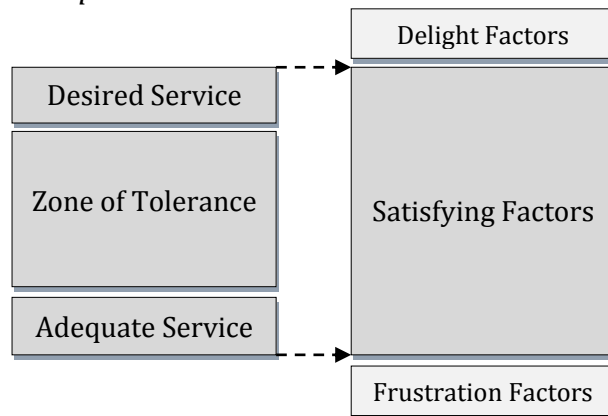
Source: Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) as adapted by Hensens (2010)

In Figure 3.6 Hensens (2010) adapted Zeithaml and Bitner's (2003) 'Duel Customer Expectation levels' to identify the delight and frustration factors he has used for his research. He identified 'satisfying factors' which are parallel to Zeithaml and Bitner's tiered expectations of desired service, the zone of tolerance, and adequate service. The desired service refers to what the customer hopes to receive, whereas adequate service is the level of service that the customer is likely to accept. These are the upper and lower boundaries to what the customer expects to receive, based on their prior experiences. It thus becomes quite obvious that even between similar restaurants in the industry, customers' expectations would vary much between the boundaries creating, as Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) put it, a zone of tolerance. This zone is dynamic; it contracts and expands in accordance with the customer's context. For example, when a customer wants the convenience of fast food, the time the customer allows for service results in the expectation boundaries narrowing considerably. Zones of tolerance also vary for different dimensions of service, especially where some factors are most important. Service reliability (e.g. promises fulfilled or favourable service outcomes) is normally inherently expected by customers. Furthermore Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) put forward the idea that exceeding the desired service brings in an element of 'surprise' to determine a state of 'delight' –

a factor that was not expected. So too with the surprise factor of going below adequate service, which Hensens (2010) termed a 'frustration factor'. In summary, the desired service levels tend to fluctuate less than the adequate service level, which varies more because of competition and other contextual influences (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003).

Lovelock and Wirtz (2004) describe the confirmation/disconfirmation constructs that so many expectancy theories are based upon. Customers' expectation standards are either confirmed or not, and can also be positive (better than expected) or negative (worse than expected). They further explain that delight is 'a function of three components: unexpected high levels of performance, arousal [e.g. surprise, excitements] and positive affect [e.g. pleasure, joy, or happiness']' (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004:44). In Hensen's (2010) model, his satisfying factors reflect the previously stated confirmation construct of Lovelock. Being delighted or frustrated requires disconfirmation – beyond desired or adequate service delivery. Wilson *et al.* (2008) also refer to 'predicted service' which is parallel to Hensen's (2010) satisfying factors. This is based on what customers normally believe they will get as an experience.

Wilson *et al.* (2008:70) also refer to delight factors as a 'profoundly positive emotional state' whereby customers' expectations were exceeded. They further describe it as 'outrageous', thus being 'unexpected, random, extraordinary and disproportionally positive'. Similar adjectives apply to negative results identified by the frustration factors. Being delighted or frustrated means the customer should not have expected the exceptionally good or bad service in the first place, thereby being pleasantly or unpleasantly surprised, accompanied by joy or anger.

The challenge here exists in sustaining these levels of customer experiences without unrealistically raising expectations. As extensively discussed in previous paragraphs, it is strategically undesirable consistently to attempt to exceed customers' expectations. Identifying the delight and frustration factors in this research however, has specific relevance and importance in that they are the extreme identified reactions, most illustrative towards actual customers' sentiments. Contextually they have been best defined and thereby are more useful for online feedback purposes to restaurateurs than any other research method.

In conclusion, a 'delight factor' is an intensely positive emotional state whereby customers' expectations are exceeded, bringing in an element of affirmative 'surprise'. However, to determine a state of 'frustration', services or goods need to be provided in a sub-standard manner in comparison with what is termed 'adequate service'.

3.6 USE OF WORD-OF-MOUTH IN SERVICES MARKETING

In the purchasing process, customers look to many sources in finding relevant information to confirm their choices. Traditional media sources communicate less about experience qualities than the personal source of information (Wilson *et al.*, 2008; Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). Personal communication channels include conversations face to face, telephone calls, mail or Internet and can be one-way, or interactive. Companies' direct communications to customers via sales people are often considered less credible and decreasingly effective (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008; Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004). Especially in the services industry, there may be less chance of finding credible information to base buyers' decisions on. Additionally in services, where the simultaneous production and consumption of the product occurs, accurate and cost-effective advertising of the consumer experience could be challenging. Customers, by being exposed to fewer attributes in services because of the intangibility factor, could feel more at risk in selecting business providers (Kasper *et al.*, 2000). Personal recommendation is therefore imperative in an attempt to match customer expectations (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004).

Immediately following the customer experience, customers normally formulate an evaluation based on their post-experience perceptions of the extent of satisfaction, quality, loyalty and emotional engagement. This reaction and subsequent behaviour are arguably most important in determining the intent to return to the business and repurchase (Wilson *et al.*, 2008). Post-experience evaluations largely determine what information customers share with others. Blythe (2005) stipulates three reasons for word-of-mouth's power: firstly it is interactive and thus creates context to the message; secondly it allows for feedback and confirmation; and thirdly the credibility of the source is perceived as far superior.

Other potential customers are highly influenced by what they hear about a product or service they are contemplating to consume. Service marketers attempt to understand and control word-of-mouth communication in order to facilitate more of the positive and less of the negative. Conveyed positive customer experiences by word-of-mouth are more likely to increase market share and create loyalty, estimated to be by as much as 80%, than other methods of communication (Solomon *et al.*, 1999). Loyal customers have many more benefits to businesses than just increased direct financial results. They facilitate free advertising by word-of-mouth endorsements. Kasper *et al.* (2000) add that from a business management's point of view, word-

of-mouth is difficult to control because of the independent opinion-sharing of the customers. Some control though is potentially facilitated by incentivising participation and influencing consumer messages sent through testimonials and references (Kasper *et al.*, 2000), promotions to create community (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004), or press releases and awards (Blythe, 2005). Additionally, according to Wilson *et al.* (2008), customers can perform many other voluntary acts on behalf of the business, such as participative acts in operations, like clearing tables at a restaurant.

Attracting a new customer costs five times as much as retaining one (Wilson *et al.,* 2008). Thus replacing customers that defected to the competition becomes a costly exercise. Defensive marketing ensures that customers are retained as far as possible. The longer a customer remains with a business, generally the more profitable they become. Lovelock and Wirtz (2004) state that contemporary research shows that customers with strong experience opinions are more likely to share them with others than those with milder views. Frustrated customers are also more likely to share than delighted customers (Solomon *et al.*, 1999). As depicted in Figure 3.7, four main sources determine the profitability of retained customers:

Figure 3.7   Defensive Marketing Effects of Service on Profits
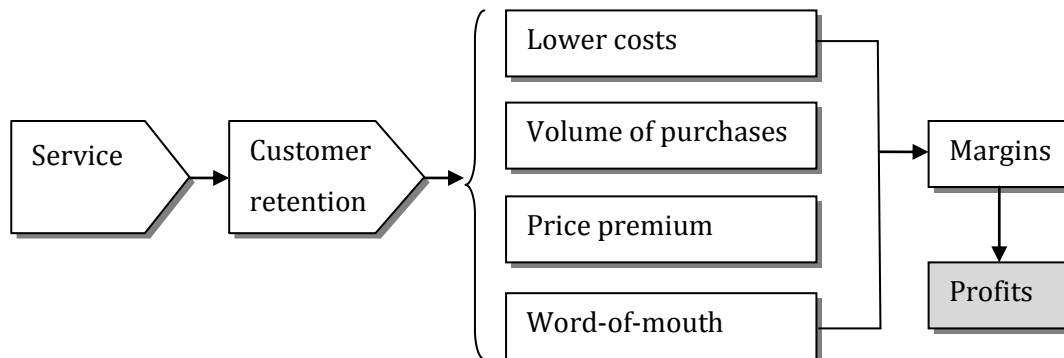
Source: Wilson et al. (2008)

Figure 3.7 illustrates the four sources mostly responsible for customer retention. Subsequent resultant sustained profits in defensive marketing are determined by word-of-mouth and/or lower costs. Besides resulting in customer retention and savings in promotional costs, word-of-mouth communication also entices and paves the way for new customers to become loyal. Apparently frustrated customers are 90% certain not to repurchase at a business again (Solomon *et al.*, 1999). However, Lovelock and Wirtz (2004) found that customers that were initially frustrated would frequently end up spreading positive word-of-mouth by being exposed to effective service recovery by the business concerned.

3.7 ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH

Customers are able to research the Internet for all possible consumer information that is humanly accessible. It stands to reason that word-of-mouth communications are very suited to Internet applications, especially so with social media. Electronic word-of-mouth refers to any negative or positive statements made by actual, potential or past customers or groups to an online community via the Internet about products and services (Cheung, Lee and Rabjohn, 2008). It can be regarded as an extension of the word-of-mouth phenomenon applied to Web 2.0 technology. Steffes and Burgee (2009) refer to electronic word-of-mouth as online informal communication between individuals about their experiences with products and services. Cruz and Fill (2008) refer to electronic word-of-mouth as a critical electronic extension of all interpersonal communications on new media communication channels.

Kozinets, de Valck, Wojnicki, and Wilner (2010) illustrated the evolution of word-of-mouth according to progression through three stages, as shown in Figure 3.8:

Figure 3.8:   The Evolution of WOM Theory
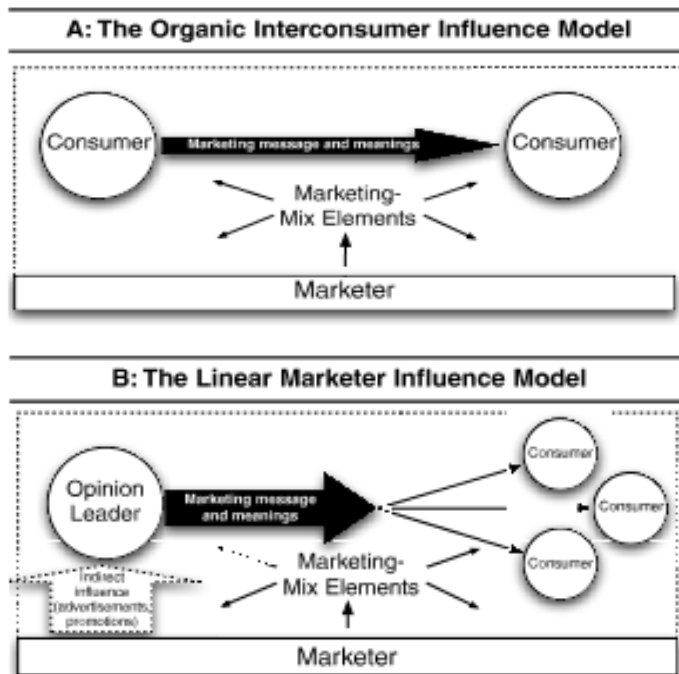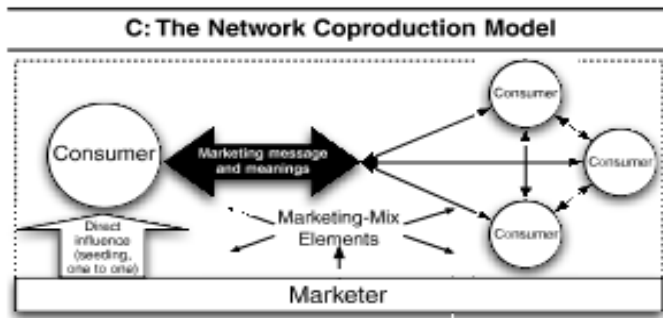
Source: Kozinets et al. (2010)

The three stages depicted in Figure 3.8 range and advance from: A) the organic communication between consumers about brand-related issues of interest, prompted by aspirations to assist others; B) influential opinion leaders became the target for marketers to influence; C) this stage coincides with the development of Web 1.0 and 2.0 technologies, and the marketing shift from the transactional to the relationship-type orientation (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010). Consumers are seen in the final stage as co-producers of commercial value and meaning. Two significant findings result from the evolutionary models in Figure 3.8: firstly the marketer's new approach in tactics, and secondly the increased empowerment of consumers. Instead of the flow of information being predominantly unidirectional and limited by physical word-of-mouth carrying capacity (as in Figure 3.8, model A), information is spread comprehensively and can have viral reach amongst network peers (as in Figure 3.8, model C). Essentially the offline motives and characteristics remain generally similar throughout the stages.

It seems that what mostly applies to word-of-mouth equally and typically does so also to online, albeit with some exceptions, according to Steffes and Burgee (2009):

 i.   There are time and space differences between sender and receiver to take into consideration in the transmission of messages
 ii. The rather limited offline reach between senders and recipients is dwarfed by the online potential of one-to-millions
 iii. Credibility is not easy to establish online, and frequently the sender is not well known. There might be trust issues involved
 iv. Online there could be motive for a non-altruistic reason such as profit-seeking, whereas in offline communications this could easily be picked up because of the richness of context

Word-of-mouth was found to be more important in the final stages of the purchasing process because it comforted customers and decreased post-purchase insecurities (Sweeney, Soutar and

Mazzarol, 2008). Services are generally perceived to be undividable between purchase and consumption; thus pre-trial purchasing is often not feasible. Factors such as intangibility, heterogeneity, perishability, and inseparability lead to customers taking risky chances. These factors further motivate consumers to spread the word-of-mouth communication, according to Solomon *et al.* (1999), for the following reasons:

i. Involvement stems from high interest and knowledge about products and services; conversations centre around their interests

ii. Ego enhancing conversations about extensive knowledge also drives sharing

iii. Altruistic reasons might facilitate one to converse in the attitude of caring how a service or product is perceived

iv. Create supporting arguments for a product/service especially when the risk is perceived to be higher, or the outcomes are complex to envision

Word-of-mouth influencers, according to Blythe (2005), are opinion leaders that have a special interest in a given market. They are journalists, experts, academics, prominent leaders, or any other person that has earned an online reputation. Characteristics relevant to their influence include demographics, social activity, attitudes, personality, lifestyle and product interest. Cruz and Fill (2008) also boldly state the undisputed importance of opinion leadership in the realm of word-of-mouth communication, and online opinion leader equivalent - 'efluentials'. They are valuable sources of word-of-mouth for the following reasons (Solomon *et al.*, 1999):

i. They are often technologically capable and persuasive

ii. Their information is frequently pre-screened, impartial, reconfigured and appraised

iii. They are highly involved in their networked communities and have social standing in their field of interest

iv. They often express their concerns in terms of the consumer, thus creating relevant consumer sentiment by being perceived as slightly higher in status

v. They are normally first to buy and try out new products and services, absorbing most of the risk

In conclusion, electronic word-of-mouth has facilitated the classical approach to a new dimension – Web 2.0 has provided a platform that brings extensive communities together to share and evaluate consumer relevant information. It is driven by the online early adopters of opinion leaders that utilise social media to discuss and review services and products to interested communities that growing increasingly aware of traditional media's shortcomings.

Trust is as always central to the consumer process; the scale of potential scope only has exponentially grown with the Internet and its ever-user friendly applications.

3.8 SERVICES MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Being competitive within the restaurant industry requires consistently delivered superior quality products with accompanying service levels. The core product (food) is increasingly found to be of diminishing importance as more holistic restaurant experiences evolve in modern society. The restaurant industry is an industry where sharing, caring and word-of-mouth promotion are important. Dining expectations of customers require an interpretation process which analyses a combination of their prior restaurant experiences and their anticipated environment. Being able to interpret customers' expectations accurately is crucial to delivering the right dining experiences.

Research results (Carbone and Haeckel, 2005; Pantelidis, 2010; Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003) show that the consideration customers give the core product in evaluating restaurants is the most difficult for customers to overcome. There is a paradox of being encouraged to feed the customers' information so that they know what to expect or else to surprise them so that exceeded expectations are increasingly achievable. Providing customers with information before, during and after dining experiences will inevitably lead to future marketing success. Known expectations can thus be actively managed. Dining satisfaction moderates the relationship between dining experiences and post-dining intentions to return to the restaurant.

Social media's rich interactive content has features which enhance customer learning and participation. Successful restaurants encourage their customers to link up on social media sites to describe their restaurant experiences online. They frequently are influenced by others' expectations and experiences (i.e. friends, family and influencers) that often become their opinions. Subsequently their online and offline expectations will be modified accordingly. Quality social media experiences require consistent and on-going content generation, both from customers and restaurateurs.

3.9 SUMMARY

This chapter clarified the concepts of services marketing and customer experiences. Definitions of services marketing were explored. Services marketing is seen as an essential base of knowledge and application for the subsequent analysis of customer expectations and experiences. It was important for this study to know how experiences influence people's judgements, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs in recognising buying behaviour. Customers' initial experiences precede their later expectations. It can thus most likely further be ascertained that experiences determine expectations, but also consequently that expectations also determine experiences.

Exploring customer experiences within the dining industry, especially how they relate to social media has demonstrated how the market-driven and social forces impact on consumer restaurant choices. Socio-cultural factors are of particular importance in this study. These factors have been shown to gain prominence in the use of social media in the restaurant industry.

Research shows that performance factors, food quality and variety influence purchase decisions. Furthermore, the customers' needs to experience new products and new restaurants drive the overall consumer behaviour trends in the industry. Customers' participatory experience includes all the processes, products and environment that culminate within their frame of preference. Conversely, the provider's frame of preference also has an impact on the customer's experience. Expectations, attitude and how value and quality are conveyed or communicated to the customer, will be reciprocated by the customers with their own set of expectations and attitude. Emotional memory is a powerful force in experiencing a product. Brand image builds attitudes and expectations, and experience moulds them into customers' personal perceptions about the business concerned.

Word-of-mouth communications were found to be suited for Internet applications, especially so with social media. Electronic word-of-mouth refers to any negative or positive statements made by actual, potential or past customers or groups to an online community via the Internet about products and services.

Social media's rich interactive content has features which enhance customer learning and participation. Successful restaurants encourage their customers to link up on social media sites

to describe their restaurant experiences online. Most importantly this chapter identifies and defines the delight and frustration factors central to the study.

In Chapter 4 customer behaviour in relation to the dining experience will be discussed. The contexts involved whereby customers' feedback on products and services to businesses or peers is shared will also be explored.

CHAPTER 4
CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR IN RESTAURANT DINING

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3 customer experiences were explored against the background of services marketing. With regard specifically to the topic of this study, word-of-mouth communication was discussed to bring clarity to the context of Web 2.0 review sites. It was concluded that there is much scope for the new media to gain ground in business, especially in terms of contributing feedback to business and review content to peers about product quality. Social media has been identified as one of the most important communication tools a manager can utilise to reach and engage customers.

In this chapter theories of customer behaviour are explored as it occurs during the consumer process. Particular attention is then given to the decision-making process, because customer choice and preference are important in understanding online consumer participation. Thereafter the important aspects that drive context in consumer choice are analysed, as contextual theory formulation is central to the research outcomes. Lastly, and more specifically, the contextual online factors that influence the customers' evaluation process are analysed, to show how they apply to online review sites.

4.2 DEFINING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR

Effective marketing strategy is highly reliant on the knowledge of why and how consumers buy and what factors affect their buying decisions (Solomon, 1999; Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). Understanding customers' behaviour is fundamental to sustainable business practices, so that customer needs can be fulfilled, resulting in a satisfactory experience. Additionally, to be able to focus on the customers' needs, there should be a robust marketing concept on offer (Cant *et al*., 2002).

In its early stages this field of study was referred to as 'buyer behaviour', and as Solomon (1999) has quite rightly claimed, the field should be seen as a 'process' of consumer exchange, not only a momentary transactional occurrence. Additionally, Berry's (1999) 'Levels of Relationship Commitment' [Figure 3.3] and Doyle's (2008) 'Management Continuum of Response' [Figure 3.4] in the previous chapter illustrate the consumer process as consisting of factors that influence behaviour before, during and after a purchase. There are also many stakeholders present during this process, beyond the provider and buyer. The buyer and user of the product or service might not be the same person; so too the buyer and the decision-maker could be different. Cant *et al.* (2002) refer to them as users, payers and selectors. These parties can further consist of individuals, groups or businesses.

In conclusion, the concepts of 'consumers' and 'customers' are assumed to be the same in most of the literature on the subject. However, consumers are seen in the context of being general users of products (good and services), whereas customers are also seen as purchasers, patrons, shoppers, clients and buyers. (The Penguin English Dictionary, 2003; Roget's Thesaurus, 2000)

For the purposes of this study, they are seen to be similar, but preference will be given to the term 'customers' in light of the restaurant industry's preferred terminology.

4.3   CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR THEORIES

A thorough analysis of consumer behaviour necessitates an analysis of the micro- and macro environments that include the business organisation, customers, and competitors (Cant *et al.*, 2002). This enables an organisation to effectively segment its particular markets, then to target a particular segment for an appropriate product by positioning itself to take advantage of a given opportunity in the market.

Theories of consumer behaviour include the classical to the contemporary; the simple to the complex; models based upon customer psyches to an emphasis on situational and contextual factors. These will be explored in more detail in paragraph 4.3.1.

4.3.1 AN OVERVIEW OF EXISTING THEORIES OF CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR

There are many different models that represent the historical thinking on consumer behaviour. The simplest and arguably the widest held theory was termed the 'black box' model, as shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1:   The Black Box Model
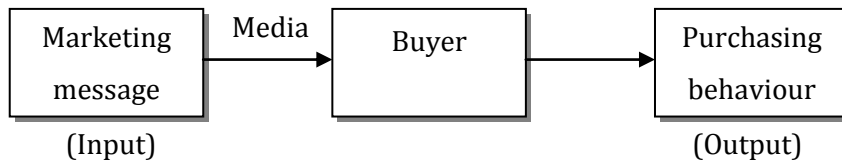
Source: Bareham (1995)

Within this type of model as illustrated in Figure 4.1, and more comprehensively in Figure 4.2, the buyer psyche is interpreted as a mystery (i.e. black box), whereby an input such as a marketing message is interpreted via media by the buyer. Some psychological process subsequently ensues, which leads to some kind of output in consumer behaviour, such as a purchase of a product or service.

Figure 4.2:   The Stimulus-Response Model
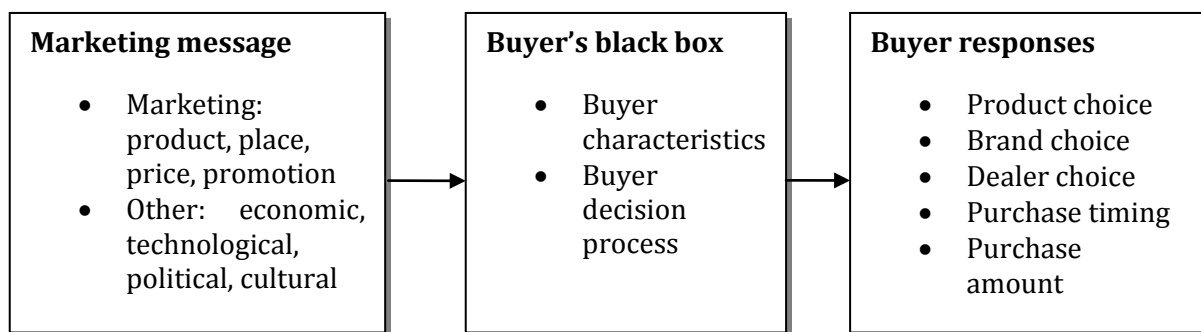
Source: Kotler and Armstrong (2006)

Kotler and Armstrong (2006) also refer to the black box model as the 'stimulus-response' model of consumer behaviour as shown in Figure 4.2. They state that ninety-five percent of psychological processes that drive purchases are unconscious. The study of marketing, and especially consumer behaviour, requires one to understand the buyer responses made and the underlying reasons to have made them. Kotler and Armstrong (2006) further emphasise characteristics that affect consumer behaviour, as depicted in Figure 4.3:

Figure 4.3:   Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour

Cultural	**Social**	**Personal**	**Psychological**	**Buyer**
Culture	Reference groups	Age & life-cycle stage	Motivation	
Subculture	Family	Occupation Economic situation	Perception Learning	
Social class	Roles and status	Lifestyle Personality Self-concept	Beliefs and attitudes	

Macro Consumer Behaviour   Micro Consumer Behaviour
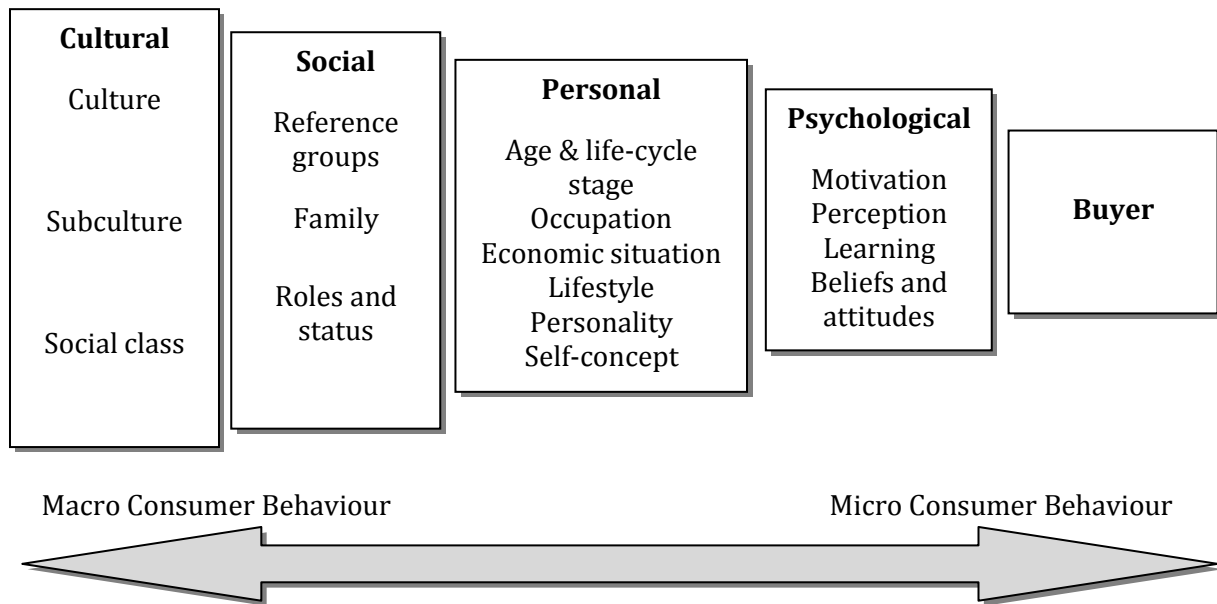
Source: Kotler and Armstrong (2006) and Solomon (1999)

Through the characteristics depicted in Figure 4.3, one can comprehend the extensive influential factors involved when a consumer process is navigated. Most of the factors are external influences or internally confined to the psyche of the purchaser; typically they are all quoted as being of fundamental importance for the consumer behaviour process (Blythe, 2005; Wilson *et al*., 2008; Bareham, 1995; Swarbrooke and Horner, 2005). Additionally Solomon (1999) refers to the 'pyramid of consumer behaviour', differentiating points on a continuum between macro- and micro consumer behaviour (e.g. from left to right in Figure 4.3), which involves parallel extremes of social as opposed to individual focus. Some of the factors identified from Figure 4.3 are accessible to the marketer for purposes of consumer influence, particularly the psychological factors pertaining to beliefs and attitudes. This will be further discussed in detail in paragraph 4.2.2.

The two separate but corresponding decision-making models as depicted by Figure 4.4 (a and b) concern a process that consumers conduct in making purchasing decisions, illustrating the cognitive abilities required.

Figures 4.4a and 4.4b: Two Decision-Making Models
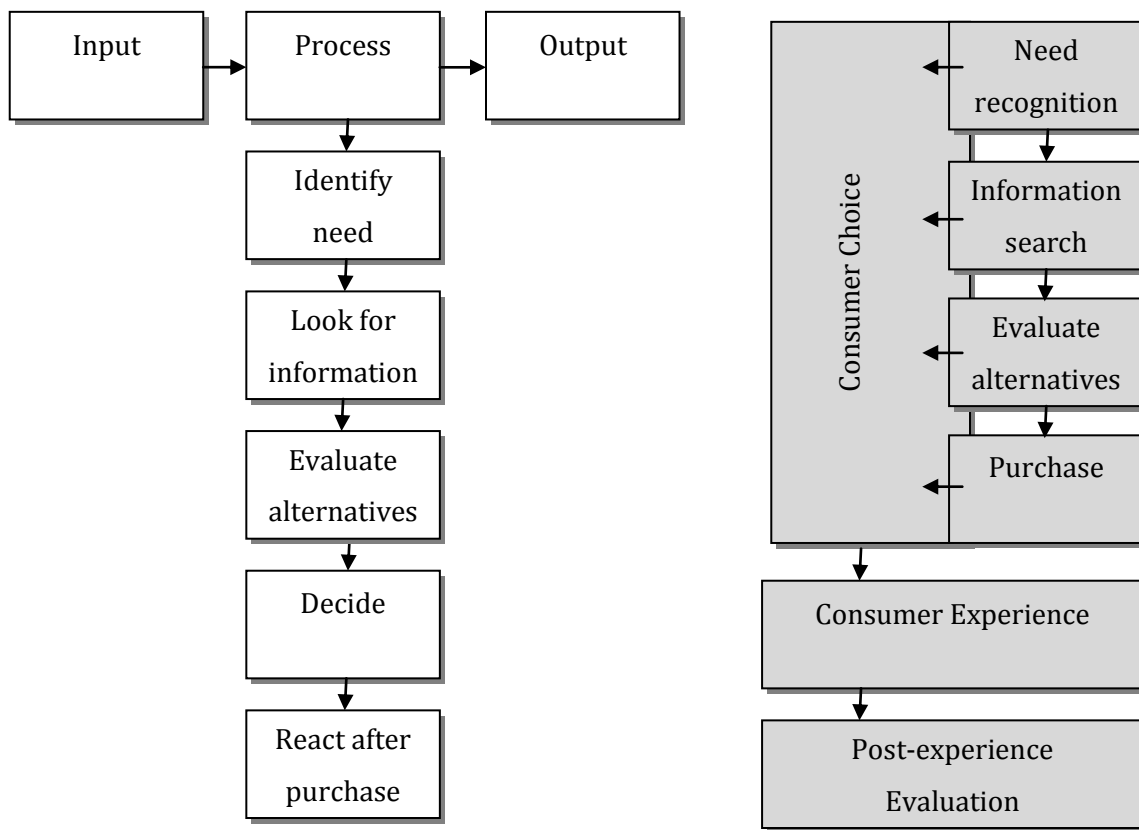
Source: Bareham (1995)   *Source: Wilson et al. (2008)*

Although the models in Figure 4.4 were published 13 years apart, they still depict a similar process that the consumer accomplishes when purchasing a product or service. Wilson *et al.* 's (2008) model [Figure 4.4b] shows three broad stages of consumer behaviour. In other studies, various authors have included all three of the stages under 'customer experiences', thus qualifying and including the preparation time before purchase, during and after purchase (Berry, 1999; Doyle, 2008).

Kasper *et al.* (2000) introduced a five-step model with a similar approach to Bareham (1995), as shown in Figure 4.4a. They then reduced it to a three-stage process similar to Wilson *et al.*'s (2008) model for services: pre-purchase, consumption and post-purchase. For further structural modifications their model has identified 'extensive problem solving behaviour' (i.e. covering all five stages), 'restricted problem solving behaviour' or 'routine buying behaviour' (i.e. covering only the final two stages). Blythe (2005) has advanced the decision-making models by emphasising the importance of feedback loops from the post-purchase evaluation stage back to the stages of problem recognition (identifying needs), information search, and evaluation of alternatives. Additionally he has included another stage after the fifth 'post-purchase

evaluation', which is termed 'divestment'. This indicates the way the product is disposed of after purchase, and is therefore more directed towards goods than service related industries.

Cant *et al.* (2002) constructed a conceptual model according to their beliefs on the general nature of customer behaviour as shown in Figure 4.5:

Figure 4.5: An Overall Model of Customer Behaviour
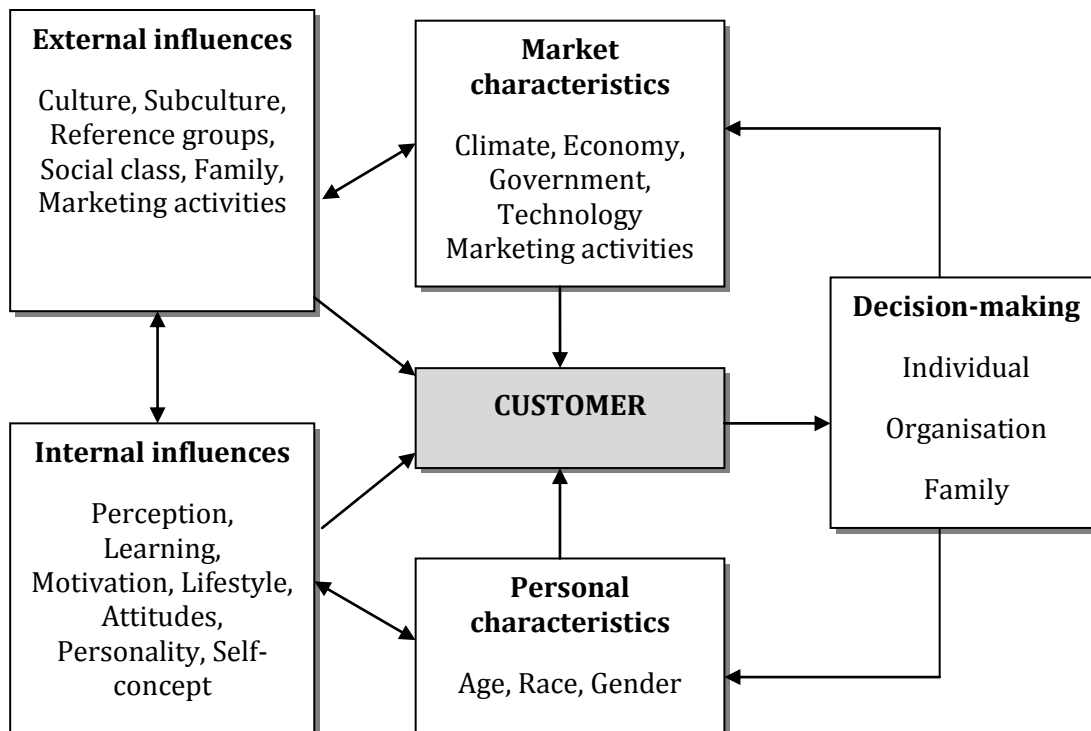
Source: Cant et al. (2002)

Figure 4.5 illustrates the various conceptual relationships that depict customer behaviour, without reverting to the linear stage processes of other models. The model's advantage is that although it is relatively easy to understand, it seems comprehensive in approach. Individuals have self-concepts and live according to lifestyles. Internal and external factors influence individuals' perceptions of themselves and their wants and needs in terms of resources required to sustain their lifestyle. Decision-making requires the customer to reconstruct the consciously analysed, the unconscious and other inherent factors into an integrative synthesis of logic.

Ratneshwar, Mick and Huffman (2003) in their approach to consumer motivation have come up with a model that attempts to answer the 'why' of consumption and produces a further perspective on the subject as sown in Figure 4.6:

Figure 4.6:   The 'Why' of Consumption

```
┌─────────────────────┐                    ┌─────────────────────┐
│        WHO          │                    │    WHERE, WHEN       │
│                     │                    │                     │
│   Inter-individual, │◄──────────────────►│    Situational/     │
│   inter-group and   │                    │     contextual      │
│   cross-cultural    │                    │    differences      │
│  differences among  │                    │                     │
│     consumers       │                    │                     │
└─────────────────────┘                    └─────────────────────┘
           ▲                                          ▲
            ╲                                        ╱
             ╲      ┌──────────────────────────┐    ╱
              ╲     │           WHY            │   ╱
               ◄───►│  Consumption motives,    │◄─►
              ╱     │  goals and desires       │   ╲
             ╱      └──────────────────────────┘    ╲
            ╱            ▲                    ▲        ╲
           ▼            ╱                      ╲        ▼
┌─────────────────────┐                    ┌─────────────────────┐
│        HOW          │                    │        WHAT          │
│                     │◄──────────────────►│                     │
│   Cognitive and     │                    │    Consumption      │
│  affective processes│                    │    behaviours       │
└─────────────────────┘                    └─────────────────────┘
```
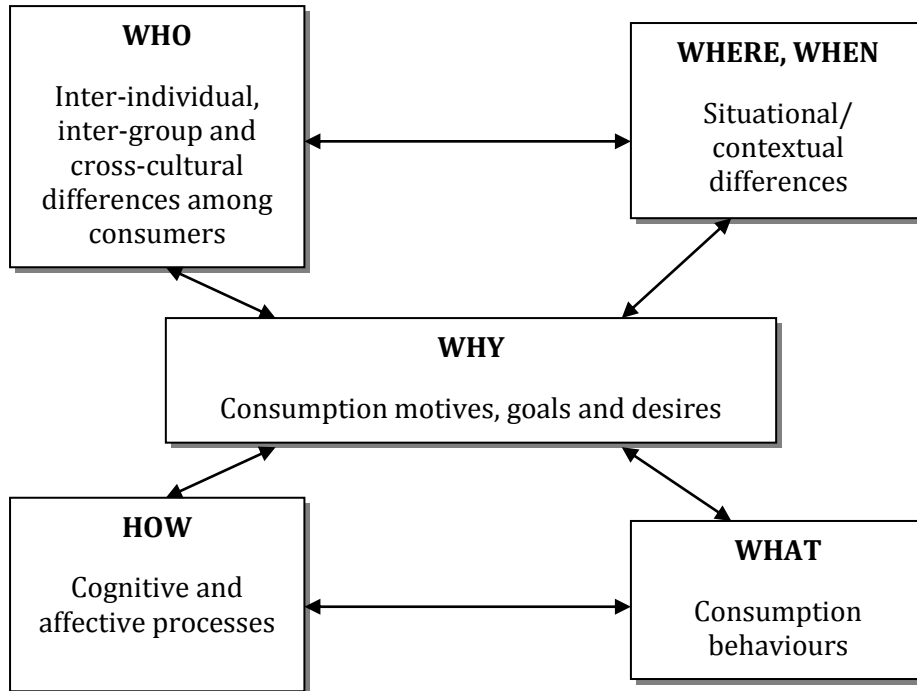
Source: Ratneshwar et al. (2003)

The model illustrated by Figure 4.6 considers mostly the centralised 'why' factor and additionally the 'how' of processing decisions and subsequent actions. Also it focuses on the link to the factors of 'who' (group influences) to the contextual factors of 'when' and 'where'. This model contains much of the most influential factors present in all the models described in this part of the chapter, and simplifies but generalises them to reflect the scope of the study.

In paragraph 4.2.2 of this chapter predominantly the 'how' of the consumption process is to be investigated. Subsequently in paragraph 4.3 the 'where' and 'when' which include the situational and contextual factors are analysed; thereafter (paragraph 4.3.1) all this is brought into relation and applied to the 'what' of consumption – the customers' post-purchase behaviour as conveyed through social media.

4.3.2 CUSTOMER CHOICE

Besides the external influences such as cultural and social factors that have an impact on buyer behaviour, there are also many personal and psychological factors to consider in the customers' decision-making process (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). Customers' choices for products are

more/less complex, involving varying quantities of participants, with more/less qualitative considerations.

Kotler and Armstrong (2006) devised a matrix illustrating types of buying decision behaviour that typify the range of differences between brands. It has been adapted to apply to 'prior experience discrepancies', as illustrated in Figure 4.7:

Figure 4.7:   Types of Buying Behaviour

	High involvement	Low involvement
Large prior experience differences	Complex buying behaviour	Variety-seeking buying behaviour
Slight prior experience differences	Dissonance-reducing buying behaviour	Habitual buying behaviour
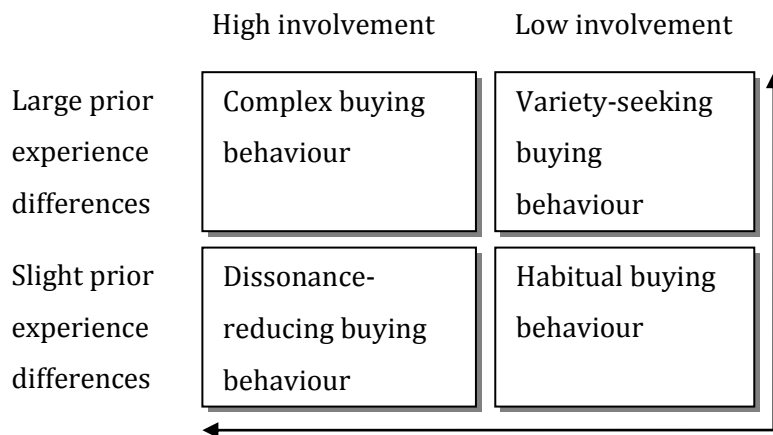
Source: Kotler and Armstrong (2006), adapted by the researcher

Figure 4.7 depicts buyers' different behaviours when faced with various degrees of consumer process involvement, and discrepancies relating to prior experiences of the product or service. In the 'complex' type, the involvement is high and prior experiences relating to the product have not been internalised (i.e. fragmented experiences, insufficiently informed). Thereby the learning process will have to go through the validating of beliefs, adapting attitudes, and subsequent reflection on the options before a choice is made. Here an example would be an exotic fine dining experience in a foreign country. Alternatively, the 'habitual' type requires low process involvement, with high internalised prior experiences. These customers know what to expect, and it becomes mostly a choice of habit. They do not have to go through the belief-attitude-behaviour progression. An example here would be the customary visit to a convenient fast food outlet around the corner. The 'variety-seeking' types are more risk-taking toward new experiences but not very involved, whereas the 'dissonance-reducing' types are forever validating their purchasing decisions (i.e. high involvement) even though their prior experiences have been adequately internalised. An example of the former is randomly choosing a menu item that was not tried before, without really validating the choice. An example of the latter would be that of a customer nit-picking because of diminutive annoyances from expected service levels not being achieved.

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Similar to Kotler and Armstrong's (2006) buying behaviour types but more specifically hospitality applied, the 'continuum of purchasing choice processes' is introduced by Williams (2002) as described in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1:   A Continuum of Hospitality Consumer Purchase Processes

	HIGH-INVOLVEMENT PURCHASE DECISION	LOW-INVOLVEMENT PURCHASE DECISION
DECISION-MAKING (Information search intensive)	*COMPLEX DECISION (choice of high-end restaurants)*	*LIMITED DECISION (preference for a specific cuisine)*
HABIT (Limited information search)	*BRAND LOYALTY (fast-food outlet)*	*INERTIA (buying French fries or a beer)*

Source: Williams (2002)

Table 4.1 explains how purchasing processes consist of dual approaches: first, more/less cognitive decision-making involving analysis and evaluation; secondly, the aspect of risk perceived with high/low involvement in the purchase process. The matrix relationship has similarities to and nuance differences from Kotler's matrix in Figure 4.7, thus illustrating more of the variables to consider in the consumer process.

The 'Theory of Planned Behaviour' sheds light on various aspects pertaining to intentions and why people are sharing content online (Syed-Ahmad, Klobas, Ismail and Murphy, 2009). This theory represents the antecedents of intention, and thereby indicates expected consumer behaviour, as shown in Figure 4.8:

Figure 4.8:   Theory of Planned Behaviour
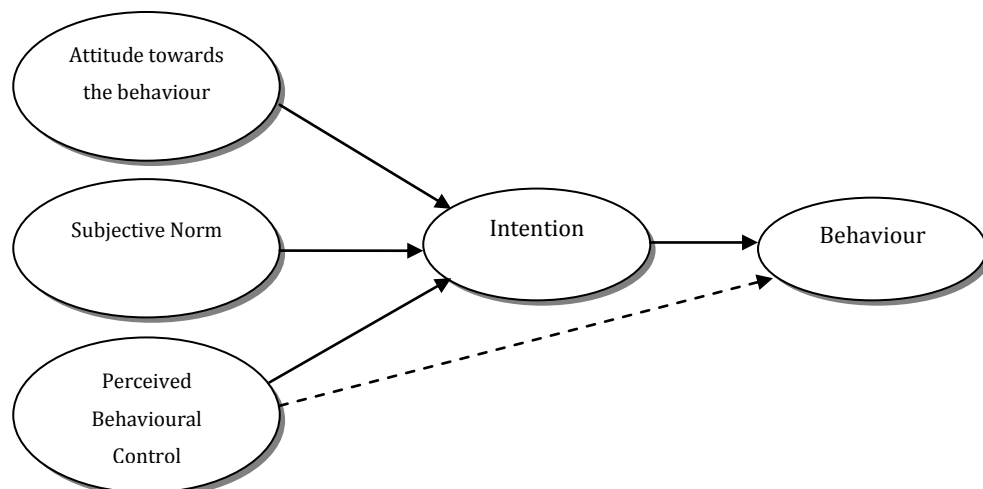
Source: Syed-Ahmad et al. (2009)

The three components that lead to intention are illustrated in Figure 4.8: 'Attitudes', as defined by the perceptions and feelings toward acting out behaviour; the 'perceived behavioural control' that represents the intricacies in acting out behaviour; and the 'subjective norm' which is indicative of how influential people assume one ought to behave, thus living out the expectancies of others.

Ratneshwar *et al.* (2003) refer to attitude theory in explaining how the cognitive motivation of the consumer fulfils needs. Attitude theory mainly derives its insight from customers' expectancies and their evaluation of experiences, which then form their preferences and subsequently the associated attitudes. Shortcomings in this theory normally stem from not considering the contextual factors involved when customers are adapting to alternative purchasing choices.

Cant *et al.* (2002) refer to the concept of attitude as a consistent inclination to approach situations, events or objects. To further show the function attitudes play in the customers' decision-making, they illustrate the attitude formation process as the ABC (Affect, Behaviour, and Cognition) model of attitude as shown in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2:   Attitude Components and Manifestations

INITIATOR	COMPONENT	COMPONENT MANIFESTATION	ATTITUDE
Stimuli: Products, situations, business environments, advertisements, *(Researcher: online reviews as inputs)*	Affective	Emotions or feelings about service product, features	Overall orientation toward object *(Researcher: online reviews as outputs)*
	Behavioural (Conative)	Behavioural intentions about service product, features	
	Cognitive	Beliefs about service product, features	

Source: Cant et al. (2002)

As illustrated in Table 4.2, one of the three components will feature more dominantly depending on the nature of the stimuli. Understanding customers' attitudes about quality experiences is important for this study, due to the fact that online review sites gain their strength by their power to influence other customers. Review sites are able to 'initiate' (see left of Table 4.2)

prospective and existing customers with rich information from evaluated post-purchase experiences. As further illustrated in Table 4.2, varying degrees of 'component manifestation' take place to configure an 'overall orientation' toward the product, service or business.

Furthermore, attitudes are complex constructs which incorporate different contexts of 'where' and 'how' they function in the purchasing process, 'when' and 'how' they are formed, and 'how' they ultimately can be influenced or changed. Attitudes are central to the contextual analysis of consumer behaviour, especially pertaining to the extent of user-generated content delivered on review sites like TripAdvisor. The accuracy and credibility of online reviews depend on the reliability of the actual contextual transference of the content produced online. This study determines if social media informational transference between online reviewer and receiver loses less contextual richness than via any other communication medium. In the next paragraph the contextual aspects are to be explored and the most important considerations for this study highlighted.

In conclusion, Table 4.3 shows the various theories discussed in this paragraph and their contribution toward the conceptualisation of this study:

Table 4.3: Theories and Conclusions

AUTHOR	THEORY	FIGURE	MAIN CONCLUSION
Bareham (1995)	*The Black Box Model*	4.1	Buyer psyche is interpreted as a mystery, whereby an input such as a marketing message is interpreted via media by the buyer
Bareham (1995) and Wilson *et al.*, (2008)	*Two Decision-Making Models*	4.4a 4.4b	Similar processes that the consumer accomplishes when purchasing a product or service; model: pre-purchase, consumption and post-purchase
Cant *et al.* (2002)	*An Overall Model of Customer Behaviour*	4.5	Conceptual relationships that depict customer behaviour, without reverting to linear stage processes of other models; decision-making requires the customer to reconstruct the conscious, the unconscious and other inherent factors into an integrative synthesis of logic
Williams (2002)	*A Continuum of Hospitality Consumer Purchase Processes*	Table 4.1	Explains how purchasing processes consist of dual approaches: first, more/less cognitive decision-making involving analysis and evaluation; secondly, the aspect of risk perceived with high/low involvement in the purchase process

Cant et al. (2002)	*Attitude Components and Manifestations*	Table 4.2	Three components to understand customers' attitudes about quality experiences, due to the fact that online review sites gain their strength by the power to influence other customers
Ratneshwar *et al.* (2003)	*The 'Why' of Consumption*	4.6	Centralising the 'why' factor; additionally the 'how' of processing decisions and subsequent actions; also it focuses on the 'who' (group influences), and the contextual factors of 'when' and 'where'
Kotler and Armstrong (2006)	*The Stimulus-Response Model*	4.2	95% of psychological processes that drive purchases are unconscious; understanding the buyer responses made and the underlying reasons to have made them
Kotler and Armstrong (2006) and Solomon (1999)	*Factors influencing consumer behaviour*	4.3	Influential factors involved when a consumer process is navigated; most of the factors are external influences or internally confined to the psyche of the purchaser; also there is a continuum between macro- and micro consumer behaviour
Kotler and Armstrong (2006), adapted by the researcher	*Types of buying behaviour*	4.7	Depicts buyers' different behaviours when faced with various degrees of consumer process involvement, and discrepancies relating to prior experiences of the product or service
Syed-Ahmad *et al.* (2009)	*Theory of Planned Behaviour*	4.8	Three components that lead to intention: 'Attitudes', as defined by the perceptions and feelings toward acting out behaviour; the 'perceived behavioural control' that represents the intricacies in acting out behaviour; and the 'subjective norm' which is indicative of how influential people assume one ought to behave, thus living out the expectancies of others

Source: The researcher's own compilation

From Table 4.3 it is clear that the theories of customer behaviour have developed from those that emphasised psychological processes and buyer responses to sophisticated behavioural processes, including post-purchase evaluation, attitudes, and participation. In paragraph 4.4, the contextual landscape of the consumer process will be explored in further development of this study's knowledge base.

4.4 CONTEXTUAL DIFFERENCES IN CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR

The need to analyse contextual differences in marketing has become apparent in Web 2.0 technologies (Zambito, 2011). Older non-contextual research conducted in the field of consumer behaviour has become less relevant as electronic means such as the Internet has changed the contextual landscape of the consumer process. For truly understanding holistic customer experiences one would need to synthesise the design of paradigms that customers form of the factors that influence their internal and external environments. This pertains to interactions, surroundings, conditions, procedures, and incidences in the transition from the offline to the online realm (Kozinets *et al.,* 2010). Determinants of context are found in the performance outcomes sought by customers in their buying behaviour. These performance outcomes pertain to the expectations formed about the product, its features and the associated services. The consumer process relies heavily on the customers' determination of product goals and whether their expected satisfaction levels match the experience outcomes. Thus customers' choices are influenced by contextually internalised drivers (Verma, 2007).

An individual's buying process of creating and adapting goals is seen as 'goal determination' (Ratneshwar *et al.*, 2003). Contemporary social psychology research highlights intentionality as central to goal determination. It involves the constant assessment between different goals and the relationship between them; considering the trade-offs and compromises so often required when pursuing and satisfying some to the detriment of others. Constant re-determination and re-evaluation of the purchasing goals are required as contextual information changes, thus it is seen as a dynamic psychological process between goal adaption and goal alignment, as depicted in Figure 4.9:

Figure 4.9:   A Model of Goal Determination Processes
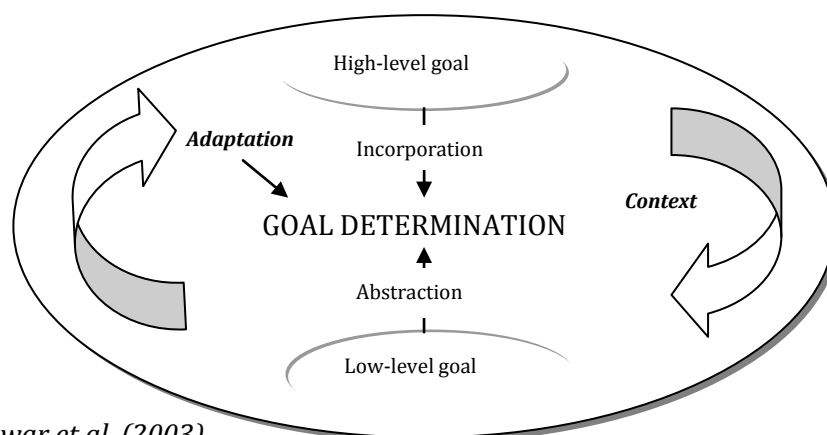
Source: Ratneshwar et al. (2003)

The construct of 'goal determination' in Figure 4.9 refers to high and low-level goals; in descending level of complexity they are life themes and values, life projects, current concerns, consumption intentions, benefits sought, and feature preferences (Ratneshwar *et al.*, 2003:13). Goal alignment happens to be occurring from both high and low-level goals: high-level goals 'incorporate' with low-level goals, whereas low-level goals move to a state of 'abstraction' via a process of profiling and constricting high-level goals. Besides goal determination, most important to note in Figure 4.9 is the force of goal 'adaptation' where the customers' purchasing goals are shaped by contextual factors. Determining and adapting goals are essentially an interpretation and subsequent transformation from context (Zambito, 2011). With research surveys and focus groups, buyers' characteristics and intrinsic motivations are analysed, but contextual factors are often not accounted for or ignored. Credible analysis of consumer goals is holistically context reliant, thus customer attitudes, beliefs, wants and needs are continually being re-evaluated, especially so with new Web 2.0 technologies.

With online communities' word-of-mouth the contexts seem to be vastly different to the traditional media, such as journalistic contributions or advertising media (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010). There exists an underlying complex cultural context to online communication. Four important factors are present when analysing the online context of customers' word-of-mouth communication:

i.   character narratives – in review content, self-identification with a particular character role is often present, often including professional, critical, clinical, industry expert, and humanitarian personas

ii. particular forums – contexts include different forum types about various interests, social events, life crises, technical, relationships, and social networking amongst many others

iii. communal norms – the unwritten context that online users adhere to, such as socio-cultural behaviour of particular groups or sub-cultures, age, interests, lifestyles and shared history

iv. promotional characteristics – context in terms of newsworthiness, fashion, relevancy and the customers' acceptance of explicit product qualities

Context in sharing online content is all-prevalent, and so too are the attempts to construct theoretical frameworks to simplify its complex and intricate nature. Zambito (2011) refers to the six B's in understanding contextual evolution:

i.   the introduction of social media has transformed 'buyer behaviour' to renewed consumer empowerment

ii.   renewed 'buyer patterns' as consumer information has decentralised away from businesses

iii.   enabled self-directed 'buyer journeys' to individual customisation and holistic experiences

iv.   'buyer characteristics' that require new customer skills and levels of participation enabled 'buyer knowledge' with an increasingly informed customer-base

v.   'buyer interactions' have evolved with increased involvement in co-producing quality

In conclusion, understanding theories of consumer behaviour contexts is necessary to appreciate the decision-making process of customers. All consumer processes involved with products and services are affected by these contextual factors. In order to narrow down the contextual scope in this study, one needs to further consider contexts relevant to the online review process. This would refer to the post-consumption stage where customers' evaluations are formed and articulated in online review forums like TripAdvisor.

4.4.1   FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ONLINE AND OFFLINE CONTEXTS IN THE POST-CONSUMPTION STAGE

Customer satisfaction has become one of the most researched areas of marketing because of its prominence in creating real wealth for business. The extensive financial potential in retaining consumers is well researched and documented (Williams, 2002). Arguably the post-consumption stage of the purchasing process can be seen as most important, as this is where the customers' expectations are evaluated as being met, and the subsequent level of satisfaction determined. The evaluation process is considered the highest in cognitive thought; more so than the lesser stages of analysis and synthesis (Krathwohl, 2002). Evaluation can also be seen as equivalent to 'reasoning' (Cant *et al.*, 2002). Satisfaction reinforces positive attitudes toward the product or service, and promotes positive word-of-mouth, and a higher likelihood of returning and becoming loyal (Williams, 2002).

Cognitive dissonance theory is based on understanding post-purchase evaluation and customers' insecurity about their choices (Williams, 2002). This phenomenon, which makes customers uncomfortable about their choices, has an effect of their confirming the benefits of their purchasing choices and justifying the decision they reached to others. From a marketing point of view, enough post-experience information should be available to the customers to

eradicate this post-purchase dissonance. It would include positive advertising, online and offline reviews, guarantees and warranties, guest complaint and return policies, and various forms of after-sales service (Williams, 2002). In hospitality, especially in restaurant dining, purchases can be characterised by being high-risk and high-involvement, thus the risk of post-purchase dissonance is high. These customer insecurities can be reduced somewhat by customers being exposed to post-purchase assessments and peer-related information like online reviews.

Williams (2002) refers to tactics customers employ to reduce their post-purchase dissonance:

i.   ignoring or denying dissonance information about their product choices
ii.   selective interpretation of information received about their product choices
iii.   lowering expectation levels
iv.   seeking out positive information about their product choices
v.   trying to convince others of their choices and thereby also convincing themselves

Williams (2002) refers to an 'assimilation' effect, whereby consumers would amplify specific positive and negative experiences and this would impact on their overall verdict, in spite of the overall balance of experience outcomes. For example, one unappreciated service encounter can foul up the whole restaurant dining experience for the customer in the post-purchase evaluation process, even though the remainder or the delivered services and food products of the consumer process were implemented beyond reproach.

Another important variable central to customers' post-consumption evaluation is attitude derived from a consumption experience, but more specifically the process of attitude change the buyer undergoes. Post-consumption evaluation and the subsequent sharing of information via review sites and other forms of electronic word-of-mouth necessitate confirmation of customers' attitudes, or alternatively, the change of attitudes toward the product, features and services of a business. Cant *et al.* (2002) identified three components [i.e. affect, behaviour, cognitive] making up the concept of attitude [see Table 4.2]; and indicated that one, two or all of these components need to be altered for attitudes to change. Applied to online review sites such as TripAdvisor, one needs to draw parallels with offline contexts, as in Table 4.3:

Table 4.3:   Offline versus Online Contextual Differences in Attitudes

COMPONENT	APPLICATION	OFFLINE RESTAURANT EXAMPLE	ONLINE REVIEW SITE EXAMPLE
Affective			
a. Conditioning	Context favourably paired with brand	Sophisticated music with the service of food	'The relaxed upmarket atmosphere was....'
b. Positive effect	Using humour, emotion and influence to affect	Friendly and warm service address by Maître d'	'Her disposition was inviting and caring when...'
c. Exposure	Repeated exposure to reaffirm	Consistent quality assurance by all parties	'Everyone was concerned about our wellbeing...'
Behavioural	Product trial for fulfilling needs	Trying a new menu item as promoted by the chef	'He convinced us to try... which turned out to be...'
	Incentives and rewards	Discounting the bill for service recovery	'They compensated us by deducting....'
Cognitive			
a. Changing beliefs	Providing evidence	The most popular menu item is the most expensive	'No wonder others raved about it!'
b. Shifting importance	Product features, unique selling points	The lunch menu is light, fresh and conveniently served quickly	'This is a great place to meet for a quick, healthy snack...'
c. Adding beliefs	Promoting added value	Augmented high qualities such as a view and location	'Besides good food, this place has a view to die for'
d. Changing the ideal	Changing the ideal perceived context	Instead of urban inspired cuisine, the theme is organic and country	'City slickers will be most surprised by the wholesome experience...'

Source: Cant et al. (2002), Framework and Table Applied by The Researcher

Table 4.3 illustrates how the context of attitudes is interpreted and conveyed via review sites; also how others' attitudes consequently can be influenced and changed in the process. Besides attitudinal changes, context is also dependent on the credibility of sources, because customers respond differently to different sources in their post-purchase evaluations (Cant *et al.*, 2002).

Factors that influence customers' expectations are invariably assessed post-purchase by comparing the resultant experiences with the initial expectations. As such these factors are all present within the context of decision-making during the consumer process, and especially present within the post-purchase evaluation phase. The sources of (dis)satisfaction are numerous, according to Wilson *et al.* (2008), and include:

i. personal needs – the circumstances necessary to the customer's interests
ii. lasting service intensifiers (sustainable in the long term)
    a. derived service expectations – expectations in accord with others' benefit
    b. personal service philosophy – the customer's fundamental attitudinal approach
iii. temporary service intensifiers – elevated customer's needs that require attention
iv. perceived service alternatives – tolerance of service levels because of (lack) of alternatives
v. customer self-perceived role – customer's perceived contribution in the expected outcomes
vi. situational factors – service environment beyond the control of the provider
vii. predicted service – level of service that customers believe they will receive
viii. explicit service promises – direct and indirect communication from the provider
ix. implicit service promises – price and other tangibles that indicate a level of quality
x. word-of-mouth communication – unbiased comments that could predict expected quality
xi. past experience – knowledge base and associated paradigm of customers formed by past buying experiences

These factors create valuable scope to the extent of context apparent in the consumer process. In conclusion, various factors were identified as to having impact on the contextual 'where' and 'when' of the consumer process. The customer behaviour outcomes have been brought into relation to the online and offline contextual factors to illustrate the particular strength of using social media review sites for post-purchase evaluations.

4.5 SUMMARY

Delight and frustration factors of customers, as investigated in Chapter 3, have been seen as a direct result of the customer experience before, during and after the consumer process. This chapter clarifies the theories of why consumers behave certain ways in the restaurant industry.

It attempts to build upon the previous chapter's service marketing constructs by further analysing customers' motives in evaluating their purchases. The influence of personal psyche, stakeholder, social and cultural factors in the micro- and macro-environments were considered in the consumer process.

Personal and psychological factors in the customers' decision-making process were discussed with the concept of attitudes central to the contextual analysis of consumer behaviour. Thereafter customers' choices were identified as being influenced by contextually internalised drivers that serve online post-purchase evaluations. These drivers have been brought into relation with the user-generated content typical of inline review sites like TripAdvisor.

In Chapter 5 this study's conceptual framework will be introduced. This will serve as basis for the research methodology regarding online review content analysis on TripAdvisor, and subsequently the comparative general dining experience surveys.

CHAPTER 5

A FRAMEWORK FOR USING SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS TO INVESTIGATE RESTAURANT DINING EXPERIENCES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 reflected the exploratory literature research to bring the identified variables into relation with each other. This chapter synthesises all the theory to construct the theoretical framework of the research. In terms of each of the hypotheses identified in Chapter 1, the results of the study so far will be categorised, qualified and verified to explain their conceptual implications. The research questions will subsequently be brought into context by elaborating on the extent to which they have thus far been answered. This chapter will further identify the necessity of acquiring primary data to enhance, supplement and fill the verification gaps as suggested within the proposed theoretical framework.

5.2 A SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS LITERATURE

The previous chapters all contributed to the analysis of the main variables in this study. Synthesising the information received in the framework of the study requires the conceptualisation of context. The first contextual issue to consider is that of the consumer process consisting of pre-, during and post-experience evaluation. Post-experience evaluation is used for the basis of this study. Secondly, there needs to be a distinction between customer experience reactions of 'surprise' and 'expected'. The former is used within the context of this study. Thirdly, distinguished distinction must be made between online and off-line contexts of customer feedback on dining experiences. Both contexts are taken into consideration and compared throughout this research.

Figure 5.1 illustrates a schematic summary of all theoretical constructs discussed thus far as applied to the topic of the research.

Figure 5.1: A Summary of Previous Literature
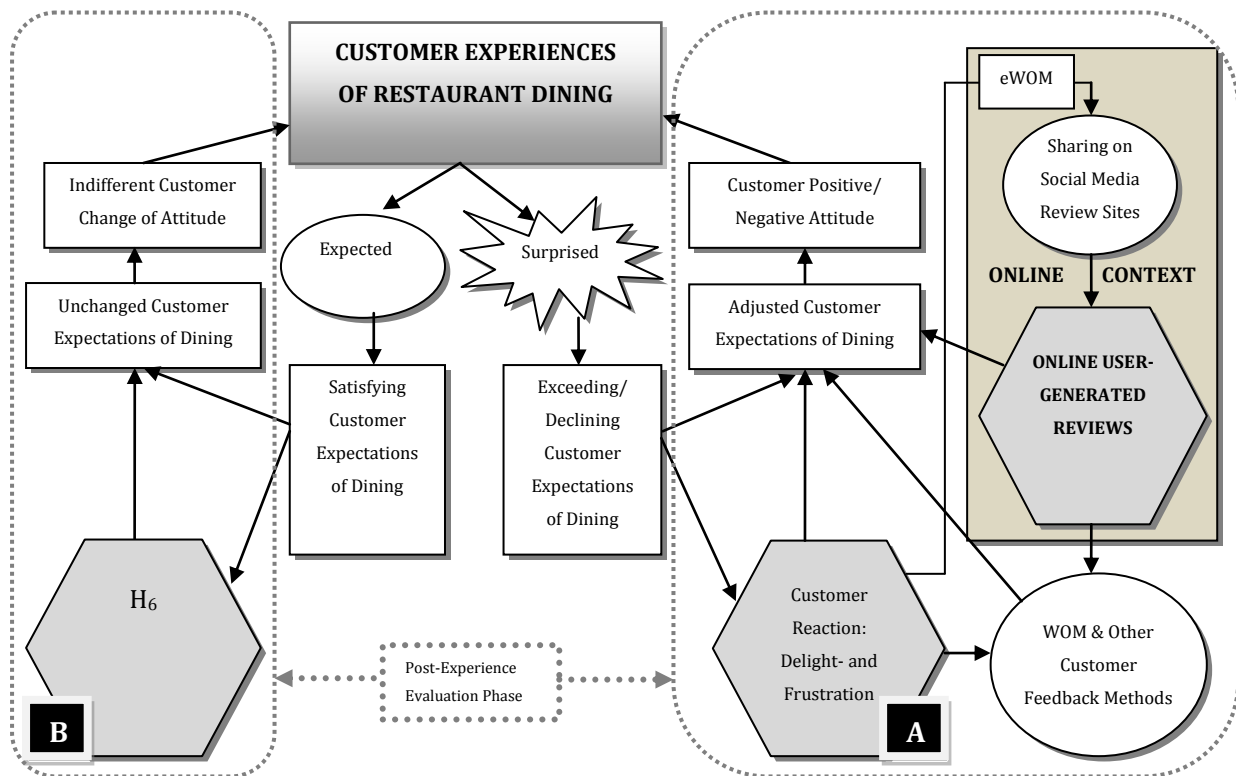
Source: The Researcher's Own Model

In Figure 5.1, one can see a compiled illustration of the relationships between the identified variables. Central to the research are customer dining experiences which can either be 'expected' (the left-side of the figure) or associated with an element of 'surprise' (the right-side corresponding part of the figure).

The indicated 'A' refers to delight and frustration factors that are derived from positive and negative 'surprises', and specifies the main focal point of the research. Alternatively 'B' depicts the relationship route of 'satisfiers' responsible for expected level of quality delivered. This 'expected' route of customer experiences was investigated and discussed, but identified as not important for the purposes of the research methodology. Further, with both theoretical routes (A and B) the post-experience evaluation phases were identified, especially in relation to customer feedback methods and social media-based reviews.

5.3 THEORIES GUIDING THIS STUDY'S FRAMEWORK

The theories and constructs assimilated in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 were accumulated and deduced to main focal points as discussed in sections 5.3.1 to 5.3.6 of this chapter.

5.3.1 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

The occurrence of customer experiences is dependent on a variety of identified variables. With customer experiences, there have been many associated concepts identified which add value to the understanding of the relevant theories. First, attitude determines much of what is understood under customer choice and consumer behaviour. 'Attitude' is a predisposition toward something. These can either be positive or negative, or indifferent – where no attitude exists. Attitudes are formed by past and present experiences.

The 'Theory of Planned Behaviour' has three components that lead to intention and they are 'attitudes', as defined by the perceptions and feelings toward acting out behaviour; the 'perceived behavioural control' that represents the intricacies in acting out behaviour; and the 'subjective norm' which is indicative of how influential people assume one ought to behave, thus living out the expectancies of others (Syed-Ahmad *et al.*, 2009).

Ratneshwar *et al.* (2003) refer to attitude theory in explaining how the cognitive motivation of the consumer fulfils needs. Shortcomings in this theory normally stem from not considering the contextual factors involved when customers are adapting to alternative purchasing choices.

Cant *et al.* (2002) refer to the ABC (Affect, Behaviour, and Cognition) model of attitude – review sites are able to 'initiate' prospective and existing customers with rich information from evaluated post-purchase experiences. Varying degrees of 'component manifestation' take place to configure an 'overall orientation' toward the product, service or business.

Besides understanding the concept of attitude, other important and related concepts should also be included:

- A 'belief' otherwise is a state of mind where trust or assurance is positioned in a person or some substance (Futrell, 1990:74).

- 'Quality' is seen as a distinctive part of customer perceived 'value', but is ultimately dependent on the results added to the customer experience, in light of costs accumulated (Heskett *et al.,* 1997). As expectations grow, the risk of disappointment and perceived value of the product involved will also proportionally increase (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007; Grönroos, 2001; Solomon *et al.*, 1999).

- There is an important link between 'satisfaction' and 'expectations' (Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998). The degree of satisfaction is directly related to the extent of the difference between the perceived customer performance and their preceding expectations. For example an 'exceeded' expectation derived from a high performance product will most probably render highly satisfied or 'delighted' customers (Mohsin *et al.*, 2005; Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998). Thus, customer satisfaction is a reaction to an experience that is perceived as 'quality' when it is positively associated with the degree of expectations that have been met (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998; Mohsin *et al.*, 2005).

- 'Loyalty' displayed is subject to customers having repeated satisfactory experiences and then deciding to repeat the process (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). Although sustained satisfaction is necessary for loyalty, satisfaction this does not mean that they will necessarily be loyal and become repeat customers (Hesket *et al.*, 1997). Thus customer loyalty cannot always be expected by a business in providing satisfactory experiences. However there is a positive relationship between a high degree of satisfaction and the possibility of loyal behaviour.

- 'Trust' as an important value of a relationship is based upon the customers' perceptions of previous experiences. Preconceived emotional memory is a powerful force in experiencing a product. (Peppers and Rogers, 2004; Harridge-March, 2006)

Secondly, it is important to analyse customers' preferences for their chosen products and services when considering their customer experiences. The expected core service of 'reliability' in any commercial transaction needs to be augmented by other differentiated service skills; it is these skills that create competitive advantage (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998). These differentiated service skills ultimately determine between 'delighted' or 'frustrated' customers. Customers often rationalise their purchase choices by validating and comparing their decisions with alternative possibilities. They reassure themselves about their purchases (Futrell, 1990).

Customer experience refers to accumulated customer knowledge. This best occurs by co-creation of the consumer process by businesses and customers (Rowley *et al.*, 2007). Customer

expectations are also founded on past buying experiences, where beliefs play an important role in shaping customer behaviour (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.,* 2007; Kotler *et al.* 2003).

The scope of understanding of the accumulation of previous customer experiences is important. Understanding the needs of customers and perceived value alone is insufficient when analysing customer experiences. One needs to account for the associated human attributes and behaviour too (McDonald and Alpert, 2007). As customers become motivated by trying out a product, they respond to some form of information that was received, either via advertising, word-of-mouth, or some other method of communication (Smith, 2003). Effective marketing, public relations, advertising and brand management are dependent on prior customer experiences. Inconsistent service levels can be experienced due to numerous intangibility factors associated with the consumer process.

The ability to manage customer expectations is deemed crucial within the consumer process. The customer ultimately establishes product value and quality (Hesket *et al.*, 1997) and as the consumer process is participative, active management of mutual perceptions of experiences can be controlled to some extent (Grönroos, 2001). Customer expectations require active management from businesses (Doyle, 2008; Harridge-March, 2006).

When customers have not experienced the product or service yet, the expectations are reliant on previous similar experiences, or information gathered from other external sources or third parties (Mohsin *et. al.*, 2005). First experiences create the expectations for future experiences (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007). Customer expectations should be correctly plotted against their experience paradigms for best quality results. Customers' initial experiences precede their expectations; experiences determine expectations, but also consequently the fact that expectations also determine experiences.

Lastly, the sustained and transcendent relationships are dependent on participation and involvement between the consumer parties; here one can refer to the role of online review sites and the associated customer behaviour that drives their popularity. Businesses should become more intensely and increasingly 'customer-centric' (O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998:164), whereas the outcomes of 'the moment of truths' exemplify the rest of the service process with the customer (Smith, 2003:63). If the emotional route of the customer becomes in any way negative, then sustaining the relationship for any length of time becomes much more difficult. Emotional ownership refers to collaboration and cooperation at the highest level, whereby the parties are so aligned with each other that they feel responsible and accountable (Berry, 1999).

Current emotional and psychological needs have increasingly required an extensive range of modern-day commercial experiences, thereby leading to a shift from outer-directed conformity to an inner-directed way of life where psychic needs become part of the consumers' higher priorities (O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998).

5.3.2 SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERIENCES

Describing social media's contribution to the field of service marketing has brought some noteworthy factors to the fore. Web 2.0 enriches on-line experiences and makes communications more exciting. It consists of interactive participative content created by knowledge that is shared amongst millions (Stokes, 2009; Elkin-Koren, 2010; Phillips and Young, 2009). Online 'word-of-mouth' as a form of social media includes referrals and forums where user-generated content is shared and evaluated (Stephan and Galak, 2009). Social media in a marketing context involves consumer-to-consumer based networks and the development of consumer communities (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009:98).

In social media, the opinion of the average online user is much more valuable than an off-line professional critic (Onishi and Manchanda, 2009; Thevenot, 2007). The new skill set of social media requires one to be a conversationalist. The insurgent consumer needs freedom of expression to make a virtual impact by creating content for the masses (Chaney, 2009:39; Safko and Brake, 2009:4). Gaining customer knowledge from social media makes credibility a crucial variable to be considered regarding a business's reputation (Phillips and Young, 2009; Jones, 2009; Peterson, 2010). The traditional media are gradually losing their effect on the increasingly discerning consumer in modern times. Consumers are actively demanding participation in the assessment of the consumer process (Zarella, 2010; Doyle, 2008).

The customer behaviour in the consumer process has evolved with Web 2.0 technologies, especially pertaining to review sites. Social media has redefined the way business looks at transparency of communication, information sharing and business cultures (Pitt, 2010); and businesses are benefiting from Web 2.0 technologies (Mckinsey Quarterly, 2009; Stokes, 2008; Chaney 2009). Social media's most inherent marketing quality is connecting the consumers by their being informed about products and services. Hereby customers' experiences are enhanced by being informed even before the consumer process starts; also then during the process and thereafter (Safko and Brake, 2010; Phillips and Young, 2009; Maxwell, 2010; Chaney, 2009).

Customers' purchasing behaviour is either influenced through the message content contained in marketing material (Freiden *et al.,* 1997), or from the source of the message (Jones, 2009). Direct contact is important in sharing pertinent data familiarising the customer with the product or business (Grönroos, 2003). In sustaining sales it becomes less important to build relationships as customers become more knowledgeable and participative in the process (Jones, 2009).

Exchanging information requires an attitude of openness to mutual benefits to inform and to participate in social media. Sharing is a concept that seems to be central to the phenomenon of social media, be it content such as product and service reviews, photos, videos, articles, opinions, religious beliefs or goods for sale (Phillips and Young, 2009; Stokes, 2008). Unlike the case with one-way 'push' advertising and promotions, the online consumer is distinctly discriminating about what he wants to be involved in (Shankar and Malthouse, 2009; Rubinson, 2009).

Social media, and specifically review sites, have created many expectations for customers in relating to products and services of business. The expectations of trust need to be instilled in social media communication to be effective (Peterson, 2010); expectations are also dependent on getting the appropriate attention from the community (Gaudeul and Peroni, 2010). When social media environments negatively affect customer expectations, the response is likely to be negative, probably leading to avoidance behaviour (Williams and Dargel, 2004).

Social media experiences and content from review sites contribute to customers' buying behaviour. As social media naturalises, the communication process and online communities grow more powerful; subsequently, the power of businesses would decrease (Thevenot, 2007). Social media communication is actually made up of collaborative experiences from users that accompany responses (Shankar and Malthouse, 2009). Fresh and novel social media content with the right degree of attention creates the best experience (Wu and Huberman, 2009). Customer experiences may also include too much information (Gaudeul and Peroni, 2010; Meyer, 1998).

Personality effects are moderated by different social media tools or applications. The actual experiences are dependent on what the users thought the tools could do for them (Sanaktekin and Aydin, 2010). Research in personality disposition involved in the experience paradigm has been neglected in social media studies.

On the other hand, social media expectations of customers are related to their experiences. Online expectations of customers reflect their offline expectations. Substandard products and service will simply be amplified by means of social media, because of the degree of transparency demanded. Controversy has viral potential whereby brands and business interests can be badly damaged (Stokes, 2008; Safko and Brake, 2009; Phillips and Young, 2009).

Customers' desire for 'social interaction', 'economic incentives', 'concern for other consumers', and the 'potential to enhance their own self-worth' were the main motivators for participation in social media (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009:98). The more customers expect from the business's participation online, the more engaged they become in being susceptible to the content created. Different levels of social media usage need to be identified because of the expectation and experience differences involved. Frequent and consistent participation increases trust in businesses' communication on social media; not by how many customers were following them. Online participants generally trusted information most when it was generated by friends or people they know (Invoke, 2010).

5.3.3 SOCIAL MEDIA AND RESTAURANT DINING

There are some parallels between the offline and online experiences (social media and restaurant dining) that have been identified which show similarities between their contexts, behaviours and consumer process factors. More holistic restaurant experiences evolve in modern society. The dining experiences are increasingly being 'made to order' (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003). Increased naturalistic online connectivity contributes positively to the realm of holism. The more seamless and user-friendly social media develop, the more interactive and holistic the experience-sharing becomes. Customers also tend to feel holistic experiences when they are involved in 'cyberscape', i.e. the conceptual online environment (Williams and Dargel, 2004; Shankar and Malthouse, 2009).

Dining contexts can be seen as a 'rich experience' for all customer senses, as do social media with participation in 'rich' content (Phillips and Young, 2009), although much of the rich quality of communication is technologically diluted by the different contexts (Pantelidis, 2010).

Spontaneity and unscripted friendliness equally contribute to the dining and social media settings (Victorino, Verma and Wardell, 2008). Research results show that social networks, such as forums, greatly enhance the consumer process (Harridge-March, 2004). Relationships are

built on trust, not demographical data (Pantelidis, 2010; Rashid, 2003). Trust is also central to social media's effectiveness; it is a prerequisite for effective participation with a positive relationship to customer satisfaction (Strauss *et al.,* 2003).

Listening skills were rated the highest required communication skill for success in the hospitality industry. Similarly, engaging online customers to convert content into restaurant sales takes a concerted effort in listening by creating rapport. Reviews are dependent on increasingly engaging listening skills for customers as well as restaurateurs

Customer expectations have highlighted certain important constructs when considering the context of dining:

i. Food has accompanying psychological needs; there is a socio-cultural context to restaurant dining (Bareham, 1995). Dining contexts can be seen as a 'rich experience' for all customer senses: combining escapist, entertainment, educational and esthetical aspects (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003). The dining expectations of customers require an interpretation process which analyses their prior restaurant experiences and their anticipated environment (Mills and Thomas, 2008)

ii. There are physiological, social and intellectual needs of diners (Anderson and Mossberg (2004). Knowing what to expect rarely encourages heightened experiences beyond the 'satisfaction' level for restaurant customers. Holistic restaurant experiences are increasingly demanded by customers although distinctive experience factors in restaurant dining are frequently regarded with suspicion, for it seems that they could be disguising some other areas lacking quality

iii. Some studies emphasise the performance drivers of customer satisfaction (Grupta *et al.,* 2007; Yüksel and Yüksel, 2003), whereas other studies rather emphasise the product and service features associated with dining experiences (Carbone and Haeckel, 2005; Pantelidis, 2010; Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003). General drivers of satisfaction cannot uniformly be established for the restaurant industry; the multi-faceted dimensions include a complex web of contexts, psychological factors, premeditated manipulation, initial and lasting impressions, and various degrees of (in)tangibility

iv. Research confirms that doing the basics right for restaurants is imperative (i.e. delicious food, appropriate cost, cheerful greeting, and attentive service). Customers' online social media experiences positively affect offline dining experiences (Titz *et al*., 2004; Grupta *et al.*, 2007; Menon and Dubé, 1999; Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003; Schoemaker, 1996).

Research finds that customer experience acts as moderator in their customer satisfaction evaluations (Patterson and Johnson, 1995). Dining satisfaction also moderates the relationship between dining experiences and post-dining intentions to return to the restaurant (Kivela *et al.*, 2000). The more customers return to a restaurant the more sensitive they are to satisfaction levels, because of their heightened expectations.

Customer experiences are highly dependent on customers' expertise. High expertise will most likely result in informed expectations that relate to a holistic consumer process. Low expertise will most likely result in uninformed expectations that have increased reliance on critical incidences of the consumer process. When previous knowledge lacks, the customer often fragments the information according to the attributes of the product or service (Matilla, 2002); or only relates it to perceived performance factors (Patterson and Johnson, 1995).

Social media contributes to the experience of restaurant dining. Social media provides an alternative tool for customers to speak out for or against the restaurants visited according to their dining experiences (Longart, 2008). Social media is a natural technological extension of the most effective marketing method available, word-of-mouth (Brownell and Newman, 2009), or 'word-of-mouse' (Pantelidis, 2010:483). Positive word-of-mouth has powerful influence in the marketing of restaurants in the offline world, whereas social media has a similar function within the online environment (Berta, 2009; Stokes, 2008).

Social media is useful in conveying abstract qualities such as service attitude via communicative narrative content, supported by photos and video. Rich interactive content has mind-set undertones which can enhance customer learning and participation (Stokes, 2008). It has great potential in informing and managing dining expectations and experiences. 'Influencers' are the individuals who have earned respect, recognition and authority amongst their online peers, thus also influencing customer dining expectations (Flamberg, 2010). Peer pressure exists online and can be harnessed to convey customer expectations and subsequent positive dining experiences.

Social media provides businesses with the opportunity to display strengths like quality, convenience, brand image, and potentially lower prices because of sustainable marketing cost savings (Safko and Brake, 2009).

High levels of technological readiness positively correlate with the level of optimism about the businesses' and product's ability to provide benefits to customers (Bowden and Corkindale, 2005). Higher expectancies of the quality of social media content should attain sustainable results in recognition, branding and participation. Diners that embrace technology in general

are more inclined to use it for adding value to their existing preferences (Dixon *et al.*, 2009). These diners also tend to be high-end restaurant customers, who have more ego-related expectations (Murphy, 2010). Low-end restaurant customers have an approach of concern for other customers, whereas the high-end restaurant customers recognise and appreciate good service and product quality more readily. With social media, service recovery has effective reach within the customer communities. Additionally potential contentious content could be exposed to viral effects (Gale, 2009) It has shown to be instrumental in the recovery of service failures and effective in managing complaints (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009).

Customers' access to immediate feedback on their individual preferences and dining experiences is shaping new communication standards and consequently increasing expectations (Rubinson, 2009). Debates around restaurant best practices are commonly found on social media sites, contributing extensively to the much needed awareness of the customer's transformational dining needs and expected dining experiences (Brandau, 2009). Being enticed or incited to participate online as a restaurant customer is effectively crossing the 'tipping point' (Longart, 2008:123). Creating regular and interesting content from the restaurant's side has a better chance of getting the desired state of customer engagement, especially for those who have already emotionally combined the offline dining experience with the online participative presence and experience (Sanaktekin and Aydin, 2010). Additionally, educating and incentivising a customer base is advisable to gain online participation (Kimes, 2009; Dixon *et. al.*, 2009). Restaurant product attributes that matter most to customers can be pre-empted by using social media to convey pertinent information and to entice product involvement (Floridi, 2008; Brownell, 2009).

Social media customers are led to participate in 'observational learning', where individual behaviour is impacted by their observation of the behaviour of others because of the information contained therein (Cai, Chen and Fang, 2007), e.g. peers' expectations and experiences that are converted into their opinions too. Peers' experiences subsequently improve as and when they are increasingly presented with expert opinions on reviews and recommendations.

Review sites, such as TripAdvisor, have been instrumental in providing customer feedback to businesses about product and service quality experienced. Research has concluded that online review sites, like TripAdvisor, have become a preferred source of information on products and services relating to hotels, destinations, hospitality related services, and more specifically to the benefit of this study, restaurants (Miguens *et. al.*, 2008). Some 82% of consumers examine

online sources before considering travelling; a further 80% agree that online word-of-mouth influences their decisions (Tourism Queensland, 2010). Review sites like TripAdvisor generate great amounts of review information based on other reviewers' contexts. These, in turn, are moderated by other reviewers (Gretzel *et al.*, 2007). Pre-existing liaisons are not required with review sites; they only share connection via discussion forums about a common interest or issue. With social networking, normally some former relationship is required, or at least a similar strong interest or curiosity that determines a liaison (Miguen *et al.,* 2008).

TripAdvisor is the largest online travel website globally and has in excess of 40 million unique visitors to their site per month; the site has 35 million reviews with 20 million registered members that contribute (TripAdvisor 2010). Review readers state they learn most of a destination, product or service (94.6%), also evaluating alternatives (91.9%), or avoiding places or services they would not enjoy (91.8%). Altogether 96.3% of respondents said that helping others by sharing their experience was their largest motivational factor to write reviews online. Additionally, top motivations out of extraversion and self-enhancement to share reviews online ranged from sharing excellent experiences (92.8%), expressing joy about a great experience (91.1%), and sharing travel experiences (87.3%) (Gretzel *et. al.*, 2007).

Hensens *et al.* (2010) found that TripAdvisor mostly provides reliable and trustworthy sources of information for its online peers enquiring as to the quality of a product or service. Skewed opinions can include factors like the reviewer's reason for travel, geographical location, perceptions of quality, or cultural exposure (Keates, 2008).

5.3.4 DELIGHT AND FRUSTRATION FACTORS IN SERVICES MARKETING

Exceeding customer expectations with delight factors does not necessarily lead to sustained customer relationships. New customers display a greater vulnerability to business relationship mishaps than existing customers (Peppers and Rogers, 2004). Longer and satisfied relationships seem to require less maintenance, less attention, less cost and less subsequent effort, especially in the case of delight and frustration factors, less surprise too. 'Desired' service which customers hope to receive is rarely achieved, whereas 'adequate' service which is the minimum accepted to stay in business, is achieved three times out of four, according to research (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003:469). Exceeding adequate service with 'delight factors' is probably nevertheless unremarkable; it frequently leads to the business overpromising, resulting in inconsistency in

service quality standards (Carbone and Haeckel, 2005). The mere fact of businesses trying to understand customer expectations usually exceeds them (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003).

The identification of delight and frustration factors in the consumer process necessitates some further considerations such as:

- The goal of customer relationship management is to delight (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). Delighted customers have more reasons to remain loyal, and therefore this leads to favourable word-of-mouth marketing
- 'Satisfying factors' are parallel to Zeithaml and Bitner's tiered expectations of desired service, the zone of tolerance, and adequate service. Desired service anticipates an expected desire to be fulfilled. It does not bring in the element of 'surprise'. To determine a state of 'delight' the element of surprise is required (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). The equivalent surprise factor of going below adequate service is termed a 'frustration factor' (Hensens, 2010)
- Desired service levels tend to fluctuate less than the adequate service level. They vary more because of competition and other contextual influences (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003)
- Delight is 'a function of three components: unexpected high levels of performance, arousal [e.g. surprise, excitements] and positive affect [e.g. pleasure, joy, or happiness']' (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004:44)
- Being delighted or frustrated requires disconfirmation – beyond desired or adequate service delivery. 'Predicted service' is parallel to satisfying factors (Wilson *et al.*, 2008; Hensens, 2010). This is based on what customers normally believe they will get as an experience
- Wilson *et al.* (2008:70) also refer to delight factors as a 'profoundly positive emotional state' whereby customers' expectations were exceeded. They further describe this as 'outrageous', thus being 'unexpected, random, extraordinary and disproportionally positive'
- Identifying the delight and frustration factors are the extreme identified reactions, most illustrative of actual customers' sentiments. Contextually they are better defined and therefore more useful for online feedback purposes to restaurateurs than any other method

5.3.5 WORD-OF-MOUTH COMMUNICATION

The use of word-of-mouth is considered an effective method in services marketing. Services are generally perceived to be undividable between purchase and consumption; thus pre-trial purchasing is often not feasible. Factors such as intangibility, heterogeneity, perishability, and inseparability lead to increased customer risk (Solomon *et al.,* 1999).

Companies' direct communications to customers via sales people are often considered less credible and decreasingly effective (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006; Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004). Traditional media sources communicate less about experience qualities than a personal source of information (Wilson *et al.*, 2008; Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). Customers, by being exposed to fewer attributes in services because of the intangibility factor, could feel more at risk in selecting business providers (Kasper *et al.*, 2000). Personal recommendation is therefore imperative in an attempt to match customer expectations (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004).

Post-experience evaluations greatly determine what information customers share with others (Wilson *et al.*, 2008). Word-of-mouth was found to be more important in the final stages of the purchasing process because it comforts customers and decreases post-purchase insecurities (Sweeney *et al.*, 2008). Blythe (2005) gives three reasons for word-of-mouth's power: firstly it is interactive and thus creates context for the message; secondly it allows for feedback and confirmation; and thirdly the credibility of the source is perceived as far superior. Conveyed positive customer experiences by word-of-mouth are more likely to increase market share and create more loyalty, estimated to be by as much as 80%, than other methods of communication (Solomon *et al.*, 1999). Attracting a new customer costs five times as much as retaining one (Wilson *et al.,* 2008). Defensive marketing ensures that customers are retained as far as possible. The longer a customer remains with a business, generally the more profitable they become.

Kasper *et al.* (2000) add that from a business management's point of view, word-of-mouth is difficult to control because of the independent opinion sharing of the customers. Some control is possible through testimonials and references (Kasper *et al.*, 2000), promotions to create community (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004), or press releases and awards (Blythe, 2005).

Contemporary research shows that customers with strong experience opinions are more likely to share them with others than those with milder views, and frustrated customers are also more likely to share than delighted customers (Solomon *et al.*, 1999; Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004). Apparently frustrated customers are 90% certain not to repurchase at a business again

(Solomon *et al.*, 1999). Customers that were initially frustrated would frequently end up spreading positive word-of-mouth by being exposed to effective service recovery (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004).

The role of electronic word-of-mouth in the consumer process has added some new capabilities. It seems what mostly applies to word-of-mouth equally and typically does so also to online, except in cases of time and space differences, limited offline reach, online credibility, and non-altruistic motives (Steffes and Burgee, 2009). Word-of-mouth influencers or 'efluentials' are opinion leaders that have a special interest in a given market (Blythe, 2005; Cruz and Fill, 2008). They are journalists, experts, academics, prominent leaders, or any other person that has earned an online reputation.

5.3.6 ONLINE AND OFFLINE DINING CONTEXTUAL DIFFERENCES

It is important to realise the online and offline dining contextual differences in customer behaviour. For truly understanding holistic customer experiences one would need to synthesise the design of customers' paradigms (Zambito, 2011). This pertains to interactions, surroundings, conditions, procedures, and incidences in the transition from the offline to the online realm (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010). Determinants of context are found in the performance outcomes sought by customers in their buying behaviour. These performance outcomes pertain to the expectations formed about the product, its features and the associated services. The consumer process relies heavily on the customers' determination of product goals and whether their expected satisfaction levels match the experience outcomes. Thus customers' choices are influenced by contextually internalised drivers (Verma, 2007).

Contemporary social psychology research highlights intentionality as central to goal determination (Ratneshwar *et al.*, 2003). Constant re-determination and re-evaluation of the purchasing goals are required as contextual information changes, thus they are seen as a dynamic psychological process between goal adaption and goal alignment. The construct of 'goal determination' refers to high and low-level goals. Descending levels of complexity include life themes and values, life projects, current concerns, consumption intentions, benefits sought, and feature preferences (Ratneshwar *et al.*, 2003:13). Goal alignment happens to be occurring from both high and low-level goals: high-level goals 'incorporate' with low-level goals, whereas low-level goals move to a state of 'abstraction' via a process of profiling and constricting high-

level goals. Besides goal determination, it is most important to note goal 'adaptation' where the customers' purchasing goals are shaped by contextual factors. Determining and adapting goals are essentially an interpretation and subsequent transformation from context (Zambito, 2011).

There exists an underlying complex cultural context to online communication. The four important factors which are present when analysing the online context of customers' word-of-mouth communication are character narratives, particular forums, communal norms, and promotional characteristics (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010). The six Bs in understanding contextual evolution in sharing online content are buyer behaviour, buyer patterns, buyer journeys, buyer characteristics, buyer knowledge and buyer interactions (Zambito, 2011).

Arguably the post-consumption stage of the purchasing process can be seen as most important, as this is where the customers' expectations are evaluated as being met, and the subsequent level of satisfaction determined (Williams, 2002). The evaluation process is deemed the highest of cognitive thought; more so than the lesser stages of analysis and synthesis (Krathwohl, 2002) and can also be seen as equivalent to 'reasoning' (Cant *et al.*, 2002). Cognitive dissonance theory is based on understanding post-purchase evaluation and customers' insecurity about their choices. Enough post-experience information should be available to the customers to eradicate this post-purchase dissonance. It would include positive advertising, online and offline reviews, guarantees and warranties, guest complaint and return policies, and various forms of after-sales service (Williams, 2002). Restaurant dining purchases can be characterised by being high-risk and high-involvement, thus the risk of post-purchase dissonance is high. These customer insecurities can be reduced by customers being exposed to post-purchase assessments and peer-related information like online reviews.

Williams (2002) refers to an 'assimilation' effect, whereby consumers would amplify specific positive and negative experiences and this would impact their overall verdict, in spite of the overall balance of experience outcomes. One unappreciated service encounter can foul up the whole restaurant dining experience for the customer in the post-purchase evaluation process.

5.4   PROPOSED FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

Considering the theory outlined in paragraph 5.3 and the summary given in Figure 5.1, a theoretical framework was constructed. Figure 5.2 outlines the framework used in this study.

Figure 5.2:   Framework of the Study
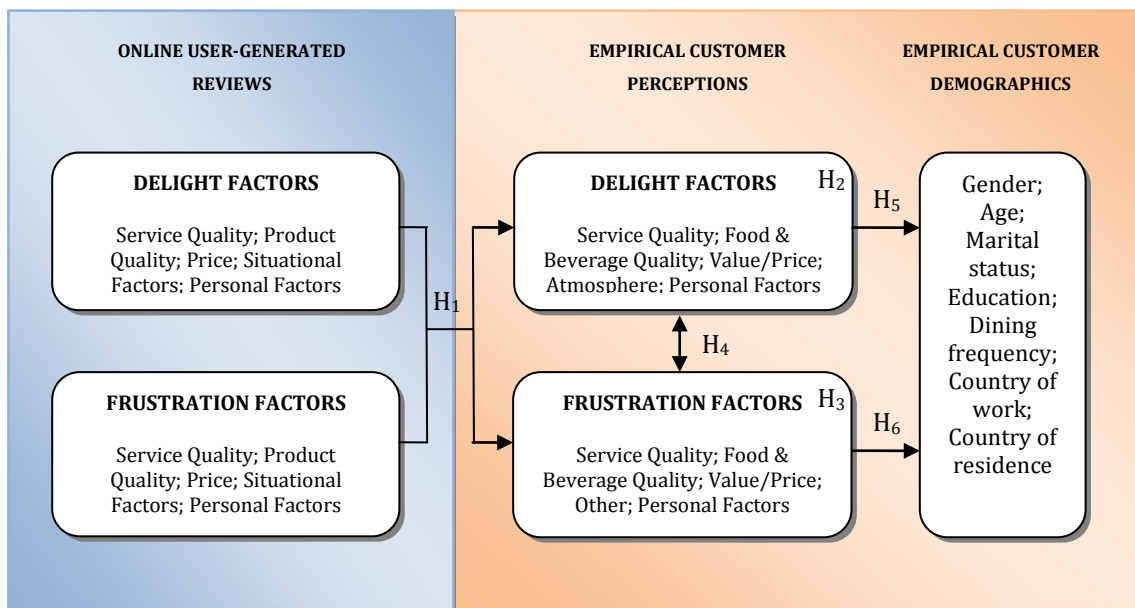
Source: Researcher's Own Model

In Figure 5.2 the delight and frustration factors are illustrated showing both contexts, i.e. online user-generated content and empirical experiences. These delight and frustration factors are all based on the experience factors for satisfaction according to Wilson *et al.* (2008:79), previously illustrated in Figure 3.2 and discussed in paragraph 3.3.2 of Chapter 3. To allocate comprehensive variables to delight and frustration factors one needs to include service quality (tangibles and intangibles) and product quality (tangibles and intangibles). Additionally, price (subjective and objective) is the prime indicator of perceived value versus quality; and then situational (external) factors with personal (internal) factors further complete all possible evaluative dimensions of customers.

Thus the combination factors of service quality, product quality, price, situational and personal factors are important contributors of customer experiences. Wilson *et al.* (2008) then also further qualified service quality as consisting of the variables 'reliability', 'responsiveness',

'assurance', 'empathy', and 'tangibles'. These variables have also been included as research factors in the determination of delight and frustration factors.

5.5   RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The various research hypotheses illustrated in Figure 5.2 are articulated as follows:

H_1:   The delight and frustration factors from social media review sites and the delight and frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences are similar

H_2:   There is a correlation among the delight factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

H_3:   There is a correlation among the frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

H_4:   There is a correlation between the frustration and delight factors of the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

H_5:   There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive delight factors in restaurant dining experiences

H_6:   There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive frustration factors in restaurant dining experiences

5.6   DEFINITIONS AND OPERATIONALISATIONS OF THE VARIABLES OF THE FRAMEWORK

As in Figure 5.2, the proposed framework indicates two research methods (as in each side of the figure) in this study: firstly the 'online content analysis' of user-generated comments on TripAdvisor, and secondly the 'empirical data analysis' gathered from surveys associated with the offline experiential environment of restaurant dining. These two contexts are separated for this study's research analysis. Subsequently their separate interpreted results are to be synthesised for contextual findings. Both offline and online contexts are illustrated, and both

contain variables of delight and frustration factors and feedback methods/review sites. This reconfirms the contextual similarities and parallels pertinent to the associated comparative discussions.

In the content analysis part of the theoretical framework the following inferences are identified: online word-of-mouth; delight and frustration factors; and user-generated content.

5.6.1 ONLINE CONTENT ANALYSIS

5.6.1.1 *TRIPADVISOR REVIEW SITE AS ONLINE WORD-OF-MOUTH*

Online 'word-of-mouth' as a form of social media includes referrals and forums where user-generated content is shared and evaluated (Stephan and Galak, 2009). In social media, the opinion of the average online user is much more valuable than that of an off-line professional critic (Onishi and Manchanda, 2009; Thevenot, 2007). Consumers are actively demanding participation in the assessment of the consumer process (Zarella, 2010; Doyle, 2008). It seems what mostly applies to word-of-mouth equally and typically does so too to online, except in cases of time and space differences, limited offline reach, online credibility, and non-altruistic motives (Steffes and Burgee, 2009). Social media is useful in conveying abstract qualities such as service attitude via communicative narrative content, supported by photos and video. Rich interactive content has mind-set undertones which can enhance customer learning and participation (Stokes, 2008). They have great potential in informing and managing dining expectations and experiences.

Pre-existing liaisons are not required with review sites; they only share connection via discussion forums about a common interest or issue (Miguens *et al*., 2008). Hensens *et al*. (2010) found that TripAdvisor mostly provides reliable and trustworthy sources of information for online peers enquiring as to the quality of a product or service.

5.6.1.2 *DELIGHT AND FRUSTRATION FACTORS*

The expected core service of 'reliability' in any commercial transaction needs to be augmented by other differentiated service skills; it is these skills that create competitive advantage

(Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998). These differentiated service skills ultimately determine between 'delighted' or 'frustrated' customers. However, research confirms that doing the basics right for restaurants is imperative (i.e. delicious food, appropriate cost, cheerful greeting, and attentive service).

'Desired' service which customers hope to receive is rarely achieved, whereas 'adequate' service which is the minimum accepted to stay in business, is achieved three out of four times, according to research (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003:469). Exceeding adequate service with 'delight factors' is probably nevertheless unremarkable; it frequently leads to the business overpromising, resulting in inconsistency in service quality standards (Carbone and Haeckel, 2005). The mere fact of businesses trying to understand customer expectations usually exceeds them (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003).

'Satisfying factors' are parallel to Zeithaml and Bitner's tiered expectations of desired service, the zone of tolerance, and adequate service. Desired service anticipates an expected desire to be fulfilled. It does not bring in the element of 'surprise'. To determine a state of 'delight' the element of surprise is required (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). The equivalent surprise factor of going below adequate service is termed a 'frustration factor' (Hensens, 2010). Being delighted or frustrated requires disconfirmation – beyond desired or adequate service delivery. 'Predicted service' is parallel to satisfying factors (Wilson *et al.*, 2008; Hensens, 2010). This is based on what customers normally believe they will get as an experience.

New customers display a greater vulnerability to business relationship mishaps than existing customers (Peppers and Rogers, 2004). Longer and satisfied relationships seem to require less maintenance, less attention, less cost and less subsequent effort. Especially in the case of delight and frustration factors, 'fewer surprises' is also a result of longer satisfied relationships.

Contemporary research shows that customers with strong experience opinions are more likely to share them with others than those with milder views, and frustrated customers are also more likely to share than delighted customers (Solomon *et al.*, 1999; Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004). Apparently frustrated customers are 90% certain not to repurchase at a business again (Solomon *et al.*, 1999). Customers that were initially frustrated would frequently end up spreading positive word-of-mouth by being exposed to effective service recovery (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004).

5.6.1.3 USER-GENERATED CONTENT

Online consumers are distinctly discriminative about what they want to be involved in (Shankar and Malthouse, 2009; Rubinson, 2009). When social media environments negatively affect customer expectations, the response is likely to be negative, probably leading to avoidance behaviour (Williams and Dargel, 2004). Additionally, customer experiences may also include too much information (Gaudeul and Peroni, 2010; Meyer, 1998).

Online expectations of customers reflect their offline expectations. Substandard products and service will simply be amplified by means of social media, because of the degree of transparency demanded. Controversy has viral potential whereby brands and business interests can be badly damaged (Stokes, 2008; Safko and Brake, 2009; Phillips and Young, 2009). Furthermore, personality effects are moderated by different social media tools or applications. The actual experiences are dependent on what the users thought the tools could do for them (Sanaktekin and Aydin, 2010). Customers' desire for 'social interaction', 'economic incentives', 'concern for other consumers', and the 'potential to enhance their own self-worth' were the main motivators for participation in social media and creating online content (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009:98).

Customers' online social media experiences positively affect offline dining experiences (Titz, Lanza-Abbott, and Cruz, 2004; Grupta *et al.*, 2007; Menon and Dubé, 1999; Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003; Schoemaker, 1996). The more customers expect from the business's participation online, the more likely they are to become engaged in being susceptible to the content created. Diners that embrace technology in general are more inclined to use it for adding value to their existing preferences (Dixon *et al.*, 2009). These diners also tend to be high-end restaurant customers, who have more ego-related expectations (Murphy, 2010). Low-end restaurant customers have an approach of concern for other customers, whereas the high-end restaurant customers recognise and appreciate good service and product quality more readily.

Social media customers are led to participate in 'observational learning', where individual behaviour is impacted by their observation of the behaviour of others because of the information contained therein (Cai *et al.*, 2007), e.g. peers' expectations and experiences that are converted into their opinions too. Peers' experiences subsequently improve as and when they are increasingly presented with expert opinions on reviews and recommendations. Biased online reviews normally include factors akin to the reviewer's purpose of travel, geographical location, perceptions of quality, or cultural exposure (Keates, 2008). Online participants

generally trusted information most when it was generated by friends or people they know (Invoke, 2010).

Five factors have been identified by the researcher to represent overall customer experience in user-generated content, these factors consisting of service quality (with descriptors of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles), product quality, price, and situational and personal factors (Wilson *et al.*, 2008).

The second phase of the study involves empirical research which implies inferences made that include: dining experiences and expectations; post-experience evaluations; and other feedback methods besides social media.

5.6.2 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH WITH SURVEYS

5.6.2.1 *RESTAURANT DINING EXPERIENCES AND EXPECTATIONS*

Customers' initial experiences precede their future expectations; experiences determine expectations, but also consequently the fact that expectations also determine experiences. When customers have not experienced the product or service yet, the expectations are reliant on previous similar experiences, or information gathered from other external sources or third parties (Mohsin *et al.*, 2005). First experiences create the expectations for future experiences (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007). Customer expectations should be correctly plotted against their experience paradigms for best quality results.

Customer expectations are also founded on past buying experiences, where beliefs play an important role in shaping customer behaviour (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007; Kotler *et al.* 2003). As such, customer expectations require active management from businesses (Doyle, 2008; Harridge-March, 2006). As expectations grow, the risk of disappointment and perceived value of the product involved will also proportionally increase (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007; Grönroos, 2001; Solomon *et al.*, 1999).

There is an important link between satisfaction and expectations (Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998). The degree of satisfaction is directly related to the extent of the difference between the perceived customer performance and their preceding expectations. For example an 'exceeded'

expectation derived from a high performance product will most probably render highly satisfied or 'delighted' customers (Mohsin *et al.*, 2005; Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998).

Customer experiences are highly dependent on customers' expertise. High expertise will most likely result in informed expectations that relate to a holistic consumer process. Low expertise will most likely result in uninformed expectations that have increased reliance on critical incidences of the consumer process. When previous knowledge lacks, the customer often fragments the information according to the attributes of the product or service (Matilla, 2002); or only links it to perceived performance factors (Patterson and Johnson, 1995) Thus, research finds that customer experiences act as moderator in their customer satisfaction evaluations (Patterson and Johnson, 1995).

Five factors have been identified in the empirical study of customer experiences, these factors consisting of service quality (with descriptors of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles), product quality, price, and situational and personal factors (Wilson *et al.*, 2008).

5.6.2.2   POST-EXPERIENCE EVALUATION

Customer experience refers to accumulated customer knowledge. This best occurs by co-creation of the consumer process by businesses and customers (Rowley *et al.*, 2007). 'Trust' as an important value in a relationship is based upon the customers' perceptions of previous experiences. Preconceived emotional memory is a powerful force in experiencing a product (Peppers and Rogers, 2004; Harridge-March, 2006). Customers often rationalise their purchase choices by validating and comparing their decisions with alternative possibilities. They thereby reassure themselves about their purchases (Futrell, 1990).

Post-experience evaluations greatly determine what information customers share with others (Wilson *et al.*, 2008). Dining satisfaction also moderates the relationship between dining experiences and post-dining intentions to return to the restaurant (Kivela *et al.*, 2000). Customers' access to immediate feedback on their individual preferences and dining experiences is shaping new communication standards and consequently increasing expectations (Rubinson, 2009).

5.6.2.3   *OTHER CUSTOMER FEEDBACK METHODS*

Social media provides an alternative tool for customers to speak out for or against the restaurants visited according to their dining experiences (Longart, 2008). Positive word-of-mouth has a powerful influence in the marketing of restaurants in the offline world, whereas social media has a similar function in the online environment (Berta, 2009; Stokes, 2008). Word-of-mouth was found to be more important in the final stages of the purchasing process because it comforts customers and decreases post-purchase insecurities (Sweeney *et al.*, 2008). Blythe (2005) stipulates three reasons for word-of-mouth's power: firstly it is interactive and thus gives context to the message; secondly it allows for feedback and confirmation; and thirdly the credibility of the source is perceived as far superior. Kasper *et al.* (2000) add that from a business management's point of view, word-of-mouth is difficult to control because of the independent opinion sharing of the customers. Some control is possible through testimonials and references (Kasper *et al.*, 2000), promotions to create community (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004), or press releases and awards (Blythe, 2005).

Customers, by being exposed to fewer attributes in services because of the intangibility factor, could feel more at risk in selecting business providers (Kasper *et al.*, 2000). Personal recommendation is therefore imperative in an attempt to match customer expectations (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004).

5.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter a summary of the previous chapters was first discussed. The process of exploratory research was succinctly illustrated by Figure 5.1, and then further elaborated by the theories guiding the framework of the study. A research framework was introduced based on the research questions and theories thus far derived, and hypotheses identified for the methodology of the study. Underlying the methodological considerations, the user-generated content analysis and empirical experiential study approach was further clarified, focusing on the most relevant of theoretical findings to formulate the research direction.

In Chapter 6 the study's methodology will be introduced whereby the design process will be analysed in detail for both online context and empirical context to obtain the data necessary for the acquired results. Under each of the methodological phases the sampling process, collection of data and processing of data will be described.

CHAPTER 6
METHODOLOGY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 provided a proposed framework to investigate social media reviews of restaurant dining experiences. The literature overviews in Chapter 2 to 4 presented the necessary theoretical background to develop a suggested framework, as given in Chapter 5. In this chapter attention will be paid to how to implement the framework and the methodology to be used.

This chapter presents an overview of the methodologies employed in this study to prove each of the hypotheses identified. The design of the research is discussed first, elaborating on the methods of sampling and the process of data collection. The two stages of the research methodology include the analysis of user-generated online content and the empirical perception survey of delight and frustration experiences.

To conclude the chapter, the data analysis procedures are outlined in reaching valid and reliable outcomes. The measuring instruments are assessed as to their effectiveness in determining consistencies in the cross-sectional data obtained. Methodologically sound, one would then be able to interpret the acquired results with confidence.

6.2 STEPS IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The overall research was designed to be:

i.   exploratory on the subject of social media review sites – to formulate the problem, develop hypotheses, develop constructs, establish priorities for research, refine ideas, and clarify concepts

ii.   descriptive on the subject of dining experience – to describe experiences of customers and how their expectations are either satisfied, exceeded or diminished; and to make directional predictions as to their various perceptions, attitudes and belief systems

iii. multivariate to investigate the relationships between variables

Methodologically, the research philosophy would require conducting the following steps as set out in Table 6.1:

Table 6.1: Steps in the Research Process

Steps	Operationalisation	Methodology	Result
i. **Literature review (chapters 2-5)**	Analysis of research questions and key variables	Secondary data desk research	Theoretical framework
ii. **Online reviews**	Structured sample: 210 global reviews analysed on TripAdvisor	Content analysis	Empirical survey questions
iii. **Empirical surveys**	Convenience sample: 166 global survey respondents analysed	Statistical methods: factor analysis, correlation, Manova, alphas	Testing of hypotheses

Source: The Researcher's Own Design

Table 6.1 outlines the major steps involved in the research. Step 1 has realised the framework for the study and the formulating of the hypotheses. Step 2 interpreted the qualitative factors of delight and frustration using the content analysis of online reviews. The qualitative analysis subsequently provided the contextual basis for the structuring of survey questions. Step 3 required a positivistic research approach. By conducting surveys of the general public about their restaurant dining experiences, the researcher has been able to statistically gauge their perceptions of dining delight and frustration factors. Comparisons can then be made according to the hypotheses in the framework of the research (see Figure 5.2).

6.3 EMPIRICAL SURVEY DESIGN

When restaurants are visited by diners, their post-experience evaluation is crucial to their overall dining experience. Their perceptions are found to be contextually strongest shortly after the experience where perceptions are fresh and contextually relevant. The empirical survey design is reliant on this post-experience evaluation. When considering good qualitative customer feedback, the content on social media review sites has been found to be typical reflections of diners' recent perceptions.

When customer's feel the need to speak to others about their perceived dining experiences, their perceptions are best articulated during post-consumption. Frequently, those customers

familiar with social media will communicate their dining experiences via user-generated content. Restaurant customers often express their opinions and advise others on their experiences via word-of-mouth or on customer review sites. This section discusses the methodology of how the user-generated content retrieved from online restaurant reviews is analysed. It describes the scrutiny process of narrative reviews on TripAdvisor for delight and frustration factors that would eventually validate the variables used in the empirical survey.

In conclusion, this research concentrates on the extreme reactions of dining experiences, namely those reactions primarily based on exceeded or diminished customer expectations. The content of the reviews is analysed for an element of 'surprise'. Throughout the design of the research, narratives that contained 'satisfier' reactions (as opposed to surprise) were not to be included in the two methodological phases (see Table 6.3).

6.3.1 THE SAMPLE USED IN CONTENT ANALYSIS

In the first stage of primary research, the sampling frame required a global scope. One finds dining establishments all over the world, even in the most remote of locations. However it does present a challenge to find a suitable sample representing all types of socio-cultural populations on TripAdvisor's review site. The reviewed restaurants listed on TripAdvisor are categorised according to city and town locations; but unfortunately not categorised according to countries.

As user-generated content of review sites is dependent on the participation of online users, and specifically dining customers that use the Internet actively, it can be deduced that global locations that are highly Internet-active would be ideal as base for the sampling frame. Opentravel.com (Open Travel, 2011) has identified the world's six most Internet accessible cities, which would probably provide for major quantities of dining review content to analyse, given the propensity of active online users. The identified cities have also provided a good mix of cultures and continents. The researcher has also included the city of Cape Town to represent the African continent, even though it does not qualify as highly Internet-connected. Table 6.2 outlines the sample used in content analysis and the sample characteristics of the first phase of this study.

Table 6.2: Content Analysis Sample

Location Identified	Three Restaurants allocated *(As At 5ᵗʰ August 2011)*	# Reviews
i. **Tallinn, Estonia**	Best: *Neh (#1of 202)* Worst: *Fellini (#161 of 202)* Average: *Drink Bar and Grill (#97 of 195)*	Minimum of 10 most recent reviews for each
ii. **Seattle, USA**	Best: *Pike Place Chowder (#1of 2,055)* Worst: *Pike Place Bar and Grill (#1,040 of 2,055)* Average: *Buca di Beppo (#619 of 2,055)*	Minimum of 10 most recent reviews for each
iii. **Hong Kong, China**	Best: *Din Tai Fung (#1 of 2,981)* Worst: *New York Main St. Deli (#1,050 of 2,981)* Average: *Megu (#573 of 2,981)*	Minimum of 10 most recent reviews for each
iv. **Singapore**	Best: *Absinthe (#1of 1,663)* Worst: *Sakae Sushi (#1,319 of 1,663)* Average: Ah Teng's Bakery *(#669 of 1,663)*	Minimum of 10 most recent reviews for each
v. **Amsterdam, Netherlands**	Best: *Brasserie Vlaming (#1 of 1,172)* Worst: *Guadalupe (#787 of 1,172)* Average: *Nomads (#410 of 1,172)*	Minimum of 10 most recent reviews for each
vi. **Seoul, South Korea**	Best: *Tosokchon (#1 of 301)* Worst: *Kraze Burger (#106 of 301)* Average: *Sortino's (#74 of 301)*	Minimum of 10 most recent reviews for each
vii. **Cape Town, South Africa**	Best: *La Colombe (#1 of 321)* Worst: *Hildebrand (#236 of 321)* Average: *Saigon (#99 of 321)*	Minimum of 10 most recent reviews for each

Source: TripAdvisor (2011)

In Table 6.2 the six most Internet accessible cities, and additionally Cape Town, are listed. The best, the worst and an average rated restaurant in each of the locations were identified according to the order of TripAdvisor's rating. There are usually more restaurants listed than are ranked, and all that are ranked have one or more reviews attached.

The best, worst and average restaurants in the sample were selected as follows:

i. The 'best' is always ranked #1 with at least 10 reviews attached

ii. The 'worst' restaurant is the least ranked as per 'popularity' but with at least 10 reviews attached

iii. The 'average' restaurant is selected by dividing the worse ranked by two, finding a median. Thereafter the closest ranked 'average' restaurant is selected according to the minimum criterion of 10 reviews

To further qualify for content analysis the content needed to be current, therefore each restaurant's most recent 10 reviews were analysed for delight and frustration factors. A total of 210 reviews were extracted from the TripAdvisor website on 5 August 2011 (see Compilation of Restaurant Reviews, Appendix A).

6.3.2 THE PROCEDURE APPLIED IN CONTENT ANALYSIS

To conduct the content analysis, five phases were pursued:

i. Phase 1: Identified Factors from the Theoretical Framework

In the 'Framework of the Study' (Figure 5.2), certain online factors were identified that included service quality, product quality, price, situational factors, and personal factors. These factors laid the theoretical foundation for analysis of the TripAdvisor user-generated content. Establishing this first phase created a credible and inclusive scope to structure relational variables. These variables would eventually form the measuring instrument for the empirical survey.

ii. Phase 2: Converting Reviews into Variables

The analysis of review content required the interpretation of reactions into variables of delight and frustration factors. Judging the correct factors from TripAdvisor required careful analysis. If there was an interpretation of customer 'surprise' in the user-generated content, it was categorised either as a 'delight factor' of 'frustration factor', depending on positive or negative reactions. However, if the user-generated content referred to the fulfilment of customers' expectations it was placed in the 'satisfiers' variable. For the purposes of this study it was not included and thus the surprise element was then identified as absent. Table 6.3 gives some examples of how this interpretation process was implemented:

Table 6.3: Examples of 'Satisfiers', 'Delight Factors' and 'Frustration Factors' used in the Content Analysis

Review Narrative	Reason for being 'Frustration factors'
Staff is eating in the restaurant	Not expected by customers in general
Food is awful	'awful' indicates some degree of surprise
...after LONG wait...	Capital letters indicate it is unexpected
....most of all the state of the toilets!	Exclamation indicates surprise
We complained, but the staff seems so adept...	Not expected by customers in general

Review Narrative	Reason for being 'Delight factors'
3 course dinner was such a bargain, was such an added bonus	Not expected by customers in general
Every course was a culinary delight	The term 'delight' undoubtedly indicates surprise
...surprised us with service and quality food	Using 'surprised' indicates the unexpected, else it would be a 'satisfier'
The host could not have been more welcoming	Unusualness of occurrence indicates surprise
Made out of local ingredients, which speaks about the quality of that place	Could be expected by customers in general, but here made obvious in reference to 'quality'
Review Narrative	**Reason for being 'Satisfiers'**
The price was fair enough	Expected by customers in general, but not referred to as 'excellent'
The place was packed	Could be expected by customers in general, and could be interpreted as positive or negative
It was a nice location	Expected or a non-descriptive reaction by customers in general

Source: Researcher's Descriptive Examples

iii.   Phase 3: Identified Variables from Content Analysis

By exploring and interpreting the TripAdvisor user-generated content within the factors of service quality, product quality, price, situational factors, and personal factors, the researcher was able to continuously add more qualifying variables. The variables were termed 'review variables' and have been analysed to relate directly within each of the identified factors (as in phase 1 of this paragraph).

It was accepted that 210 reviews would be sufficient in determining and extracting most of the important and representative frustration and delight factors. The content analysis process has indeed demonstrated that after approximately 150 reviews, very few original review variables were further identified.

iv.   Phase 4: Code Book of Review Variables

From the 210 TripAdvisor reviews, 893 separate delight and frustration responses about dining experiences were identified. This resulted in the development of the Code

Book of Delight and Frustration Factors (see Appendix C), consisting of 219 delight and frustration variables. The variables with numbers between 1 and 514 were designated delight factors, whereas all variables where the number was preceded by a '9' were identified as frustration factors, as shown in Appendix C.

v.   Phase 5: Review Variables' Frequency Table and Charts

Thereafter a spreadsheet was constructed whereby the Code Book variables were logged from comments on each sample review (see Appendix B). Subsequently a frequency table was created, which tabulated the 'count', 'cumulative count' and the 'percentage of valid' of each variables (see Appendix D). After filtering the frequency table to include those variables with six responses or higher (see Appendices E and F), a chart was constructed to visually compare the results (see Graphs 6.1 and 6.2; Appendices G and H). These results are further discussed in the next paragraph.

6.3.3 CONTENT ANALYSIS RESULTS

From 219 variables, a frequency table was created differentiating either delight or frustration factor variables with six responses or more (see phase 5, previous paragraph). This filtered down the most important delight factor variables to a total of 24, and the frustration factor variables to a total of 21. These identified 45 variables further validated, formed and phrased the 45 survey questions in the second phase of the research, as in Table 6.4:

Table 6.4: The 45 Variables as Identified in the Content Analysis

Code	DELIGHT FACTORS	Code	FRUSTRATION FACTORS
SERVICE QUALITY			
1	Excellent service quality	91	Poor service quality
121	Service welcoming	9117	Service inconsistency
131	Service professional	9122	Service too slow
141	Service attentive	9123	Service too quick
144	Service is friendly	9134	Service insincere
		9141	Service inattentive
		9144	Service unfriendly/rude

| FOOD and BEVERAGE QUALITY			
21	Excellent food quality	921	Poor food quality
210	Food quantity excellent	9214	Stale food
211	Good ingredients	9217	Food is tasteless
214	Food freshness	9220	Food not prepared as ordered
215	Food delicious		
217	Food taste excellent		
218	Food flavour excellent		
219	Food presentation		
221	Beverage range is excellent		
VALUE/PRICE			
31	Value for money	931	No value for money
33	Value reasonable/fair value	933	Value unreasonable/unfair
35	Restaurant is competitive	934	Overpriced/expensive
		935	Restaurant is uncompetitive
ATMOSPHERE		OTHER	
41	Excellent ambience/atmosphere	946	Lack of hygiene
43	Restaurant authentic	947	Long queues
45	Excellent location	9415	Unpleasant noise levels
418	Relaxing atmosphere		
419	Ambience romantic/Intimate		
PERSONAL FACTORS			
472	Recommended by customers	9514	Customer has high expectations then let down
512	Customer to recommend it to others	9515	Customer not to recommend it to others
		9516	Customer disappointed

Source: The Researcher's Own Model

Table 6.4 structures the five delight and five frustration variables into the 45 coded variables (reduced from 219) by content analysis.

The frequency table of coded variables was then converted into graphs to illustrate the frequency of responses and for comparisons between the variables. Certain deductions can be

made as to the most popular variables with the highest frequencies of delight. Graph 6.1 illustrates the variable of 'excellent food quality' as the most noticeable delight factor with a response rate of 71. This coincides with other research results which show that the consideration customers give the core product of food in evaluating restaurants is the most significant (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003; Schoemaker, 1996).

In comparison, 'excellent service quality' was much less featured at 24, in fact as much as two-thirds less. This confirms other research results that doing the basics right for restaurants is imperative, i.e. appropriate cost, cheerful greeting, and attentive service (Titz *et al.*, 2004; Grupta *et al.*, 2007; Menon and Dubé, 1999). Service consistency is imperative because of the many intangibility variables that determine quality.

Graph 6.1: Frequency Table Graph of Delight Factors
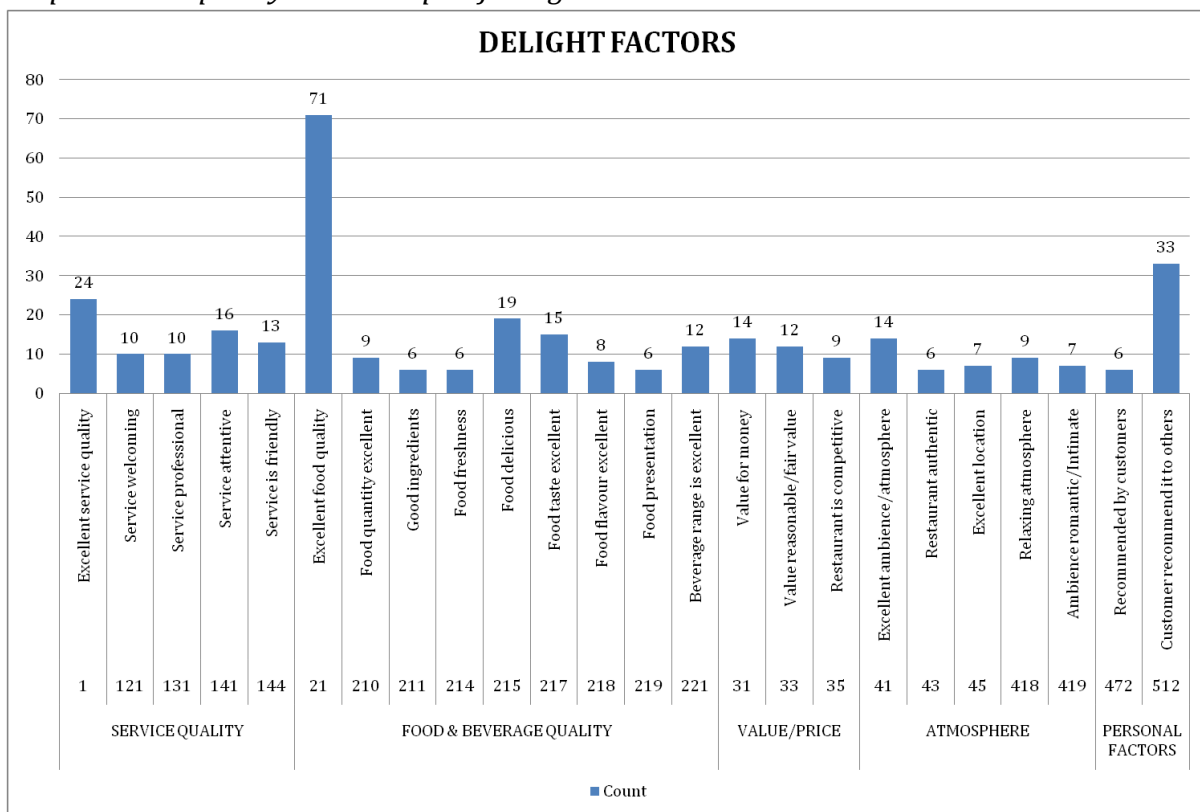
Source: The Researcher's Frequency Table Results

In Graph 6.1, the propensity of diners to speak out about exceptional experiences is evident in the high rate of 'recommendation to others' (33). Central to recommendations are word-of-mouth endorsements from customers; they are frequently quoted as a powerful source of forming expectations. Similarly, 'trust' is an important value in relationships and is based upon

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the customers' perceptions of previous experiences. Preconceived emotional memory based on customers' memories of previous dining experiences is a powerful force in their perception of product and service quality (Peppers and Rogers, 2004; Harridge-March, 2006). Subsequently 'delicious food', 'attentive service' and 'excellent food taste' were next in order of responses (19, 16, and 15 respectively).

Graph 6.2 shows that certain deductions can be made as to the most popular variables with the highest frequencies of frustration.

Graph 6.2: Frequency Table Graph of Frustration Factors
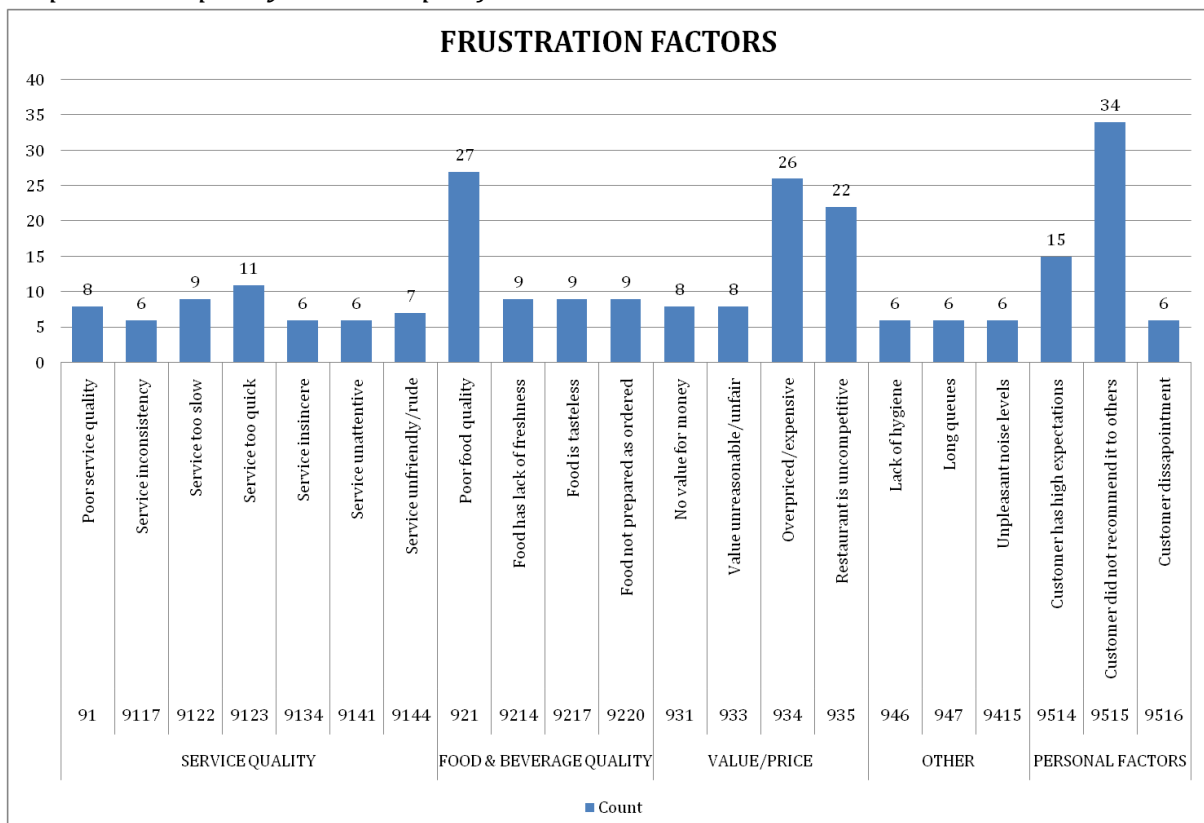
Source: The Researcher's Frequency Table Results

Graph 6.2 shows many responses for 'poor food quality' at 27. However, the most responses went to 'not recommending to others' (34), which demonstrates the altruistic nature of social media reviewers toward other participants. Being 'overpriced' or 'expensive' was also a popular reaction of frustration experiences (26). Customers often rationalise their purchase choices by validating and comparing their decisions with alternative possibilities. They reassure themselves about their purchases (Futrell, 1990). They also compare the establishments, as illustrated by their reactions of 'uncompetitiveness' in relation to other restaurants (22).

According to Graph 6.2, 'high expectations that were not met' additionally added to diners' frustrations (15). As expectations grow, the risk of disappointment and perceived value of the product involved will also proportionally increase (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007; Grönroos, 2001; Solomon *et al.*, 1999). There is an important link between 'satisfaction' and 'expectations' (Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998). Additionally, customer expectations are founded on past buying experiences where beliefs play an important role in shaping customer behaviour (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007; Kotler *et al.* 2003).

In conclusion, the main similarities/differences between delight and frustration factors are:

   i.   Very similar relatively low response levels of 'service quality' factors

  ii.   Very similar relatively high response levels of 'food and beverage quality' factors

 iii.   'Value/price' perceptions were more prevalent if it comes to customers' frustration, than with delight

 iv.   'Other' factors like 'lack of hygiene', 'long queues' and 'unpleasant noise levels' additionally contributed to customers' frustration; these were not an issue in delight factors

6.4 RESEARCH DESIGN FOR EMPIRICAL STUDY

The empirical research stage of the study required the completion of surveys to determine if restaurant experiences of the general public are similar to those found in the analysed TripAdvisor reviews. Hereby the online user-generated content perceptions of delight and frustration factors could be validated by the general public perception as survey respondents rate their dining experience perceptions. The validity and reliability of the surveys were ensured and tested by collecting a total of 32 responses over three versions of pilot surveys. Convenience samples were used. The process and results of the pilot surveys are discussed in 6.4.3.

6.4.1 SAMPLING FOR EMPIRICAL STUDY

When scrutinising the framework of the study (see Figure 5.3), one can see that the empirical data need to be collected from a global sample, preferably from the same seven cities as

sampled with the content analysis. Ideally cluster samples should be drawn from the required populations of the seven global cities, in order to be fully representative. These seven international highly 'wired' cities would have been the ideal population to structure the sampling frame for the survey. However, restaurant customers exist everywhere and the online reviewers are present in any location globally.

Convenience sampling is sometimes necessary because of not being able to structure nor effectively plan a sample allocation otherwise. One often cannot exercise control over who is included or not in a sample. Random sampling in the empirical study was not possible because an acceptable degree of confidence could not be formed that the sample was representative of the population (Davies, 2007). In other words, there was no way to determine if the empirical sample was at all biased. However, this limitation has no real effect on the expected outcomes of the study.

The researcher therefore opted for a convenience sample that is indeed international, but not necessarily specific to the countries used in the content analysis. As the research is not country or culture specific, no such variable was identified in the framework of the study. Demographical information was, however, included in the framework (see hypotheses H_5 and H_6 in Figure 5.3, Chapter 5). Thus, statistical differences could be investigated between the overall demographical information of the general public and their dining perceptions. The fact that such empirical surveys do not require country specific sampling enabled the researcher to utilise a non-probability convenience sample (Welman and Kruger, 2001). The population for the empirical study is defined as all restaurant diners, located anywhere globally.

The initial sample consisted of employees from Stenden University's global campuses, located in the Netherlands, Thailand, Bali, Qatar, and South Africa. Due to logistical complications, this sample had to be extended to include general contacts via LinkedIn and Facebook.

The sample further included professional contacts from industry, higher education faculty, hotel school alumni, and personal contacts. Snowball sampling was achieved by requesting known online 'influencers' to engage their contacts for participation and redistribution of the empirical online survey (Welman and Kruger, 2001). The sampling approach seemed to have acquired the desired outcome; subsequent responses resulted in a variation of countries represented to achieve a global population.

This sample resulted in a total of 166 respondents, consisting of 89 South Africans dispersed across the country, mostly from the Gauteng and the Eastern Cape provinces. The sample also

produced 77 international respondents, with just over half located from the Netherlands, and the rest dispersed over 16 other countries.

6.4.2 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPIRICAL STUDY

Online surveys were submitted via e-mail or social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) to potential respondents to be completed anonymously to ensure privacy and confidentiality. The respondents completed the online surveys referring to their general perception of restaurant dining experiences according to given descriptive variables.

The final two versions of the executed surveys can be viewed in appendices I and J, which has been a culmination of various pilot developments (described in 6.4.3). These two versions consisted of a 'general public edition' and a 'Stenden edition'. The versions are predominantly similar, except for one demographical question of work location (see question 1.6, both in appendices I and J). The first section required the respondent's demographical details, which included: gender, age, marriage status, educational level, frequency of dining out, and locations of work and residence. The second section contained statements that relate to frustration factors in dining situations, each statement to be judged according to the respondent's perceptions. The third section was similar in structure, but related to delight factors.

The survey respondents used a six-point Likert scale from 'dislike extremely' to 'like extremely' for rating their perceptions. Table 6.4 illustrates the survey's variable descriptors regarding dining perceptions with 21 positive factors and 24 negative factors. The variables were directly derived from the frequency table results of the TripAdvisor content analysis (see online surveys, Appendix I and J). The survey designated a total of 45 dining experience factors for respondents' perceived dining experiences. Their responses were general recollections of their restaurant dining likes and dislikes.

Ethical clearance for the execution of the survey was obtained from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Ethics Committee (reference H 2012 BES BMa 002).

6.4.3 PILOT SURVEYS TO TEST QUESTIONS

To determine the proper construction and execution of a survey, it is required to test a pilot with actual respondents to see if the desired outcomes will be reached. The researcher conducted three different empirical pilot surveys to achieve the final version.

   i.   In the first pilot survey, 12 respondents completed the questionnaire created in Microsoft Excel. To establish the delight and frustration factors, respondents were asked to express what frustrates and delights them most in the survey. Their opinions were gauged as 'least to most delightful' and 'least to most frustrating' on a Likert scale of 1 to 10. The researcher inserted macro-enabled buttons for ease of response. However, the demographics were initially completed manually by respondents.

   ii. In the second pilot survey, five respondents filled in the survey on an official Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University web portal that was accessible remotely from the Internet. In establishing frustration and delight factors, the respondents had to express which statements were most important to them by completing the online survey with a Likert scale of 1 to 5; from 'not important' to 'very important'. For demographical information they had to choose amongst given options from drop-boxes. Most significant was the demographical question on 'place of residence' - choices included Tallinn, Estonia; Seattle, USA; Hong Kong, China; Singapore; Amsterdam, Netherlands; Seoul, South Korea; Cape Town, South Africa; and Other. It was initially intended that the sample would reflect similar information to that used in the content analysis (see 6.3.1, Content Analysis).

Statistical methods dictate that a format of uniformity of factors should be present throughout a survey in terms of the measurement instrument. A statistician was consulted about the viability of the existing format of the survey and if the required results would be reached. Separating frustration and delight factors by alternate questions, measured by different Likert scales was not going to produce the required statistical results. It was thus necessary to recast the frustration and delight factors statements into descriptive concepts. With descriptive dining experience concepts, diners were able to accurately assess their feelings according to a scale of 'dislike extremely' to 'like extremely', no matter whether they were positive, negative, or whether the experience was frustrating, infuriating or immensely pleasing.

   iii. Finally, the third pilot survey was answered by 15 respondents. In establishing frustration and delight factors, respondents were asked to express their perceptions of

dining experiences. The survey presented a six-point Likert scale, from 'dislike extremely' to 'like extremely'. Demographical information included the previous drop-boxes for choice; however the 'place of residence' and 'place of work/study' were altered to suit a convenience sample. The tendency to choose a central median value was consciously omitted by using six intervals instead of five, which necessitated that the respondent choose between a range of 'likes' and 'dislikes' only. This measuring instrument was then regarded as good for the administration of the empirical survey.

Two similar surveys were created, one for Stenden University staff (see 'Stenden Edition', Appendix I) and another for the general restaurant customer, regardless of location (see 'General Public Edition', Appendix J). Both are similar, except that the former had a 'place of work' drop-box that included Stenden University's international campus sites.

In conclusion, three major revisions were made to ensure statistically viable outcomes. The changes in the Likert scale from 'least to most frustrating/delightful' proved ambiguous, however 'not important to very important' did not describe the statements comprehensively either. Finally, in the creation of the third pilot survey, diners were asked about their perception (how they felt) about a particular experience, be it positive or negative. Results indicated the last pilot survey conveyed the clearest experience descriptors to respondents; thus it was least ambiguous.

6.4.4 DATA COLLECTION FOR EMPIRICAL STUDY

Surveys are ideal for data collection in this field of research, because customers' dining experiences can be gauged without direct input by the researcher. Using an online self-administered survey offers many benefits in comparison with other forms of communication formats. Most important of these are the minimised costs involved, especially pertaining to the logistical implications of the global sample locations. There is the added benefit that survey anonymity results in mostly honest feedback. Data collection is normally rapid, and is easily manipulated for statistical methods. Unfortunately response rates from e-mail or online surveys can be poor (Cooper and Schindler, 2006).

A central online survey web link was sent to the prospective respondents via e-mail, Facebook and LinkedIn. Included was a cover letter with research objectives, instructions to complete the

survey and reference to the context of the study. All data in response to the surveys were captured with survey operating software administered by Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. The captured data were subsequently transferred and consolidated into an Excel data file for further statistical data analysis.

6.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In this paragraph the statistical methods used to analyse the empirical survey results are discussed. Understanding the methodology behind the data analysis is best illustrated by referring to the theoretical framework created for the study (see Figure 5.2). This has been replicated here for convenience as in Figure 6.1. Additionally, the relevant hypotheses have been included. The applicable data analysis method is then described and justified in terms of the functional outcomes expected.

Figure 6.1:   Framework of the Study
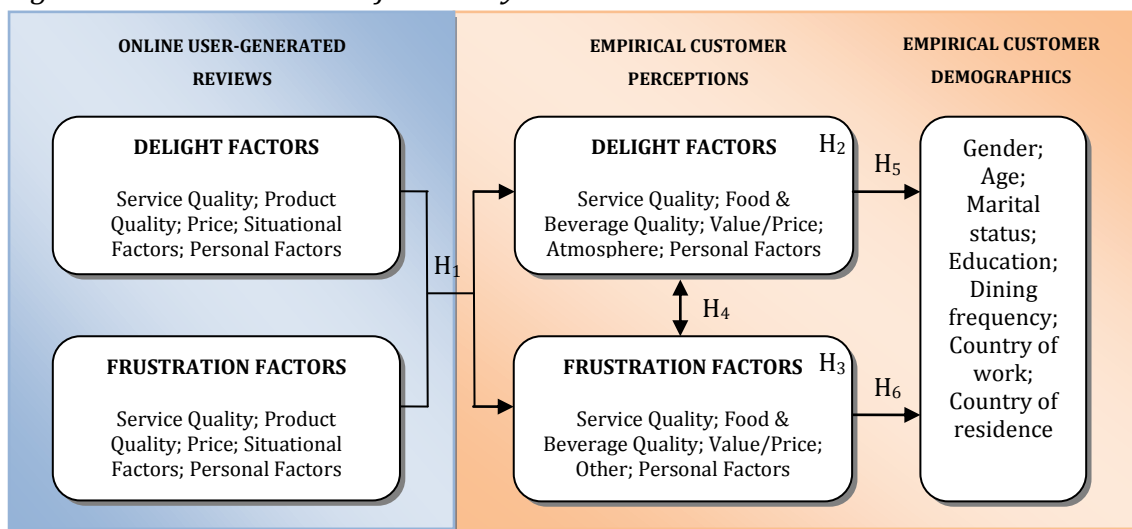
Source: Researcher's Own Model

Figure 6.1 depicts the various hypotheses and related variables where data needed to be statistically analysed. The different methods in order of the set hypotheses are:

i.   Frequency Analysis with Histograms
To determine whether the delight and frustration factors from social media review sites and the delight and frustration factors from the general public's experiences are similar, a comparison had to be made between qualitative data results obtained from online data

and quantitative empirical data. Histograms of the user-generated content results (Graphs 6.1 and 6.2) had to be compared and analysed with those from the general publics' perceptions.

ii. Factor Analysis

Establishing if the delight factors in online user-generated content and the general public's perceptions were similar required the running of multiple variables simultaneously. A separate analysis was required for frustration factors. This was best done by Factor Analysis, which revealed different patterns of relationship amongst data. (Rummel, 2002)

iii. Correlation Coefficient

To illustrate the difference between the frustration and delight factors of the general public's perceptions required the analysis of Correlation Coefficients. This investigates the relationship of dependence between two variables (UWE, 2006). In this study the delight and frustration factors are the variables to determine the strength of association. This is graphically presented as a scatter plot, whereby a correlation along an upward slope determines positive association.

iv. MANOVA – Controlling for multiple factors

Determining if there are no statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive delight or frustration factors in restaurant experiences requires the measurement of significant differences between various established means. This is best done by measuring multiple dependent variables of demographics from the sample employed (Statsoft, n.d.). The demographical variables (survey questions 1_1 to 1_7) were analysed for sources of error within the sample distribution, as well as the variability between the demographical variables. The statistical results should ensure separate P-values for each dependent variable.

Solid research design is dependent on the probability of making a Type 1 error, establishing whether the critical minimum level of Alpha is above 5%. This analysis will be incorporated to measure the internal consistency and reliability of the variables (Iacobucci and Duhachek, 2003). Are the variables measuring the same factors throughout? Thus, are the constructs of delight and frustration consistently stated in the survey? Besides the various mentioned data

analysis methods employed, graphical descriptive statistics are also required in summarising the characteristics and tendencies of the acquired sample.

6.6 SUMMARY

The methodological steps in the research show the continuation from secondary data analysis, to content analysis and subsequent empirical data analysis. The survey design highlighted the content analysis sampling procedures and the various phases conducted to reach conclusive qualitative results.

As bases for the empirical study, variables were translated to survey response items that measured dining customers' perceptions. The test pilot surveys were discussed, and the lessons learnt applied to administering the final survey properly. The data analysis was discussed, and the methods used validated. In Chapter 7, the results obtained from the data analysis will be interpreted and discussed in greater detail.

CHAPTER 7

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL STUDY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 6 described the methodology used to investigate social media reviews. Overviews of the content analysis process were given, with the ensuing results that laid the foundation for the empirical surveys to be conducted. Restaurant dining experiences were gauged both from an online qualitative approach, as well as a quantitative positivistic approach. This chapter presents an overview of all the results found in the quantitative empirical study. With the analysis of results, certain observations and interpretations are made to place the findings in context. In the latter part of this chapter, each of the hypotheses identified is tested.

7.2 THE EMPIRICAL SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The empirical surveys yielded results from the responses of 166 participants. To concisely reiterate the methodology: the content analysis phase produced a code book and frequency tables, and identified the most recurring variables (see Appendices C to H). The survey consisted of two main parts, namely one concerning frustration factors (Q2) and one delight factors (Q3); additional demographical factors were also included (Q1).The results of the content analysis were then used to construct the descriptive variables in the survey (see Appendices I and J).

In the following paragraphs, the various statistical analysis results from the survey are discussed and then directly interpreted to remain in context. The results are illustrated in graphs, figures and tables to simplify the observations and associations.

7.2.1 DEMOGRAPHICAL RESPONSES

The methodology of the empirical research phase required an international sample. Although the content analysis phase used a structured sample from seven different global cities, a convenience sample was used for the empirical surveys. Most respondents were married (43%), although closely followed by singles (42%). The largest proportion of respondents (30%) were under the age of 30 years, followed by those in their forties (28%). Graph 7.1 depicts the demography of the respondents:

Graph 7.1: Demographical Results of Respondents
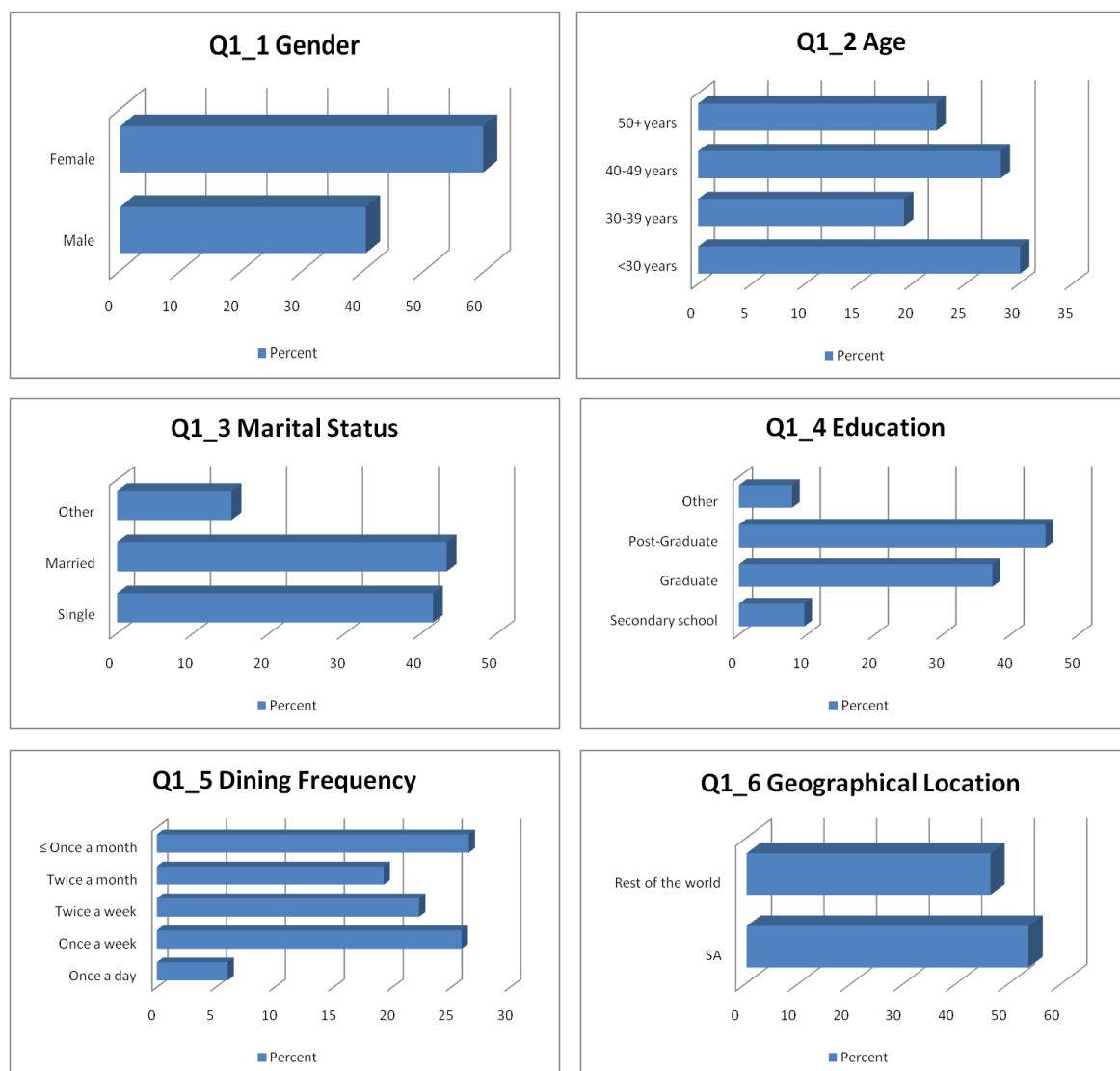
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

Graph 7.1 also illustrates the high education levels present in the sample of respondents, with both post-graduates (45%) and graduates (37%) accounting for more than 80% of the responses. Dining frequencies at restaurants were high, were more than a quarter (26%) dining out once a week, but on the other hand a similar proportion (27%) dined out once a month, or less.

The convenience sample yielded 166 completed surveys, resulting in just over half (54%) being generated from South Africa. The rest (46%) were from the rest of the world. According to gender description, 60% of the respondents were female, whereas 40% males responded. [For all demographical data see Graph 7.1; the relevant frequency tables can be viewed in Appendix L].

7.2.2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The survey contained 21 descriptive frustration factors, whereby the respondents had to state their perceptions of dining occurrences. Respondents were asked to judge their feelings whether a certain dining occurrence was extremely disliked (0) to whether it was extremely liked (5). Establishing the mean of all respondents' perceptions with each descriptive factor, major fluctuations were found as illustrated in Graph 7.2 (see 'descriptive statistics', Appendix P):

Graph 7.2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Frustration Factors

Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

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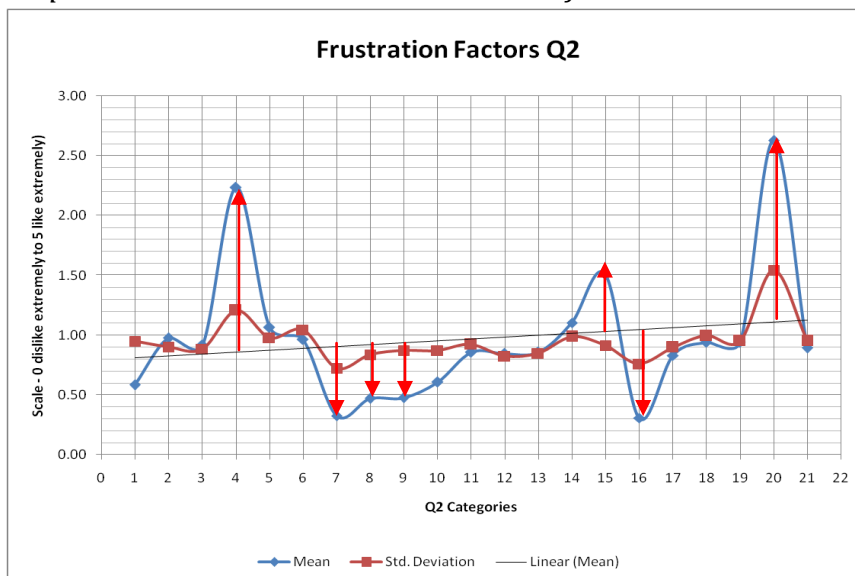
From Graph 7.2 one can see the linear trajectory line of the mean (in black). The mean's line is predominantly centred along the scale at number 1.0. The major mean fluctuations (in blue) from the line are evident. The standard deviations are shown along the same graph for reference only; their measures are not relevant to the means' Y-axis scale. However, the deviations show consistency with the pattern of the means, with similar but less prominent fluctuations. This describes how far the scale data are dispersed from the average diners' perceptions. Thus it can be seen that the amount of variability in the dataset is mostly linear, affected only by the major mean fluctuations. For the purposes of the analysis, mean fluctuations equal and larger than 0.4 from the linear mean line are observed to be of consequence (with red arrows), and are described in Table 7.1:

Table 7.1: Explanations of the Major Mean Fluctuations identified in Graph 7.2

MAJOR FRUSTRATION FLUCTUATIONS	MEANS ≥ 0.4 from line	OBSERVATION & EXPLANATION
Q2_4: Service that is too quick	2.23	The score shows that unexpected rapid service is an ambivalent perception, being reliant on context
Q2_7: Unfriendly service or staff was rude	0.33	The very low score indicates strong general feelings about this variable of 'poor service quality', more so than any other
Q2_8 and Q2_9: Poor quality, and stale food	0.47 0.48	The low scores confirm the importance of the core product quality to diners, confirmed by literature
Q2_15: Uncompetitive in comparison with other restaurants	1.51	The restaurant being competitive seems not to be a strong frustration factor; perhaps not seen to benefit the respondents directly
Q2_16: Lack of hygiene	0.31	Another strong frustration factor illustrated with the lowest score (0) of all factors
Q2_20: Recommending others to stay away from a bad restaurant	2.63	The score indicates an ambiguous response rate, together with the highest SD; This factor seems to be mostly misinterpreted

Source: The Researcher's Own Compilation

Table 7.1 describes the results in terms of the means of the frustration factors, and key observations made by the researcher. Similarly the delight factors were graphically presented from the frequency table, as in Graph 7.3:

Graph 7.3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Delight Factors
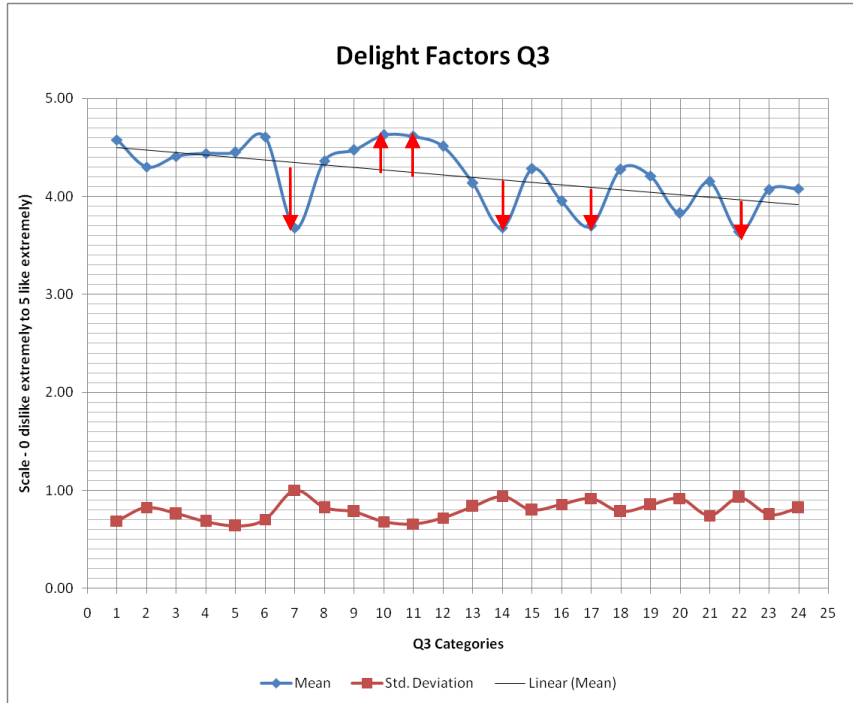
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

Unlike the major fluctuations found in the frustration factors' means, the delight factors were more predictably aligned, as can be observed in Graph 7.3. Most of the means can be seen to fall between 3.9 and 4.6 (see the linear mean line in black), with relatively few major fluctuations. It follows too, that the standard deviation is concentrated along a stable average of 0.8, a reflection of the consistency of data variability being of a narrow spread. Table 7.2 describes the major delight fluctuations equal and larger than 0.4 from the linear mean average with the possible explanations:

Table 7.2: Explanations of the Major Mean Fluctuations identified in Graph 7.3

MAJOR DELIGHT FLUCTUATIONS	MEANS ≥ 0.4 from line	OBSERVATION & EXPLANATION
Q3_7: Generous food proportions	3.68	The size of a meal seems not to be a strong contender for delight as others; cultural/social context should be taken into account here for a more detailed interpretation

Q3_10 and Q3_11: Delicious food and exceptional taste	4.63 4.61	Being of the highest scores, these are invariably of importance to respondents, confirming core product value
Q3_14: Exceptional range of beverages	3.68	Having a wide choice of beverages seems less relevant to delight than other factors, thereby differentiating food from beverage in importance
Q3_17: Competitive in comparison to other restaurants	3.70	As with frustration factors, the competitiveness of a restaurant does not seem to be of direct benefit to the respondents; perhaps it is less relevant to their customer choice
Q3_22: Romantic or intimate ambience	3.64	This weakest delight factor is surprising, especially when comparing it to Q3_21 (relaxing atmosphere) with a mean score of 4.15; perhaps the demographical composition of the respondents was more suited towards a 'relaxed' context

Source: The Researcher's Own Compilation

Table 7.2 discusses the observations and possible explanations regarding the delight factor fluctuations in the means obtained by frequency tables created from the results of the empirical surveys. The explanations and discussions mentioned in this paragraph are further analysed in the next paragraph. The results of each of the survey variables are analysed in greater detail.

7.2.3. SURVEY VARIABLES

In the previous paragraph the mean scores of the frustration and delight factor results were discussed. To be able to specify and qualify the factors, each of the variable averages needs to be scrutinised for inconsistencies. The variable datasets have been expressed in percentages and grouped under each relevant factor. They are presented in graphs to facilitate easy comparison, and then the results interpreted to verify the full spectrum of dining inferences. (The statistical frequency tables for the variables can be viewed in Appendices M to O.)

7.2.3.1   *FRUSTRATION FACTORS*

The first factor that was derived from the content analyses and included in the empirical survey was that of service quality, with results derived as shown in Graph 7.4. Under service quality, the researcher identified seven frustration variables, namely: poor service quality (Q2_1), service inconsistency (Q2_2), service too slow (Q2_3), service too quick (Q2_4), service insincere (Q2_5), service inattentive (Q2_6), and service unfriendly/rude (Q2_7).

Graph 7.4: The Response Rates of Service Quality (Frustration Factors)

Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

As interpreted by the mean scores, Graph 7.4 illustrates the dominance of the Q2_7 variable (service unfriendly/rude), evoking strong feelings from the respondents. This respondent reaction could be interpreted as justified, because such extreme behaviour by staff would be unacceptable no matter what positive factors might be realised during the dining process. Predictably, the general poor service quality (Q2_1) response rate was also significant. Uniquely, the normal distribution represented by factor Q2_4 (service too quick) shows a strong central tendency, illustrating the respondents' ambivalent perceptions and their interpretation of how much they dislike quick service. The product quality variable is made up of four variables, namely: poor food quality (Q2_8), stale food (Q2_9), food tasteless (Q2_10), and food not prepared as ordered (Q2_11). Graph 7.5 illustrates the results obtained from the frequency tables of the product quality factor:

Graph 7.5: The Response Rates of Product Quality (Frustration Factors)
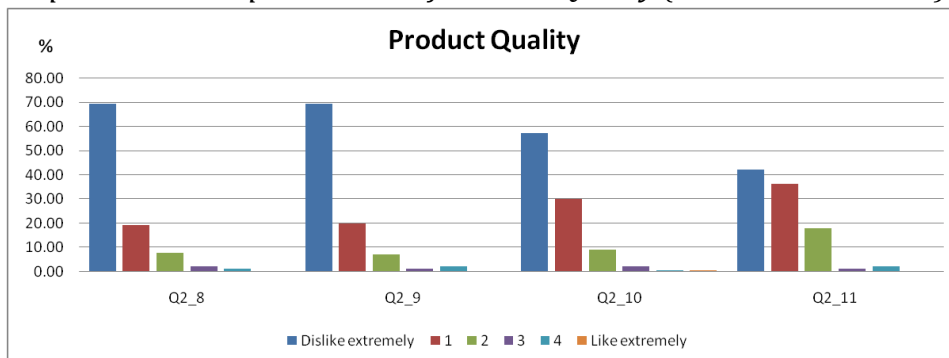
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

The high response rates of Q2_8 and Q2_9 depict how important quality of food is to the dining customer. General poor food quality and stale food are virtually identical in the 'dislike extremely' score of (0). The former is not surprising as most of the literature identifies customers' preferences as such. In many ways one could interpret food that is 'stale' as something that customers would find detestable at best in any paid-for dining environment, probably because it would not be associated with normal dining conditions.

The third frustration factor is that of value and price. Price is statically stated on menus. However, perception of value is known to be highly subjective. Poor service and product quality have the potential to be exacerbated by the perception of associated value. The four variables that form part of this factor are: having no value for money (Q2_12), value unreasonable/unfair (Q2_13), overpriced/expensive (Q2_14), and restaurant being uncompetitive (Q2_14).

Graph 7.6 illustrates the respondents' rates of value/price perceptions of their restaurant dining experience:

Graph 7.6: The Response Rates of Value/Price (Frustration Factors)

Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

The four variable bar charts in Graph 7.6 show the much wider dispersion of data between scales (0) and (2) than with the other variable. This refers, as in a previous discussion, to the respondents' subjective perception of value. Factor Q2_15 (restaurant being uncompetitive) shows respondents being rather indifferent about their comparative opinion (score 2), underlining the ambiguous context of the variable description.

The factor of 'other' was unique to frustration factors. This was because of three variables identified in the content analysis that were not present in delight factors. They are identified as:

lack of hygiene (Q2_16), long queues (Q2_17), and unpleasant noise levels (Q2_18). Results are as shown in Graph 7.7:

Graph 7.7: The Response Rates of Other (Frustration Factors)
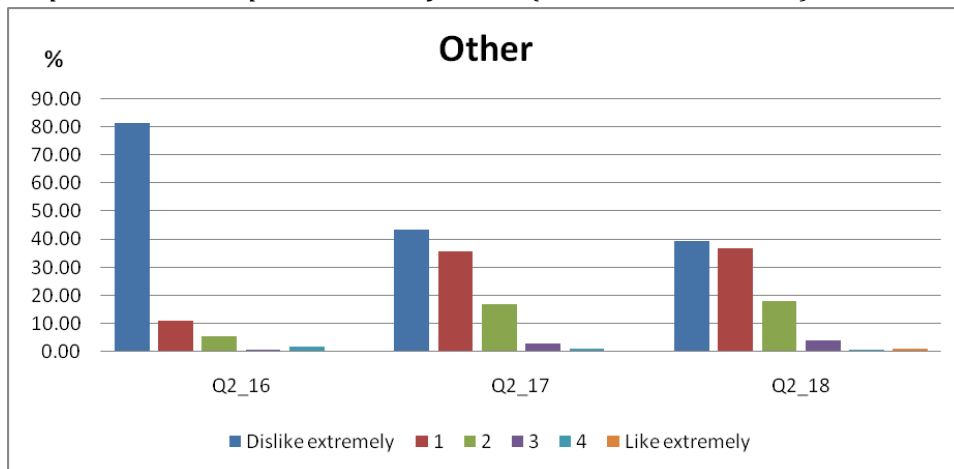
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

The highest frustration variable recorded at an 81% score of scale (0) was the respondents' extreme dislike for the lack of hygiene. Diners often do not suspect this variable. Ultimately realising that their dining experience might have been compromised by poor hygiene, could contain a vicious surprise element.

The last frustration factor is made up of personal factors which include: customer having had high expectations, then being let down (Q2_19), customer not to recommend a bad restaurant (Q2_20), and customer being disappointed (Q2_21). These results are illustrated in Graph 7.8:

Graph 7.8: The Response Rates of Personal Factors (Frustration Factors)
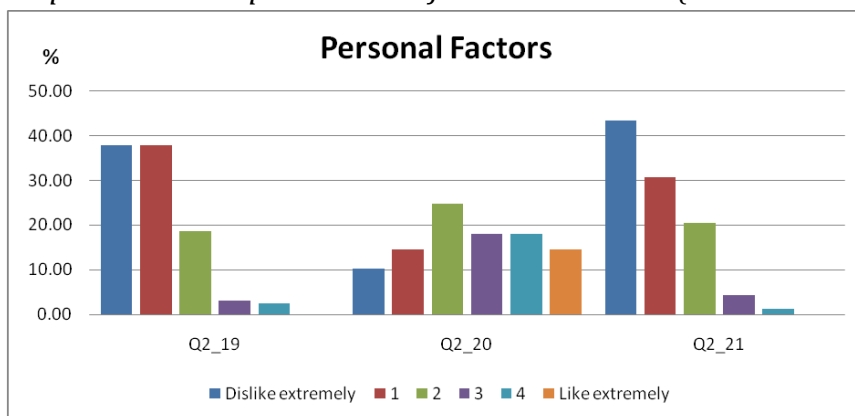
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

Respondents seem to have had a moderately high tendency about their expectations (Q2_19), as both scores (0) and (1) are high. Expectations are dependent on previous dining experiences, and could be much reliant on their demographical profiles, such as educational levels. The higher levels of education prevalent in the survey samples could culminate into higher dining experiences, which should translate into higher expectations. This seems to be the case as illustrated.

The most interesting variable in Graph 7.7 is Q2_20 (customer not to recommend a bad restaurant) which is evenly distributed around a mean of 2.63, right in the middle of the score range. This is to be expected, especially with some respondents liking to share and others disliking to share bad news about a restaurant. Here there could be contextual issues that influence their choice to share, like being active online, and comfortable in expressing themselves online. One would need to consider that this variable, derived from content analysis, was categorised from online users. However, derived from empirical survey respondents, this range of data is vastly different and probably not applicable.

7.2.3.2   DELIGHT FACTORS

With the first identified factor of service quality five variables were identified from the content analysis and subjected to the empirical surveys: exceptionally good service quality (Q3_1), welcoming service (Q3_2), professional service (Q3_3), attentive service (Q3_4), and friendly service (Q3_5). The result of the frequency table is illustrated in Graph 7.9:

Graph 7.9: The Response Rates of Service Quality (Delight Factors)
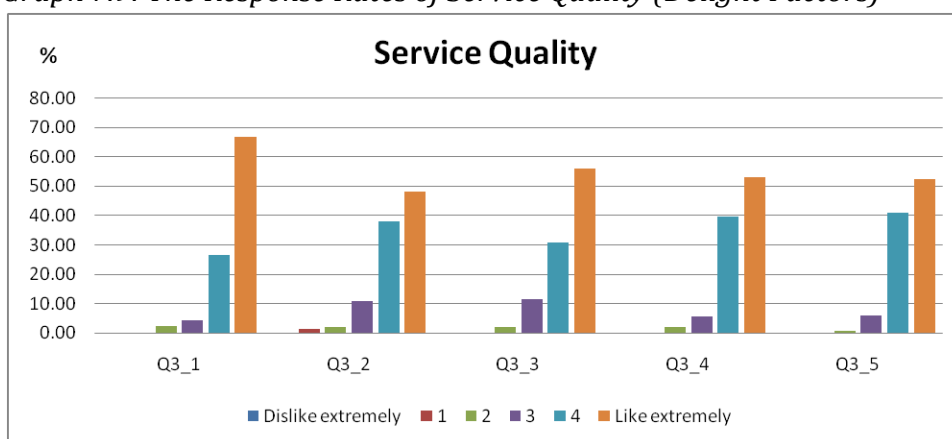
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

From Graph 7.9 moderately high response rates can be noticed when scrutinising the five bar charts, especially pertaining to the last four variables being of similar profile. Exceptionally good service quality (Q3_1) has yielded the best score of (5), suggesting that a common but combined service quality perception was preferred by respondents. Thus, the results yielded less extreme reactions where descriptive factors were more specific.

Product quality included as many as nine variables: exceptionally good food quality (Q3_6), generous food portions (Q3_7), good ingredients (Q3_8), exceptional food freshness (Q3_9), delicious food (Q3_10), exceptionally good food taste (Q3_11), exceptional food flavour (Q3_12), exceptional food presentation (Q3_13), and exceptional beverage range (Q3_14). Graph 7.10 depicts the frequency tables of the various variables mentioned:

Graph 7.10: The Response Rates of Product Quality (Delight Factors)
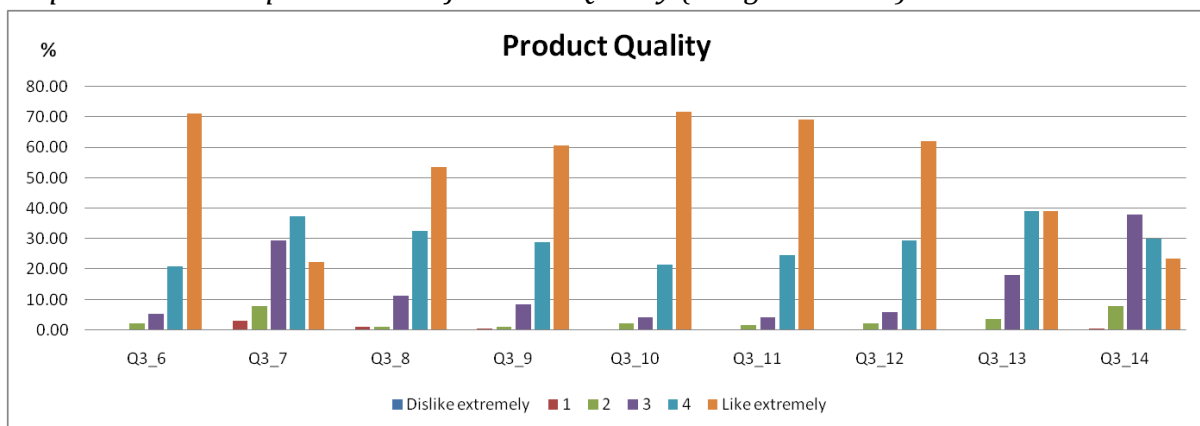
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

In line with literature findings, the core product in restaurant dining seems to be evoking the extreme response rates within the results. This is particularly evident with Q3_6 (exceptionally good food quality), Q3_10 (delicious food), and Q3_11 (exceptionally good food taste). The last two factors are very similar in their context, whereas the former, once again, culminates the product experience. The response rates in Q3_7 and Q3_14 were much more widely spread, and show ambiguous delight perceptions about portion size and range of beverages. This probably explains that these variables are not significant to respondents within the product quality factor.

Within the price/value factor, the general dispersion of scores is apparent, as in Graph 7.11. This is especially evident regarding reasonable/fair value (Q3_15) and being competitive in comparison to other restaurants (Q3_16).

Graph 7.11: The Response Rates of Price/Value (Delight Factors)
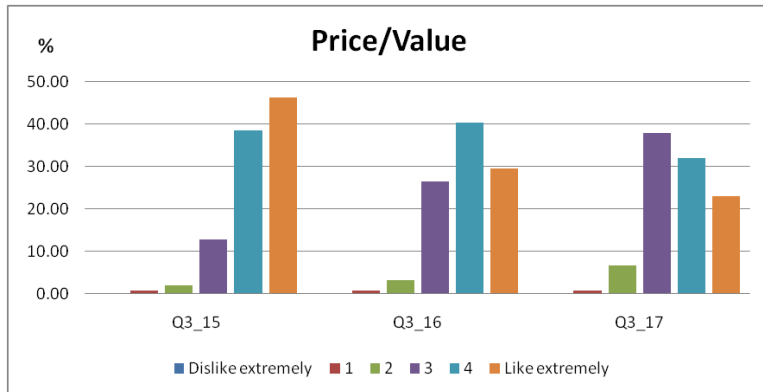
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

Graph 7.11 illustrates the more defining 'value for money' (Q3_14); as expected, it has a stronger slant towards scores (4) and (5).

The factor of atmosphere was found to be unique to delight factors. Whereas frustration factors highlighted 'others', atmosphere seemed to be a positive attribute of diners' experiences. Variables include: excellent ambience or atmosphere (Q3_18), restaurant being authentic or genuine (Q3_19), excellent location (Q3_20), relaxing atmosphere (Q3_21), romantic or intimate ambience (Q3_22). See Graph 7.12 for the respective bar charts pertaining to the frequency tables:

Graph 7.12: The Response Rates of Atmosphere (Delight Factors)
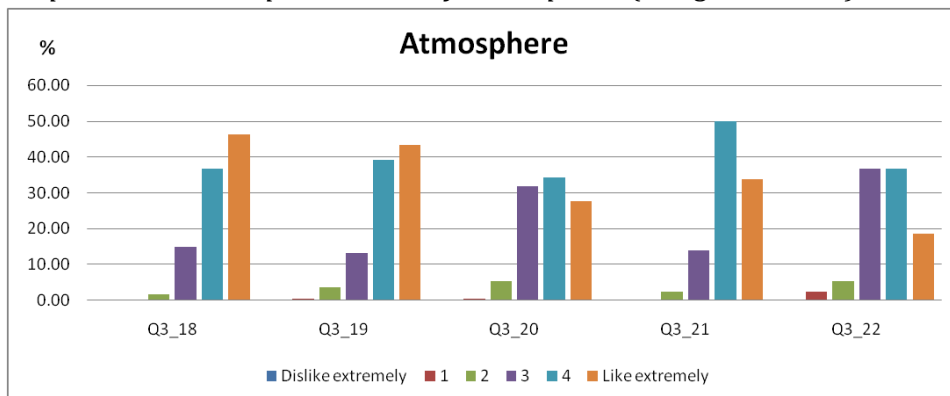
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

Graph 7.12 shows that the general perception of Q3_18 (excellent ambience or atmosphere) is a strong delight variable, followed by Q3_19 and Q3_21 (restaurant being authentic/genuine, relaxing atmosphere).Having an excellent location (Q3_20) surprisingly was less of a strong variable; and more so having a romantic or intimate ambience (Q3_22).

Finally, personal factors have two variables, namely: others recommending a good restaurant (Q3_23) and recommending others to go to good restaurants (Q3-24). Graph 7.13 illustrates the results:

Graph 7.13: The Response Rates of Personal Factors (Delight Factors)
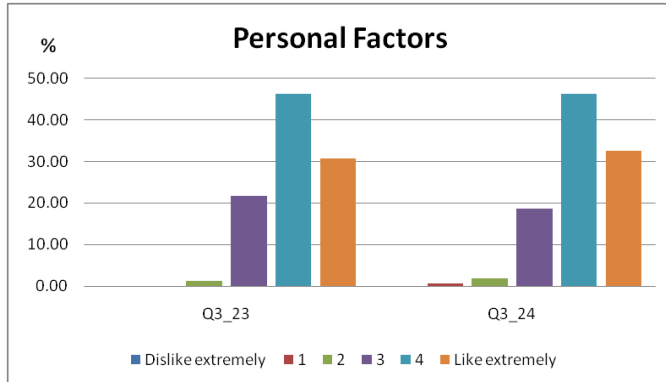
Source: The Researcher's Own Graph

Graph 7.13 summarises the personal factors of delight. Both Q3_23 and Q3_24 similarly reflect a moderately high level (majority of 4) of respondents' preferences to take others' advice and to give an opinion on a restaurant.

A summary of the top response rates from paragraph 7.2.3 is concluded in Table 7.3 depicting firstly, the status of high response rates and secondly, the strength of relation between frustration and delight factors observed:

Table 7.3: Responses of Frustration and Delight Factors

FRUSTRATION FACTORS	DELIGHT FACTORS	RESPONSE RATES & RELATION
Poor service quality (Q2_1) Service unfriendly/rude (Q2_7)	Exceptionally good service quality (Q3_1)	Similar high response rates; both highly related to service quality
Poor food quality (Q2_8) Stale food (Q2_9) Food tasteless (Q2_10)	Exceptionally good food quality (Q3_6) Delicious food (Q3_10) Exceptionally good food taste (Q3_11)	Similar high response rates; both highly related to food quality
No value for money (Q2_12) Value unreasonable/unfair (Q2_13)	Value for money (Q3_14)	Similar moderately high responses; both highly related to value for money
Lack of hygiene (Q2_16)	Excellent ambience or atmosphere (Q3_18) Restaurant being authentic or genuine (Q3_19)	High response rates for both; factors are not related

Source: The Researcher's Own Compilation

Table 7.3 concludes the factors and related variables that attracted the largest response scores at the extremes of the scale, i.e. (0) and (1) with frustration factors, and (4) and (5) with delight factors. The observations of paragraph 7.2.3 will be further analysed and compared with the results of the content analysis in Chapter 8.

7.2.4. FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis is used to measure the variability among correlated variables so that underlying factors may be detected. These might show joint variations among the observed variables, and show up hidden factors not previously observed. Factor analysis can be used to explore the data for patterns, and reduce the numerous variables to a more controllable number (Tryfos, n.d.; Abdi, 2003).

The varimax rotation method was conducted to determine: firstly, whether the identified delight and frustration descriptors were correctly categorised; and secondly, if a factor was suitable to measure what it is supposed to measure (see Appendices Q and R). The results of the factor analysis yielded factor loadings for each of the frustration variables (Q2_1 to Q2_21) and the delight variables (Q3_1 to Q3_24) as shown in Figures 7.1 and 7.2:

Figure 7.1: Factor Analysis of Frustration Factors – The Creation of New Factors

			Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5
Service Quality	Poor service quality	Q2_1	0.45	0.48	0.15	-0.06	0.42
	Inconsistent service quality	Q2_2	0.23	0.41	0.25	0.19	0.57
	Slow service	Q2_3	0.38	0.13	0.20	0.17	0.59
	Service that is too quick	Q2_4	-0.07	0.15	-0.01	0.32	-0.03
	Insincere service	Q2_5	0.13	0.64	0.28	0.29	0.05
	Inattentive service	Q2_6	0.23	0.58	0.12	0.16	0.17
	Unfriendly service or staff was rude	Q2_7	0.61	0.41	0.16	-0.08	0.27
Product Quality	Poor food quality	Q2_8	0.63	0.13	0.28	-0.03	0.24
	Stale food	Q2_9	0.73	0.18	0.27	-0.15	0.26
	Tasteless food	Q2_10	0.61	0.24	0.41	-0.03	0.23
	Food not received as ordered	Q2_11	0.47	0.21	0.41	0.00	0.12
Value/Price	No value for money	Q2_12	0.30	0.27	0.61	-0.02	0.25
	Value unreasonable or unfair	Q2_13	0.38	0.22	0.82	-0.16	0.05
	Overpriced or expensive	Q2_14	0.27	0.08	0.60	0.15	0.19
	Uncompetitive in comparison to other restaurants	Q2_15	0.17	0.09	0.56	0.23	0.44
Other	Lack of hygiene	Q2_16	0.70	0.13	0.27	0.16	0.11
	Long queues	Q2_17	0.52	0.03	0.23	0.39	0.17
	Unpleasant noise levels	Q2_18	0.61	0.10	0.22	0.31	0.19
Personal	Having high expectations and then being let down	Q2_19	0.37	0.11	0.46	0.02	0.57
	Recommending others to stay away from a bad	Q2_20	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.26	0.07
	Disappointment	Q2_21	0.46	0.27	0.44	0.13	0.34
			Food Quality & Situation	Service Care	Value/Price	N/A	Service Reliability

Source: The Researcher's Own Compilation

Figure 7.1 illustrates the original set of frustration factors (far-left column). The centre columns show the 21 frustration variables derived from the content analysis and used in the empirical survey. Factor analysis via the varimax rotation method produced five columns of new factor loadings for both frustration and delight factors. Figure 7.2 shows a similar format of the factor analysis process for Q3:

Figure 7.2: Factor Analysis of Delight Factors – The Creation of New Factors

			Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5
Service Quality	Exceptionally good service quality	Q3_1	0.59	0.06	0.40	0.16	0.07
	Welcoming service	Q3_2	0.39	0.11	0.58	0.16	0.16
	Professional service	Q3_3	0.35	0.17	0.63	0.16	0.12
	Attentive service	Q3_4	0.30	0.10	0.78	0.07	0.12
	Friendly service	Q3_5	0.23	0.24	0.56	0.11	0.22
Product Quality	Exceptionally good food quality	Q3_6	0.65	0.25	0.34	0.06	0.07
	Generous food portions	Q3_7	0.20	0.43	0.17	0.00	0.54
	Good ingredients	Q3_8	0.71	0.21	0.19	0.05	0.32
	Exceptional food freshness	Q3_9	0.78	0.16	0.18	0.12	0.25
	Delicious food	Q3_10	0.80	0.19	0.21	0.11	0.11
	Exceptionally good food taste	Q3_11	0.85	0.14	0.16	0.19	0.10
	Exceptional food flavour	Q3_12	0.76	0.17	0.31	0.16	0.11
	Exceptional food presentation	Q3_13	0.31	0.43	0.34	0.23	0.18
	Exceptional range of beverages	Q3_14	0.05	0.39	0.45	0.21	0.42
Value/Price	Excellent value for money	Q3_15	0.55	0.24	0.20	0.16	0.52
	Fair or reasonable value	Q3_16	0.35	0.24	0.25	0.28	0.57
	Competitive in comparison to other restaurants	Q3_17	0.20	0.41	0.26	0.24	0.45
Atmosphere	Excellent ambience or atmosphere	Q3_18	0.39	0.43	0.36	0.22	0.08
	Being authentic or genuine	Q3_19	0.34	0.44	0.31	0.10	0.17
	Excellent location	Q3_20	0.10	0.81	0.04	0.07	0.10
	Relaxing atmosphere	Q3_21	0.20	0.60	0.26	0.27	0.20
	Romantic or intimate ambience	Q3_22	0.16	0.56	0.08	0.17	0.21
Personal	Others recommending a good restaurant to you	Q3_23	0.14	0.27	0.09	0.76	0.19
	Recommending others to go to good restaurants	Q3_24	0.20	0.15	0.22	0.73	0.05
			Food Quality & Value	Mood & Aesthetics	Hospitable Service	Recommendations	Differentiation

Source: The Researcher's Own Compilation

Both results of the factor loadings were analysed and categorised as follows:

i. The highest loadings (>0.04) for each of the frustration and delight variables were identified according to the factor columns 1-5, e.g. Q2_1 = 0.48 was identified to fall within Factor 2

ii. On completion, each factor was given a colour and each of the variables coded to show their specific factor they fall into

iii. The loadings ≤0.04 were rejected, and given a grey colour: this resulted in two frustration variables (Q2) being omitted, and factor 4 not being represented by any valid variables; no variables were omitted in delight factors (Q3)

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iv. The frustration factor analysis left the researcher with factor 1, 2, 3 and 5 - factor 4 (in grey) was omitted; delight factor results produced five new factors

v. The four new frustration factors were given suitable and representative titles: food quality & situation, service care, value/price, and service reliability; the five new delight factors were entitled: food quality & value, mood & aesthetics, hospitable service, recommendations and differentiation (see bottom of columns 4-8, Figure 7.1 and 7.2)

Table 7.4 describes the variable allocation of new factors after the factor analysis results, as discussed in the previous paragraph under (v):

Table 7.4: Factor Analysis Variable Allocation

Factors of Frustration – Q2	Factor 1 Food Quality & Situation	Factor 2 Service Care	Factor 3 Value/Price	Factor 4 Not allocated	Factor 5 Service Reliability
Highest Factor loadings > 0.04	Q2_7 Q2_8 Q2_9 Q2_10 Q2_11 Q2_16 Q2_17 Q2_18 Q2_21	Q2_1 Q2_5 Q2_6	Q2_12 Q2_13 Q2_14 Q2_15	N/A	Q2_2 Q2_3 Q2_19
Alpha	0.90	0.71	0.84		0.79

Factors of Delight – Q3	Factor 1 Food Quality & Value	Factor 2 Mood & Aesthetics	Factor 3 Hospitable Service	Factor 4 Recommen-dations	Factor 5 Differentiation
Highest Factor loadings > 0.04	Q3_1 Q3_6 Q3_8 Q3_9 Q3_10 Q3_11 Q3_12 Q3_15	Q3_13 Q3_18 Q3_19 Q3_20 Q3_21 Q3_22	Q3_2 Q3_3 Q3_4 Q3_5 Q3_14	Q3_23 Q3_24	Q3_7 Q3_16 Q3_17
Alpha	0.94	0.83	0.84	0.80	0.76

Source: The Researcher's Own Table

In Table 7.4, one can observe both the new delight and frustration factors with their respective reallocated variables in columns below. The alpha reliability measure of each factor has also

been included and will be discussed in detail in the next paragraph. In conclusion, the new factors have effectively changed the framework of the study. The factor analysis has clarified the assumption that the original factors derived from the literature and validated by content analysis no longer holds true.

7.2.5. RELIABILITY TESTS

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) state that reliability in research can be measured by answering the following questions:

i.   Will the measuring instrument yield similar results in different instances?
ii. Will similar observations be made by different researchers?
iii. Is the process of data analysis clear and objectively performed?

The original frustration and delight factors originated from customer experience factors sourced from the literature, as discussed in Chapter 5 (Wilson *et al.*, 2008). These factors were subjected to content analysis and further refined by creating variables within these factors (as in Chapter 6). Subsequently these variables formed the 45 descriptive survey items, differentiated under frustration (Q2) and delight factors (Q3). The factor analysis in the previous paragraph has necessitated the researcher to revise the factors, because the original factors were shown to be unreliable indicators for the 45 descriptive variables.

Especially important in this study, is determining the extent of how the 45 survey variables were perceived by respondents - did the surveys measure what they were supposed to be measuring, and if so, would they do so consistently? To be able to determine whether the new factors had improved internal consistency and reliability over and above the old factors, the statistical inter-correlation measure of Cronbach's Alpha was used (see Appendix S). This method determines the degree of homogeneity within the survey's variables, and how they fulfilled the factors' intended constructs. The results are structured according to Table 7.5, where results of internal consistency are compared between the five old factors and the four new factors:

Table 7.5: Comparative Results of the Cronbach's Alphas of Frustration Factors

Frustration Factors	Average inter-item correlation	Cronbach alpha
Service Quality	0.36	0.76
Product Quality	0.60	0.85
Value/Price	0.57	0.84
Other	0.55	0.78
Personal	0.32	0.46
Average	**0.48**	**0.74**

New frustration factors	Average inter-item correlation	Cronbach alpha
Food Quality & Situation	0.53	0.90
Service Care	0.45	0.71
Value/Price	0.57	0.84
Service Reliability	0.56	0.79
Average	**0.53**	**0.81**

Source: The Researcher's Own Research Results

Table 7.5 illustrates the Cronbach's Alpha results within the frustration factors. The average inter-item correlations indicate the average correlations of the consistencies on the frustration factors as a whole. The Table shows how much the factors signify the constructs that should be measuring diners' perceptions. The results show a clear indication that the average inter-correlation has increased substantially. Although the frustration factors have reduced from five to four, the new factors achieved a superior Alpha. Both original frustration and delight factors had acceptable Cronbach's Alpha measures over 0.7, which indicated them to be acceptable (DeCoster, 2004). Nevertheless, it was especially the new frustration factors that achieved much improved results by topping 0.8 as indicated in Table 7.5, which indicates a good measure of consistency and homogeneity among the frustration factors.

Table 7.6 compares the less contrasting results achieved by delight factors:

Table 7.6: Comparative Results of the Cronbach's Alphas of Delight Factors

Delight Factors	Average inter-item correlation	Cronbach alpha
Service Quality	0.54	0.85
Product Quality	0.55	0.90
Value/Price	0.58	0.80
Atmosphere	0.47	0.81
Personal	0.66	0.80
Average	**0.56**	**0.83**

New delight factors	Average inter-item correlation	Cronbach alpha
Food Quality & Value	0.66	0.94
Mood & Aesthetics	0.46	0.83
Hospitable Service	0.53	0.84
Recommendations	0.66	0.80
Differentiation	0.52	0.76
Average	**0.57**	**0.83**

Source: The Researcher's Own Research Results

Table 7.6 shows how the average alpha measure has hardly changed, even though the factors have been redefined and reconceptualised. It further shows that the construct changes from the factor analysis have not yielded that much improvement in terms of reliability.

In conclusion, Cronbach's Alpha will increase when inter-item correlations increase (as seen with frustration factors). The delight factors' results were less obvious, even though the constructs of the new factors have changed. Thereby it assures and assigns a good measure of reliability to the new factors within the study. It was decided that the new factors will be used for further multivariate analysis as it will indicate more validity.

7.2.6. CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Correlation analysis measures the relationship between continuous variables (DeCoster, 2004). The further away the value of the correlation is from the centralised '0' the more it shows increased strength of the relationship, ranging to both -1.0 and 1.0. The direction of the relationship is identified by a negative or positive sign.

Correlation analysis was performed on both the new frustration and delight factors identified from the factor analysis in paragraph 7.2.4. The correlations firstly were calculated among the frustration factors, then among the delight factors, and lastly, between both the frustration and delight factors.

The correlations among the frustration factors are illustrated in Table 7.7:

Table 7.7: Correlations among Frustration Factors

Correlations among frustration factors

	Q2 Food qual & situation	Q2 Service care	Q2 Value/Price	Q2 Service reliability
Q2 Food qual & situation	1.00			
Q2 Service care	0.62	1.00		
Q2 Value/Price	0.71	0.52	1.00	
Q2 Service reliability	0.72	0.60	0.67	1.00

Source: the Researcher's Own Table

In Table 7.7 the results show how the frustration factors are correlated to each other. As was to be expected in relation to the other values, the relationship between the lack of service care and perceived lack of value (0.52) does not seem to be strong. However, it is much stronger when considering the core product (0.71). Conversely, the lack of food quality has a strong

relationship with the lack of service reliability at 0.72 (i.e. considering bringing food on time, at the optimal temperature, having high expectations).

The correlations among the delight factors are illustrated in Table 7.8:

Table 7.8: Correlations among Delight Factors

Correlations among delight factors

	Q3 Food quality & value	Q3 Mood & aesthetics	Q3 Hospitable service	Q3 Recommendations	Q3 Differentiation
Q3 Food quality & value	1.00				
Q3 Mood & aesthetics	0.62	1.00			
Q3 Hospitable service	0.66	0.64	1.00		
Q3 Recommendations	0.41	0.50	0.44	1.00	
Q3 Differentiation	0.62	0.69	0.63	0.45	1.00

Source: the Researcher's Own Table

Table 7.8 shows the surprisingly low relative correlation value of positive recommendation about exceptional food quality and value (0.41) or exceptional hospitable service (0.44). Equally low, diners do not seem to recommend restaurants based on how different in quality they are to others (0.45). On the other hand, diners seem to prefer to differentiate their choice according to restaurants' mood and aesthetics (0.69). Additionally, mood and aesthetics seem to correlate well to good service and food quality and value for money.

Observing the correlations between the frustration and delight factors, Table 7.9 shows a negative relationship:

Table 7.9: Correlations among Frustration and Delight Factors

Correlations between frustration and delight factors

	Q2 Food qual & situation	Q2 Service care	Q2 Value/Price	Q2 Service reliability
Q3 Food quality & value	-0.52	-0.36	-0.46	-0.46
Q3 Mood & aesthetics	-0.30	-0.29	-0.35	-0.33
Q3 Hospitable service	-0.52	-0.53	-0.44	-0.49
Q3 Recommendations	-0.25	-0.24	-0.31	-0.29
Q3 Differentiation	-0.31	-0.29	-0.43	-0.36

Source: the Researcher's Own Table

Table 7.9 shows the correlation results for the relationship between frustration and delight factors. Most seem to be evenly correlated in the region of the -0.4 value, though some stronger relationships are noted. Predictably, poor food quality and situation has a relatively strong negative relationship with exceptional food quality and value (-0.52), as well as with exceptionally hospitable service (-0.52). Predictably too, is a similar strong negative relationship between poor service care and exceptionally hospitable service (-0.53). The weakest negative correlation value was found between poor service care and positive recommendations to visit a restaurant (-0.24).

In conclusion, the correlation results have not yielded many surprises. Poor food quality is strongly associated with lack of value and service reliability. Diners seem to prefer to differentiate their choice of restaurant according to experiencing an exceptional environment where mood and aesthetics are important.

The most unusual result is the low correlation between a positive recommendation of a good restaurant and exceptional food quality with outstanding value. This could be because of the ambiguous nature of response frequencies received, and was extensively discussed in paragraph 7.2.3.

7.2.7. MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

The MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance) test measures statistically significant mean differences between independent and dependent variables (DeCoster, 2004; UCLA, n.d.). The test also measures the size and directional correlations among them. The independent or predictor variables can be included as covariates, or in this research, as true independent variables. In other words one might ask: are mean differences among independent variable groups or within a combination of dependent variables likely to occur? In this paragraph, the significant results pertaining to the MANOVA test are discussed. The research's variables and the MANOVA test relationships are illustrated in Figure 7.3; thereafter the results described in more detail within this paragraph.

Figure 7.3: MANOVA Test Structure and Relationship between Factors of this Research
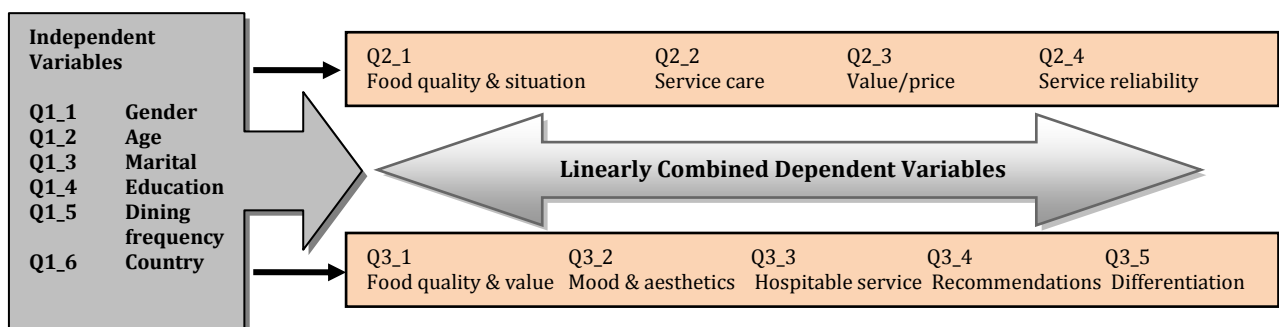
Source: The Researcher's Own Design

In Figure 7.3 it is clear that the new factors are used as dependent variables in a linear relationship, whereas demographics are typified as independent variables (Ainsworth, 2012):

In preparation for the MANOVA testing, the population spread (N) of the survey samples had to be adjusted to have approximately equal cell sizes for all the independent demographical variables (UCC, n.d.). Therefore certain of the independent demographically variable variables needed to be combined to equally spread the N sizes (see 'MANOVA adjustments', Appendix L). It was ensured that the largest N-cell did not represent 1.5 times more than the smallest N-cell. If the N-cells were not combined, smaller N sizes would result in insignificant effects not likely to be detected.

The MANOVA tests done on the dependent frustration variables (as created with the factor analysis in 7.2.4) show the following results, as in Table 7.10:

Table 7.10: MANOVA Test on Frustration Variables

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	DEPENDENT VARIABLES			
	Q2_1 **Food quality & situation**	**Q2_2** **Service care**	**Q2_3** **Value/price**	**Q2_4** **Service reliability**
Q1_1 Gender	p-value = 0.34029; Wilk's Lamba = 0.97249			
Q1_2 Age	P -value = 0.61656; Wilk's Lamba = 0.93981			
Q1_3 Marital Status	p-value = 0.12850; Wilk's Lamba = 0.92526			
Q1_4 Education	p-value = 0.33212; Wilk's Lamba = 0.91943			
Q1_5 Dining Frequency	p-value = 0.35775; Wilk's Lamba = 0.89703			
Q1_6 Country	**p-value = 0.00077; Wilk's Lamba = 0.88910**			
Univariate Results of Country (p-values)*	**0.0001**	0.1053	0.0865	**0.0010**
Cohen's d	**0.06 (Medium)**			**0.52 (Medium)**

Source: MANOVA Test Results

The significant dependent variable results are shown in bold red values in Table 7.10. If the MANOVA test proves significant, then the p-value < 0.05; additionally, at least one of the one-way ANOVA (univariate) tests should indicate significance (UCLA, n.d.). Table 7.10 shows that the MANOVA results for the 'country' independent variable (Q1_6) were significant, where the p-value = 0.00077, thereby far less that the required 0.05 (95% confidence level). Univariate ANOVA results were then calculated (*see 'univariate results'). Within the results of the 'country' independent variable, one would observe that each dependent variable corresponds to a different one-way ANOVA. The bold red p-values of the both Q2_1 and Q2_4 under the independent variable 'country' are less than 0.05, thus the Type 1 error was controlled. The other p-values were larger than the required 0.05, thus showing no significance.

The Cohen's d measurement on the last line of Table 7.10 describes the size of the experimental effect of the significant differences (Thalheimer and Cook, 2002). Benchmarks for interpretation are classified as: 0.2 (small), 0.5 (medium) and 0.8 (large). This provides an additional practical measure to the significance tests conducted. In the case of the frustration factors, both effects seem to be medium, which indicates a moderate significant difference between demographical variables. In other words, Cohen's d of 0.60 (Q2_1) would suggest that the demographical location was associated with approximately half of one standard deviation increase in perception of 'food quality & situation'. A similar result can be made in the case of Q2_4 (0.52).

As a general guideline, MANOVA results dictate that when correlation coefficients among the means are high (>0.8), the set of dependent variables might be problematic for analysis. Fortunately, this study's inter-correlation coefficients of the dependent variables have all fallen between 0.41 and 0.72 (see Appendix S). Usually, moderate correlations among the dependent variables are advisable along a linear axis; best if the range is kept between 0.3 and 0.8. (Laerd Statistics, 2012)

The MANOVA tests done on the delight dependent variables (as created with the factor analysis in 7.2.4) show the following significant results in the red squares, as in Table 7.11:

Table 7.11: MANOVA Test on Delight Variables

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	DEPENDENT VARIABLES				
	Q3_1 Food quality & value	Q3_2 Mood & aesthetics	Q3_3 Hospitable service	Q3_4 Recommendations	Q3_5 Differentiation
Q1_1 Gender	**p-value = 0.03133; Wilk's Lamba = 0.92686**				
Univariate Results of Gender (p-values)*	**0.0374**	**0.0079**	0.17161	0.1643	0.1258
Cohen's d	**0.33 (Small)**	**0.43 (Medium)**			
Q1_2 Age	P -value = 0.70173; Wilk's Lamba = 0.92970				
Q1_3 Marital Status	p-value = 0.18881; Wilk's Lamba = 0.91862				
Q1_4 Education	p-value = 0.07382; Wilk's Lamba = 0.86371				
Q1_5 Dining Frequency	p-value = 0.18583; Wilk's Lamba = 0.85309				
Q1_6 Country	p-value = 0.05526; Wilk's Lamba = 0.93525				

Source: MANOVA Test Results

Table 7.11 suggests that the MANOVA delight factor test result seems to be not as significant as with the frustration factor dependent variables. The MANOVA p-value for the gender independent variable indicates a p-value < 0.05. Univariate ANOVA results were further analysed for each of the dependent variables. With the independent variables of age, marital

status, education, dining frequency and country, the MANOVA p-values were well above the minimum significance level. In the univariate results, the gender (Q1_1) results show the p-values of both Q3_1 and Q3_2 ANOVAs less than alpha (0.05), so they are regarded as significant. This is because both the p-values remain below 0.05 (Q3_1) at 0.03 and 0.007 (Q3_2). However it is apparent that the other gender p-vales are above this minimum requirement (*see 'univariate results').

By observing the bold red values in Table 7.12, the Cohen's d measurement at Q3_1 shows a negligible significant difference in error, whereas the difference at Q3_2 seems more substantial, at 0.43. Cohen's d of 0.33 (Q3_1) would suggest that the gender of respondents was associated with only a third of one standard deviation increase in perception of 'food quality & value'. This means that some significance exists, but because of the population discrepancy, it practically has no real impact on the MANOVA results.

The MANOVA results are further to be applied to the identified hypotheses and discussed in paragraph 7.3.

7.3 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

In the results of the empirical study, several findings contributed to the hypotheses stated in the framework of the study, and the researcher has determined whether they are to be rejected or accepted. The research findings are now summarised within the context of the hypotheses:

H$_1$: The delight and frustration factors from social media review sites and the delight and frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences are similar

This stated hypothesis has been rejected as the factor analysis has shown different factors to represent the results of the survey compared with the factors identified by content analysis of social media review sites. Additionally, because of the different measuring instruments involved, the content analysis results could not effectively be compared with the descriptive statistics results of the empirical survey. Frequencies of specific narrative reactions were recorded by the content analysis method, whereas the survey results measured the intensity

(scale: extremely dislike to like) of dining experience perceptions. Furthermore contextual post-consumption dining evaluations and their expression are markedly different from current perceptions and preferences of the dining experience. Thus it is adequate to state that delight and frustration factors from social media review sites are different and cannot be compared with the same factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences.

H₂: There is a correlation among the delight factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

Diners seem to prefer differentiating their choice of restaurant according to an establishment's mood and aesthetics. Additionally, there was a noticeable high correlation among the delight factors, in that mood and aesthetics seem to correlate well with good service, food quality as well as value for money. (See Table 7.8.)

H₃: There is a correlation among the frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

In general, there were clear correlations evident among the frustration factors, especially when considering the core product quality of food. The lack of food quality has a strong relationship with the lack of service reliability, which includes bringing food on time, at the optimal temperature, and the guest having high expectations. (See Table 7.7.)

H₄: There is a correlation between the frustration and delight factors of the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences

Most frustration and delight factors seem to be evenly correlated, though some stronger relationships were more prominent. Poor food quality with related dire situation had a strong negative relationship with exceptional food quality and value, as well as with exceptionally hospitable service. There was a similar relationship between poor service care and exceptionally hospitable service. The weakest negative correlation value was found between poor service care and positive recommendations to visit a restaurant which did not seem logical. (See Table 7.9.)

H₅: There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive delight factors in restaurant dining experiences

From the MANOVA results there was a statistically significant difference between the respondents' gender and their perception of good food quality and value for money. There was also a statistically significant difference between respondents' gender and their perception of a restaurant with exceptional mood and pleasant aesthetics. In both results presented, p-values remain below the required levels. (See Table 7.11.)

H₆: There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive frustration factors in restaurant dining experiences

The MANOVA results indicated the p-values of both the frustration factors Q2_1 and Q2_4 were less than 0.05, thus the hypothesis was accepted. This explains that although there were significant statistical differences between demographical location of respondents and their perceptions of poor food quality and situation, there were small effect sizes between their means. Additionally, larger significant statistical differences were found between demographical location of respondents and their perception of service reliability. (See Table 7.12.)

To conclude this paragraph, a summary of the hypotheses' test results is provided. Various statistical methods such as correlation, MANOVA and factor analysis were employed to reach the desired outcomes of the research as stated in Chapter 1. A summary of the accepted/rejected hypotheses is provided in Table 7.12:

Table 7.12: Summary of Hypotheses Accepted/Rejected

HYPOTHESES	ACCEPTED OR NOT
H1: The delight and frustration factors from social media review sites and the delight and frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences are similar	Not accepted
H2: There is a correlation among the delight factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences	Accepted
H3: There is a correlation among the frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences	Accepted

H4: There is a correlation between the frustration and delight factors of the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences	Accepted
H5: There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive delight factors in restaurant dining experiences	Accepted
H6: There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive frustration factors in restaurant dining experiences	Accepted

Source: The Researcher's Own Table

From Table 7.12 it is clear that five of the six hypotheses were accepted.

7.4 SUMMARY

This chapter contained the array of results the research had to interpret to reach the research's objectives. The empirical survey results were analysed by many statistical methods:

 i.   Demographical analysis to profile the sample respondents
 ii. Descriptive statistics to determine the characteristics, shape and spread of the sample
 iii. Correlation to determine the strength of relationship between variables
 iv. Factor analysis for discovering patterns among variables to determine possible new underlying factors
 v.   Tests for reliability, using Cronbach's Alpha, to determine the internal consistency for homogeneousness of the measuring instrument
 vi. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to determine interdependency amongst all variables

Amongst all the data analysis methods employed, factor analysis results dictated a revised set of factors. The new set of factors was applied to the study. The chapter concluded with a concise discussion of the results of the hypotheses testing.

In Chapter 8 the study is summarised and conclusive arguments highlighted in answering the research questions. Contributions and recommendations are then made to industry.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 7 provided the results and interpretations of the findings of the investigation conducted into social media reviews with empirical surveys of restaurant dining experiences. It described the systematic process the researcher pursued to prove the intended hypotheses stipulated within the proposed framework of the study. With the quantitative analysis accomplished, the research dictated a revised course of action – a newly created framework to assimilate all the theories explored within this study. This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of all the findings found within this investigation. First the previous chapters will be summarised, then the main conclusions of the research consolidated, and thereafter practical recommendations made to the restaurant industry.

8.2 SUMMARY

In this section a detailed summary of the study will be discussed, firstly referring to the secondary research undertaken (8.2.1), and thereafter the primary research done (8.2.2). Table 8.1 gives an overview of this research project's objectives stated in Chapter 1 (under 1.5), and refers to the section in which it is discussed:

Table 8.1: Summary Overview

RESEARCH TYPE	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES (AS IN CHAPTER 1)	CHAPTER ALLOCATION	PARAGRAPH SECTION DISCUSSED
SECONDARY RESEARCH	To investigate restaurant dining experiences	Chapter 3	8.2.1
	How dining experiences influence social media reviews	Chapters 1,2,3	8.2.1

SECONDARY RESEARCH	To investigate literature on social media, customer experiences of restaurant dining, services marketing and consumer behaviour	Chapter 2-4	8.2.1
	To develop a theoretical framework to conduct content analysis and empirical research	Chapter 5	8.2.1
PRIMARY RESEARCH	To analyse the customer reviews on the social media platform of TripAdvisor	Chapter 6	8.2.2
	To identify the delight and frustration factors of restaurant customers from the customer reviews	Chapter 6	8.2.2
	To empirically test whether these reviewed delight and frustration factors identified are applicable to the restaurant industry by relating them to delight and frustration factors in general dining experiences	Chapter 7	8.2.2
	To make recommendations on the research findings that relate directly to the restaurant industry	Chapter 8	

Source: The Researcher's Own Table

Table 8.1 outlines the type of research, associated objectives, the relevant chapters dealing with the content, and reference to the section within this paragraph.

8.2.1 SECONDARY RESEARCH SUMMARY

Chapter 1 described the background and scope of the research, in conjunction with a preliminary literature review of the main topic variables. The main concepts central to the study were briefly discussed, and the proposed methodology outlined. A proposed framework with various hypotheses was designed and research questions were stated to give direction to the course of the study.

Chapter 2 explored the theoretical overview of social media, their brief history, and the industry developments in terms of applicable consumer behaviour in restaurants. The relationship between social media and the customers' dining experiences was extensively analysed. Online review websites were scrutinised, especially with the focus on TripAdvisor. The main findings were that social networks are customer-driven. The most loyal and engaged of the customers are also the most participative in the marketing process. Most research emphasised the rapid growth in social media. Social media creates opportunities for feedback, increasing customers' participation, knowledge gathering, and peer-related engagement. Online participants generally

trusted information most when it was generated by friends or people they know. Within the dining experience, research results show that the consideration customers give the core product in evaluating restaurants is crucial. Ideally, customers' expectations must be actively managed by informing them adequately, but also by ensuring some room for a pleasant dining surprise.

Relevant research questions to answer in Chapter 2 were:

i. Why do customers participate in social media?
ii. What is the relationship between dining experiences and social media?
iii. Does participation in social media enhance the customers' experience of dining and their respective perceptions of quality?

- Participation of consumers in social media

Social media increases the transparency factor between restaurants and customers (Stokes, 2008). Social media requires and embraces interactivity; they have viral potential, thereby being able to theoretically reach millions of people. Additionally, they create the online means to review and post evidence of an experience of dining during or immediately after product/service delivery. They have not just provided a forum for feedback, but have effectively increased participation in the assessment of the customer dining experiences and knowledge gathering about the quality of restaurants (Doyle, 2008; Safko and Brake, 2009; Chaney, 2009; Gale, 2009). Customers are now informed more than ever, and are therefore prepared for what to expect. This places increased pressure on restaurants to meet and exceed the customers' sustained expectations. Social media often supports the 'assimilation' effect: where consumers would amplify specific positive and negative experiences after an unexpected experience (Williams, 2002). This experience would disproportionally impact their overall verdict of the positive or negative experience outcomes. Social media is regarded as such an appropriate source outlet because of their reach and interactive environment.

- The relationship between dining experiences and social media

The likelihood of customers creating personal relationships with restaurateurs was traditionally limited unless there was direct personal contact during the dining experience. Social media provides the dining customer with a view behind the scenes, thereby seeing the human side of the restaurant business, receiving information about new product developments, events and menus (Levy, 2009). In this way social media exemplifies the brand for diners.

Different motivations draw diners to utilise social media tools, which include: pre- and post-purchase advice seeking, exertion of power, convenience of redress, desire to help the restaurant, self-enhancement, venting of negative feelings, expression of positive emotions, and concern for other customers (Murphy, 2010). Restaurants, being social environments, are most suited for dining customers to adapt and use social media applications to express themselves (Thevenot, 2007).

- Social media and the enhancement of the customers' experience of dining

Technological customer participation and innovations have directly contributed to increased dining satisfaction and restaurant profitability (Dixon *et al.*, 2009). This shows benefits for both dining customers and restaurateurs alike. Personality disposition adds to the propensity of social media use in the consumer process. Human emotions are powerful determinants in customer behaviour, and are effectively expressed through social media channels (Sanaktekin and Aydin, 2010). Especially where surprise (pleasant or otherwise) is concerned with the dining experience, a convenient expressive outlet would naturally be through social media. The 'activist consumer' has emerged with the event of the social media, by demanding attention from the businesses dealt with (Rubinson, 2009). For relief associated with a frustrating dining experience, social media has been considered to be instrumental in the recovery process of alienated customers (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009).

Chapter 3 focused on services marketing and its contribution to the restaurant industry. Extensive literature research was conducted to explore all facets of customer experiences and expectations, especially those pertaining to the dining experience. The restaurant industry has received due attention, theoretically aiding the reader to appreciate the dining context, and to realise the types of customers and their specific choices. Customer word-of-mouth, being of fundamental importance to dining experiences and online reviews, is also discussed within the framework of the study. Central to the study are the concepts of delight and frustration factors. Desired service refers to what the customer hopes to receive, whereas adequate service is the level of service that the customer is likely to accept. These are the upper and lower boundaries of what the customer expects to receive, based on his/her prior experiences. Exceeding the desired service brings in an element of 'surprise' to determine a state of 'delight' – a factor that was not expected. Being delighted or frustrated requires disconfirmation, beyond desired or adequate service delivery. Being delighted or frustrated means the customer should not have expected the exceptionally good or bad service in the first place, thereby being pleasantly or unpleasantly surprised, and this feeling being accompanied by joy or anger.

Relevant research questions to be answered in Chapter 3 were:

iv.   What is the relationship between customers' expectations and experiences of dining?

v.   What are delight and frustration factors in customer experiences?

vi.   What is word-of-mouth (WOM) and e-WOM?

- **The relationship between customers' expectations and experiences of dining**

Understanding the needs of customers and what commercially creates value is not enough – one also needs to consider the associated human attributes and behaviour variables present throughout the consumer process (McDonald and Alpert, 2007). Restaurant customers compare their actual dining experiences with their expectations, which is termed the 'confirmation paradigm' (Longart, 2008). They substantiate the performance of a product/service by using a customer behaviour assessment process. The management of customer expectations is crucial, especially to the quality of customer dining experiences (Doyle, 2008; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Gale, 2009).

Peer pressure certainly exists among dining customers to convey their expectations about product/service quality. The online sharing of these expectations to educate and inform others, in turn manages other customers' expectations effectively (Flamberg, 2010). The occurrence of customer expectations becomes directly linked to the experiencing of the product, especially in the restaurant industry. Once the decision to consume a meal is made upon preconceived expectations, it most often cannot be undone. Customers continuously try to reassure themselves about the validity of their purchases (Smith, 2003). Expectations are founded on past buying experiences, where beliefs play an important role in shaping customer behaviour (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.,* 2007; Kotler *et al.,* 2003).

- **The delight and frustration factors of customer dining experiences**

The desired outcome of customer relationship management is not just a quest for customer satisfaction, but ultimately delight (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). Delighted customers have more reasons to remain loyal, and this therefore leads to favourable word-of-mouth marketing. Desired service refers to what the customer hopes to receive, whereas adequate service is the level of service that the customer is likely to accept. These are the upper and lower boundaries

of what the customer expects to receive, based on prior experiences (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003).

Exceeding the desired service brings in an element of 'surprise' to determine a state of 'delight' – a factor that was not expected. So too with the surprise factor of going below adequate service, which Hensens *et al.* (2010) termed 'frustration factors'. This indicates a different emotional 'tipping point' for each dining customer, where their inner state is independently influenced by the external context in such a way that verbal stimulation is unavoidable (Longart, 2008). Conclusive results show that frustrated customers are 90% certain not to repurchase at a business again, unless effective service recovery was accomplished (Solomon *et al.*, 1999).

- Word-of-mouth (WOM) and e-WOM

In frequenting restaurants, dining customers look to many sources in finding relevant information to confirm their choices. Immediately following the customer experience, customers normally formulate an evaluation based on their post-experience perceptions of the extent of satisfaction, quality, loyalty and emotional engagement. The dining customers express themselves when the tipping point is reached, by communal sharing of emotion, intensified by the element of surprise. Positive word-of-mouth highly correlates with increased levels of dining satisfaction (Longart, 2008). The intensity of surprise is directly correlated with the frequency or intensity of word-of-mouth. Using social media demands rich media content abilities, which enhances the natural characteristic extensions of word-of-mouth, turning electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) into a phenomenal marketing method (Brownell and Newman, 2009; Pantelidis, 2010).

There are three reasons for word-of-mouth's power: firstly it is interactive and thus creates context to the message; secondly it allows for feedback and confirmation; and thirdly the credibility of the source is perceived as far superior (Blythe, 2005). Online opinion leaders (efluentials) are valuable for e-WOM in that they influence fellow diners' perceptions of quality products/services of restaurants (Solomon *et al.*, 1999)

Chapter 4 concentrated its focus on consumer behaviour, exploring the theories surrounding the motivations of the customers' buying process. The dining context was subsequently brought into the theoretical discussions by relating consumer behaviour to online versus off-line factors, with specific analysis of the contextual differences. Contextual differences explored in this chapter include the customers' perceptions of: brand conditioning, positive effects of interactions, consistency of exposure to service/product, behavioural incentives, changing

beliefs, shifting importance according to values, adding promoted beliefs and value, and changing the ideal value perception.

The relevant research questions to answer in Chapter 4 were:

vii.   How does customer behaviour influence dining experiences?

viii.   What factors influence the online and off-line context of customers' dining experiences?

- Customer behaviour and dining experiences

For understanding holistic customer dining experiences one would need to synthesise the design of paradigms that customers form of the factors that influence their internal and external environments. Determinants of an ideal dining context are found in the performance outcomes sought by customers and their related buying behaviour. These performance outcomes pertain to the expectations formed about the product/services. The customer behaviour process relies heavily on the customers' determination of product goals and whether their expected satisfaction levels will match the experience outcomes. Therefore the customers' choices are influenced by contextually internalised drivers (Verma, 2007).

Contemporary social psychology research highlights intentionality as central to goal determination (Ratneshwar *et al.*, 2003). It involves a constant assessment between different goals and the relationship between them. Goal determination considers the trade-offs and compromises so often required when pursuing and satisfying some, to the detriment of others. Understanding theories of consumer behaviour contexts is necessary to appreciate the decision-making process of dining customers. All customer behaviour processes are affected by these contextual factors.

- Factors that influence the online and off-line context of customers' dining experiences

One of the most important factors to consider is the recent shift of commercial power from the providers to the customers (Thevenot, 2007). Online opinion sharing, review sites, blogs and product feedback have effectively levelled the consumerism playing field for competitors; additionally they have increased the buyers' power. Buyers' online characteristics and intrinsic motivations are important, but often both real-world and online contextual factors are not accounted for or ignored. Customers' dining perceptions are context reliant; their attitudes,

beliefs, wants and needs are continually in the process of being re-evaluated. This becomes an especially meaningful observation with the immergence of Web 2.0 technologies.

The human's evaluation process is deemed the highest activity of cognitive thought; more so than the lesser stages of analysis and synthesis (Krathwohl, 2002). The evaluation process can also be seen as equivalent to 'reasoning' (Cant *et al.*, 2002). The online communities' word-of-mouth context seems to be vastly different from that of the traditional media, which typically consists of journalistic contributions or advertising media (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010). However, social media has the potential to convey an underlying complex cultural and social context among participants.

In restaurant dining, product purchases and related services can be characterised by being high-risk and high-involvement, thus the risk for post-purchase dissonance is high. These customer insecurities can be reduced somewhat by customers being exposed to post-purchase assessments and peer-related information like online reviews. Enough post-experience information should be available to dining customers to eradicate any post-purchase dissonance (Williams, 2002). Word-of-mouth and e-WOM makes this information readily available, ultimately so with Web 2.0 technologies.

Chapter 5 reiterated the abundance of theories and findings in a succinct approach, specifically describing the logic of the research process. A model illustrating the literature study provided the rationale for pursuing a framework to further conduct the research. The chapter provided a sound prelude to the theoretical base of the methodological steps to be pursued. This includes the compiled illustration of the relationships between all the identified variables in previous chapters. The chapter further discusses the main issues surrounding customer dining experiences that are either 'expected' or associated with an element of 'surprise'. Delight and frustration factors are derived from positive and negative 'surprises'. Further, the post-experience evaluation phases were identified, especially in relation to customer feedback methods and social media-based reviews.

8.2.2. PRIMARY RESEARCH SUMMARY

Chapter 6 showed the methodology in detail, but in clear, deliberate intentions and steps. Three major methodological phases were followed throughout the study:

i. Secondary research (literature review) provided the theoretical base for the study's framework, and produced the initial content analysis factors.

ii. The content analysis sampled 210 reviews, which resulted in a total of 893 coded reactions. A total of 219 delight and frustration factors were identified and eventually filtered down to 45 factors, which were subject to a frequency criterion of ≥6.

iii. Eventually, these 21 frustration and 24 delight factors formed the base for the empirical survey item descriptors, or variables as they became known. These variables were structured in a survey questionnaire with a perception evaluation scale of six intervals. Two pilot surveys were administered before the final two survey versions were sent out via social media and e-mail to convenience samples.

Chapter 7 discussed the results and analysis of each of the statistical methods employed. All of these results were immediately interpreted and discussed. The findings as related to the hypotheses were discussed. It was found that the following hypotheses were accepted:

- H2: There is a correlation among the delight factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences
- H3: There is a correlation among the frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences
- H4: There is a correlation between the frustration and delight factors of the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences
- H5: There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive delight factors in restaurant dining experiences
- H6: There are statistical differences between the demographics of restaurant customers and how they perceive frustration factors in restaurant dining experiences

The following hypothesis was rejected:

- H1: The delight and frustration factors from social media review sites and the delight and frustration factors from the general public's perceived restaurant dining experiences are similar

The interpretations of the content analysis and empirical research are now brought into the triangulation of overall research findings. In paragraph 8.3 the main findings are to be concluded within the relevance of the research framework and its contribution thereto.

8.3   CONCLUSIONS

8.3.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Concluding the findings of delight factors as researched by means of content analysis, one needs to observe the most popular variables (24) with the highest frequencies achieved for each variable. A summary of the delight variable results shows:

- 'Excellent food quality' is the most noticeable delight variable (71): research results show the consideration customers give the core product of food in evaluating restaurants is the most significant (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003; Schoemaker, 1996).
- 'Excellent service quality' was much less featured (24): research results show doing the basics right for restaurants is imperative, i.e. appropriate cost, cheerful greeting, and attentive service (Titz *et al.*, 2004; Grupta *et al.*, 2007; Menon and Dubé, 1999);
- Service consistency is imperative because of the many intangibility variables that determine quality.
- 'Recommendation to others' (33): the propensity of diners to speak out about exceptional experiences; word-of-mouth endorsements from customers; they are frequently quoted as a powerful source of forming expectations.
- 'Trust' is an important value in relationships and is based upon the customers' perceptions of previous experiences.
- Preconceived emotional memory based on customers' memories of previous dining experiences is a powerful force within their perception of product and service quality (Peppers and Rogers, 2004; Harridge-March, 2006).
- 'Delicious food', 'attentive service' and 'excellent food taste' was next in order of responses (19, 16, and 15 respectively).

Certain deductions, and consequently conclusions, can be made as to the most popular variables with the highest frequencies of frustration:

- 'Not recommending to others' (34), which demonstrates the general altruistic nature of social media reviewers toward other participants.
- 'Poor food quality' (27): high frustration frequency, but not as prominent as with the corresponding delight factor.

- 'Overpriced/expensive'(26): a popular reaction to frustration experiences; customers often rationalise their purchase choices by validating and comparing their decisions to alternative possibilities; they reassure themselves about their purchases (Futrell, 1990).

- 'Uncompetitiveness' regarding other restaurants (22): customers frequently compare restaurant establishments for value.

- 'High expectations that were not met' (15): as expectations grow the risk of disappointment about perceived value of the product involved will also proportionally increase (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007; Grönroos, 2003; Solomon *et al.*, 1999).

- 'Satisfaction' links with 'expectations' (Yűksel and Rimmington, 1998). Additionally, customer expectations are founded on past buying experiences where beliefs play an important role in shaping customer behaviour (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003; Shoemaker *et al.*, 2007; Kotler *et al.* 2003).

In conclusion, the main similarities/differences between delight and frustration variables as applied to customers dining experience are:

i.   Customers regard extreme service quality variables as relatively unimportant in relation to the larger dining experience.

ii. Customers regard extreme food and beverage quality variables as crucial in the dining experience.

iii. Value for money becomes increasingly an issue as customers become frustrated, more so than if the dining experience is associated with delight.

iv. Frustration occurs more often when dining is associated with a perception that hygiene is lacking, or else from the prospect of waiting in long queues, or experiencing unpleasant noise levels. These factors were not a concern when experiencing delightful dining.

8.3.2. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The analysis of the demographical findings of the respondents that were sampled for the empirical surveys yielded the following results:

- Most respondents were married (43%), although closely followed by singles (42%).

- The largest proportion of respondents (30%) was under the age of 30 years, followed by those in their forties (28%).

- High education levels were present in the sample of respondents, with both post-graduate (45%) and graduate (37%) accounting for more than 80%.

- Dining frequencies at restaurants were high; more than a quarter (26%) dined out once a week, but on the other hand a similar proportion (27%) dined out once a month, or less.

In general one may conclude that the sample respondents were to a large extent representative of the population of 'regular restaurant fine diners', being affluent, educated, and age-appropriate. They were also of some global relevance, although the majority were from South Africa (54%) and the Netherlands (24%).

The results of the empirical surveys' frequency tables have concluded the following about the most important variables and their relationship within delight and frustration factors, as in Table 8.2:

Table 8.2: Relation between Frustration and Delight Factors

FRUSTRATION FACTORS		DELIGHT FACTORS
Poor service quality Service unfriendly/rude	⬌	Exceptional good service quality
Poor food quality ✓ Stale food ✓ Food tasteless	⬌	Exceptional good food quality ✓ Delicious food ✓ Exceptional good food taste
No value for money Value unreasonable/unfair	⬌	Value for money
Lack of hygiene	**Not related**	Excellent ambience or atmosphere Restaurant being authentic or genuine

Source: The Researcher's Own Compilation

Table 8.2 illustrates the relationship between the variables of both factors, and it infers that the top three are strongly related. This in effect means that customers perceive service quality in similar intense reactions, either a pleasant or unpleasant surprise. The same can be concluded for food quality and value for money. However, the lack of hygiene proved to be a considerable frustration factor, which had no related delight factor identified. So too have delightful 'situational factors' not identified a corresponding frustration factor, as ambience and authenticity are uniquely positive dining experiences.

The statistical process of factor analysis resulted in a new set of frustration and delight factors. The new set of delight factors includes food quality and value, mood and aesthetics, hospitable service, recommendations and differentiation. The new set of frustration factors includes food quality and situation, service care, value/price, and service reliability.

Correlation analysis indicated noteworthy relationships between the new factors (variables):

- Within frustration factors:
  - When considering the core product (food), it correlates highly with the perceived lack of value.
  - The lack of food quality correlates strongly with the lack of service reliability (i.e. considering bringing food on time, at the optimal temperature, having high expectations).
- Within delight factors:
  - Diners seem to prefer to differentiate their choice according to restaurants' mood and aesthetics; the correlation being strong between variables.
  - Mood and aesthetics seem to correlate well with good service, good food quality and value for money.
- Within delight and frustration factors:
  - Poor food quality and situation have a strong correlation (negative) with exceptional food quality and value, as well as with exceptional hospitable service.
  - A similar strong correlation exists between poor service care and exceptional hospitable service.

From the multivariate analysis of variance the empirical results illustrated statistically significant differences relevant to the demographic locations of survey respondents:

i. Customers from different countries have different perceptions of dire food quality with accompanied dire dining situations.
ii. Customers from different countries have different perceptions of bad service reliability.
iii. Male or female customers have different perceptions of superior food quality accompanied by value for money.
iv. Male or female customers have different perceptions of superior mood and aesthetics.

8.3.3. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIVE FINDINGS

Excellent food quality is most noticeable delight factor which has stayed consistent throughout the wide array of research results. This finding reveals the crucial consideration customers give the core product of food and beverages in evaluating restaurants and their dining experiences.

Correspondingly, poor food quality is an important consideration, but does not feature quite as prominently. However, where poor food quality does feature, it is in its relationship with the lack of service reliability. This was one of the new factors that were brought into the product equation with the factor analysis. Service reliability includes potential customer irritations such as not bringing food on time, food being below the optimal temperature, or the customers having high expectations and then being let down.

Dining customers' source of frustration was often perceived as the experience being overpriced or expensive. The dining customers often rationalised their purchase choices, by comparing their actual dining experiences with their expectations, which is termed the 'confirmation paradigm' (Longart, 2008). However, when they felt that there was no value for money, the frustration factor related highly to core products, food and beverages. The factor analysis has in many ways qualified that value needs to be associated with a certain aspect of service, product or feature. Without the factor qualifier, value seems to be devoid of experiential context.

In the content analysis' results, the responses of the variable 'lack of hygiene' were relatively low. However, with the empirical surveys they stood out as an extreme 'dislike' which drew over 81% of respondents. This can be explained in that matters of hygiene do not frequently occur (a measure of content analysis), but when and if they do, this evokes extreme reactions (perceived dislikes – empirical survey).

The original factor of 'excellent ambience or atmosphere' has proved to be very similar to the new factor of 'mood and aesthetics'. The latter was a favourite preference among survey respondents, although this was not the case in the frequencies of review content. Diners' preferences and perceptions of the dining experience seem to be very different to what they actually experience and write about in reviews. Thus it can be concluded that mood and aesthetics are essential, especially when diners differentiate between their favourite restaurants.

Excellent service quality was much less featured in the overall research results than expected, but it did illustrate that managing the service basics for restaurants is imperative. The new

factor of hospitable service included welcoming, professional, attentive and friendly service, which received an equally high expected response rate.

Service consistency has proven to be imperative because of the many intangibility variables that customers would identify within the restaurant setting. Service consistency has manifested various augmented qualities of mood and aesthetics, value for money, and the perception that the restaurant is authentic or genuine.

Online reviews have highlighted the high tendency of diners to recommend (along with not recommending) a restaurant to other potential customers. Frequently diners articulated after their experiences that they would (not) recommend. This shows the undeniable propensity of diners to speak out about exceptional experiences, seeking word-of-mouth endorsements from customers. It is apparent that word-of-mouth endorsements are a powerful source of forming diners' expectations, and this demonstrates the general altruistic nature of social media. Interestingly, recommendations did not feature with the empirical data analysis, most probably because extreme 'likes' or 'dislikes' were not associated with the perception of recommending.

In conclusion, different nationalities would perceive bad food, quality and bad service reliability differently. In addition, men and women would perceive superior food quality, mood and aesthetics, and value for money in a different way.

8.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY TO NEW KNOWLEDGE

According to Chapter 1 of this study, the primary objective of this research was to investigate social media reviews and customers' restaurant dining experiences. Social media reviews, like TripAdvisor, give solid contextual feedback to restaurateurs. Meaningful issues relating to delight and frustration factors can be identified by content analysis, and addressed as part of the process of managing customers' expectations and experiences. Establishing the unique combination of variables (social media, customer experiences, and restaurant dining) has built new paradigms of understanding for the industry.

A further intention was to identify the delight and frustration factors in restaurant dining by means of content analysis on TripAdvisor reviews. These factors were identified, and certain of

these factors' variables highlighted as most prevalent when online reviews are analysed. A proposed theoretical framework was structured to indicate direction in the study.

The study then further empirically tested whether these identified frustration and delight factors are indeed applicable to restaurant dining. Factor analysis proved that the factors identified in the content analysis were not the same as those factors identified within perceived restaurant preferences. The major contributor to new knowledge from this study is the conclusion that generally perceived preferences of dining experiences are indeed different from those found in user-generated content of online review sites. Whereas many restaurateurs rely on online reviews for valuable customer feedback, this does not necessarily imply their dining experience preferences. As research has shown, the contexts are fundamentally different.

This study provided a new set of guidelines to restaurateurs on the relationship between online reviews and perceived dining experiences.

8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study, being research applied specifically to the particular industry, necessitates that recommendations are supplied that may lead to the benefit of restaurateurs and, ultimately, the dining customers. The restaurant industry is one where business failure is most prevalent (Grabmeier, 2012). As many as 60 percent of restaurants fail during their first three years of operation. Many of these failures can be attributed to restaurateurs not managing the expectations and experiences of dining customers.

Whereas restaurants have been around for centuries, technology has increasingly changed the interaction landscape between restaurants and diners. Web 2.0 and social media in particular have contributed greatly to the nature, reach and scope of customer relations. The benefits of social media marketing are extensive according to Stokes (2008), in that 'viral marketing' can have exponential growth and reach, and that potential managerial insights into the target market demographics can be extensive. Social media capitalises on the creativity of the customers to spread the restaurant's message at a low cost, also establishing direct and personal contact between managers and customers.

Particular findings of this research that are of value to the restaurant industry are:

i. This study has brought forward a new set of guidelines for restaurateurs in terms of the relationship between online reviews and perceived dining experiences. Restaurateurs must realise that online written reviews do not directly translate to diners' preferred dining experiences in a restaurant. Post-experience reactions are contextually different from prevailing dining preferences. Online reviews are important in facilitating customer expectations, but not so in forming customers' preferences. This especially became obvious in this study when interpreting the different factors' results of hygiene, aesthetics, mood, and ambiance.

ii. Food quality and not so much service is the ultimate determinant of customers' sentiments towards the reputation of a restaurant. It remains at the core of the product/service combination, and cannot be compromised. Without a good product, along with consistent delivery, diners are reluctant to speak out to others in favour of the restaurant. Poor food quality is frequently associated with a lack of service reliability, especially regarding food not being hot, lengthy waiting periods, or being let down.

iii. Value for money ideally needs to be associated with a specific service or product feature for it to be meaningful to the restaurateur. General perceptions of value *per se* concerning the overall dining experience did not show significant research results.

iv. Outstanding mood and aesthetics are especially important when diners differentiate between their favourite restaurants.

v. Customers particularly displayed an extreme dislike when there is a perception that hygiene is lacking, especially because it is not a common occurrence. It would certainly evoke surprise with an accompanied highly negative emotion when it does happen.

vi. Basic hospitality such as being welcoming, professional, attentive and friendly is increasingly essential for the sustained success of a restaurant.

8.6 SHORTCOMINGS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Throughout both phases of the research it would have been beneficial to have similar sampling frames to represent a comparable global scope. It was a challenge to find a suitable sample representing all types of socio-cultural populations on TripAdvisor's review site. By identifying

a sample of seven global locations that are highly Internet-active, it performed well for the content analysis. The collection of empirical data posed a challenge to establish a similar sample. Ideally cluster samples should be drawn from the required populations of the seven global cities, in order to be fully representative. However, as discussed, this shortcoming did not have much of an adverse outcome in the expected results.

Related areas of further study could include:

- Using the newly identified delight and frustration factors, redoing the content analysis and further testing it empirically. It is suggested it would be beneficial to compare such results with the findings of this research, by conducting a longitudinal research
- This study's scope focused on the dining customers' perspectives while the manager's interactive but relevant role in the consumer process was mostly ignored. Conducting similar surveys on restaurateurs and managers would be a good addition to expand the existing theories and contribute to alternative findings
- Using the study of memetics to determine diners' intricate preferences where the study explores the infectiousness of ideas conveyed to customers via social media (Marsden, 1998). This science originates from the premise that customers do not consciously decide on their own buying behaviour. Further study could explore the different pathways of their predetermined consumer behaviour

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

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A. COMPILATION OF RESTAURANT REVIEWS

(AS AT 5ᵀᴴ AUGUST 2011)

PLEASE NOTE: _THE CODED REVIEWS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST_

Neh

#*1*of 202 restaurants in Tallinn

32 ratings

Lootsi 4, Tallinn 10151, Estonia

+3726022222 | www.neh.ee

Price range: $17-$70

Dining options: Lunch, Dinner, Reservations

Good for: Romance, Doing business, Local cuisine, Special occasions, Entertaining clients

"incredible and mindboggling !"

Reviewed July 27, 2011

Wow, never expected this quality in a former Sovjet State, this is Michelin star quality. How did the Chef manage to get unnoticed to this level? And not only the quality of the food, the service is impecable... my compliments!

"Fantastic service and food"

Reviewed May 16, 2011

The reviews are not wrong we had a lovely meal at this restaurant the week before they went the island for the summer. Thankfully we booked a reservation at this restaurant a few weeks before we flew to Tallin, we were looking forward to it and we were not dissappointed with the food and service and the whole evening was wonderful. The fact the 3 course dinner was such a bargin was just an added bonus. worth a visit when they get back to Tallin.

"A great experience"

Reviewed May 8, 2011

We had dinner at Neh for a group of 23 that fitted well into their separate dining room upstairs. The room has a cosy atmosphere just right for an enjoyable evening. Dinner was great. Every course was a culinary delight in its own right, the veal cheeks were particularly delicious. We relied on the sommelier's choice of wine and were not disappointed. Neh is a great place for enjoying modern Estonian cuisine that is worth its price.

"Fantastic seasonal restaurant in Tallinn"

Reviewed May 5, 2011

It is a testament to this restaurant that they have only been open since 1st December 2010 and are already number 1 on TripAdvisor. We booked for the end of season restaurant closing party on 30th April before the team head off to the Padaste Manor spa for the summer and the experience was fantastic. The host could not have been more welcoming when we arrived and greeted us like we had been dining there for months instead of it being our first experience. The food was fabulous and the staff were very attentive and well informed without being itntrusive. The 3 courses were very good value. Sadly you won't be able to dine here until 1st September when the team relocates back to Tallinn for the winter but if we find ourselves back in the city in Winter then we will definitely go back to the restaurant.

"Great restaurant!"

Reviewed May 5, 2011

I went there for a lunch break and experienced a great service and cuisine. We had a 3 set menu. Everything was made out of local ingredients which speaks about the quality of that place. I kindly suggest it to everyone. The price was fair enough. 3 set menu cost 13 euro that day.

"Excellent"

Reviewed April 27, 2011

Great menu for good price. I recommend this restaurant.

"Wonderful restaurant"

Reviewed April 21, 2011

Went there on a Sunday for lunch and had the 3 course set menu. Everything was delicious and provided excellent value for money. Staff was professional and attentive without being pushy.

Unfortunately they are closing down for the summer soon but if I'm ever back in Tallinn during the winter-season I'll definitely be visiting again.

"Great value"

Reviewed April 16, 2011

Very nice experience. We chose supper menu (22€), which included salad as starter, pork for main course and chocolate cake for dessert. Food was great, tasting very fresh. Only minus comes from too fast food delivery -there wasn't almost time to catch your breath between courses.

"An evening full of surprises."

Reviewed April 15, 2011

Just a few days ago I was lucky to visit neh and spend an evening in their most exclusive table - the chef's table. Since our table was practically in the kitchen the experience was nothing I had expected. The service was absolutely VIP, we had a really lovely waitress Kristel who was very attentive and thoughtful at all times. Besides our fine waitress we had a lot of attention from the cooks and the sous-chef Martin who introduced every dish and also explained how the food was prepared. He answered all our smart or rather foolish questions so many thanks to him for being so kind. At first the sous-chef gave us a brief overview of the menu which created some ideas of what to be ready for but really we didn't have a clue what to expect. Even if we didn't know what was coming we weren't disappointed for a second. Every dish was different, unbelievably fresh in taste and simply delicious. We were served about seven to ten stunning courses and I can honestly say some of them forced me to overcome myself but that is only good. To sum it up we had a wonderful, unexpected and a very special evening enjoying great food in the heart of the restaurant. It was a truly unique experience and I suggest it to everyone who likes to eat well, enjoys great serviceand is interested in what goes on in the kitchen.

"Underground surprise"

Reviewed March 25, 2011

Completely hidden in a ghetto, Neh surprised us with a service and quality Estonian food. I've now been there couple of times already and there will probably be more visits.

Drink Bar & Grill

35 ratings

Cuisines: Bar, Grill, Fish & Chips, English

Vaike Karja 8, Tallinn 10140, Estonia

Price range: $3-$18

Dining options: Breakfast/Brunch, Lunch, Dinner, Late Night, Dessert

Good for: Bar scene, Entertaining clients, Dining on a budget

"Amazing food and great friendly atmosphere"

Reviewed August 3, 2011 **NEW**

Have just got back from a stay in Tallin and fortunately found the Drink Baar early on in the holiday. The food is to die for, the beer batter on the fish and chips was top rate and the pork cooked in cider with roast potatoes was heavenly (we don't normally go back to any one place on holiday, but the food was so good and reasonably priced that we went back a few times). The choice of beers & ciders is huge, although the house lager and house wine were good enough for us not to want to try any others. A TV is available for watching sports through the day and the evening is lively with everyone in the bar being so friendly and welcoming. Would definately go back next time I am in Tallinn.

"Wide range of beers and great food."

Reviewed July 21, 2011

First time I walked in the bar didn't expect much, but wow, the fish n' chips are great, and the burger is also awesome. Right prices too. Go with some spare time, it might be crowded.

"Reasonably Priced, nothing unusual""

Reviewed June 15, 2011

If like us on Day one you just wanted something simple, known to you and well priced then this place ticks the boxes. No real "local" dishes to speak off but to be honest we were tired and just wanted a steak and some chips, please do explore the local cuisine afterwards though!!

225

"My Favourite Bar in Tallinn"

Reviewed June 14, 2011

Every time I visit Tallinn I must find time to visit this place too. I especially like their ciders; in Finland they tend to give the title "cider" to all sorts of strange mixtures of fruit and berry juices with alcohol. No, I want mine just like served at Drink with a reasonable price. The food is also very good, I just love their cottage pie!

"Great food and drink"

Reviewed June 1, 2011

While visiting familly in Tallinn one of the first places we went to eat was here. They had a great selection of beers and good food. I really liked the fried cheese balls. It is quiet, relaixing and has a very friendly staff.

"My favorite Bar in Tallinn"

Reviewed May 31, 2011

On a recommendation from a friend, I went to Drink Bar upon arriving in Tallinn. After visiting one or two other bars, I found myself returning to this bar over the course of my stay. Not only is the food delicious, but the atmosphere is very welcoming and James' knowledge of European beers AND micro-brews in the states was much appreciated. I enjoyed playing a few rounds of cribbage and sampling a few different beers... and most definitely will return again to Drink Bar. Thank you James' and staff for an excellent experience!

"keep coming back to this excellent bar and food"

Reviewed May 14, 2011

Make several trips to Tallinn - business and pleasure - this bar has always had a friendly atmosphere - not pretentious - excellent food served quickly - fish and chips the best ever - advise everyone I know who goes to Tallinn to make a visit to this bar - beers are always perfect ....If you are in Tallinn - seek out this one - owner and staff are delightful ......

"Best Fish and Chips ever"

Reviewed May 9, 2011

Tallinn is quite an expensive city when it comes to dining out and having paid out alot on evening meals it was great to find a retaurant that was reasonably priced and served great food as well. There were 4 people in our party we all had the Fish and Chips and agreed that these were the best any of us had eaten anywhere. The place isn't posh but its got a nice atmosphere and the service was good. The beer selection is extensive and we thought it would be rude if we didn't sample at least five of them, the ladies had a bottle of Rose wine between them and we all had starers and desert. The Bill was less than 60 euros. It's only quite small but worth waiting for a table if it's busy.

"Best Pub in Tallinn"

Reviewed May 9, 2011

Drink it without a doubt the best pub in Tallinn. The range of beer is fantastic, and it has the best atmosphere of any drinking spot in town.

"Not as nice as what people say"

Reviewed May 7, 2011

I've been to Drink Bar during my stay in Tallinn and all started well; nice selection of beers, menu looked good and nice girls behind the bar.... Well it all turned sour very fast. I ordered one of the beer and came flat, and not sure the bartenders knew how to deal with such sutuation since I'm not going to drink flat beer and then feel sick, at least in the UK they'll get it right away. I then ordered food with what they call mushy peas, well again frozen garden peas barely mashed...The "regulars" were also taking over the bar and seemed to gets served well before others, while i was standing being the cashier for about 5 minutes. And then the price, well over other bars in Tallinn... All in all, not a place I'll spend too much time at. I'd rather go to Molley Mallones, or even Nimeta... That says it all.

Fellini

#**161**of 202 restaurants in Tallinn

17 ratings

Cuisines: Italian

Kinga 1, Tallinn, Estonia

Price range: $15-$22

Dining options: Reservations

"Avoid this place - there are far nicer and cheaper places with better service"

Reviewed July 28, 2011

We ate here on our first night out. The food was average, definitely not terrible (I ate the pizza), but our lingering memory was having the waiter explain to us that the service charge on the bill (10%) was not in fact for service (the obvious implication being that we had to tip him). In general the atmosphere was ok (the square is nice), but they rushed us out of there and it was expensive. Compared to the other places we ate at during our time there, this was definitely the worst.

"really expensive and terrible food"

Reviewed July 22, 2011

We ordered 3 pizzas, coca cola, one beer and mineral water. The cost was 65 euros and the pizzas were terrible. Tables were dirty etc. They add 30% even to the high prices shown in the menu: 20% tax and 10% 'tourist fee' were added. The 'tourist fee' is not used in other restaurants in Tallinn as far as we know.

"Tourist trap but good wine"

Reviewed July 21, 2011

Awoid at all coats. There are a dosin places in Tallinn that offer moore pr. Euro.

"Don´t visit Fellini in Tallinn"

Reviewed July 1, 2011

This place is managed by russians, not italians. Mafia chief is sitting in the table and the staff is eating in the restaurant. Food is awful and over priced. Only italians are the aprons of the staff and Solaia and Sassicaia on the wine list (250-300 €)! Avoid it!

"Food is bad and service low level but prize the highest in town"

Reviewed July 1, 2011

Ordered starters and pizza. Starters came with the pizza after LONG wait. Pizza was almost cold and nothing special. The biggest supprise was when the cheque arrived. There was an extra charge added (10 % !). This was mentioned according to the manager on the first page of the menu. SO REMEMBER TO READ THE FIRST PAGE CAREFULLY ! Can't recommend this place to anybody.

"The worst meal ever!"

Reviewed June 29, 2011

My husband and I had lunch at this restaurant today and we are still angry about the food, service and most of all the state of the toilets! We ordered the lasagne and penne pasta. When it arrived we were so disappointed, pasta was very poor and tasteless but the lasagne was terrible, looked like it was under the grill for ages, dried out and hard. Complained to the waiter and he said nothing. When the bill arrived they had deducted 2euros from the bill, big deal!, all the extra charges they put on the bill meant we still had to pay 26.62 for rubbish. But it was the condition of the toilets that were appalling, so dirty and smelly. If we had used them before the meal we would have left right away. A terrible start to our first day in Tallinn.

"Waste of Money"

Reviewed June 25, 2011

Out of a party of six only two of the meals were acceptable, the rest awful. Overpriced with mysterious extra charges, tasteless food and surly service. We did complain but the staff seem to be so adept at dealing with complaints for some reason. Don't bother with this establishment.

"Total scam!!"

Reviewed June 20, 2011

We ordered mixed grill for 36 € for just meat for two persons. French frieze was side order. Beer and coffey was very expensive. The double espresso was single. Tax and service fee was added after. Total 36 € per person for meal with just one beer and coffey is too much. Don't visit this restaurant.

"Awful restaurant"

Reviewed June 20, 2011

A terrible restaurant. Poor service, bad food, rude prices and dirty cloths and cutlery. We felt really ripped off, and it was a boring start to my first visit to Tallinn. Do not eat at this restaurant!

"absolute crap"

Reviewed May 11, 2011

I visited with family and the food was completely bland, tasteless and extremely overpriced. It was actually much more expensive than the Old Hanse and the Pepper Sack which by the way have excellent food at a cheaper price. The waitresses were more interested in fixing dates for the night than in looking after the needs of customers. Please avoid this place unless you want to spend money to understand how crap the food was...

Pike Place Chowder

#**1**of 2,057 restaurants in Seattle

139 ratings

Neighborhood: Downtown

1530 Post Alley, Seattle, WA 98101

206-267-2537

Dining options: Breakfast/Brunch, Lunch, Dinner, Takeout

Good for: Families with children, Local cuisine, Outdoor seating, Dining on a budget

"There is a reason there is always a line!"

Reviewed August 4, 2011 **NEW**

Great food. My wife had the seafood chowder and crab roll while I had the SW chicken/corn chowder. Everything was great and tasty. The food had tons of flavor and we enjoyed every bite. The long lines do not lie.

"A great chowder"

Reviewed July 30, 2011 **NEW**

If you are at Pike Place Market then this is where you want to get a bowl of chowder. The place is in an alley right beside the market and they have several types of chowder, but the best I tasted was the clam chowder. The staff runs the place like a machine, taking simple and quick to the point orders while in line, which they have to as there was a line from basically 11:00 am on. Easily one of the best clam chowders I ever had; across the street from the Inn at the Market hotel.

"YUM!!!!"

Reviewed July 30, 2011 **NEW**

The seafood bisque was delicious! I wish I had some right now!!!

"A worthwhile stop"

Reviewed July 29, 2011

Had the chowder sampler that is well worth the money. Can't say that I prefer the clam chowder over Legal Seafoods for example, but the experience is definitely worthwhile and worth a taste but probably not a full meal.

"Best chowder in town"

Reviewed July 28, 2011

I have to say that is some darn good chowder in Seattle. We got a classic clam chowder in a bread bowl and it was delicious. We also got the dungeness crab roll, it was not my favourite thing to eat, I think it lacked flavour. We were at Pike place on a sunday afternoon and the entire area was really crowded. There was a huge line up to order and there was limited place to sit, but I have to say, it was worth the wait.

"Oh My God!!"

Reviewed July 27, 2011

I think the title of my review says it all. You really can't go wrong with anything here, but my favorites happen to be the Seafood Bisque, Scallop Dill Chowder, and Smoked Salmon Chowder. If you come to Seattle and don't eat at Pike's Place Chowder, you will have missed the whole point.

"best chowder"

Reviewed July 21, 2011

stand in line informal eat in or take out. Seafood and Boston Clam chowder are the best and I live in Ma.

"Chowder is ok, nice location, easy to find"

Reviewed July 17, 2011

Being from New England, I had to try the New England clam chowder and the south western corn chicken chowder. I have to say the corn chowder was slightly better, both were pretty good. If I had to do it again i wouldn't have gotten the bread bowl, but just a small cup to try more chowders. The bread itself isn't that good.

"Go to Ivar's Instead"

Reviewed July 14, 2011

The chowder is good, but it's certainly not the best in the country. It's not even the best in Seattle. Ivar's chowder is way better, and it's a nicer spot.

"Delicious!"

Reviewed July 12, 2011

New England Clam Chowder was delicious! We tried the nations best.

Buca di Beppo

#**619**of 2,055 restaurants in Seattle

37 ratings

Cuisines: Italian

Neighborhood: South-Lake Union

701 9th Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98109

(206) 244-2288 | www.bucadibeppo.com

Price range: $21-$30

Good for: Families with children, Large groups

"TOGO not so good"

Reviewed April 29, 2011

Buca/Seattle WA - TOGO Sat 4/23/11: We love the family size dishes, specially the LINGUINE FRUTTI DI MARE. We had this dish as dine-ins and dine-outs, from the regular size menu. Great sauce seasoning, nicely tossed linguine texture (not too soft, not too chewy), the seafood was not overly cooked. SO, we thought we couldn't go wrong if we order for a private party. We ordered the EXTRA LARGE PARTY PAN. Well, this is WHERE IT WENT WRONG, too much linguine and not enough seafood; only one layer on top of the deep pan linguine. They didn't have party size fried calamari, so we got 2 orders from the regular menu as side dishes. There's a reason why they don't have this on the TOGO party size menu – it gets SOGGY quickly. DONOT GET the EXTRA LARGE PARTY PAN!! = TWO STARS. SERVICE gets ONE STAR. They didn't follow through with their promises to our requests: red pepper - received 6 tiny pack and the PAN serves 20, NO utensils, 6 paper plates and the PAN serves 20, NO carry carton to help transport the hot dish. The fried calamari gotten soggy 10mins out, despite the waitress' assurance. DONOT order fried calamari to go, for dine-in only. We had a wait a bit at pickup despite the advance-order from internet. DONOT use internet to order, call it in. Their website shopping cart is a bit out-dated, too dump sort of speak. OVERALL – 2 STARS for this experience.

"Fun family-friendly food!"

Reviewed September 5, 2010

We've eaten at Buca di Beppo on a few trips to Seattle. The food's not bad - the basic spaghetti & meatballs are yummy (look elsewhere for Fine Italian Dining) but we usually go as a group with the expectation that the meal will be a fun evening out. A good spot to order big platters of food to share, have some inexpensive wine, and discuss the amusing momentos & photos that have overtaken the walls.

"Bland corporate food"

Reviewed May 21, 2010

This place confuses quantity and kitch with quality. You can do much better in Seattle. Overpriced and overcooked

"so-so"

Reviewed September 9, 2009

After having a excellent time at another location, we headed to buca seattle. Dont get me wrong the food was good, but not worth the price and the service was.. mediocre. The waiter def thought as a small group of three we werent worth his time. and he showed his impatience. very clearly. Another large group came and was seated next to us and he went through a whole spiel that we didnt get, including the drink specials. I wouldnt eat here again, but I will Buca in another city, just not Seattle

"One word...Delicious!!!"

Reviewed May 20, 2009

My wife and I went here on a whim because there was always a crowd out front, and it was so good!!! I read reviews on here after about how expensive it was, but for the amount of food, it was cheap. You would pay the same amount at other chain Italian restaurants for the same amount of food. Yes it was crowded but for the amount of people it was excellent service. We liked it so much we ate dinner here twice.

"Was 5 stars before it changed ownership. They made it boring."

Reviewed April 23, 2009

Was 5 stars before it changed ownership. They made it boring.

"If you are really hungry"

Reviewed February 10, 2009

If you are really hungry

"Great for large groups, birthday parties etc"

Reviewed January 19, 2009

Great for large groups, birthday parties etc

"How Fun!"

Reviewed October 8, 2008

A friend of mine eats here every time she and her family are in Seattle so we decided to try it while we were there. Don't go here for quiet ambiance--it's a noisy, friendly "no one is a

stranger" atmosphere. YOU HAD BETTER BE HUNGRY! They have just introduced something they call "Buco Mio" which are single portions of favorite menu items. Otherwise, it's all served family style: pass the bowls and platters around the table. We had Tiramisu that came in a large bowl and was too much for the two of us so we took it with us. It was delicious. The night we were there, we saw many tables of 6 or more diners. Highly recommend this place if you're looking for fun and very good food.

"Mercer Island boy"

Reviewed September 24, 2008

Bucca di beppo is a fun delicous experience. The food is absolutely amazing. All of my friends and I were waiting in there lobby for our reservation and a waiter came out with mozzella garlic bread we liked it so much everyone got there own bread and enjoyed just as much. The servings are family size so one order can serve 2 or 3. The tirimisu is the bomb dot com. All around the restaurant are tons and tons of pictures and arts. They also have two tables in the kitchen where people can watch the chefs. The wait is longer, so it would be best to get a reservation. I just have had a great experience at bucca di beppo.

Pike Place Bar & Grill

#**1,040**of 2,055 restaurants in Seattle

Cuisines: Hamburgers, American

Neighborhood: Downtown

90 Pike St, Seattle, WA 98101-2125

(206) 624-1365

Price range: $1-$20

Dining options: Breakfast/Brunch, Lunch, Dinner, Late Night

Good for: Scenic view

"Tasty Beer at Pike Place Market"

Reviewed July 27, 2011

Good place for a tasty brew and snack in the midst of shopping at the market.

"Awful. Go elsewhere!"

Reviewed June 9, 2011

We ate here on the 5th of June, 2011 after exploring the market for the morning, thinking that that the menu sounded good, and with such a great location it couldn't be bad. We were so wrong! I ordered the Oriental Chicken salad and it came out looking EXTREMELY anaemic - the salad greens were BARELY green at all and it looked like it came from one of those salad bags you pick up at the supermarket. The mandarin slices came from a can, the salad dressing was absolutely foul and in the end I truly couldn't bring myself to eat it (I'm not a picky eater at all!!). Another friend in our party also ordered the same salad and she felt the same way - eventually voicing her opinion after we both stayed quiet and tried to grin and bear it (I was glad it wasn't just me!!). I was disappointed at paying $12 (plus tax and tip, not including appetizers or drinks!) for a really substandard meal. The other two people in our group ordered burgers and they came with a really small serving of fries and my friend's husband wasn't at all satisfied after eating it - the meal was neither good value nor appetizing. The service was fine (and JUST fine) - but there's really no way this place can redeem itself with the service while serving such appaulling food. It's a shame this place is such a disappointment as it's a perfect location that they could well capitalize on - basically a captive audience for those who have been at the market and would like somewhere to sit down and relax while they eat after being in the busy marketplace. The only recommendation I can provide for this place is NOT to go here. Truly.

"Fish & Chips to Die For"

Reviewed December 13, 2010

On Friday I had the Tomatoe & Salmon Bisque and then went back on Saturday for our tradition of getting the fish and chips. I usually get the cod and my wife gets the halibut. Yet another wonderful meal. It was warm and cozy inside and they had good wines on special that are local to the Washington area. I'd recommend this place to anyone especially if you like good fish and chips.

"YOU GET BETTER FOOD AT A LOCAL YMCA - STAY AWAY!"

Reviewed August 29, 2010

We should have known better NOT TO GO IN when we talked by and saw this wrinkled clothed dressed kid who seemed like he was high, passing out business cards outside the restaurant. We were SOOOO hungry and wanted to sit down, so we went in. This is what I am going to sum it up to be: Probably family owned for a long time, burnt out and have no love for the business. It looks like it hasn't been remodeled in 20 years. They see the money coming in (how little, I don't know) and just wake up every morning and probably says "UGH, time to make the doughnuts!" The food was horrible, the waiter was unprofessional and seemed like he didn't want to be there. The lady who sat us seemed like she hated her life and if I were to give her a razor, she'd probably use it to kill herself. I never had such horrible food in my life. I didn't even eat it. Everything was cold and looks like it came off another person's plate. The sad thing is this - It's in such a beautiful spot, overlooking Pike Place Market where they throw the fish, right in front of you. Someone needs to come in, buy it, remodel and that would become the next happening restaurant. In the meantime, PLEASE - FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, STAY AWAY.

"Used Bandaid in Hamburger!!!!!!"

Reviewed August 23, 2010

Good waitress, food was fair, but the overwhelming and worst problem I have encountered in quite sometime was that my daughters boyfriend received quite the surprise inside his BBQ Burger a Used BANDAID!!! the waitress was extremely embarrassed and apologetic, but the thing that prompts me to write this review is the fact that the manager did not come to our table until after we asked to speak with him. and while he did comp us for that meal, we were all so grossed out we really figured he should comp the whole bill. we never really suggested it, but did lead the conversation towards that end, thinking he should realize how big a deal this was. but he honestly didn't seem to really care. his apology surely was not sincere. it was more of a things happen, sorry attitude. obviously we won't be eating there again and don't recommend it, unless you are totally unconcerned with Hepatitis or HIV

"Relax after exploring Pike Place Market"

Reviewed November 10, 2009

As a restaurant dining destination, don't come here. The food is just so so, and there are so many more better options around. However, if you want to just relax with a beer flight of many tasty beers, I recommend going the back room where they have a whole section for hanging out while looking at beer memorabilia away from the loud noise of the main restaurant. We had to go up

to the bar to get our own beer and bring it back to our tables, but having that break from the crowds of Pike Place was a great laid back escape and the beers were tasty.

"Horrible service, horrible food"

Reviewed September 8, 2009

Wow, what a surprise this dining experience was. I figured, hey, a bar and grill at Pike Place, it's sure to be great. But instead, it was easily one of the worst restaurants I've been to. The first we noticed something wasn't quite right was the initial greeting. Waiting to be seated, our waiter/hostess comes to the front and says "are you coming in to eat something or what?". Right then and there we should have turned around, but were far too hungry. We ended up being stuck with him as our waiter (long grey pony tail, George Carlin lookalike actually). When he finally came around to take our order, it was as if our presence was inconveniencing him. The calamari we ordered was like no calamari we've ever had. Small and chewy and instead of Tzasiki sauce, we were fairly certain it was ranch dressing. The cheeseburger I ordered was basic and had a couple cold fries thrown on the plate with it. Overall, the restaurant seemed horribly managed and just generally bad. It entirely deserves a 1/5 in every way... Yes, it's really one of THOSE establishments. We overheard other patrons in seats next to us who seemed extremely displeased with the service and food as well. No tip, and we will never come back.

"Bad service, Really bad food"

Reviewed September 7, 2009

I was encouraged to stop in by a promoter from the restaurant. I swear the chicken fried steak I was served was left over from the day before. The waiter was so nice, until he thought I was trying to leave without paying and hollered at me as I was leaving. I had already paid and had left him a reasonable tip, which I wanted to take back, but didn't. Typical city person.........pretending to be all nice to get a good tip. The food sucked and I should not have left a tip at all. I would NEVER go there again.

"Could have been worse..."

Reviewed June 17, 2009

Nothing spectacular. We were having a hard time finding a good lunch while visiting Pike Place Market so we stopped in. We did end up with a good view of the market by sitting in the corner

of the bar area (everyone in party must be 21). The food was descent, nothing to write home about but I've definitely had worse. This isn't a luxury place for sure...it's a bar with food...and an old bar at that. The staff has been around since the city was underground...but they are friendly...and not terribly slow. If you're in a pinch - stop in.

"Mismanaged, confused, a poor experience"

Reviewed May 28, 2009

I went there with my mother on a Sunday afternoon at 1:40. It wasn't that crowded yet it took 35 minutes to receive an appetizer and a sandwich. We were about to leave when we finally got our food. The buffalo wings were cold and the least spicey I've ever had; the meat was dry. My salmon sandwich was overcooked and the bread was dry. The macaroni salad was flavorless. We were sat parallel to the kitchen and could here all the conversations between staff. Confusion reigned, with plates sitting on the hot plate for a long time without being picked up. The only reason we didn't leave was because we were staring at our food which was ready to be served. With so many choices at the Market we were VERY disappointed in having gone here. Finally, when the hostess brought us our check she practically threw the tray down on the table. As we left, she walked past us and didn't even say goodbye or thankyou. The restaurant lacked good management and leadership. I will never go there again.

Din Tai Fung

#**1**of 2,981 restaurants in Hong Kong

Shop 130 & Restaurant C, 3F Silvercord, 30 Canton Road, Hong Kong,China

852-27306928 | www.dintaifung.com.tw/en/area_a_detail.asp?AreaNO...

Dining options: Lunch, Dinner

Good for: Families with children, Large groups, Local cuisine, Dining on a budget

"Top place in town for dumplings with smart decor to match"

Reviewed August 4, 2011

For a good quality dose of freshly prepared dumplings and delicious aromatic soups, nothing beats Din Tai Fung. Rather smart for a noodles and dumplings eatery, DTF is in fact a large

worldwide chain that began in Taiwan as a noodle shop. It has certainly grown from it's rather modest beginnings into a destination for many craving high quality Chinese cuisine with good value prices to match. As you enter, there is a large window and behind it are several skilled chefs hard at work wrapping dumpling after dumpling. The menu is fantastic as it has clear photos of each dish as well as the usual description - therefore it is easier for those who aren't familiar with Chinese cuisine to decide what to order, however even someone like me who has lived in Hong Kong all their life needs a bit of reminding now and again. The spring rolls are the best in Hong Kong - according to my father that is, although I can't dissagree. The true highlight however, has got to be the Xiao Long Bao or 'soup dumplings' which are literally dumplings with scorching hot soup inside. Yes - it can burn your tongue but it is most delicious with the vinegar, ginger and soya sauce dish they serve with it. The great thing about this place is it's a lot smarter than most dumpling places yet it is incredibly cheap for what it offers. And the service is tops too. Din Tai Fung is definitely a must-try for those who visit and also for those who live in Hong Kong.

"Explosion of Flavor in Your Mouth"

Reviewed July 31, 2011 **NEW**

Yes, that's right. Who doesn't want flavor exploded all over the inside of their mouth. This may not be the intent of Din Tai Fung (I'm pretty sure their goal is simply to make the tastiest soup dumplings known to this good earth), but it sure as h*ll is the result. If you don't know the difference between a dumpling and a soup dumpling then please just halt everything, call din tai fung, and make a reservation. Soup dumplings, per their namesake, are dumplings that are so beautifully put together they're able to hold a tiny spoonful of soup inside each dumpling. If eaten at a place like din tai fung, two things happen: 1) you're overwhelemed by the amazing flavor packed in that little mouthful of soup, and 2) you burn yourself b/c you're stuffing dumplings in your face as fast as you can. They cover the gambit of dumpling flavors... from classics like "shrimp & pork" to more exotic flavors like "truffle amazingness." My recommendation: Go. Order a bunch of Tsing Tao. Get a few veggies. Skip the buns. And walk out knowing the glory that is a soup dumpling. Note: If for some reason you're reading this and you're not in Hong Kong, Din Tai Fung is a chain with ~10-20 restaurants across the world. We've been in both Singapore & HK. It's well worth the trip wherever you are.

"without a doubt the best xiao long bao in Hong Kong"

Reviewed July 29, 2011

amazing xiao long bao here, personally I think this is the best place in HK to go for this signature dish. I've heard it's even better in the Taiwan branch. around lunch and dinner times the place gets mega packed and busy, so best to arrive early unless you're prepared to potentially wait and queue up for quite some time

"Exceptional Xiao Long Bao!!"

Reviewed July 29, 2011

The world's most amazing Xiao Long Bao!! Exceptionally tasty food at very, very reasonable prices!! After tasting quite a few dumplings all over the world, Din Tai Fung has something very special to offer!!!

"Xiao long Bao - An absolute must!"

Reviewed July 28, 2011

Everything in this restaurant is tasty, especially the xiao long baos. What was refreshing is that the restaurant actually had a pamphlet giving instructions on how to eat xiao long baos (which was perfect for me) other dishes i ordered included the pork chop fried rice, some greens etc. a must try!

"Great Xiao Long Bao"

Reviewed July 27, 2011

While in Hong Kong my partner and I have been hunting for the best Xiao Long Bao spot. So far Din Tai Fung has offered some of the best Xiao Long Bao we've had, yet the competition is tough with Crystal Jade. The service is attentive but not pushy, good. Food is great and if you want to have a relaxed time try to avoid peak eating hours because this is a favorite both among locals and tourists. There's a new Din Tai Fung branch at Causeway Bay (68 Yee Wo St) in case you are far from the Tsim Sha Tsui location.

"Superb lunch at a surprisingly reasonable price!"

Reviewed July 22, 2011

First of all, the waiters and other staff actually smile! I've been a regular visitor to Hong Kong since 1978 and have found service with a smile to be an exception to the rule, but Din Tai Fung impresses in this aspect. The food was served hot, visually appealing and more especially to the palate. We ordered the pork and shrimp dumplings (yummy!), spring rolls with chicken, hot &

sour soup, steamed kale and a bowl of rice, cold sago pearls in coconut milk with melon for dessert plus a coke for the wife. I paid HK$291 (about US$38), such a steal for the food quality, service and ambiance. I would not hesitate to recommend this restaurant to anyosne visiting Hong Kong. The dim sum is exceptional, not your run of the mill variety; clean tasting with the freshest ingredients. Two thumbs up, way way up! Truly deserving of their #1 rank in the restaurant poll !

"Excellent dim sum!"

Reviewed July 18, 2011

Went here on the recommendation of a friend who lives in HK. What an absolute treat! Their speciality is the xia long bao --- dim sum with soup inside the dumpling. We tried the one with the truffles and it was amazing. We also had wonton soup, pork buns and shrimp dumplings --- all very scrumptious and taste very fresh. One of the highlights of our dining experience in Hong Kong. Would also like to mention the excellent service in the restaurant. We were greeted with a very warm welcome from the reception all the way to our table, the attendants waiting on our table were very efficient, friendly and attentive, and when we left, we were all thanked by the staff even if they werent serving us. 10/10 for me. Well done. I'd love to be back.

"A must go if visiting Hong Kong"

Reviewed July 12, 2011

If you're looking for a great alternative to the hotel restaurants in HK, this is absolutely it. The best dumplings we had while in HK.

"Not to be missed - an incredible dining experience!!"

Reviewed July 6, 2011

Din Tai Fung was so good that we went back more than once on during our 8 day stay. The service is good, the food is incredible, the concept is effective, the signature dumplings are absolutely dreamy and the price is not-to-be-beaten. I cannot say enough good things about Din Tai Fung. Definitely try the signature dumplings, however saying this nothing we had was anything less than perfection. Simple Asian greens have never tasted so good. Well deserving of it's one Michelin Star and it's number 1 spot on Trip Advisor. Do not miss this if you're in Hong Kong!!

Megu

Cuisines: Japanese

R002- 03, Elements, 1 Austin Road West, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China

852 3743 1421

Price range: $50-$70

Dining options: Reservations

Good for: Romance

"nice place with fusion japanese cuisine, well decorated seating area and professional server"

Reviewed September 18, 2008

nice place with fusion japanese cuisine, well decorated seating area and professional server

"i'm talking about the one in "Elements""

Reviewed August 14, 2008

i'm talking about the one in "Elements"

"expensive Japanese food"

Reviewed July 21, 2008

A bottle of water cost $80 HK dollars, and everything else is much more expensive that the average Japanese food. I thought with this price, the food must taste better. However, it was not necessarily so, especially when I was sitting in front of the chefs looking at how they made the sushi. They did not even put any gloves or month mask on. It did not look very sanitary to me. The food just LOOKED more creative, but they tasted nothing special, even worse than some other Japanese restaurant I have been.

"poor food"

Reviewed March 23, 2008

poor food

"Great Food! The service..."

Reviewed January 29, 2008

Great Food! The service is impecable, servers very knowledgeable of the food. Try the Kobe Beef!!

"Nice but expensive fusion Japanese place...nice deco and pretty people..."

Reviewed January 18, 2008

Nice but expensive fusion Japanese place...nice deco and pretty people...

"Sushi was so-so, foie gras a little undercooked (!) Beef was excellent - but only because it was a great cut. Not worth..."

Reviewed January 5, 2008

Sushi was so-so, foie gras a little undercooked (!) Beef was excellent - but only because it was a great cut. Not worth a re-visit

"Love their lunch set menus & good quality food."

Reviewed January 1, 2008

Love their lunch set menus & good quality food.

"Good is pretty innovative & interesting...sashimi is average but quite pricey for its quality. Average expense per..."

Reviewed December 30, 2007

Good is pretty innovative & interesting...sashimi is average but quite pricey for its quality. Average expense per person for dinner is about $900 with Sake.

"Food is great, although..."

Reviewed November 28, 2007

Food is great, although a little bit expensive. Love the environment though. oh, please make sure you bring your coat as the place is quite cold...

New York Main St. Deli

Cuisines: American, Fish & Chips, Hamburgers

B/F, Langham Hotel Hong Kong, 8 Peking Road, Tsimshatsui, Hong Kong,China

+8522375 1133

Price range: $20-$25

Dining options: Takeout

Good for: Families with children

"Never again"

Reviewed August 1, 2011

Went with my mother for a really early dinner (18:45) and the waiter sat us right by the open kitchen even though the restaurant was only 20% full if that. So we asked to be sat somewhere else (because the smell of the cooking was quite overpowering, frying chips, cooking burger/ steak etc) but they were "all reserved".. Not pleased, we asked again when another waiter brought over some snacks (gherkins and something else) and water, and he moved us to a booth seat. Finally, we thought. We ordered two set menus, it was all very rushed, I had not finished my first course when they put down our main course, considering this restaurant was inside a hotel I would have thought they would have some sort of dining/ serving etiquette. My side order appeared alongside my mum's main and vice versa.. hmm.. and my medium-well lamb was very undercooked, it was more like a medium-rare. The only nice thing I consumed that evening was a celery flavoured soda, and that came in a can. I wouldn't go there again, it was nothing special especially at that price.

"Overpriced with very ordinary food."

Reviewed June 19, 2011

What to say?? We were starving after a long flight. The coffee was barely drinkable, hot chocolate awful and sandwich barely edible. The service was non existent. Thankfully the rest of the hotel was beyond reproach.

"Love their crunch cake. Burgers are humongous!"

Reviewed August 4, 2008

Love their crunch cake. Burgers are humongous!

"the all American Burger..."

Reviewed May 23, 2008

the all American Burger place.....

"The chicken macaroni in..."

Reviewed April 10, 2008

The chicken macaroni in cheese and tomato sauce is so great

"Love their sandwiches with different bread choice, but the sour dough never taste the same in San Francisco"

Reviewed March 28, 2008

Love their sandwiches with different bread choice, but the sour dough never taste the same in San Francisco

"Cod Fillet GOOD !! Burgers EXCELLENT !! Cheese Cake is BIG but... yummy !! MUST TRY ~~ sweet potato chip !!"

Reviewed February 28, 2008

Cod Fillet GOOD !! Burgers EXCELLENT !! Cheese Cake is BIG but... yummy !! MUST TRY ~~ sweet potato chip !!

"good burgers and Chili dogs!!!"

Reviewed January 23, 2008

good burgers and Chili dogs!!!

"Don't go to the one at Citibank Plaza..."

Reviewed January 18, 2008

Don't go to the one at Citibank Plaza...

"good siting area, very US feels, big portion..good place to relax and talks..."

Reviewed January 2, 2008

good siting area, very US feels, big portion..good place to relax and talks...

Absinthe

#**1** of 1,663 restaurants in Singapore

46 Bukit Pasoh Road, Singapore 089858, Singapore

62229068 | www.absinthe.sg

Price range: $25-$200

Dining options: Lunch, Dinner, Reservations

Good for: Romance, Doing business, Special occasions, Entertaining clients

"dishonest and rude waitress"

Reviewed July 30, 2011

I choose this Absinthe to spoil my French husband to have dinner on the last day of our honeymoon. It turns out to be a very big mistake. I reserve this French restaurant because of the review of Tripadvisor. The food is fine. It is not romatic at all because a couple sitting behins us brought a crying baby with them. The waitress was dishonest and rude. After we order the Absinthe menu 98$++each, which included three starters, one main course, French cheese, dessert and tea. The waitress came to tell us there are some hams tonight and would we like to share with each other? We said we would like to share, of course. She charges 50$++ to our bill for the 50g ham directly. We didn't know the price and didn't know we have to pay for it until we see the bill. When I ask her for a pen to sign my bill she refused. She said she has to check if I could pay with this credit card first. To my point of view, the waitress is dishonest and rude.

"Good food, nice setting"

Reviewed July 26, 2011

Deservedly well praised. A decent restaurant with nice setting and fair pricing. Advise you book in advance

"Tremendous"

Reviewed July 21, 2011

As good as you'll find. Service, atmosphere and food faultless. Not the least bit stuffy, as many French restaurants can be. Wine list to die for, and manager made sensibly priced recommendations. You know that it will be quite expensive but it's a top class experience so go and enjoy ! G'day.

"Superb beyond expectations"

Reviewed July 20, 2011

I took clients here based solely on the TripAdvisor review. Dinner was absolutely superb. The service was fantastic and the food was absolutely delightful. The waiter brought an amuse-bouche for the one member of our party who didn't order an appetizer - not only very thoughtful but she said it was very tasty. Among the five of us, we had steak, lamb, fish, and seafood. Everyone was extremely pleased with their dinners. The desserts were heavenly and the cheese trolley was to die for. Service was wonderful throughout. I was so thrilled to have had such a wonderful dinner experience based solely on a TripAdvisor review. Definitely recommend making reservations.

"Francois just gets better."

Reviewed July 19, 2011

Superb cuisine and great value. A good wine list and a cheese trolley that is the envy of the town.

"Everything we had hoped. Chose this based on the TA reviews and I'm so glad we did. Excellent dining experience."

Reviewed July 16, 2011

Our concierge almost talked me out of experiencing 'Absinthe' but I'm so glad we chose to ignore his advice. From arriving to leaving the restaurant we felt so welcome and pleased with the professional service. I could perhaps fault it on one very minor point but it was quickly picked up and rectified so quickly that it doesn't rate mentioning. If you love French Food and excellent service and your fortunate enough to be in Singapore you owe it to yourself to book in at Absinthe. Took my Mum along who was somewhat so-so about going but she came away

raving about the Duck she ordered and the attentive service. Well done everyone for a great evening.

"In my opinion the absolute best restaurant in Singapore"

Reviewed July 13, 2011

Aftere the closing of my former favorite restaurant (the Braize at Sentosa) I was looking for a while for any equivalent in terms of quality of food and service. And found the Absinthe to be even better (except for the atmosphere; the Braize was right at the beach). We've come here for the 5th time now and have never had the slightest thing to critize about it. So I finally got myself to write a well deserved review. The maitre de service is amazing, and so is the chef who continously ensures that everybody is happy and satisfied by personally taking care of his guests. The food is just impecable. If you like french food, this is the place to go to. Sure, it's expensive, but it's worth every cent. The fois gras (29) and the wagyu (70pp) are not only cooked to perfection, you also get a generous portion (we're big eaters but have actually never been able to finish all of the wagyu; you get like a whole side for two!). And the wine selection offers very decent wines, some at very reasonable prices. We'll certainly go back at the next best occasion.

"Nice French Food - Great Staff"

Reviewed July 11, 2011

Went on a Friday, place was full so call in advance (we called 5 days before). We were very happy with everything - the staff was well trained and attentive, including chef and manager. Food was good and great French wine. Ask for 'The best rum in the world' after dinner - it's amazing. Ps. bring a cardigan

"Very good food, service and atmosphere"

Reviewed July 2, 2011

Dinner at Absinthe was a very pleasant surprise. Recently, we have read positive review for other restaurants in Singapore and have been sadly disappointed. However, the good reviews for Absinthe, located in a charming part of Singapore, are all accurate. The service was professional and attentive. The food was delicious and well presented. And we appreciated the quiet atmosphere and our intimate table. The prices were very fair, and we all enjoyed what we ordered. We will definitely return and recommend to our friends.

"Superb French Cuisine at a Reasonable Price"

Reviewed June 9, 2011

After reading the favorable reviews on TripAdvisor, I wanted to try the restaurant myself and had lunch, ordering from the two-course set menu for the day. Foie gros (available for an extra charge) was a small but perfectly prepared, a melt-in-your-mouth delicacy set in a delicate, slightly fruity sauce. The main course of fish in a safron flavored sauce was equally delectable. Dessert was less memorable but also tasty. In all, this was among the best French food I have enjoyed in a long time, at a price far more reasonable than one could find today in Paris or New York for comparable food. On leaving I learned that the restaurant was offering a promotion for those using the American Express card. Future diners may want to inquire if similar promotions are available when they visit. In addition, the restaurant is accessible from the MRT. Be sure to take exit H from the Outram Park station, which requires going to the lower level if one arrives on the East-West, rather than the Northeast, line.

Ah Teng's Bakery

#**669**of 1,663 restaurants in Singapore

1 Beach Road, Singapore 189673, Singapore

(65) 6337 1886

"Cake good, tea good, don't touch the Coke Light"

Reviewed April 13, 2010

We visited Ah Teng's bakery as part of the Raffles tour with Viator. We opted for the "light refreshments" and were taken to Ah Teng's bakery round the back of Raffles Hotel. Here we were sat down as part of a group and served a large portion of very delicious rich chocolate truffle cake. While I would have preferred choice in cake I wasn't going to complain with this one, but others in the group weren't happy! The tea was apparently very good, and hot water refills were available. The Coffee was also included. We had been warned that any other drinks etc were not included in the package cost, which was fine. I ordered a Coke Light as I don't drink tea or coffee and was pleased that they served it. I was less pleased when the bill came soon after. For approximately a can's worth, maybe less, they charged me SIN$10.60! I was in shock!

There was a fabulous poster up outside that said "How can one resist the temptation to go shopping at Raffles?" To which the answer is: buy a Coke Light first.

"Disappointing!"

Reviewed August 13, 2009

We went for tea and cake one afternoon during our recent stay in Singapore. This was by far our most disappointing experience. There was very little atmosphere and the staff seemed barely interested and unhelpful, very unlike the rest of Sngapore! The self service style was not in keeping with the tea room setting. There was a limited choice of cake and the quality of ours was poor compared to other small Mall cafes. The worst thing was the tea, it was a cup of hot water with a teabag dropped in! No teapot, not pot of hot water. Don't bother to pay ridiculously high prices for such a poor experience.

"Great pies"

Reviewed February 7, 2009

Great pies

"We had breakfast at Ah Teng's Bakery last weekend. To our disappointment, the food was exorbitant. With the same food..."

Reviewed July 28, 2008

We had breakfast at Ah Teng's Bakery last weekend. To our disappointment, the food was exorbitant. With the same food quality, I can get it from the normal coffee houses at less than half the price. $7.50 for three slices of bread, coconut jam, served with coffee/ tea... the ambience has that 70's look otherwise, it has no competitive edge against the good old traditional coffee houses located at the neighborhood areas. nay, I will give it a miss.

"Really bad local food for tourists. Whatever you do don't try to "Peranakan' specials. They stink."

Reviewed July 25, 2008

Really bad local food for tourists. Whatever you do don't try to "Peranakan' specials. They stink.

"liked the quiche"

Reviewed July 20, 2008

liked the quiche

"good place for a chit chat and snack"

Reviewed June 17, 2008

good place for a chit chat and snack

"nice cakes!"

Reviewed May 19, 2008

nice cakes!

"Don't just head for the..."

Reviewed May 1, 2008

Don't just head for the breads and pastries! GO FOR THE CAKES! Their cakes are my all-time fav!

"Only by compulsion with..."

Reviewed April 28, 2008

Only by compulsion with mum and aunt...

Sakae Sushi

#**1,319**of 1,663 restaurants in Singapore

14 ratings

Cuisines: Japanese

1 Hougang Street 91, Singapore 538692, Singapore

6312 1532

Price range: $8-$12

"Lousy service"

Reviewed July 9, 2011

The management should review its marketing strategy including innovation skills. I do not want to eat at any of outlets.

"This is the worst example of how to run a restaurant"

Reviewed June 15, 2011

I used to be a regular at this chain of restaurants. My kids are crazy over sushi and since this is one of the larger chains, they are conveniently located. This is the only thing that is good. We used to visit between 1-2 times a month and every single time we go there (Regardless of location), we will end up disappointed. Food is served very late, sushi rice is served broken and not how it should be properly shaped, adults meal were served 20 minutes ahead of children's meal, orders were forgotten/misplaced, semi rude staff..... To avoid at all cost!

"Anyone who thinks this is Japanese Sushi....so wrong"

Reviewed April 14, 2011

I am a Japanese, have tried "sushi" in many different countries in many different price range. One thing to say about SAKAE SUSHI. This is NOT sushi. Anyone who thinks they are enjying sushi at this place is terrbily and sadly wronged. If you like this kind of food, that is great...however, please do not think this is Sushi. I was warned by many locals and Japanese alike about SAKAE SUSHI..I finally decided to give it a try after 6 months in Singapore...This place makes you hate the word SUSHI. I feel insulted that they place the word SUSHI in their store name.

"rotten fish anyone ?"

Reviewed September 23, 2009

Just read my friend's facebook of her bad experience with Sakae Sushi, "food that has gone sour and irresponsible manager who insists the food are still edible... wad a great experience..." A friend commented: "It happened to me once at the OUB centre branch. The swordfish sashimi was as fresh as a rotting rodent".Ad I said "Me too had a very bad experience at Sq2 branch. Felt like vomiting after eating. From then on, I never go Sakae anymore".

"(Park Mall) Recently, the teppanyaki buffet prices were increased. From 26++, it's now 36++. Ridiculous for its quality."

Reviewed July 1, 2008

(Park Mall) Recently, the teppanyaki buffet prices were increased. From 26++, it's now 36++. Ridiculous for its quality.

"my all time favourite for affordable sushi"

Reviewed June 16, 2008

my all time favourite for affordable sushi

"I just love Sakae Sushi.."

Reviewed May 17, 2008

I just love Sakae Sushi..

"For basic sushi it is okay but when compared to the kaiten sushi in Japan, they definitely have a llong way to go."

Reviewed January 12, 2008

For basic sushi it is okay but when compared to the kaiten sushi in Japan, they definitely have a llong way to go.

"love sushi so much"

Reviewed January 8, 2008

love sushi so much

"damn. no veg food lah wth"

Reviewed January 5, 2008

damn. no veg food lah wth

Brasserie Vlaming

#**1**of 1,172 restaurants in Amsterdam

Cuisines: International

Neighborhood: Grachtengordel-West

Prinsengracht 193a, Amsterdam 1015 DS, The Netherlands

020 4272063 | www.eetcafevlaming.nl

Price range: $29-$64

Dining options: Dinner, Reservations, Dessert

Good for: Romance, Doing business, Local cuisine, Special occasions, Entertaining clients

"One of Amsterdam's glittering diamonds!"

Reviewed August 4, 2011

Don't come back from Amsterdam without having dined at brasserie vlaming was the firm instruction from friends as we left for a five day break in the Dutch capital. Two of us were celebrating birthdays while in the Netherlands and it was for my friend's special celebration, on July 26, that we carried out our orders and booked for three at the brasserie. And we weren't disappointed. We wanted a fairly early meal so it was no surprise to find the place almost empty when we arrived. However, it quickly filled up and we were able to soak up a wonderful atmosphere as the staff went about their work quietly and efficiently. Overseeing operations was a tall, willowy, jean-clad gentleman who glided from table to table welcoming diners, explaining the menu and entering into mirth-filled banter in an impressive array of languages! As for the food....it was a dreamy encounter with the highly visible kitchen, where no more than three chefs combined their skills to produce a veritable feast of good food. My wife opted for the bean soup - or was it pea? One waiter referred to it as bean and another as pea....it was probably pea, said my wife. Whichever, it was superb. She followed this with Angus black steak...a memorable dish. Our friend opted for pate, which she thought wonderful, followed by duck, again outstanding. I began with goats cheese tart, simply marvellous, with blacklened tuna to follow, delicious! For pudding, the two ladies caved in and sampled the brasserie's much-trumpeted sticky toffee pie...they loved it! I, as a smug diabetic, politely declined and then fumed inwardly at my misfortune! This was a great night with wonderful food and a warm, inviting atmosphere. We would certainly instruct any of our friends who might be going to Amsterdam not to return without having dined at brassierie vlaming!

"Charming with excellent service"

Reviewed August 4, 2011

Yes we did pick the Wlaming restaurant because of the number one rating at Tripadvisor. And we agree with community. We had a delightful visit, here is why. The service was personal, honest and very personal. It turned out to be the owner of the restaurant who performed with a great attitude. During our stay he suddenly took his bike and drove away. It turns out the family Wlaming owns a bistro not far from the restaurant. Luckily he came back. The food is not Michelin class, but hey, the prices are neither. Coming from Denmark the price level was surprisingly low. A main dish for just 20 euro. On recommendation we had a shared starter that turned out to be a small tower of delicious small dished. The white Pouilly Fume was perfect for the tuna steaks and the homemade fries are a feast. We ended up spending the whole evening at the table just outside the entrance. Marvelous.

"Everybody in the restaurant had come via trip advisor"

Reviewed August 3, 2011 **NEW**

Not so much a hidden Jem, but proves the system works. Had an excellent meal late Saturday night - we just turned up and they were very accommodating. House wine was very pleasant and the waitress recommendations spot on. Would definitively go again.

"Great birthday treat"

Reviewed August 1, 2011 **NEW**

I went here with my family for my birthday. The waiting staff were attentive, the food was delicious and the chef visiting the tables was a nice touch

Frans1951, Eigenaar at Brasserie Vlaming - Amsterdam, responded to this review

August 1, 2011

Dear guest, I'm not sure if the other visitors were singing for you as well?! If they did indeed, I hope it sounded harmonious. Otherwise I hope the dinner was a real "party" for your Bday. Best regards, Frans Vlaming

"Family feel, with delicious food and warm environment."

Reviewed July 29, 2011

I was choosing restaurants blindly for my husband and his colleagues, who were in town for a conference. The evening I booked for him, at the location on the Prinsengracht, they were closed, even though when I made the booking I was not advised of that. When my husband and

his boss arrived there was a note on the door apologizing AND offering to pick them up and bring them to the other location. Assuming the person they were mtg. wasn't going to do that, they ended up not going. That, as it turned out, was to be to my advantage. The following evening, with many apologies made, we went (myself included) back to the restaurant. The meal was lovely. The food was delicious, the wine selection fantastic and the service was stellar. We started with the assorted appetizer platter There were olives, cheese, meat, bittenballen (Similar to a croquette) and more. We also shared the veal with the tuna mayonnaise. It may seem weird to Americans, but it was very tasty and well prepared. Three of us had the same entree, fried duck breast. This was delicious. My husband had a pork dish (I think it was schnitzel???) and he liked that a lot as well. I'm not a dessert person, generally speaking, but we all tasted the sticky toffee pudding and it was scrumptious. As tasty as this dessert was, I really enjoyed my duck best that evening. The service was great, the owner was friendly and accommodating and best of all the food was fantastic. We enjoyed our dinner immensely and we will recommend this restaurant to any of our friends visiting Amsterdam. And of course we will return here when we are in Amsterdam again.

Frans1951, Eigenaar at Brasserie Vlaming - Amsterdam, responded to this review

July 30, 2011

Thank you for your very kind review! I can promise you that next time you come the vitello tonnato will taste even better: now cooked "sous vide" (slowly cooked in vacuum). The veal is melting in your mouth. And of course the STP will still be on the menu. Hope to see you back again! Best regards, Frans Vlaming

"Stunning meal"

Reviewed July 29, 2011

Myself and my girlfriend spent the last night of our city break in this charming restaurant, which proved to be a tremendous romantic setting. Recently overtaking Zazas to be the No.1 recommended Amsterdam restaurant on Tripadvisor (also visited, also excellent), Vlaming once again proved that you can't go far wrong based on the public's reviews. A lovely romantic and informal atmosphere buzzed throughout this small but charming venue, and the waitresses were incredibly welcoming in explaining the menu and looking after us. A towering carousel packed with mixed goodies greeted us for starters, before I had the duck breast and girlfriend had the steak for mains. Both were outstanding - lovely and rustic - with a side of buttery green beans and sugar snaps. I am not normally a massive one for puds, but seeing as the sticky toffee

pie had been recommended by very single reviewer we had read for about the past month, we had to try it. Now I can see why it was given top billing. Three words: Oh my God. All in, for three courses and a skin-full of wine, beer, limoncello for both of us, the bill came to 105 Euros, which we thought was good value given the quality of the experience. Special shout should also go to the gregarious chef, who was extremely welcoming and made a real night of it with the charismatic manner in which he interacted with the guests. Hint: Take a short walk to the bars and cafes of the Jordaan area before or after your meal - very chilled out and classy district.

Frans1951, Eigenaar at Brasserie Vlaming - Amsterdam, responded to this review

July 30, 2011

Dear visitor, it was a pleasure to have you as our guests. And maybe it was good that you came the last nght of your visit to Amsterdam: some come back during1 of the next days allready and miss other good restaurants the city offers. But of course they are most wellcome all the time, like you are when visiting Amsterdam again. Best regards, Frans Vlaming

"Simply Fantastic"

Reviewed July 27, 2011

After reading the reviews it was hard not to try it out myself. Everything was fantastic and the owner was very friendly. The conversation with him as he was tasting the night's special (as there was a complaint and he wanted to taste it himself) was delightful. We had no complaints with our meal. Everyone agreed it was by far the best meal we had in Amsterdam. I mentioned to him the negaitve review that was listed on this sight and he told me the other side of the story. Too much of a gentleman to go into it online - very impressive.

Frans1951, Eigenaar at Brasserie Vlaming - Amsterdam, responded to this review

July 29, 2011

Dear guest, I'm glad you enjoyed your meal that much. And of course we try to learn and improve after comments from a visitor being less satisfied. Thanks for writing your kind review. Best regards, Frans Vlaming

"Fabulous !"

Reviewed July 26, 2011

On our previous visit to Amsterdam we tried at the last minute to get a table at Brasserie Vlaming but unfortunately it was fully booked. I had heard such wonderful things about the restaurant that I was determined to go. So for this visit the reservation was made well in advance. And it lived up to every expectation. The food was amazing, the service welcoming and all in all, a great night. My husband and I chose the duck which was delicious and my mother in law had the pork. Now, my MIL is not the easiest person to please (!) but she was lost for words and couldn't praise the food enough. For dessert, well we had to, didn't we...it was the sitcky toffee pie. OH MY LORD. Just incredible. To finish the meal off we had some of the homelade limoncello - which was also a triumph. This restaurant really does deserve all the praise and glowing reviews that you will see on here. Looking forward to going again on our next visit to Amsterdam.

Frans1951, Eigenaar at Brasserie Vlaming - Amsterdam, responded to this review

July 26, 2011

Dear guest, thank you for your kind review. I'm really happy to see that the comments concerning the duck we serve are all very positive again, after last week's bad experience 2 guests (and myself!) had. Next time you come you should/could try the zabaglione: it's very delicious as well!! Hope to see you soon again. Best regards, Frans Vlaming

"In a word..."AMAZING""

Reviewed July 25, 2011

After seeing that this was the top restaurant on TripAdviser of course we had to visit. This place lives up to the hype, absolutely amazing!!!!! I had only tried duck for the first time during this trip to Amsterdam, enjoyed it, and decided to try it for the second time here and it was delicious in every way. Portions are generous; vegetables served can be shared. Which is what my party of four did, we ordered 4 different vegetable bowls, and the butter beans were like no other. The chef came to the table not once, but twice during the meal to ensure we were enjoying ourselves, which of course we were! We were also visited during the meal by one of the owners, both men are very charming and created a very "at home" feel to the experience. A word of caution, you would be remiss to visit this restaurant and not indulge in the sticky toffee, so if that means that you eat only half of your dinner to accommodate this, you must! It is bar none, the best thing I have ever eaten in a dessert. Should my travels ever bring me back to Amsterdam I will no doubt come back to this fine establishment. Top notch experience! I rated

this more formal, but it was definitely between this and casual as this is not a pretentious environment at all!

Frans1951, Owner at Brasserie Vlaming - Amsterdam, responded to this review

July 26, 2011

Dear guest, indeed we tried to create a "living room" atmosphere and thus I'm very glad you felt like at home with us. The Sticky Toffee Pie is allready 5 years on the menu and I suppose we will keep it there for the coming 5 years as well. So if you come back to Amsterdam once you're most wellcome and can taste the STP again. Best regards, Frans Vlaming

"Fabulous food and service!"

Reviewed July 24, 2011

Absolutely worth the 15-20 minute walk from the touristy side of town! Eva, our waitress, was polite, friendly and helpfull! The Blackangus steak melted in your mouth. Watchout for dessert, wrong suggestion to split a dish, I wanted one for myself...the homemade limocella was sinfully good.

Frans1951, Eigenaar at Brasserie Vlaming - Amsterdam, responded to this review

July 29, 2011

Dear visitor. You're right: we can not enough underline that we have a great staff working with us. Both in the front and kitchen. And yes, sometimes we suggest to share the Sticky Toffee Pie as a dessert . We hate it if it is too much after 2 courses allready and have to trough it away. But you of course can order a second STP.... Or come back. Best regards, Frans Vlaming

Nomads

#**410**of 1,172 restaurants in Amsterdam

Cuisines: Moroccan

Neighborhood: Jordaan

133 Rozengracht, Amsterdam 1016, The Netherlands

(020) 344 64 01 | www.restaurantnomads.nl/

Price range: $16 - $26 (NLG25-NLG40)

Dining options: Reservations

Good for: Bar scene, Large groups

"Great experience! Good food, great service!"

Reviewed March 14, 2011

I booked this place for a group of 12 and we all had a really good time. The food was good and they catered for the groups dietary needs perfectly. The decor is lovely and the lounges are so relaxing it really helped to give a chilled out dinning experience. It was a little odd to eat out of huge sharing platters, but a great experience nonetheless. Our waiter, Micky, was very helpful. The only thing that was a little dissapointing was that it did get busy and so the waiter had to try and look after three large groups. I think this place is great whether you are a couple looking for an intimate meal, or a larger group of friends wanting to hang out and eat good food.

"A dining experience!!"

Reviewed January 16, 2011

We went to Nomads after seeing great reviews on trip advisor for my partners 40th birthday. The decor is stunning, comfy sofas mood lighting (not too dark toeat) the scent of incense and even a belly dancer. I have never been to a reataurant with such beautiful interior decorating! Our waitress was very helpful, we opted for the 3 course set menu, as each course came out she explained every dish we really liked the cold mezze to start but didnt so much like the warm ones, dessert was fresh fruit baclava and turkish delight all of which were lovely. The cheapest bottle of wine was 25 euros which even for amsterdam is expensive! we had 4 bottles of beer with our meal and the total price for it was 103 euros which was very expensive but the overall dining experience was lovely great for a special occasion.

"Great atmosphere!"

Reviewed June 30, 2010

I had dinner here with some friends whilst in Amsterdam. It was a very cool place. Our table was made up of huge sofas and before dinner someone came around and massaged our feet which was a weird but fun experience in a restaurant. The food was good but what makes this place in the atmosphere, there was belly dancers there, soft music and a general atmosphere of calm and

relaxation (which the dutch do very well). The restaurant is more expensive than many other places in Amsterdam but for the whole experience I thought it was well worth it.

"Minor Adjustments Would Make Major Impact"

Reviewed May 10, 2010

A party of 15, we were asked to delay our dinner arrival from 8 to 9pm, as they had no room for us. When we arrived at 9, we were seated in 2 sections of the pillow area in the center of the back room. It was WAY TOO CRAMPED for 15 people to share that space. We easily required 3 sections. The food was tasty, but came out too slowly. The drinks were slow as well, and the water (which was needed due to salt content of food) was insanely expensive!! In the 3+ hours we were there, the same belly dancer came out for 10 minutes twice. Also, the "DJ" playing the music throughout the night was too loud and would not take a request (which was to play more traditional music instead of the contemporary style he was playing). Bill was extraordinarily high. I would not go there again under the smae circumstances. I would suggest better scrutiny of menu and prices and go easy on the water.

"It was OK"

Reviewed May 22, 2009

We were in Amsterdam for my friends Hen Weekend. There were 10 of us in the party. Nomads in an interesting restaurant with large square sofas for all to lounge on. The food in provided on a large tray in the middle - you eat the food on your knee with small plates (it's served tapas style). As there was 10 of us we had to have the fixed menu at 42 euros each which I thought was pretty pricey - although we ended up with 8 portions to make this cheaper. You need to as well and the cheapest bottle of house wine was 25 euros (it was nice thought). If I had known the drinks prices before we went I might have thought again. All in all it is a unique experience and does have belly dancing etc and the food was OK. I'm not sure overall it's value for money but it is an experience and we all had a nice time.

"Great ambience and excellent food!"

Reviewed December 7, 2008

Great ambience and excellent food!

"Middle eastern supperclub"

Reviewed August 12, 2008

This is the middle eastern Supperclub. Contrary of supperclub, food here is very nice, though a bit heavy. Service is decent, beds are comfy,music is good and belly dancer is hot. There is even a fortuneteller!

"First of all, I love Arabic food! My best Arabic food experience was in New Jersey (weird, but true!). This place was..."

Reviewed July 17, 2008

First of all, I love Arabic food! My best Arabic food experience was in New Jersey (weird, but true!). This place was called Rose's Place, so if you are around, I would check it out! But Nomads...Oh boy, what can I say. The service was bad, the price was bad and of course the food was bad. But the lounge idea and design of the restaurant had something nice (thus the 1 star rating). Although the lights and music turned it more into a nightclub. Anyways, let's start with the service: arrogant, cocky and no passion. I can actually say the same about the food. You must have a lot balls to serve such a little amount of food plus we didn't have the luxury to pick something from the menu. We had to take the special Nomads 3 course meal. So much for the "customer is king" idea... And then the price, I can just say: how dare you! You might as well buy a diamond necklace for your sweetheart. It's so sad...I went with my wife and sister in law (it was her birthday present) and my sister in law has a lot of knowledge about Arabic food. Even though she wasn't as harsh as me, she agreed that the quality was poor and they asked way to much for it. Of course this review (like many others) is based on my own opinion, but I just want to warn you before you burn your money in this restaurant. And some advice for Nomads: go to Rose's Place and see how it's done.

"Very nice entourage. Mix..."

Reviewed April 23, 2008

Very nice entourage. Mix of Arabian and western food. Nice seeting. Excellent for friends and colleagues. If possible, visit the More dancing next door. Open all night. Check www.nomads.nl and make reservations.

"Food is decent, ambience..."

Reviewed February 6, 2008

Food is decent, ambience is nice...see a couple belly dancing shows...massage and fortune teller apparently available for extra, but the wait staff unable to filfill promised appointment.

Guadalupe

#787 of 1,172 restaurants in Amsterdam

Cuisines: Mexican, International

Neighborhood: De Wallen

Prins Hendrik Kade 92, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

0204206114

Dining options: Lunch, Dinner, Reservations

"poor food..expensive and cats?"

Reviewed May 2, 2011

We ordered our food and the attendent asked if we liked some nachos. OOh well never came...when the food was on the table the nachos (Doritos with cheese and guacamole) appeared. I complained and eh said sorry and took of. Later then came 2 cats in side...I didn't liked right way. But when my husband went to pay they said the machine was off line, so my husband had to go looking for a ATM to pay the bill. We were there waiting and the cats..begun walking all over the tables around...on the plates and everything. Disgusting!

"Yulia: I had a horrible allergy after eating GuadaLupe's food. Be careful..."

Reviewed February 28, 2011

I had half an hour before my train and decided to use 25% discount voucher of IamAmsterdamcard in this restairant. A waiter said that they cook very quickly. The result: 15 minutes cooking a simple salad and a fried potato with eggs. I ate a half of the food and asked to pack the rest in a plastic container, reminded that I will pay with discount. The face of the waiter was far from friendly. I payed in 2 min, ran, caught my train. At home I finished the rest of the food. In the next morning I saw that my neck and arms were covered with horrible scratching red spots: a strong allergy developed. I suppose that they added something in the food intentionally. I am rather resistant to food allergents and I am sure it was their revenge to my

request to use a discount and be quick. Never visit this restaurant. I am surprised how many people already wrote about negative experience and the restaurant still works! And it was recommended by a tourist service of Amsterdam! They don't care about city reputation.

"IF YOU GO HERE YOU ARE WALKING INTO A CON MARKET!"

Reviewed January 29, 2011

This restaurant is a CON!!! A complete RIP OFF!!! The drinks are not priced so that when A TOURIST orders say a coke, (this applies to most drinks) large is given to them without a choice, this costs 4.50! The person only realises at the end when the bill arrives because guess what - there is NO DRINKS MENU!!!!! EVEN IF SMALL IS REQUESTED LARGE IS STILL GIVEN!!! And I noticed if a complaint is made the staff threaten to phone the police. This is ROBBERY!! Can you imagine that situation of a large group of poor people - say students or people with little money! Whereas Dutch people are served drinks at 2.50, to avoid negative local publicity. Also, water costs 4 Euros and alot of people expect tap water for free especially when they are ordering highly expensive meals NOT A SINGLE BOTTLE OF WATER FOR THAT PRICE. Again they are neither told that they have to pay for water or have an opportunity to see it on the menu because guess what?? Yep you're right THERE ISNT A DRINKS MENU!! The food is of sub standard (and that is being extremely kind) value I would liken it to fast food that you could get off the street for under 5 Euros not the 15-20 Euros charged. The food is STALE AND NOT FRESH!!!! And when I was there I noticed a mouse running across the floor of the restaurant!!! Absolutely no health/hygiene whatsoever!! Also, they claim to produce two beers, Amstel and Heineken, that is a lie!!! It comes from the same tap, which is Heineken, there is no Amstel!!! Also, there are numerous add ons that the customer is 'OFFERED WITH YOUR MEAL' at the end of ordering such as bread, sauce etc. all costing three euros each which you only become aware of when the bill is in front of you. This is total and utter DECEIT!!! To make matters worse if you have a coupon for 25% (the I Amsterdam Voucher) off the staff will only except it if you force it down their throats. They will keep pretending they haven't seen it and also pretend to forget about it. You may have to show it to them three or four times and then when the bill arrives they conviniently 'forget' to make the discount, often going back to the till twice to print off a new receipt, ('OH SORRY I FORGOT I WILL JUST DO THAT AGAIN FOR YOU') if the customer in question is persistent. AVOID THIS RESTAURANT AT ALL COSTS. THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER GENUINE RESTAURANTS AROUND THE AREA. DONT BE SCAMMED BY THIS ONE!!!! ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE A TOURIST!!

"BAD (why write a sentance when one word will do!)"

265

Reviewed November 12, 2010

The overpriced food is sub-standard and although the waiter was trying to be 'friendly' he was rather irritating to say the least. When we then went to pay using the 25% I Amsterdam discount voucher they refused the discount and said that it did not apply to the meals that we had eaten. There was also a ghost tax of 3 euro for a pepper sauce that had been offered with the steak and which had not even arrived at the same time. Don't waste your time, money or breath in this dive, i've had better food in a motorway service station.

"TERRIBLE!"

Reviewed October 5, 2010

We were here for the lunch a few days ago. The service was terrible, after a 45 minutes delay just for a rare steak, they forgot one of the meals we ordered and there was not any rush... Then, they refused to take our credit card, saying that there were electronic issues, but they just did not want to pay the fees. There are many mexican and generally speaking south american restaurants in Amsterdam, don't go to this one!

"Beware of the chalkboard prices - we were fleeced with full menu prices!"

Reviewed August 28, 2010

Good position, good atmosphere, good food. Having ordered a meal (fish & chips) from the board outside with special dishes we are charged the full menu price. A complaint registered the threat that if we insisted in paying the lower price, our waiter would be docked the difference. It was either a con or poor management.

"Terrible food and even worse service"

Reviewed August 13, 2010

We live in Amsterdam and tonight we stopped on the way home at Guadalupe. We realise its in a touristy part of the city but were looking forward to tapas. Unfortunately it was the worst restaurant experience we have ever had. The tapas was not even edible, after asking for parma ham, chorizo, bread instead we received a random fry up of whatever food the chef could find in the fridge! When we complained both waiters appeared scared, now we know why. The owner is an overbearing tyrant who came over and started yelling at us! He told us that we should have said something before touching the food and as we did not he was not listening! He was abusive

and rude, I'm still in shock, I've never been treated this badly in a restaurant. There are so many nice places to eat in Amsterdam, do yourself a favour and avoid this tourist trap.

"Worst restaurant experience in YEARS!"

Reviewed August 13, 2010

Ordered a Tapas mix plate like the one in the photo on the menu....what actually came out was nothing like it....and the taste was horrible....just some random deep fried food...chorizo that was NOT chorizo but some plain tasteless sausage which I even doubt had meat in it...just fat. We spoke to the owner very nicely...only for him to tell us that we tried the food so now we have to pay for it...we also told him that the food not only didnt taste good but it looked nothing like the photo....his response..."bad luck...I dont care...you're paying for it" after a 10 minute argument we agreed to only pay half...very rude boss and staff....worst experience in years...DO NOT GO THERE!!!

"Good food, good value, friendly staff"

Reviewed March 2, 2009

Been to Amsterdam 3 times now and visited Guadlupe every time. Lovely mixed tapas at very reasonable prices - last time we got 2 courses with wine for €56.35 - highly recommended.

"entgegen der Bewertungen hier ziemlich gut"

Reviewed January 27, 2011

Ich habe die Bewertungen auf TA hier erst nach meinem Besuch gelesen und war ziemlich erstaunt. Das Essen (ich hatte Mexikanische Tapas) war gut, aber auch nicht grad billig. Die Portion war nicht riesig, was bei Tapas ja auch normal ist und hat dafür aber 9,50 EUR gekostet. Komisch war, dass draußen an der Tür Angebote angeschlagen waren, die man auf der Karte nicht mehr gefunden hat. Auch waren keine Getränkepreise in der Karte. Nachdem ich gefragt habe, was ein Bier kostet wurde mir 5 EUR genannt, was ich ziemlich teuer fand (was aber in AMS normal ist). Daraufhin wurde mir ein kleines Bier für 2,50 EUR angeboten. Ich denke alles in allem ist es ein Touristen Restaurant, was etwas teuer ist, aber im großen und ganzen okay. Die Bedienung war nett und zurückhaltend. Der Salat meiner Freundin war einfach und mit 6,50 EUR auch nicht billig. Amsterdam ist aber auch woanders teuer. Das Restaurant ist sehr nett dekoriert.

I read and was quite surprised the evaluations on TA here only after my visit. The meal (I had Mexican Tapas) was good, in addition, not degrees cheaply. The portion was not enormous, which with Tapas is also normal and have for it however 9.50 EUR cost. It was amusing that outside at the door offers were fastened, which one did not find on the map to no more. Also no beverage prices were in the map. After I asked, what costs me a beer became 5 EUR mentioned, which rather expensive I found (which however in AMS is normal). Thereupon a small beer for 2,50 EUR was offered to me. I think all in all am it a tourist restaurant, which is somewhat expensive, but on the whole okay. The operation was nice and reserved. The salad of my friend was simple and with 6,50 EUR also not cheap. In addition, Amsterdam is elsewhere expensive. The restaurant is very nicely decorated.

http://au.babelfish.yahoo.com/translate_txt

Tosokchon

#**1** of 301 restaurants in Seoul

127 ratings

Cuisines: Asian

85-1 Chebu-dong, Jongro-gu, Seoul, South Korea

02-737-7444

Dining options: Breakfast/Brunch, Lunch, Dinner, Late Night

Good for: Families with children, Romance, Large groups, Local cuisine, Dining on a budget

"Worst Service EVER..."

Reviewed July 25, 2011

When I went there with my grandparents, they barely paid any attention to us. We asked for water five times, and the water was dirty. Then we ordered our meal, but the people who came after us received theirs before us. I was very frustrated because they had three rooms empty and the people were walking one mph. We kept asking them, they kept saying, " just a little bit more miss." I was VERY upset about this.

"Worth the search!"

Reviewed July 20, 2011

This is the third time I'm trying to submit the same review! We list this in our to-go after reading recommendations from Trip Advisor. It wasn't exactly easy to find, a kind gentlemen lead us there. Housed in a traditional setting, we had to take off our shoes, and sat on mats. On each table were 2 pots of different kimchi - I love love love those! I actually ate more kimchi than the samgaetang. As for the samgaetang - delicious! Best was the rice inside the chicken, soaked with ginseng, very fragrant. And it was cooked with gingko nuts as well. Soup was warming and smooth. They also served us with a cup of tea and ginseng wine. We enjoyed our dining there, and hope to be back!

"Average samgaetang housed in a traditional Korean house."

Reviewed May 21, 2011

I visited this Tosokchon after reading the recommendations on TripAdvisor. The samgaetang (ginseng chicken soup) was just average. The soup is rather bland with little ginseng taste. Fortunately, the chicken was tender. Free flow of kimchi added some flavour to the soup. There are two varieties of the kimchi and are in two small pots shared at each table. I would recommend a visit to tosokchon for the experience rather than the soup. The restaurant is housed in a traditional Korean house. The rooms where you dine are in traditional setting. Be prepared to take off your shoes and sit on the floor.

"Delicious Samagyetang."

Reviewed April 26, 2011

After arriving in Seoul and checking-in in our hotel. We immediately went to Tosokchon. We arrived there around 10:30am so there was no queue yet. After getting off the subway, we asked some locals for the location of the place. (My cellphone has a picture of their signboard). I ordered Samgyetang while some of my friends ordered the grilled chicken. Samgyetang was really delicious. And all through out my stay in Seoul for the next 6 days, I was hoping to find a restaurant that serves Samgyetang, but I didn't find any. My friends didn't like the grilled chicken very much (They eat it will steamed rice). If I have the chance of getting back to Seoul, I surely will be back at Tosokchon for their Samgyetang (and a cola).

"best samgetang"

Reviewed April 25, 2011

This is the best korean ginseng chicken soup I have ever had. Worth queuing over 20mins. I returned the next day at about 11 am to beat the queue and had another bowl before I flew home. Add a dash of ginseng souchu for the extra umph!

"miracle"

Reviewed November 27, 2010

One of Korean friend recommended this restaurant. dead Delicious!!

"Must eat Korean food"

Reviewed July 11, 2010

Hearing rave reviews about this place I decided to give it a go. Was a bit shocked when the taxi driver didn't know where to go at first. The restaurant is housed in several old hut-like buildings but gets very busy at dinner time. If you go before 6:30pm you should be able to avoid the queues. The place attracts a lot of locals too indicating how good it is. The soup is made with quality ingredients and is very filling. You can get a slice of Korean culture by visiting this place.

"Ginseng chicken soup at its best"

Reviewed June 14, 2010

Tosokchon is the best place to go for Samgyetang — a type of stew whereby a spring chicken is stuffed with rice, chestnuts, ginseng root, and some other good stuff and cooked up in a broth. With its warm wood accents and traditional wood low tables (with seating on the floor), Tosokchon's a cozy spot to build up your appetite. There is no english menu available but it's not a big problem for foreigners. There's not a whole lot on the menu in this eatery. That made ordering over the language barrier easy. Simply say "samgyetang"or just point at the soup stone pot at the next table. Make sure it's a white chicken because they have Black Chicken Ginseng soup too! They told me that this is a summer delicacy. "Fight fire with fire" and so they say. I enjoyed it in the pleasantness of spring as well. They just brought the steaming, hearty chickeny goodness out to us. Pretty nice stuff with great taste and aroma; if you like oriental herbs (or chicken soup) you'll love this for sure. (www.perfyi.wordpress.com)

"Worth lining up for"

Reviewed June 1, 2010

This restaurant is where even the President has to line up to eat. The best value for money and the atmosphere of the old Korean house is wonderful. Worth the trip and the waiting line. A "Must Go" in Seoul.

"Seriously one of the best! excellent "samgyetang" a chicken broth and ginseng based meal... pricewise might be a little..."

Reviewed October 25, 2009

Seriously one of the best! excellent "samgyetang" a chicken broth and ginseng based meal... pricewise might be a little more expensive than other places but it's totally worth it!

Sortino's

2nd Floor-736-11Hannam-Dong, Yongsan Gu, Seoul, South Korea

02-797-0488-9

Price range: $7-$100

Dining options: Reservations

Good for: Entertaining clients

"Ter-ri-ble!"

Reviewed July 16, 2011

I went with my husband and a couple friends and we each ordered something different. Strangely enough, my Fettucine Alfredo was alright but my husband's seafood pasta was horrible! It tasted like a salt lick and we both got food poisoning from it.

"Watch out for recommendations"

Reviewed August 16, 2010

Good food, no doubt and generally ok priced. Originally was even more reasonably priced when it first opened as it catered to the expat crowd but as Itaewon has become more 'local' the opportunity to fleece the punter couldn't be resisted with prices going up and portions down

(like someone else commented on here). Mr S may saunter round and offer recommendations, if he finds out your on a corporate card, expect the bottle on the bill to be exorbitant, he might offer some specials "why don't I throw some truffles on there?" or "I've got some great special steaks not on the menu". You think, oh, that's nice, some real personal service from the owner, until the truffles cost you $100 on top of a $25 salad and the steaks are $80/each and your HR department rejects the $500 wine that was "recommended" Great place to try just down the road is Casa Antonio run and now owned by the original manager of La Tavola (also still in Itaewon) which set the benchmark for affordable italian in Seoul.

"Good food, but a little pricy"

Reviewed April 3, 2010

My husband and I went to Sortino's for a special occasion. If you are looking for romance, you might want to go on a weeknight, because the restaurant was very crowded and a bit too loud. The food, however, was generally very good. We ordered the crostini as an appetizer. The olive oil was very good quality, as was the buffalo mozarella, but they put smoked salmon on it even though it was not on the menu (I hate smoked salmon). I ordered the pasta alla norma, which is rotini in a tomato sauce with roasted vegetables. It was really nice, but it only had roasted eggplant even though it was supposed to include several other vegetables. My husband ordered carbonara, which was delicious in the beginning, but as we ate, it became too sticky. The server told us they use only egg yolk, not cream, in their carbonara, and I think that was why it was too dry. It had a nice flavor, though. One thing I noticed is that they make the food much too salty, but you might be able to ask them to take it easy on the sodium. The service was also very good (especially for Korea). Overall, the best reasonably-priced Italian I've had in Seoul, although their prices are not particularly good value compared to what you'd get in an Italian restaurant in the US or Europe.

"Expat favorite for a reason."

Reviewed March 2, 2010

Actually located in Itaewon-dong, this is a great place for Italian. Prices are about norm for Korea and the atmosphere is great especially if you can get a window seat. Bread before the meal is awesome and if you ask they will bring a simple salad of greens, sun dried tomatoes and olives (not on menu). Easily the best Italian in the area for the price. Get reservations for Fri or Sat nights. They do fill up. Dress tends to be on the dressy side but as with all things in Itaewon you'll see a bit of everything especially with the lunch crowd which is much less formal than

evenings. Can bring kids but more of a couples or date place for atmosphere and the food is a bit upscale for most kids.

"Great food"

Reviewed October 3, 2008

Great food

"Not worth all the fuss"

Reviewed August 25, 2008

I've been to Sotino's on three occassions over a year in a half and have found the prices going up, up up and up! and the portion sizes going down down down and down. As well as the quality. On my first visit the food was absolutely superb and the second time when I ordered the same it was much less tantalizing. As for the my third visit, I'm sorry to say but the food was nothing to write home about and it will be my last visit or recommendation. The prices are ridiculous 28$ for a small bowl of pasta!!!! There are way better Italian restaurants in Seoul.

"It was good food but nothing to write home about. And for the price it's not that good and the portions are small."

Reviewed June 1, 2008

It was good food but nothing to write home about. And for the price it's not that good and the portions are small.

"Authentic Italian! Excellent Pizza and pasta !"

Reviewed January 14, 2008

Authentic Italian! Excellent Pizza and pasta !

"The Risotto wasnt cook enough. ok red wine by the glass. all the rest of the food was very bland and the place was..."

Reviewed December 23, 2007

The Risotto wasnt cook enough. ok red wine by the glass. all the rest of the food was very bland and the place was somehow still packed

"Excellent!"

Reviewed December 22, 2007

Excellent!

Kraze Burger

#**106** of 301 restaurants in Seoul

T-9 COEX MALL ASEM TOWER 159, Samsung-dong, Gangnam-gu, Seoul,South Korea

02-555-7808

Price range: $10-$15

Dining options: Lunch

Good for: Families with children

"A good burger"

Reviewed April 3, 2011

I visited the Kraze Burger at the Hyundai store in Ulsan. It was a very busy restaurant. I had a good burger, but it certainly is not a copy of a USA burger, it is a very much a specialty burger that is all their own. I liked it. Its 10 bucks for a burger, but everything is expensive in Korea. I would go again and try one of their other specialty burgers.

"NOT anything like a USA burger!"

Reviewed March 14, 2011

Born in Japan, I've lived in the USA for 42 years, and I'm amazed that Koreans think Kraze Burger is a USA hamburger! As others have said before me, the food is EXTREMELY overpriced, and the food is absolutely horrible -- I choked down two burgers on two different occasions (at two different locations) just to make sure I didn't get a bad hamburger... It turns out it's just bad! I also ordered the chili cheese fries, and never received them -- when I asked where they were, I got a broken-English response that basicly said, "It's too much food, so I didn't bring it to you." THAT IS HORRIBLE SERVICE!!! I will never go back. McDonald's has a REAL AMERICAN HAMBURGER that is inexpensive and you will get really good service.

"Don't follow the reviews here!"

Reviewed October 10, 2010

Kraze Burger is horrible, there are far better places all over Seoul, and even McDonalds or Burger King is better quality if you just need a fast food fix. It's really overpriced and bland, the burgers are overcooked and the fries taste like the "food service" kind. Seoul has many great locally owned burger places now, especially in Hongdae and Itaewon. Avoid this ripoff.

"An OK burger but nothing special"

Reviewed June 4, 2010

Many branches in Seoul. A nicer atmsophere than your typical fast food chain but for a burger speciality place I didn't find it overly impressive.

"Nothing to write home about, but not bad either"

Reviewed May 9, 2010

We were told that Kraze Burger had the best burgers. We had the "matiz" - which was like a teriyaki burger with bacon. Not the greatest, but not bad either. All the burgers are from 7300-9300 won. There's also some steak burger for 18000 won. Fries start from 4200 won!!! Why go to Korea to look for a burger, but if you have to, you might be just as happy at McDonald's, where the prices are hopefully better.

"Sterile copy of the real thing"

Reviewed April 18, 2010

I think some Korean businessman liked the concept of the American diner and copied it from pictures and movies without caring about the soul of what makes a diner special. Walking into a Kraze Burger is like walking onto the set of a creepy horror film where everything looks okay but something isn't right. There's a tendency of Korean restaurants to take blue collar foods from other countries and make them as pretentious as possible, i.e., price them through the roof, without "getting" the concept. The burgers are okay. The chili fries are great. But dessert is a big fat bill that will make your stomach lurch. The service is cold and sterile, just like the atmosphere. It's more of a burger museum than a hoppin' diner. Again, there are much better burgers in Korea at much better prices. Just search the internet.

"This place care for their burges"

Reviewed March 9, 2010

great atmosphere and burgers made with great care and dedication. Just don't order the plain simple burger.

"A burger is not supposed to be sterile..."

Reviewed December 8, 2009

A burger is not supposed to be sterile overpriced for what you get

"Good burger place"

Reviewed October 27, 2008

I go here for my monthly burger fix. LOVE the teriyaki based K.O. burger with the mushrooms, though I have no idea what "K.O." stands for. The one with the balsamic vinaigrette and jalapeno slices is tasty too! If you go often enough, you can get a coupon card stamped each time and your 11th is free. There are branches in most of the busy and trendy areas like Daehakno and Apgujeongdong.

"Apparently pronounced "Krah zay". Its okay but wouldn't go out of my way to visit."

Reviewed April 6, 2008

Apparently pronounced "Krah zay". Its okay but wouldn't go out of my way to visit.

La Colombe

#**1** of 321 restaurants in Cape Town

Cuisines: French

Neighborhood: Tokai

Constantia Uitsig Wine Estate, Cape Town, South Africa

+27217942390

Dining options: Lunch, Dinner, Reservations, Dessert

Good for: Romance, Doing business, Local cuisine, Outdoor seating, Special occasions, Entertaining clients

"Fantastic!!"

Reviewed July 9, 2011

Went to this brilliant restaurant with high expectations! Previous no12 in the world, no 1 in the country, no1 on Tripadvisor. So with all this in mind and having been to a few of Cape Towns best restaurants off we went. This time it was special though. A very special birthday! So we sat down in a packed restaurant and chose the winter menu. A beautiful 5 course menu. But with any food as you'll know, the proof is in the taste and not in the description. This did not fail at all. Every dish was even better than the description. The service was spot on and not intrusive. My favorite was the Ribeye. Tender and cooked as they recommended medium rare. Although not the cheapest restaurant, it was worth every penny and we will go back on our next visit. 5 Star!!

"Ces't Magnifique!"

Reviewed July 2, 2011

This was not my first visit to La Colombe and hopefully It'll not be my last! I love it and once again it lived up to all my expectations. The menu is small, well planned and the execution brilliant. We had a luncheon there and decided on the 3 course menu with a wine pairing. Every course was a feast for the eyes and a taste sensation. Our waitron was very professional, well spoken and charming. If I had to make a list of my top 100 things to do before I popped my clogs this would definitely be on the list!

"A great restaurant"

Reviewed June 27, 2011

Great restaurant. Good service and better food and wine. Nice atmosphere, definately a romantic favourite. Tricky to find as the restaurant does not have a large sign by the road.

"Fantastic!!"

Reviewed June 14, 2011

The best food ever. Really good service, romantic atmosphere. If you are in Cape Town, this restaurant is at the top of the "must go" list! We will definitely be back!

"Truly memorable setting, incredible cuisine and a phenomenal wine list"

Reviewed May 2, 2011

This place simply knocks spots off any other restaurant I have been to in the UK or the US. Everything was perfect. The service is exceptional and the food is exquisite. The sommelier recommended a superb wine which was the perfect accompaniment to our choice of cuisine. i will certainly be coming back again. No trip to cape town would be complete without making a pilgrimage to this incredible restaurant.

"Outstanding South African cuisine"

Reviewed April 16, 2011

Taken here in a group of 9. I can understand why this has been a regular of our host. Well appointed interior but we elected to be seated outside on a balmy evening. Well received by knowledgeable waiter and sommelier. A sensible limited menu which offered plenty of opportunity to select local produce. We rejected the tasting menu but were given wonderful appetizer before I consumed the most tender and tasty scallops and pork belly. Had to go for the steak to ensure that I sampled the full range of the sparkling, white and red wines produced on the winery estate. No-one at our table was disappointed with their choice and the kitchen was very amenable to modifying any dish to suit personal taste. I have this place in my diary for my next visit to Cape Town.

"Outstanding"

Reviewed April 9, 2011

We had a table of 11 and none of us could fault this fantastic restaurant. The highlight of our trip to cape town and knocks the socks off comparable restaurants in London, Sydney or New York. Starters and desserts were a highlight.

"Continues to be excellent!!"

Reviewed April 7, 2011

I take my friends to this place every time we go to SA and I have to say, it still delivers on service, atmosphere and quality gourmet food every single time. If you want to spoil yourself and your loved ones, please go there, you will not be disappointed! The only restaurant with even better food is in Franschoek and is called Reuben's- my SA favourite!!

"One of the best in Cape Town, but not in a league of its own"

Reviewed April 5, 2011

Often rated as head and shoulders above any other restaurant in Cape Town and Constantia. Certainly an excellent restaurant, but not in a league of its own. Buitenverwachting, Catharina's and Harbor House all offer similar top-notch quality. I actually preferred our meal at the sister restaurant, Constantia Uitsig. A little pricey because of the fame and publicity. Excellent service - a superb staff. A very enjoyable meal and should not be missed.

"Awesome for the price, wines were a let down and cant realistically be #12 best restaurant in the world."

Reviewed April 3, 2011

Was looking forward to eating here more than ever after I found out that La Colombe was rated #12 in the world by San Pellegrino. Perhaps I was expecting more due to the number 12 rating. The meal was great...I was very happy with the degustation that was served. Service was attentive, yet I felt our waiter was the new kid. The matched wines were not of a high quality and most were less than $20-40USD a bottle. Sadly after having sampled many Sth African wines, I must say, they dont rate anywhere on a world scale. I was surprised to see all matching wines were Sth African and no option given to match the meal with European wines. The lack of red wines offered also left me sceptical. 1 red in 7 courses is just not diverse enough in my opinion. Somellier was very friendly and a really great guy, however I wasnt keen on his selections. If you told me that I was sitting in the 12th best restaurant in the world, I would have told you that I thought you were lying. Had I not known this 1 simple fact, after paying my bill, I would have left the restaurant a very satisfied and happy man. In summary, this place is great value, however I can safely say that this restaurant deserves no place in the San Pellegrino top 100 or if it does then its definely at the tail end of it.

Saigon

#**99**of 321 restaurants in Cape Town

Neighborhood: Gardens

kloof street, Cape Town, South Africa

Dining options: Dinner, Reservations

"Overpriced and little in the way of flavour"

Reviewed July 1, 2011

I am bemused by some of the positive reviews on here. My wife and I ate at the restaurant last night and were not impressed. One thing I should say upfront is that the service was excellent. Everyone was very attentive and friendly, so no complaints there. However, that is where the good news ends. We ordered a bottle of Shiraz (R120), the dumplings and chicken skewers for starters and then angry duck and the beef chilli plate for mains, with smokey noodles on the side. The food was utterly tasteless. The duck tasted of nothing and was smothered in a flavourless salty sauce, the noodles had simply been boiled and then had oil poured over them (how exactly can they by "smokey" if you don't fry them on high heat in a wok?) and the beef was dry. The wine was just about OK, but was certainly not a R120 bottle. The tables are piled in almost on top of each other, so you feel cramped, and the seats were uncomfortable. When the bill came, it was R450 for two. Given the food on offer, this is not even close to competitive in the Cape Town market. I honestly have no idea how they justify these prices. My wife and I are well travelled and have been all around South East Asia. I have to say, the food served is far from authentic and has clearly been adapted to what they think people in Cape Town want. My advice is to save your money and eat at one of the many much better and cheaper restaurants. If you want Asian food, you don't even have to go far, as Yindees Thai right across the street is far superior.

"Excellent service...the food is even better!"

Reviewed June 27, 2011

We didn't have a reservation on a Saturday night, but they seated us within about 10 min! The bar area was a bit crowded while waiting (at least we didn't have to wait there long!). The restaurant has soft, low-key lights that create the perfect ambience. The Vietnamese decor is done elegantly without giving it a themed feeling. All the staff is incredibly friendly and eager to serve you. Our waitress knew the menu by heart and could help us choose the best dishes according to our own tastes and likes. The presentation and preparation of the food was perfect and extremely flavoursome....the seafood hot plate is a must! A bit expensive, but well worth the money.

"Best fusion cooking in CPT I guess"

Reviewed March 12, 2011

Saigon is an awfully big restaurant as we know Chinese restaurants to be. It does give that impression a bit, also inside. It has its own parking. We had walked Kloofstraat up and down looking for a first class restaurant. We wanted to avoid the Mount Nelson's Hotel restaurant. There are lots and lots of pizza and hamburger places in this street but we were looking for something different and ended up in Saigon. It was lunchtime and quiet. The restaurant looks Asian with chop sticks, soy sauce, nam pla sauce on the table. The food is not purely Asian The food was a surprise. The dishes were very well prepared and represented a kind of fusion cooking that I still have to find in Western restaurants. I suppose one would have to specify it if you'd want a typical Vietnamese dish. We had a good Tom Yam soup, indicated as very spice with 3 red peppers but we found it reasonably mild. But good. Having lived in Asia for many, many years we are maybe used too much to very spicy food. The meat dish and the fish dish were both excellent. Well made and beautifully presented. I don't care much for the all too often typical presentation of most Western restaurants but if the food is good it adds to the overall experience. I think the food is best described as fusion. It is Asian food for Western clients. We had to wait rather long for our main dishes but it was clear that the kitchen had started with fresh ingredients that would need time to cook. Service was good and friendly - although they could have told us these dishes would take long. I certainly will go back for lunch (as I don't like big crowded restaurants)

"Again and again, very good"

Reviewed January 31, 2011

We visited this restaurant three times during our days in Cape Town and it was always very good. We had cristal spring rolls and the deluxe sushi platter - incredible good.

"Nice Place"

Reviewed October 14, 2010

The Saigon is a Vietnais Restaurant with a rather modern styl. They serve good sushi and lovely vietnamis starters. Price/value is absolutly allright. The food they serve is well done and tasty. The service is good, the kitchen is fast. I would recommend the restaurant it is a great place to have a asian dinner in Capetown.

"Excellent Food"

Reviewed September 2, 2010

I was not expecting great food from a place that offers a variety of cuisines and has a large casino looking sign but I was mistaken. It was some of the best Thai food I ever had and they also had excellent fun cocktails

"good dinner and service"

Reviewed August 25, 2010

The B&B we were staying at recommended this place for a meal, not too heavy, some variety, in close walking distance. We were quite pleased with everything about this place. It fills up quick, can get a bit noisy but the food was really quite good.

"Saigon's dumplings & sushi are among the..."

Reviewed April 30, 2010

Saigon's dumplings & sushi are among the best in Cape Town. Beautiful large window views of Table Mountain, friendly efficient service. Always reliable & good.

"Safe and sound without being particularly impressive"

Reviewed February 23, 2010

This restaurant is in a good location if you dont want to go downtown. The food was fine and the service was ok. It was Valentines Day so there were lots of customers.

"A restaurant I love going to"

Reviewed January 16, 2010

I've been going to Saigon every few months for the past eight years and have always looked forward to the next time. I've always enjoyed it, as have the different groups of friends I go with and, as far as I can see, everyone else in the restaurant. I've tried most of the starters, though not the sushi, and enjoyed them all. My personal favourites among the main courses are the duck dishes, especially the crispy barbecue duck with plum sauce, but I always sample everything on the table and have found it all consistently good. The staff are welcoming on arrival and attentive throughout the meal. The decor is pleasant and the seating arrangements are comfortable - I prefer the smaller, intimate upstairs dining area which leads onto a terrace with beautiful views of the city centre. I'm amazed that my experience of Saigon is so different from that of other reviewers on this page.

Hildebrand

#**236**of 321 [restaurants in Cape Town](#)

Cuisines: Italian

Neighborhood: Cape Town CBD

Pierhead | Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa

[www.hildebrand.co.za](#)

Dining options: Lunch, Dinner, Reservations

Good for: Outdoor seating, Scenic view

"Hildebrand went from awesome to awfull!"

Reviewed May 1, 2011

We have been going to this restuarant since 1986...25 years. Today: The medium lamb chops were burnt...yes read flame burnt pitch black. Inedible. The T-Bone was tough, a steak knife battled through the sinewy, filletless Tbone. The seafood platters were dry. The vegetables was less than 1 spoonful, dry and tasteless. Management offered us free dessert, which 6 of the 7 of us declined. Our hearts go out to the staff with 20+ years service, that have to deal with this sad situation.

"Hildebrand - Despite spectacular position, food shocking!"

Reviewed April 21, 2011

We are Capetonians and were disappointed when we went for a meal at the Hildebrand Restaurant this week. They used to have a fantastic reputation and the location of the restaurant is superbly situated. Ben our waiter was great, but the food was shocking. I ordered "Karoo lamb chops". You got two chops that were all bone and grissel - inedible. Even our local Spur knocks the socks off the lamb chops! I then requested the linefish of the day which was Blue Nose which ordinary. My husband and I obviously then ate at different times and when my fish arrived was very dry. Equally disappointing was that even though the management were aware of my returned meal, there was no follow through to check that we were satisfied or happy with the replacement meal. This was an embarrassment for a restaurant that used to be considered

top class and where many tourists visit. Cape Town Waterfront has many other options, this is not one of them!

"bad service"

Reviewed March 2, 2011

Service was very slow, possibly understaffed. Did not have enough candles for every table. Ran out of bread, which never happened to me before. The Manager set at the next table and was bragging, that he in mid month already achieved his target. At the same time he had one beer after the other. But what do you expect from an italian restaurant with a german name???

"As a cape town local I am ebarrassed by this restaurant!"

Reviewed January 13, 2011

I recently went to this restaurant with some family that was visiting from overseas, and to say the least I was embarrassed by this restuarant. With such a prime spot they believe that can charge high prices because they will get tourists in simply because of their position. The service was terrible, we were not given enought cutlery or napkins, my pasta was undercooked and fairly tasteless. We had to ask for the bill numerous times. The main thing I want to say is that cape town has so many wonderful restaurants to choose from so if you are a tourist definitly give this one a miss!

"4 visits yet disappointed at the end..."

Reviewed January 3, 2011

During an 8 day stay in Cape Town Hildebrand was found to be a place to go at the beginning, simply because the food was very good and excellent value for money. This impression changed on New Years Eve 2010, when at the dine & dance event they organized at a cost of 185 USD per person it happened short after midnight that they removed wine and water from the table during a 25 minutes stay on the dance floor. The table was absolutely empty after returning there. This is absolutely not acceptable and made me cancel any further reservation at Hildebrand. It can't be that at a dine & dance event you've got to have somebody watching your table.

"It has potential..."

Reviewed January 1, 2011

Its not our first time at the Hildebrand... we were ushered to our parking space next to the restaurant, as always. a bit slow on the uptake to seat us, having two entraces means having a rep at each end to receive potntial guests. Our waiter Michael became increasingly great. Our starter calamari was hot off the pan, but presentation very disappointing. My prawn and basil ravioli lacked basil, the ossobuco was like a home cooked meal- nothing too fancy. Appetites satisfied - but the staff really need their serving passion back, they need to recommend specials, wines, dishes , etc. The manager, AJ was on the ball- brilliant liasing with customers, great service.

"Shocking service, mediocre food - give it a miss"

Reviewed December 29, 2010

After being shown to a table on entering the restaurant, we then waited almost 20 minutes for a waiter to take our drinks order and other 20 minutes for the food order. I had the lunch "Flash Steak and Rosemary Chips which was actually a small piece of fatty frying steak and microwave frozen chips. I'm told it was once a great place - just glad we didn't book there at exhorbitant prices for the New Year. Nice building (apart from the disgusting toilets), everything else is terrible.

"Great food and service, reasonable price"

Reviewed October 9, 2010

We ate at Hildebrand our first night in Cape Town. They have a price fixed dinner advertised outside and we thought we'd give it a try, I had the fish which was delicious. The selectons were good and the service was excellent even though we chose this dinner. We returned a few nights later with 2 other couples. This time we all ordered off the regular menu and were all happy with our meal.

"Excellent food and service so we ate there twice"

Reviewed September 8, 2010

I ate at this restaurant on my first night in Cape Town and enjoyed lobster bisque for starter, followed by the seafood platter for main and chocolate mousse for dessert. Everything was cooked and presented beautifully. I went back there and tried the calamari for starter and then the Fillet Hildebrand for main. Again the quality of the food was exceptional, especially the fillet. Absolutely cooked to perfection. I have read some of the other reviews and I can only assume

the chef has changed as we did not experience any of the bad things that have happened. The waiters were attentive and professional and I would not hesitate to recommend this restaurant to future visitors.

"At one time a wonderful restaurant; now slipping to mediocracy"

Reviewed September 1, 2010

I went to this restaurant many times in the past when I lived in Cape Town. I found then that it was truly excellent and served the best of quality Italian cuisine. However, after five years abroad, I returned to a very diminished restaurant with poor food and the most terrible of service. I had lunch with my South African friends and my wife. My South African friends who knew the restaurant from its inception (before it even moved to the Waterfront) were horrified.

The lunch involved long waits for service and when I complained the first time, the waiter patted my back in the hope to pass it off. This is an absolute "no no" in the F & B business; you don't touch the customer! The second time, I had to complain was prompted because the waiter added to the table before clearing away the empties and thus bottles of oil and vinegar were perilously half an inch from the edge. He then dropped the water bottle cap on the ground, served water and put the dirty gap back on the bottle. I had to ask the manageress to replace the waiter but she really could not care less. As it was she said that the waiter was one of her best. Amongst all this, we had the stale bread, the starter that came with the main course, the lemon butter that never came with the prawns, the over cooked steak - the "full faulty towers" works! It was supposed to be Italian food; we never saw the black pepper grinder once!! After all of this, I would have to be out of my mind to ever go back there again when there are so many other fine restaurants across in the V & A that serve well such good food. I would suggest that the Hildebrand will end up as a fish and chipper in a couple of years time.

B. CONTENT ANALYSIS RESULTS – CODING PER REVIEW

Review #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
						Criteria logged from comments								
1	21	1	514											
2	32	9514												
3	21	31	417											
4	121	21	141	142	31	512								
5	211	33	1	2	512									
6	34	512												
7	31	131	141	142	215	512								
8	21	214	9122											
9	1	141	143	141	212	213	214	215	152	512				
10	1	21	512											
11	21	31	33	221	411	144	512							
12	21	33	514											
13														
14	22	21												
15	221	144												
16	215	412	222	221	472									
17	413	122	21	22	112									
18	33	21	41	1	221	942								
19	221	41												
20	221	414	922	9132	921	9411	9113	9123	935	9515				
21	933	9122	934											
22	921	933	934	933										
23	935	9515												
24	943	944	935	921	9515									
25	9123	9216	933	9515										
26	921	91	945	9217	9214	9141	931	945						
27	921	935	9217	114	9114	9515								
28	934	935	9515											
29	91	921	935	946	932	9515								
30	9217	935	936	9141	9515									
31	21	217	218	947										
32	217	131	115	947										
33	215													
34	31													
35	21	9218	942	948										
36														
37	21													
38														
39	935													
40	215													
41	911	929	9116	913	9123									
42	441													
43	915	934	935	9220	9515									
44	931	91	9143	9145	9117	9515								
45	210	1												
46														
47	210													
48	42													
49	9415	210	215	21	416	512								
50	416	215	231	210	441									
51														
52	9214	9219	9218	931	9210	931	921	45	9514	9512	9516	9515		
53	21	417	512											
54	9521	9522	9112	9442	921	9131	9133	9216	451	9514	9515			
55	1	9241	143	124	9114	9146	9134	9231	9513	9515				
56	935	221	9515											
57	9124	9521	9133	9210	9214	9216	9046	###	###	9514	9515			
58	9214	9131	9141	9134	921									
59	451	9442	9515											
60	9123	9216	9218	9214	9220	9214	9218	9131	9135	9114	9144	9046	9515	9516
61	214	215	218	31	25	21	215	32	1	512				
62	218	218	216	512										
63	35	948	947											
64	217	33	512											
65	217	26	512											
66	21	35	141	142	9415									
67	144	216	219	217	32	217	214	211	512					
68	472	217	214	1	121	136	144	141	125	512				
69	35	21												
70	1	21	152	34	21	512								
71	44	131												
72														
73	934	946												
74	921													
75	21	1	118											
76	934													
77	9220	9515												
78	25	21												
79	2101	935												
80	21	934	41	9417										
81	948	9143	9122	9118	9220	931	9515							
82	9521	922	921	91										
83	210													
84														
85	21													
86														
87	21	210												
88	21													
89														
90	442	210	418											
91	9419	9415	9144	9144	9514									
92	45	33												
93	1	41	21	418	221	222	934							
94	21	1	143	217	117	512								
95	21	31	221											
96	121	131	511	21	141	512								
97	117	131	141	146	21	31	210	221	33	512				
98	115	141	21	22	9417									
99	45	131	141	215	219	418	419	33	512					
100	21	21	217	33	36	9514								
101	21	9213	22	932										
102	941	9141	9133	9152	9213	921	936	9223	935	9516				
103	21													
104	935	9442	934	9516										
105	921													

Review #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
106														
107														
108														
109	21													
110														
111	9152													
112	452	9123	9219	9117	9135	9144	9516							
113	921	943												
114	9214	9114												
115	935													
116														
117														
118	935													
119														
120														
121	41	136	121	144	26	153	21	215	117	21	417	472	512	
122	126	134	131	34	215	21								
123	21	121	115											
124	141	215	143											
125	215	221	1	1	144	121	21	514						
126	419	419	418	121	26	146	21	31	123	121	127	45		
127	144	112	21	134										
128	21	121	9514	512										
129	215	210	141	127	418	418	9514							
130	128	144	146											
131	21	233	44	418	152	9415	419	416						
132	418	419	410	44	146	26	934	934						
133	152	21	41	410	934									
134	948	217	9123	9123	935	9145	935							
135	934	934	410	152	931									
136	41	21												
137	21	418												
138	91	921	935	44	9124	9146	9210	9115	932	921	934	9515		
139														
140	9136													
141	9123	946	9136	9123	946									
142	9123	9144	9231	9523	9515									
143	932	9113	9154	9114	9119	921	9214	946	933	9121	9113	9134	9513	9515
144	935	921	2142	9118	933									
145	91	9123	9154	9118	949									
146	9119	9134	946											
147	921	9132	9124	9128	9118	9144	9515							
148	921	933	9118	9146	9144	9515								
149	21	33												
150	934	9210	9117	9119	934	934	144							
151	9116	922	9117	9512	9122	9513								
152	9512	213	21	215	2102	216	2103							
153	2103	218	213	43										
154	215	35	921											
155	21	947	511											
156	472	215												
157	472	9514	947	48	211	2104	43							
158	35	211	41	43	417	925	216	217	218					
159	947	31	43	41										
160	21													
161	921	9217	9523											
162	21	33	###	933	9134	9512	935	9515						
163	9410	9419	9415	21	211	218	1	33						
164	41	451	35	41										
165	21													
166	931	921	###	9515	934									
167	931													
168	43	21												
169	9220	9217	421											
170														
171	9410	2101	512											
172	934	921	91	9515										
173	921	9515	934	9220	932									
174														
175	9515													
176	943	9152	9151	9414	934	9153	9417	9515						
177														
178	934													
179	21	217	36	512										
180														
181	9514	21	213	21	1	143	220	31						
182	512	9514	925	1	2	219	217	131	136	132	512			
183	1	2	41	419	949									
184	21	1	419	512										
185	35	1	21	222	512									
186	472	26	222	925	211	2103	217	221	233	512				
187	35	21												
188	1	41	21	2105										
189	935	1	21											
190	141	9119	922	9221	144	9222	31							
191	1	141	144	9217	9220	934	948	935	9515					
192	41	417	43	444	144	133	212	119	219	220	218	31		
193	942	943	220	2101	21	219	9122	214	144	512				
194	2105	21												
195	21	31	217	123	512									
196	21	22												
197	213	9415	21											
198	35	457	136	11										
199	45	421												
200	512	2105	121	141	44	443	451							
201	9514	9220	###	9217										
202	9516	9514	45	133	9211	9117	###	###	9133	9515				
203	9122	9124	9134	943										
204	9517	934	91	9217	9220	9141	9515							
205	9514	9143												
206	9122	131	9219	9217	9133	926	46							
207	9122	921	934	45	945	9215								
208	215													
209	21	219	220	141	131	512								
210	9514	921	9131	9122	9143	9119	9115	9146	9131	9214	9117	9515		

C. CODE BOOK OF DELIGHT- AND FRUSTRATION FACTORS

DELIGHT FACTORS			FRUSTRATION FACTORS		
1 Service Quality	11 Reliability	112 Delightful	91 Service Quality	911 Reliability	9112 Frustrated
		113 Treated fairly			9113 Treated unfairly
		114 Skilled communication			9114 Defensive communication
		115 Effective			9115 Ineffective
		116 Completed orders			9116 Incomplete orders
		117 Consistent			9117 Inconsistent
		118 Reasonable			9118 Unreasonable
		119 Informing/Knowledgeable			9119 Uninforming/Unknowledgeable
	12 Responsiveness	121 Welcoming		912 Responsiveness	9121 Unwelcoming
		122 Well-paced			9122 Too slow
		123 Quick			9123 Too quick
		124 Apologetic			9124 Unapologetic/arrogant
		125 Gratitude			9125 Thankless
		126 Personal			9126 Impersonal
		127 Charismatic			9127 Bombastic
		128 Polite			9128 Impolite
	13 Assurance	131 Professional		913 Assurance	9131 Unprofessional
		132 Confident			9132 Unsure
		133 Service orientated			9133 Reluctant to serve
		134 Sincere			9134 Insincere
		135 Orderly			9135 Confusion
		136 Efficient			9136 Inefficient
	14 Empathy	141 Attentive		914 Empathy	9141 Inattentive
		142 Not intrusive			9142 Intrusive
		143 Thoughtful			9143 Unthoughtful
		144 Friendly			9144 Unfriendly/rude
		145 Patience			9145 Impatience
		146 Care			9146 Careless
	15 Tangibles	151 Tasteful environment		915 Tangibles	9151 Tasteless environment
		152 Unique concept			9152 Bad concept
		153 Visible kitchen			9153 cold/sterile
		154 Correct orders			9154 Incorrect orders
2 Product Quality	21 Food Quality	210 Quantity	92 Product Quality	921 Food Quality	9210 Quantity
		211 Good ingredients			9211 Bad ingredients
		212 Explaining dishes			9212 Not explaining dishes
		213 Variety			9213 No acceptable variety
		214 Freshness			9214 Freshness
		215 Delicious			9215 Terrible
		216 Temperature			9216 Temperature
		217 Taste			9217 Tasteless
		218 Flavour			9218 Flavour
		219 Presentation			9219 Presentation
		220 Prepared as ordered			9220 Nor prepared as ordered
		2101 Innovative			92101 Common
		2102 Fragrance			92102 Fragrance
		2103 Texture			92103 Texture
		2104 Filling			92104 Filling
		2105 Consistency			92105 Consistency
	22 Beverage Quality	221 Range		922 Beverage Quality	9221 Range
		222 Explaining drinks			9222 Explaining drinks
		223 Presentation			9223 Presentation
	23 Unexpected Additions	231 Food		923 Unexpected Additions	9231 Food
		232 Beverages			9232 Beverages
		233 Dietary requirements			9233 Dietary requirements
	25 Menu			925 Menu	
	26 Explanations of menu			926 No explanation of menu	
3 Price/Value	31 Value for money		93 Price/Value	931 No value for money	
	32 Bargain			932 Rip-off	
	33 Reasonable/Fair			933 Unreasonable/Unfair	
	34 Good price			934 Over-priced/expensive	
	35 Competitive			935 Uncompetitive	
	36 Promotions/Specials	361 Food		936 Promotions/Specials	9361 Food
		362 Beverages			9362 Beverages
4 Situational Factors	41 Ambience/Atmosphere	410 Exotic	94 Situational Factors	941 Ambience/Atmosphere	9410 Too busy
		411 Other friendly customers			9411 Other unfriendly customers
		412 Friendly atmosphere			9412 Unfriendly atmosphere
		413 Welcoming atmosphere			9413 Unwelcoming atmosphere
		414 Pretty staff			9414 Pretentious
		415 Pleasant noise levels			9415 Unpleasant noise levels
		416 Fun/Social			
		417 Warm and Cosy			9417 Cold
		418 Relaxing			9418 Not relaxing
		419 Romantic/Intimate			9419 Unromantic
	42 Size of restaurant	421 Busy		942 Size of restaurant	
	43 Authenticity			943 Not authentic	
	44 Décor	441 Entertaining		944 Staff eating	
		442 Updated		945 State of toilets	
		443 Seating		946 Hygiene	
		44 Elegant		947 Long queues	
	45 Location	451 View		948 Seating substandard	
		452 Convenient		949 Signs not clear	
	46 Management			9046 Management	90461 Service
	47 Recommended by	471 Staff			90462 Food
		472 Customers			90463 Beverages
	48 Frequented by locals				
5 Personal Factors	51 Emotional State	511 Patience	95 Personal Factors	951 Emotional State	9511 Reluctance to visit
		512 Recommend it to others			9512 Frustrated
		513			9513 Upset/Angry
		514 Not expected			9514 High expectations
					9515 Not recommend to others
					9516 Disappointed
	52 Physical State			952 Physical State	9521 Hunger
					9522 Tired
					9523 Food poisoning/sick

D. CONTENT ANALYSIS FREQUENCIES FOR ALL VARIABLES (PART 1)

Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Frequency table: 1.000000 (Copy of Leon- Content Analysis Results) Percent of Valid	Cumul % of Valid	% of all Cases	Cumulative % of All
Missing	0	893	0.000000		0.000000	100.0000
11	1	28	0.111982	3.1355	0.111982	3.1355
42	1	169	0.111982	18.9250	0.111982	18.9250
46	1	188	0.111982	21.0526	0.111982	21.0526
48	1	189	0.111982	21.1646	0.111982	21.1646
114	1	200	0.111982	22.3964	0.111982	22.3964
118	1	207	0.111982	23.1803	0.111982	23.1803
119	1	208	0.111982	23.2923	0.111982	23.2923
122	1	219	0.111982	24.5241	0.111982	24.5241
124	1	222	0.111982	24.8600	0.111982	24.8600
125	1	223	0.111982	24.9720	0.111982	24.9720
126	1	224	0.111982	25.0840	0.111982	25.0840
128	1	227	0.111982	25.4199	0.111982	25.4199
132	1	238	0.111982	26.6517	0.111982	26.6517
153	1	293	0.111982	32.8108	0.111982	32.8108
231	1	394	0.111982	44.1209	0.111982	44.1209
411	1	400	0.111982	44.7928	0.111982	44.7928
412	1	401	0.111982	44.9048	0.111982	44.9048
413	1	402	0.111982	45.0168	0.111982	45.0168
414	1	403	0.111982	45.1288	0.111982	45.1288
442	1	432	0.111982	48.3763	0.111982	48.3763
443	1	433	0.111982	48.4882	0.111982	48.4882
444	1	434	0.111982	48.6002	0.111982	48.6002
452	1	439	0.111982	49.1601	0.111982	49.1601
457	1	440	0.111982	49.2721	0.111982	49.2721
911	1	485	0.111982	54.3113	0.111982	54.3113
913	1	486	0.111982	54.4233	0.111982	54.4233
915	1	487	0.111982	54.5353	0.111982	54.5353
926	1	522	0.111982	58.4546	0.111982	58.4546
929	1	523	0.111982	58.5666	0.111982	58.5666
941	1	595	0.111982	66.6293	0.111982	66.6293
944	1	604	0.111982	67.6372	0.111982	67.6372
2102	1	630	0.111982	70.5487	0.111982	70.5487
2104	1	634	0.111982	70.9966	0.111982	70.9966
2142	1	638	0.111982	71.4446	0.111982	71.4446
9112	1	641	0.111982	71.7805	0.111982	71.7805
9121	1	670	0.111982	75.0280	0.111982	75.0280
9128	1	695	0.111982	77.8275	0.111982	77.8275
9151	1	741	0.111982	82.9787	0.111982	82.9787
9153	1	745	0.111982	83.4267	0.111982	83.4267
9211	1	752	0.111982	84.2105	0.111982	84.2105
9215	1	764	0.111982	85.5543	0.111982	85.5543
9221	1	794	0.111982	88.9138	0.111982	88.9138
9222	1	795	0.111982	89.0258	0.111982	89.0258
9223	1	796	0.111982	89.1377	0.111982	89.1377
9241	1	799	0.111982	89.4737	0.111982	89.4737
9411	1	802	0.111982	89.8096	0.111982	89.8096
9414	1	803	0.111982	89.9216	0.111982	89.9216
9517	1	880	0.111982	98.5442	0.111982	98.5442
9522	1	884	0.111982	98.9922	0.111982	98.9922
90461	1	887	0.111982	99.3281	0.111982	99.3281

| Category | Frequency table: 1.000000 (Copy of Leon- Content Analysis Results) | | | | | |
	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent of Valid	Cumul % of Valid	% of all Cases	Cumulative % of All
9442	3	817	0.335946	91.4894	0.335946	91.4894
9513	3	824	0.335946	92.2732	0.335946	92.2732
9521	3	883	0.335946	98.8802	0.335946	98.8802
136	4	246	0.447928	27.5476	0.447928	27.5476
146	4	287	0.447928	32.1389	0.447928	32.1389
216	4	344	0.447928	38.5218	0.447928	38.5218
220	4	377	0.447928	42.2172	0.447928	42.2172
222	4	393	0.447928	44.0090	0.447928	44.0090
451	4	438	0.447928	49.0482	0.447928	49.0482
922	4	518	0.447928	58.0067	0.447928	58.0067
9124	4	694	0.447928	77.7156	0.447928	77.7156
9143	4	727	0.447928	81.4110	0.447928	81.4110
9146	4	740	0.447928	82.8667	0.447928	82.8667
9210	4	751	0.447928	84.0985	0.447928	84.0985
9216	4	768	0.447928	86.0022	0.447928	86.0022
9218	4	781	0.447928	87.4580	0.447928	87.4580
9512	4	821	0.447928	91.9373	0.447928	91.9373
22	5	104	0.559910	11.6461	0.559910	11.6461
26	5	111	0.559910	12.4300	0.559910	12.4300
44	5	180	0.559910	20.1568	0.559910	20.1568
143	5	270	0.559910	30.2352	0.559910	30.2352
152	5	292	0.559910	32.6988	0.559910	32.6988
213	5	315	0.559910	35.2744	0.559910	35.2744
417	5	411	0.559910	46.0246	0.559910	46.0246
932	5	536	0.559910	60.0224	0.559910	60.0224
943	5	603	0.559910	67.5252	0.559910	67.5252
948	5	624	0.559910	69.8768	0.559910	69.8768
9114	5	649	0.559910	72.6764	0.559910	72.6764
9118	5	664	0.559910	74.3561	0.559910	74.3561
9119	5	669	0.559910	74.9160	0.559910	74.9160
9131	5	700	0.559910	78.3875	0.559910	78.3875
9133	5	707	0.559910	79.1713	0.559910	79.1713
43	6	175	0.671892	19.5969	0.671892	19.5969
211	6	308	0.671892	34.4905	0.671892	34.4905
214	6	321	0.671892	35.9462	0.671892	35.9462
219	6	373	0.671892	41.7693	0.671892	41.7693
472	6	446	0.671892	49.9440	0.671892	49.9440
946	6	613	0.671892	68.6450	0.671892	68.6450
947	6	619	0.671892	69.3169	0.671892	69.3169
9117	6	659	0.671892	73.7962	0.671892	73.7962
9134	6	713	0.671892	79.8432	0.671892	79.8432
9141	6	723	0.671892	80.9630	0.671892	80.9630
9415	6	809	0.671892	90.5935	0.671892	90.5935
9516	6	879	0.671892	98.4323	0.671892	98.4323
45	7	187	0.783875	20.9406	0.783875	20.9406
419	7	427	0.783875	47.8163	0.783875	47.8163
9144	7	734	0.783875	82.1948	0.783875	82.1948
91	8	197	0.895857	22.0605	0.895857	22.0605
218	8	367	0.895857	41.0974	0.895857	41.0974
931	8	531	0.895857	59.4625	0.895857	59.4625
933	8	544	0.895857	60.9183	0.895857	60.9183

D. CONTENT ANALYSIS FREQUENCIES FOR ALL VARIABLES (PART 3)

Category	Count	Cumulative Count	Percent of Valid	Cumul % of Valid	% of all Cases	Cumulative % of All
		Frequency table: 1.000000 (Copy of Leon- Content Analysis Results)				
35	9	152	1.007839	17.0213	1.007839	17.0213
210	9	302	1.007839	33.8186	1.007839	33.8186
418	9	420	1.007839	47.0325	1.007839	47.0325
9122	9	679	1.007839	76.0358	1.007839	76.0358
9214	9	763	1.007839	85.4423	1.007839	85.4423
9217	9	777	1.007839	87.0101	1.007839	87.0101
9220	9	793	1.007839	88.8018	1.007839	88.8018
121	10	218	1.119821	24.4121	1.119821	24.4121
131	10	237	1.119821	26.5398	1.119821	26.5398
9123	11	690	1.231803	77.2676	1.231803	77.2676
33	12	140	1.343785	15.6775	1.343785	15.6775
221	12	389	1.343785	43.5610	1.343785	43.5610
144	13	283	1.455767	31.6909	1.455767	31.6909
31	14	125	1.567749	13.9978	1.567749	13.9978
41	14	168	1.567749	18.8130	1.567749	18.8130
217	15	359	1.679731	40.2016	1.679731	40.2016
9514	15	839	1.679731	93.9530	1.679731	93.9530
141	16	262	1.791713	29.3393	1.791713	29.3393
215	19	340	2.127660	38.0739	2.127660	38.0739
935	22	592	2.463606	66.2934	2.463606	66.2934
1	24	24	2.687570	2.6876	2.687570	2.6876
934	26	570	2.911534	63.8298	2.911534	63.8298
921	27	514	3.023516	57.5588	3.023516	57.5588
512	33	481	3.695409	53.8634	3.695409	53.8634
9515	34	873	3.807391	97.7604	3.807391	97.7604
21	71	99	7.950728	11.0862	7.950728	11.0862

E. CONTENT ANALYSIS TABLE FOR ALL VARIABLES ABOVE 5 FREQUENCIES

Category	Description	Count >5	% of all cases
43	Restaurant authentic	6	0.67
211	Good ingredients	6	0.67
214	Food freshness	6	0.67
219	Food presentation	6	0.67
472	Recommended by customers	6	0.67
946	Lack of hygiene	6	0.67
947	Long queues	6	0.67
9117	Service inconsistency	6	0.67
9134	Service insincere	6	0.67
9141	Service unattentive	6	0.67
9415	Unpleasant noise levels	6	0.67
9516	Customer dissapointment	6	0.67
45	Excellent location	7	0.78
419	Ambience romantic/Intimate	7	0.78
9144	Service unfriendly/rude	7	0.78
91	Poor service quality	8	0.90
218	Food flavour excellent	8	0.90
931	No value for money	8	0.90
933	Value unreasonable/unfair	8	0.90
35	Restaurant is competitive	9	1.01
210	Food quantity excellent	9	1.01
418	Relaxing atmosphere	9	1.01
9122	Service too slow	9	1.01
9214	Food has lack of freshness	9	1.01
9217	Food is tasteless	9	1.01
9220	Food not prepared as ordered	9	1.01
121	Service welcoming	10	1.12
131	Service professional	10	1.12
9123	Service too quick	11	1.23
33	Value reasonable/fair value	12	1.34
221	Beverage range is excellent	12	1.34
144	Service is friendly	13	1.46
31	Value for money	14	1.57
41	Excellent ambience/atmosphere	14	1.57
217	Food taste excellent	15	1.68
9514	Customer has high expectations	15	1.68
141	Service attentive	16	1.79
215	Food delicious	19	2.13
935	Restaurant is uncompetitive	22	2.46
1	Excellent service quality	24	2.69
934	Overpriced/expensive	26	2.91
921	Poor food quality	27	3.02
512	Customer recommend it to others	33	3.70
9515	Customer did not recommend it to others	34	3.81
21	Excellent food quality	71	7.95

F. CONTENT ANALYSIS FREQUENCY TABLE FOR DELIGHT AND FRUSTRATION FACTORS

CONTENT ANALYSIS FREQUENCY TABLE FOR DELIGHT FACTORS

	Category	Description	Count >5	% of all cases
SERVICE QUALITY	1	Excellent service quality	24	2.69
	121	Service welcoming	10	1.12
	131	Service professional	10	1.12
	141	Service attentive	16	1.79
	144	Service is friendly	13	1.46
FOOD & BEVERAGE QUALITY	21	Excellent food quality	71	7.95
	210	Food quantity excellent	9	1.01
	211	Good ingredients	6	0.67
	214	Food freshness	6	0.67
	215	Food delicious	19	2.13
	217	Food taste excellent	15	1.68
	218	Food flavour excellent	8	0.90
	219	Food presentation	6	0.67
	221	Beverage range is excellent	12	1.34
VALUE/PRICE	31	Value for money	14	1.57
	33	Value reasonable/fair value	12	1.34
	35	Restaurant is competitive	9	1.01
ATMOSPHERE	41	Excellent ambience/atmosphere	14	1.57
	43	Restaurant authentic	6	0.67
	45	Excellent location	7	0.78
	418	Relaxing atmosphere	9	1.01
	419	Ambience romantic/Intimate	7	0.78
PERSONAL FACTORS	472	Recommended by customers	6	0.67
	512	Customer recommend it to others	33	3.70

CONTENT ANALYSIS FREQUENCY TABLE FOR FRUSTRATION FACTORS

	Category	Description	Count >5	% of all cases
SERVICE QUALITY	91	Poor service quality	8	0.90
	9117	Service inconsistency	6	0.67
	9122	Service too slow	9	1.01
	9123	Service too quick	11	1.23
	9134	Service insincere	6	0.67
	9141	Service unattentive	6	0.67
	9144	Service unfriendly/rude	7	0.78
FOOD & BEVERAGE QUALITY	921	Poor food quality	27	3.02
	9214	Food has lack of freshness	9	1.01
	9217	Food is tasteless	9	1.01
	9220	Food not prepared as ordered	9	1.01
VALUE/PRICE	931	No value for money	8	0.90
	933	Value unreasonable/unfair	8	0.90
	934	Overpriced/expensive	26	2.91
	935	Restaurant is uncompetitive	22	2.46
OTHER	946	Lack of hygiene	6	0.67
	947	Long queues	6	0.67
	9415	Unpleasant noise levels	6	0.67
PERSONAL FACTORS	9514	Customer has high expectations	15	1.68
	9515	Customer did not recommend it to others	34	3.81
	9516	Customer dissapointment	6	0.67

G. CONTENT ANALYSIS RESULTS CHART FOR DELIGHT FACTORS

DELIGHT FACTORS

Category	Code	Factor	Count
SERVICE QUALITY	1	Excellent service quality	24
	121	Service welcoming	10
	131	Service professional	10
	141	Service attentive	16
	144	Service is friendly	13
FOOD & BEVERAGE QUALITY	21	Excellent food quality	71
	210	Food quantity excellent	9
	211	Good ingredients	6
	214	Food freshness	6
	215	Food delicious	19
	217	Food taste excellent	15
	218	Food flavour excellent	8
	219	Food presentation	6
	221	Beverage range is excellent	12
VALUE/PRICE	31	Value for money	14
	33	Value reasonable/fair value	12
	35	Restaurant is competitive	9
ATMOSPHERE	41	Excellent ambience/atmosphere	14
	43	Restaurant authentic	6
	45	Excellent location	7
	418	Relaxing atmosphere	9
	419	Ambience romantic/Intimate	7
PERSONAL FACTORS	472	Recommended by customers	6
	512	Customer recommend it to others	33

FRUSTRATION FACTORS

Category	Code	Factor	Count
SERVICE QUALITY	91	Poor service quality	8
	9117	Service inconsistency	6
	9122	Service too slow	9
	9123	Service too quick	11
	9134	Service insincere	6
	9141	Service unattentive	6
	9144	Service unfriendly/rude	7
FOOD & BEVERAGE QUALITY	921	Poor food quality	27
	9214	Food has lack of freshness	9
	9217	Food is tasteless	9
	9220	Food not prepared as ordered	9
VALUE/PRICE	931	No value for money	8
	933	Value unreasonable/unfair	8
	934	Overpriced/expensive	26
	935	Restaurant is uncompetitive	22
OTHER	946	Lack of hygiene	6
	947	Long queues	6
	9415	Unpleasant noise levels	6
PERSONAL FACTORS	9514	Customer has high expectations	15
	9515	Customer did not recommend it to others	34
	9516	Customer dissapointment	6

Count

I. EMPIRICAL SURVEY EXAMPLE 1

Restaurant Experience Survey (General public edition)

| 476 | ntzkrrjqlr | 1 |

Page: **1**

Page No: 1

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS BY SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE OPTION.

1. DEMOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Please complete the following section:

1.1 *	Please state your gender	(please select) ▼
1.2 *	Please state your age in years	(please select) ▼
1.3 *	Please state your marriage status	(please select) ▼
1.4 *	Please state your level of education achieved	(please select) ▼
1.5 *	How often do you dine at restaurants on average	(please select) ▼
1.6 *	Please state your town/city of work or study	
1.7 *	Please state your town/city of residence	

add new question

2. HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE FOLLOWING EXPERIENCES?

How do you feel about the following experiences when dining out at a restaurant? Use the scale from 0 to 5 to answer, 0 being dislike extremely to 5 being like extremely.

2.1 *	Poor service quality	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.2 *	Inconsistent service quality	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.3 *	Slow service	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.4 *	Service that is too quick	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.5 *	Insincere service	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely

2.6 *	Inattentive service	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.7 *	Unfriendly service or staff was rude	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.8 *	Poor food quality	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.9 *	Stale food	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.10 *	Tasteless food	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.11 *	Food not received as ordered	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.12 *	No value for money	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.13 *	Value unreasonable or unfair	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.14 *	Overpriced or expensive	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.15 *	Uncompetitive in comparison to other restaurants	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.16 *	Lack of hygiene	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.17 *	Long queues	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.18 *	Unpleasant noise levels	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.19 *	Having high expectations and then being let down	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.20 *	Recommending others to stay away from a bad restaurant	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
2.21 *	Disappointment	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely

add new question

3. HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE FOLLOWING EXPERIENCES?

How do you feel about the following when dining out at a restaurant? Use the scale from 0 to 5 to answer, 0 being dislike extremely to 5 being like extremely.

3.1 *	Exceptionally good service quality	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
3.2 *	Welcoming service	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
3.3 *	Professional service	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
3.4 *	Attentive service	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
3.5 *	Friendly service	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely
3.6 *	Exceptionally good food quality	dislike extremely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ like extremely

3.7 *	Generous food portions	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.8 *	Good ingredients	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.9 *	Exceptional food freshness	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.10 *	Delicious food	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.11 *	Exceptionally good food taste	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.12 *	Exceptional food flavour	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.13 *	Exceptional food presentation	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.14 *	Exceptional range of beverages	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.15 *	Excellent value for money	dislike extremely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	like extremely
3.16 *	Fair or reasonale value	dislike extremely	○	like extremely
3.17 *	Competitive in comparison to other restaurants	dislike extremely		like extremely
3.18 *	Excellent ambience or atmosphere	dislike extremely		like extremely
3.19 *	Being authentic or genuine	dislike extremely		like extremely
3.20 *	Excellent location	dislike extremely		like extremely
3.21 *	Relaxing atmosphere	dislike extremely		like extremely
3.22 *	Romantic or intimate ambience	dislike extremely		like extremely
3.23 *	Others recommending a good restaurant to you	dislike extremely		like extremely
3.24 *	Recommending others to go to good restaurants	dislike extremely		like extremely

add new question

add new category

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE.

J. EMPIRICAL SURVEY EXAMPLE 2

Restaurant Experience Survey (Stenden edition)

Page: 1

Page No: 1

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS BY SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE OPTION.

1. DEMOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Please complete the following section:

1.1 * Please state your gender

1.2 * Please state your age in years

1.3 * Please state your marriage status

1.4 * Please state your level of education achieved

1.5 * How often do you dine at restaurants on average

1.6 * Please state your place of work/study at Stenden

1.7 * Please state your city/town of residence

add new question

2. HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE FOLLOWING EXPERIENCES?

How do you feel about the following experiences when dining out at a restaurant? Use the scale from 0 to 5 to answer, 0 being dislike extremely to 5 being like extremely.

2.1 * Poor service quality
dislike extremely   0   1   2   3   4   5   like extremely

2.2 * Inconsistent service quality
dislike extremely   0   1   2   3   4   5   like extremely

2.3 * Slow service
dislike extremely   0   1   2   3   4   5   like extremely

2.4 * Service that is too quick
dislike extremely   0   1   2   3   4   5   like extremely

2.5 * Insincere service
dislike extremely   0   1   2   3   4   5   like extremely

2.6 * Inattentive service
dislike extremely   0   1   2   3   4   5   like extremely

2.7 *	Unfriendly service or staff was rude	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.8 *	Poor food quality	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.9 *	Stale food	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.10 *	Tasteless food	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.11 *	Food not received as ordered	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.12 *	No value for money	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.13 *	Value unreasonable or unfair	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.14 *	Overpriced or expensive	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.15 *	Uncompetitive in comparison to other restaurants	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.16 *	Lack of hygiene	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.17 *	Long queues	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.18 *	Unpleasant noise levels	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.19 *	Having high expectations and then being let down	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.20 *	Recommending others to stay away from a bad restaurant	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
2.21 *	Disappointment	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

add new question

3. HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE FOLLOWING EXPERIENCES?

How do you feel about the following experiences when dining out at a restaurant? Use the scale from 0 to 5 to answer, 0 being dislike extremely to 5 being like extremely.

3.1 *	Exceptionally good service quality	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
3.2 *	Welcoming service	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
3.3 *	Professional service	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
3.4 *	Attentive service	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
3.5 *	Friendly service	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely
3.6 *	Exceptionally good food quality	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.7 *	Generous food portions	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.8 *	Good ingredients	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.9 *	Exceptional food freshness	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.10 *	Delicious food	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.11 *	Exceptionally good food taste	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.12 *	Exceptional food flavour	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.13 *	Exceptional food presentation	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.14 *	Exceptional range of beverages	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.15 *	Excellent value for money	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.16 *	Fair or reasonable value	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.17 *	Competitive in comparison to other restaurants	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.18 *	Excellent ambience or atmosphere	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.19 *	Being authentic or genuine	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.20 *	Excellent location	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.21 *	Relaxing atmosphere	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.22 *	Romantic or intimate ambience	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.23 *	Others recommending a good restaurant to you	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

3.24 *	Recommending others to go to good restaurants	dislike extremely	0	1	2	3	4	5	like extremely

add new question

add new category

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE.

K. CODE KEYS FOR SURVEY QUESTIONS

Key to Questions	Description	Question Type	Choice List Description (value)
Q1-1	Please state your gender	Drop down list (one choice from a list)	Male (1), Female (2)
Q1-2	Please state your age in years	Drop down list (one choice from a list)	1-9 (1), 10-19 (2), 20-29 (3), 30-39 (4), 40-49 (5), 50-59 (6), 60-69 (7), 70-79 (8), 80+ (9)
Q1-3	Please state your marriage status	Drop down list (one choice from a list)	Single (1), Married (2), Divorced (3), Widowed (4), Other (5)
Q1-4	Please state your level of education achieved	Drop down list (one choice from a list)	Secondary School (1), Graduate (2), Post-Graduate (3), Other (4)
Q1-5	How often do you dine at restaurants on average	Drop down list (one choice from a list)	Once a day (1), Once a week (2), Twice a week (3), Once a month (4), Twice a month (5), Once a year (6), Twice a year (7), Less (8), Don't know (9)
Q1-6	Please state your country of work or study	Open Question (long answer)	
Q1-7	Please state your country of residence	Open Question (long answer)	
Q2-1	Poor service quality	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-2	Inconsistent service quality	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-3	Slow service	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-4	Service that is too quick	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-5	Insincere service	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-6	Inattentive service	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-7	Unfriendly service or staff was rude	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-8	Poor food quality	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-9	Stale food	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-10	Tasteless food	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-11	Food not received as ordered	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-12	No value for money	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-13	Value unreasonable or unfair	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-14	Overpriced or expensive	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-15	Uncompetitive in comparison to other	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-16	Lack of hygiene	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-17	Long queues	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-18	Unpleasant noise levels	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-19	Having high expectations and then being	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-20	Recommending others to stay away from a	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q2-21	Disappointment	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-1	Exceptionally good service quality	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-2	Welcoming service	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-3	Professional service	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-4	Attentive service	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-5	Friendly service	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-6	Exceptionally good food quality	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-7	Generous food portions	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-8	Good ingredients	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-9	Exceptional food freshness	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-10	Delicious food	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-11	Exceptionally good food taste	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-12	Exceptional food flavour	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-13	Exceptional food presentation	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-14	Exceptional range of beverages	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-15	Excellent value for money	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-16	Fair or reasonale value	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-17	Competitive in comparison to other	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-18	Excellent ambience or atmosphere	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-19	Being authentic or genuine	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-20	Excellent location	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-21	Relaxing atmosphere	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-22	Romantic or intimate ambience	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-23	Others recommending a good restaurant	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	
Q3-24	Recommending others to go to good	Scale type F (0 dislike extremely to 5 like extremely)	

L. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – DEMOGRAPHICS (AND CONSOLIDATED FOR MANOVA)

DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA CAPTURED

MANOVA ADJUSTMENTS

Frequency table: Q1_1

	Count	Percent
Male	67	40.36
Female	99	59.64

Frequency table: Q1_2

	Count	Percent
10-19 years	5	3.01
20-29 years	45	27.11
30-39 years	32	19.28
40-49 years	47	28.31
50-59 years	31	18.67
60-69 years	1	0.60
70-79 years	4	2.41
80+ years	1	0.60

Frequency table: Q1_3

	Count	Percent
Single	69	41.57
Married	72	43.37
Divorced	13	7.83
Widowed	3	1.81
Other	9	5.42

Frequency table: Q1_4

	Count	Percent
Secondary school	16	9.64
Graduate	62	37.35
Post-Graduate	75	45.18
Other	13	7.83

Frequency table: Q1_5

	Count	Percent
Once a day	10	6.02
Once a week	43	25.90
Twice a week	37	22.29
Twice a month	32	19.28
Once a month	36	21.69
Once a year	2	1.20
Twice a year	6	3.61

Frequency table: Q1_6

	Count	Percent
N/A	0	3	1.81
SA	1	89	53.61
NL	2	40	24.10
FR	4	2	1.20
SPN	5	3	1.81
UK	6	2	1.20
DUB	7	4	2.41
SWT	8	8	4.82
ITL	9	2	1.20
KNY	10	2	1.20
TAI	11	1	0.60
USA	12	1	0.60
AUS	13	1	0.60
SVK	14	1	0.60
UKR	15	1	0.60
IND	16	2	1.20
CHI	17	1	0.60
BEL	18	1	0.60
ATR	19	1	0.60
GER	20	1	0.60

Frequency table: Q1_7

		Count	Percent
N/A	0	2	1.20
SA	1	88	53.01
NL	2	40	24.10
FR	4	3	1.81
SPN	5	3	1.81
UK	6	2	1.20
DUB	7	4	2.41
SWT	8	4	2.41
ITL	9	1	0.60
KNY	10	3	1.81
TAI	11	1	0.60
USA	12	3	1.81
AUS	13	2	1.20
SVK	14	1	0.60
UKR	15	1	0.60
IND	16	3	1.81
CHI	17	1	0.60
BEL	18	1	0.60
ATR	19	1	0.60
GER	20	1	0.60
MOZ	21	1	0.60

Frequency table: Q1_1

	Count	Percent
Male	67	40.36
Female	99	59.64

Frequency table: Q1_2

	Count	Percent
<30 years	50	30.12
30-39 years	32	19.28
40-49 years	47	28.31
50+ years	37	22.29

Frequency table: Q1_3

	Count	Percent
Single	69	41.57
Married	72	43.37
Other	25	15.06

Frequency table: Q1_4

	Count	Percent
Secondary school	16	9.64
Graduate	62	37.35
Post-Graduate	75	45.18
Other	13	7.83

Frequency table: Q1_5

	Count	Percent
Once a day	10	6.02
Once a week	43	25.90
Twice a week	37	22.29
Twice a month	32	19.28
≤ Once a month	44	26.51

Frequency table: Q1_6

	Count	Percent
SA	89	53.61
Rest of the world	77	46.39

M. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – FREQUENCY TABLES OF EACH VARIABLE: FRUSTRATION FACTORS

Frequency table: Q2_6

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	65	39.16
1	62	37.35
2	26	15.66
3	7	4.22
4	5	3.01
Like extremely	1	0.60

Frequency table: Q2_7

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	129	77.71
1	26	15.66
2	7	4.22
3	2	1.20
4	2	1.20

Frequency table: Q2_8

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	115	69.28
1	32	19.28
2	13	7.83
3	4	2.41
4	2	1.20

Frequency table: Q2_9

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	115	69.28
1	33	19.88
2	12	7.23
3	2	1.20
4	4	2.41

Frequency table: Q2_10

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	95	57.23
1	50	30.12
2	15	9.04
3	4	2.41
4	1	0.60
Like extremely	1	0.60

Frequency table: Q2_11

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	70	42.17
1	60	36.14
2	30	18.07
3	2	1.20
4	4	2.41

Frequency table: Q2_12

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	64	38.55
1	70	42.17
2	27	16.27
3	4	2.41
4	1	0.60

Frequency table: Q2_13

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	65	39.16
1	66	39.76
2	31	18.67
3	2	1.20
4	2	1.20

Frequency table: Q2_14

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	52	31.33
1	59	35.54
2	47	28.31
3	3	1.81
4	4	2.41
Like extremely	1	0.60

Frequency table: Q2_15

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	24	14.46
1	56	33.73
2	66	39.76
3	18	10.84
4	2	1.20

Frequency table: Q2_16

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	135	81.33
1	18	10.84
2	9	5.42
3	1	0.60
4	3	1.81

Frequency table: Q2_17

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	72	43.37
1	59	35.54
2	28	16.87
3	5	3.01
4	2	1.20

Frequency table: Q2_18

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	65	39.16
1	61	36.75
2	30	18.07
3	7	4.22
4	1	0.60
Like extremely	2	1.20

Frequency table: Q2_19

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	63	37.95
1	63	37.95
2	31	18.67
3	5	3.01
4	4	2.41

Frequency table: Q2_20

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	17	10.24
1	24	14.46
2	41	24.70
3	30	18.07
4	30	18.07
Like extremely	24	14.46

Frequency table: Q2_21

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	72	43.37
1	51	30.72
2	34	20.48
3	7	4.22
4	2	1.20

N. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – FREQUENCY TABLES OF EACH VARIABLE: DELIGHT FACTORS (PART 1)

Frequency table: Q3_6

	Count	Percent
2	4	2.41
3	9	5.42
4	35	21.08
Like extremely	118	71.08

Frequency table: Q3_7

	Count	Percent
1	5	3.01
2	13	7.83
3	49	29.52
4	62	37.35
Like extremely	37	22.29

Frequency table: Q3_8

	Count	Percent
1	2	1.20
2	2	1.20
3	19	11.45
4	54	32.53
Like extremely	89	53.61

Frequency table: Q3_9

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	1	0.60
2	2	1.20
3	14	8.43
4	48	28.92
Like extremely	101	60.84

Frequency table: Q3_10

	Count	Percent
2	4	2.41
3	7	4.22
4	36	21.69
Like extremely	119	71.69

Frequency table: Q3_11

	Count	Percent
2	3	1.81
3	7	4.22
4	41	24.70
Like extremely	115	69.28

Frequency table: Q3_12

	Count	Percent
2	4	2.41
3	10	6.02
4	49	29.52
Like extremely	103	62.05

Frequency table: Q3_13

	Count	Percent
2	6	3.61
3	30	18.07
4	65	39.16
Like extremely	65	39.16

Frequency table: Q3_14

	Count	Percent
1	1	0.60
2	13	7.83
3	63	37.95
4	50	30.12
Like extremely	39	23.49

Frequency table: Q3_15

	Count	Percent
1	1	0.60
2	3	1.81
3	21	12.65
4	64	38.55
Like extremely	77	46.39

O. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – FREQUENCY TABLES OF EACH VARIABLE: DELIGHT FACTORS (PART 2)

Frequency table: Q3_16

	Count	Percent
1	1	0.60
2	5	3.01
3	44	26.51
4	67	40.36
Like extremely	49	29.52

Frequency table: Q3_17

	Count	Percent
1	1	0.60
2	11	6.63
3	63	37.95
4	53	31.93
Like extremely	38	22.89

Frequency table: Q3_18

	Count	Percent
2	3	1.81
3	25	15.06
4	61	36.75
Like extremely	77	46.39

Frequency table: Q3_19

	Count	Percent
1	1	0.60
2	6	3.61
3	22	13.25
4	65	39.16
Like extremely	72	43.37

Frequency table: Q3_20

	Count	Percent
1	1	0.60
2	9	5.42
3	53	31.93
4	57	34.34
Like extremely	46	27.71

Frequency table: Q3_21

	Count	Percent
2	4	2.41
3	23	13.86
4	83	50.00
Like extremely	56	33.73

Frequency table: Q3_22

	Count	Percent
1	4	2.41
2	9	5.42
3	61	36.75
4	61	36.75
Like extremely	31	18.67

Frequency table: Q3_23

	Count	Percent
2	2	1.20
3	36	21.69
4	77	46.39
Like extremely	51	30.72

Frequency table: Q3_24

	Count	Percent
Dislike extremely	1	0.60
2	3	1.81
3	31	18.67
4	77	46.39
Like extremely	54	32.53

P. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF BOTH FRUSTRATION AND DELIGHT VARIABLES

Descriptive Statistics

	Valid N	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std.Dev.
Q2_1	166	0.58	0	5	0.95
Q2_2	166	0.98	0	4	0.90
Q2_3	166	0.92	0	4	0.88
Q2_4	166	2.23	0	5	1.21
Q2_5	166	1.07	0	4	0.98
Q2_6	166	0.96	0	5	1.04
Q2_7	166	0.33	0	4	0.72
Q2_8	166	0.47	0	4	0.84
Q2_9	166	0.48	0	4	0.87
Q2_10	166	0.61	0	5	0.87
Q2_11	166	0.86	0	4	0.92
Q2_12	166	0.84	0	4	0.82
Q2_13	166	0.86	0	4	0.85
Q2_14	166	1.10	0	5	0.99
Q2_15	166	1.51	0	4	0.91
Q2_16	166	0.31	0	4	0.76
Q2_17	166	0.83	0	4	0.90
Q2_18	166	0.94	0	5	1.00
Q2_19	166	0.94	0	4	0.95
Q2_20	166	2.63	0	5	1.54
Q2_21	166	0.89	0	4	0.95
	Ave	**0.97**			

Descriptive Statistics

	Valid N	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std.Dev.
Q3_1	166	4.58	2	5	0.69
Q3_2	166	4.30	1	5	0.83
Q3_3	166	4.41	2	5	0.76
Q3_4	166	4.44	2	5	0.68
Q3_5	166	4.45	2	5	0.64
Q3_6	166	4.61	2	5	0.70
Q3_7	166	3.68	1	5	1.00
Q3_8	166	4.36	1	5	0.83
Q3_9	166	4.48	0	5	0.78
Q3_10	166	4.63	2	5	0.68
Q3_11	166	4.61	2	5	0.66
Q3_12	166	4.51	2	5	0.72
Q3_13	166	4.14	2	5	0.84
Q3_14	166	3.68	1	5	0.94
Q3_15	166	4.28	1	5	0.80
Q3_16	166	3.95	1	5	0.86
Q3_17	166	3.70	1	5	0.92
Q3_18	166	4.28	2	5	0.78
Q3_19	166	4.21	1	5	0.85
Q3_20	166	3.83	1	5	0.92
Q3_21	166	4.15	2	5	0.74
Q3_22	166	3.64	1	5	0.93
Q3_23	166	4.07	2	5	0.76
Q3_24	166	4.08	0	5	0.82
	Ave	**4.21**			

Q. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – FACTOR ANALYSIS (FRUSTRATION FACTORS)

Eigenvalues
Extraction: Principal components

	Eigenvalue	% Total variance	Cumulative %	**Factor Loadings - Varimax rotation**	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5
1	9.25	44.05	44.05	**Q2_1**	0.45	0.48	0.15	-0.06	0.42
2	1.43	6.80	50.85	**Q2_2**	0.23	0.41	0.25	0.19	0.57
3	1.16	5.54	56.39	**Q2_3**	0.38	0.13	0.20	0.17	0.59
4	1.16	5.53	61.93	**Q2_4**	-0.07	0.15	-0.01	0.32	-0.03
5	0.96	4.57	66.49	**Q2_5**	0.13	0.64	0.28	0.29	0.05
6	0.90	4.29	70.78	**Q2_6**	0.23	0.58	0.12	0.16	0.17
7	0.79	3.75	74.53	**Q2_7**	0.61	0.41	0.16	-0.08	0.27
8	0.74	3.53	78.07	**Q2_8**	0.63	0.13	0.28	-0.03	0.24
9	0.63	2.99	81.06	**Q2_9**	0.73	0.18	0.27	-0.15	0.26
10	0.52	2.46	83.52	**Q2_10**	0.61	0.24	0.41	-0.03	0.23
11	0.46	2.19	85.71	**Q2_11**	0.47	0.21	0.41	0.00	0.12
12	0.44	2.09	87.79	**Q2_12**	0.30	0.27	0.61	-0.02	0.25
13	0.41	1.97	89.77	**Q2_13**	0.38	0.22	0.82	-0.16	0.05
14	0.39	1.87	91.64	**Q2_14**	0.27	0.08	0.60	0.15	0.19
15	0.37	1.75	93.39	**Q2_15**	0.17	0.09	0.56	0.23	0.44
16	0.31	1.49	94.88	**Q2_16**	0.70	0.13	0.27	0.16	0.11
17	0.29	1.37	96.25	**Q2_17**	0.52	0.03	0.23	0.39	0.17
18	0.23	1.12	97.37	**Q2_18**	0.61	0.10	0.22	0.31	0.19
19	0.23	1.07	98.44	**Q2_19**	0.37	0.11	0.46	0.02	0.57
20	0.17	0.79	99.23	**Q2_20**	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.26	0.07
21	0.16	0.77	100.00	**Q2_21**	0.46	0.27	0.44	0.13	0.34

R. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – FACTOR ANALYSIS (DELIGHT FACTORS)

Eigenvalues
Extraction: Principal components

	Eigenvalue	% Total variance	Cumulative %
1	10.95	45.64	45.64
2	2.15	8.94	54.58
3	1.35	5.61	60.19
4	1.20	4.98	65.18
5	0.93	3.88	69.06
6	0.82	3.41	72.46
7	0.73	3.06	75.52
8	0.64	2.67	78.19
9	0.61	2.56	80.75
10	0.57	2.36	83.11
11	0.51	2.13	85.24
12	0.46	1.93	87.17
13	0.39	1.61	88.78
14	0.37	1.54	90.32
15	0.34	1.41	91.73
16	0.33	1.38	93.10
17	0.31	1.29	94.40
18	0.26	1.09	95.49
19	0.25	1.04	96.53
20	0.24	1.01	97.54
21	0.20	0.82	98.36
22	0.17	0.70	99.06
23	0.14	0.58	99.64
24	0.09	0.36	100.00

Factor Loadings - Varimax rotation

	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5
Q3_1	0.59	0.06	0.40	0.16	0.07
Q3_2	0.39	0.11	0.58	0.16	0.16
Q3_3	0.35	0.17	0.63	0.16	0.12
Q3_4	0.30	0.10	0.78	0.07	0.12
Q3_5	0.23	0.24	0.56	0.11	0.22
Q3_6	0.65	0.25	0.34	0.06	0.07
Q3_7	0.20	0.43	0.17	0.00	0.54
Q3_8	0.71	0.21	0.19	0.05	0.32
Q3_9	0.78	0.16	0.18	0.12	0.25
Q3_10	0.80	0.19	0.21	0.11	0.11
Q3_11	0.85	0.14	0.16	0.19	0.10
Q3_12	0.76	0.17	0.31	0.16	0.11
Q3_13	0.31	0.43	0.34	0.23	0.18
Q3_14	0.05	0.39	0.45	0.21	0.42
Q3_15	0.55	0.24	0.20	0.16	0.52
Q3_16	0.35	0.24	0.25	0.28	0.57
Q3_17	0.20	0.41	0.26	0.24	0.45
Q3_18	0.39	0.43	0.36	0.22	0.08
Q3_19	0.34	0.44	0.31	0.10	0.17
Q3_20	0.10	0.81	0.04	0.07	0.10
Q3_21	0.20	0.60	0.26	0.27	0.20
Q3_22	0.16	0.56	0.08	0.17	0.21
Q3_23	0.14	0.27	0.09	0.76	0.19
Q3_24	0.20	0.15	0.22	0.73	0.05

S. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – ALPHA ANALYSIS FOR RELIABILITY (FRUSTRATION AND DELIGHT FACTORS)

Old Factors

Average inter-item corr.: 0.36

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_1	0.63	0.70
Q2_2	0.67	0.69
Q2_3	0.49	0.73
Q2_4	0.10	0.83
Q2_5	0.53	0.72
Q2_6	0.56	0.71
Q2_7	0.57	0.72

Cronbach alpha: 0.76

Average inter-item corr.: 0.60

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_8	0.66	0.82
Q2_9	0.76	0.78
Q2_10	0.76	0.78
Q2_11	0.59	0.85

Cronbach alpha: 0.85

Average inter-item corr.: 0.57

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_12	0.67	0.79
Q2_13	0.73	0.77
Q2_14	0.67	0.80
Q2_15	0.61	0.82

Cronbach alpha: 0.84

Average inter-item corr.: 0.55

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_16	0.61	0.72
Q2_17	0.58	0.75
Q2_18	0.69	0.62

Cronbach alpha: 0.78

Average inter-item corr.: 0.32

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_19	0.37	0.25
Q2_20	0.13	0.79
Q2_21	0.46	0.12

Cronbach alpha: 0.46

Average inter-item corr.: 0.54

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_1	0.59	0.84
Q3_2	0.70	0.81
Q3_3	0.70	0.81
Q3_4	0.74	0.80
Q3_5	0.58	0.84

Cronbach alpha: 0.85

Average inter-item corr.: 0.55

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_6	0.70	0.88
Q3_7	0.49	0.90
Q3_8	0.77	0.87
Q3_9	0.77	0.88
Q3_10	0.77	0.88
Q3_11	0.77	0.88
Q3_12	0.77	0.88
Q3_13	0.61	0.89
Q3_14	0.47	0.90

Cronbach alpha: 0.90

Average inter-item corr.: 0.58

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_15	0.65	0.73
Q3_16	0.71	0.66
Q3_17	0.59	0.80

Cronbach alpha: 0.80

Average inter-item corr.: 0.47

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_18	0.60	0.78
Q3_19	0.59	0.78
Q3_20	0.61	0.78
Q3_21	0.66	0.76
Q3_22	0.57	0.79

Cronbach alpha: 0.81

Average inter-item corr.: 0.66

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_23	0.66	
Q3_24	0.66	

Cronbach alpha: 0.80

New Factors

Average inter-item corr.: 0.53

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_7	0.68	0.89
Q2_8	0.68	0.89
Q2_9	0.76	0.89
Q2_10	0.76	0.89
Q2_11	0.62	0.90
Q2_16	0.72	0.89
Q2_17	0.58	0.90
Q2_18	0.65	0.90
Q2_21	0.69	0.89

Cronbach alpha: 0.90

Average inter-item corr.: 0.45

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_1	0.48	0.69
Q2_5	0.53	0.62
Q2_6	0.59	0.55

Cronbach alpha: 0.71

Average inter-item corr.: 0.57

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_12	0.67	0.79
Q2_13	0.73	0.77
Q2_14	0.67	0.80
Q2_15	0.61	0.82

Cronbach alpha: 0.84

Average inter-item corr.: 0.56

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q2_2	0.63	0.72
Q2_3	0.66	0.69
Q2_19	0.61	0.74

Cronbach alpha: 0.79

Average inter-item corr.: 0.66

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_1	0.67	0.93
Q3_6	0.73	0.93
Q3_8	0.78	0.93
Q3_9	0.84	0.92
Q3_10	0.82	0.92
Q3_11	0.84	0.92
Q3_12	0.83	0.92
Q3_15	0.71	0.93

Cronbach alpha: 0.94

Average inter-item corr.: 0.46

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_13	0.57	0.81
Q3_18	0.63	0.80
Q3_19	0.60	0.81
Q3_20	0.61	0.81
Q3_21	0.67	0.80
Q3_22	0.57	0.81

Cronbach alpha: 0.83

Average inter-item corr.: 0.53

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_2	0.66	0.79
Q3_3	0.67	0.79
Q3_4	0.72	0.78
Q3_5	0.64	0.80
Q3_14	0.55	0.84

Cronbach alpha: 0.84

Average inter-item corr.: 0.66

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_23	0.66	
Q3_24	0.66	

Cronbach alpha: 0.80

Average inter-item corr.: 0.52

	Itm-Totl Correl.	Alpha if deleted
Q3_7	0.56	0.73
Q3_16	0.64	0.64
Q3_17	0.59	0.68

Cronbach alpha: 0.76

T. EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS – MANOVA RESULTS

New Frustration Factors

Dependent variables:	Q2 Food qual & situation					
	Q2 Service care					
	Q2 Value/price					
	Q2 Service reliability					MANOVA TEST
Q1_1	**Q2 Food qual & situation Mean**	**Q2 Service care Mean**	**Q2 Value/Price Mean**	**Q2 Service reliability Mean**	**N**	
Male	0.69	0.83	1.13	1.03	67	
Female	0.60	0.90	1.04	0.89	99	Wilks lambda=.97249, F(4, 161)=1.1387, p=.34029
Q1_2new	**Q2 Food qual & situation Mean**	**Q2 Service care Mean**	**Q2 Value/Price Mean**	**Q2 Service reliability Mean**	**N**	
10-29 years	0.63	0.95	1.16	1.03	50	
30-39 years	0.61	0.76	0.89	0.74	32	
40-49 years	0.71	0.96	1.14	1.03	47	
50+ years	0.56	0.76	1.04	0.89	37	Wilks lambda=.93981, F(12, 420.97)=.83276, p=.61656
Q1_3new	**Q2 Food qual & situation Mean**	**Q2 Service care Mean**	**Q2 Value/Price Mean**	**Q2 Service reliability Mean**	**N**	
Single	0.75	0.91	1.17	1.07	69	
Married	0.51	0.85	0.99	0.89	72	
Divorced/Widowed/Ot	0.67	0.84	1.08	0.73	25	Wilks lambda=.92526, F(8, 320)=1.5842, p=.12850
Q1_4	**Q2 Food qual & situation Mean**	**Q2 Service care Mean**	**Q2 Value/Price Mean**	**Q2 Service reliability Mean**	**N**	
Secondary school	0.47	1.00	0.94	0.88	16	
Graduate	0.71	0.87	1.13	0.99	62	
Post-Graduate	0.57	0.85	1.03	0.95	75	
Other	0.83	0.85	1.27	0.79	13	Wilks lambda=.91943, F(12, 420.97)=1.1317, p=.33212
Q1_5new	**Q2 Food qual & situation Mean**	**Q2 Service care Mean**	**Q2 Value/Price Mean**	**Q2 Service reliability Mean**	**N**	
Once a day	0.38	0.77	0.83	0.50	10	
Once a week	0.53	0.81	0.92	0.91	43	
Twice a week	0.62	0.69	1.08	0.91	37	
Twice a month	0.72	1.06	1.16	1.16	32	
Once a month or less	0.75	0.97	1.23	0.95	44	Wilks lambda=.89703, F(16, 483.34)=1.0938, p=.35775
Q1_6new	**Q2 Food qual & situation Mean**	**Q2 Service care Mean**	**Q2 Value/Price Mean**	**Q2 Service reliability Mean**	**N**	
SA	0.46	0.78	0.99	0.76	89	
Other	0.84	0.98	1.18	1.15	77	Wilks lambda=.88910, F(4, 161)=5.0205, p=.00077
Univariate Results:	F=14.8; p=0.0001	F=2.7; p=0.1053	F=3.0; p=0.0864	F=11.2; p=0.0010		
	Cohen's d=0.60 (Medium)			**Cohen's d=0.52 (Medium)**		

New Delight Factors

Dependent variables:	Q3 Food quality & value						
	Q3 Mood & aesthetics						
	Q3 Hospitable service						
	Q3 Recommendations						
	Q3 Differentiation						MANOVA TEST
Q1_1	**Q3 Food quality & value Mean**	**Q3 Mood & aesthetics Mean**	**Q3 Hospitable service Mean**	**Q3 Recommendations Mean**	**Q3 Differentiation Mean**	**N**	
Male	4.39	3.89	4.24	3.98	3.67	67	
Female	4.59	4.15	4.27	4.14	3.85	99	Wilks lambda=.92686, F(5, 160)=2.5252, p=.03133
Univariate results:	F=4.4; p=0.0374	F=7.2; p=0.0079	F=0.1; p=0.7161	F=2.0; p=0.1643	F=2.4; p=0.1258		
	Cohen's d=0.33 (Small)	**Cohen's d=0.43 (Medium)**					
Q1_2new	**Q3 Food quality & value Mean**	**Q3 Mood & aesthetics Mean**	**Q3 Hospitable service Mean**	**Q3 Recommendations Mean**	**Q3 Differentiation Mean**	**N**	
10-29 years	4.44	4.06	4.33	4.10	3.80	50	
30-39 years	4.50	4.07	4.29	4.08	3.85	32	
40-49 years	4.51	3.94	4.12	4.01	3.64	47	
50+ years	4.61	4.11	4.29	4.11	3.86	37	Wilks lambda=.92970, F(15, 436.57)=.77872, p=.70173
Q1_3new	**Q3 Food quality & value Mean**	**Q3 Mood & aesthetics Mean**	**Q3 Hospitable service Mean**	**Q3 Recommendations Mean**	**Q3 Differentiation Mean**	**N**	
Single	4.41	4.06	4.28	4.05	3.81	69	
Married	4.57	3.98	4.26	4.06	3.71	72	
Divorced/Widowed/Other	4.60	4.15	4.18	4.16	3.88	25	Wilks lambda=.91862, F(10, 318)=1.3787, p=.18881
Q1_4	**Q3 Food quality & value Mean**	**Q3 Mood & aesthetics Mean**	**Q3 Hospitable service Mean**	**Q3 Recommendations Mean**	**Q3 Differentiation Mean**	**N**	
Secondary school	4.75	4.25	4.53	4.31	4.13	16	
Graduate	4.43	3.93	4.31	3.96	3.78	62	
Post-Graduate	4.54	4.08	4.19	4.11	3.71	75	
Other	4.37	4.06	4.09	4.12	3.72	13	Wilks lambda=.86371, F(15, 436.57)=1.5865, p=.07382
Q1_5new	**Q3 Food quality & value Mean**	**Q3 Mood & aesthetics Mean**	**Q3 Hospitable service Mean**	**Q3 Recommendations Mean**	**Q3 Differentiation Mean**	**N**	
Once a day	4.71	4.20	4.36	4.45	3.60	10	
Once a week	4.59	4.03	4.23	3.94	3.80	43	
Twice a week	4.44	4.06	4.39	4.00	3.80	37	
Twice a month	4.50	3.96	4.23	4.17	3.72	32	
Once a month or less	4.44	4.05	4.17	4.10	3.82	44	Wilks lambda=.85309, F(20, 521.66)=1.2800, p=.18583
Q1_6new	**Q3 Food quality & value Mean**	**Q3 Mood & aesthetics Mean**	**Q3 Hospitable service Mean**	**Q3 Recommendations Mean**	**Q3 Differentiation Mean**	**N**	
SA	4.56	4.09	4.37	4.04	3.87	89	
Other	4.44	3.99	4.13	4.10	3.67	77	Wilks lambda=.93525, F(5, 160)=2.2156, p=.05526

U. LETTER FROM THE LANGUAGE EDITOR

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27 November 2012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

We hereby certify that we have language edited the thesis prepared by Leon van Achterbergh and entitled SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEWS TO INVESTIGATE RESTAURANT DINING EXPERIENCES and that we are satisfied that, provided the changes we have made are effected to the text, the language is of an acceptable standard, fit for publication.

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