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Measuring Customer Satisfaction in the Local Ghanaian Restaurant Industry

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Abstract

As the Ghanaian food sector continues to grow and with Ghanaian consumers' perception for quality food been on the rise, the issue of customer satisfaction continues to engage the mind of academia and local restaurant managers. This research ascertained the critical determinants that influence customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian local restaurant industry.

The aftermath of the study showed that out of the five variables utilized only the three variables (namely food quality, service quality and price) had significant influence in determining customer satisfaction. The study clarified that service quality variables (which included attentive staff, efficient staff, staff's knowledge about food, staff greeting customers) have the most critical impact in determining customer satisfaction. After service quality, came food quality and price.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Local Restaurant Industry.

1. Introduction

The restaurant industry in Ghana is gaining grounds. Ghana boasts of a wide selection of both local and international restaurants particularly across the length and breadth of the country, providing a range of goods and services that is of immense benefit to majority of Ghanaian customers (touringghana.com). Again, this industry is on the rise, because the Ghanaian way of life is experiencing a metamorphosis. In an interview between Julia Taylor Kennedy and Susan Aryeetey, Susan Aryeetey alluded to the fact that in Ghana, there was an upsurge of women in the corporate world, middle level employment and the informal sector. Statistics from Newmont Ghana; a mining giant indicated that working class women in the Ahafo mines area accounted for 9% of the total number of women employed. However, the challenge is how to balance the family and career, which you find almost everywhere (carnegiecouncil.org). Specifically, women are having less time to plan and prepare food for their spouses and children. As such, because of hunger and the lack of time to prepare food at their various homes, preference for food prepared at restaurants has taken central stage in our cultural fabric. Hence, the growth in the restaurant industry (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006).

However, those at the mercy of this upsurge in the restaurant industry are consumers who patronize the delicacies of these restaurants. With Ghanaian consumers' expectation for quality food which is reasonably priced seemingly been on the rise, it is of essence that owners of restaurant treat fairly the issue of customer satisfaction with the

utmost importance it deserves and from the perspective of the consumer, since as (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006) claims the customer is the final arbiter of how much to spend and where, when and what to eat. As such, any factor that influence customer satisfaction ought to be useful in guiding restaurant owners and managers to design and deliver the right offering.

This research's aims at testing empirically the determinants of customer satisfaction in the local Ghanaian restaurants setting. As well this research will be relying on the expectancy disconfirmation model that characterize customer satisfaction process as multidimensional. That is a model that postulates that, consumers use more than one standard of comparison in forming a (dis)confirmation judgment about an experience with a product/service (Huiqun and Xin,2009).Finally, the managerial implication of customer satisfaction in the local restaurant industry in Ghana will as well be provided.

This paper is divided into several sections. First, a brief review of main concepts of interest is provided. Next, the research methodology used for this study is presented, followed by presentation and discussion of the results. Finally, the article concludes with main research findings.

1.1 Problem Statement

The Ghanaian food service sector which consists of hotels and resorts, restaurants and institutional contracts was valued at \$1 billion (Ashitey, 2008). The sector is expected to continue to grow, as convenience fast food and local Ghanaian cuisine restaurants, continue to expand (Ashitey, 2008). This consistent growth is triggered by growing preference of young professionals to meet business contacts at Ghanaian restaurant. As well is as a result of the changes that are envisaged in the Ghanaian demographics with increased urbanization and more women working outside the home. This trend is making women to have less time to plan and prepare food for their spouses and children. As such, because of hunger and the lack of time to prepare food at their various homes, preference for food prepared at restaurants has taken central stage in our cultural fabric. Hence, the upsurge in Ghanaian restaurant industry which is as well drawing tourist and investor into Ghana. However, those at the mercy of this upsurge in the restaurant industry are consumers who patronize the delicacies of these restaurants. With Ghanaian consumers' expectation for quality food which is reasonably priced seemingly been on the rise, it is of essence that owners of restaurant treat fairly the issue of customer satisfaction with the utmost importance it deserves and from the perspective of the consumer, since as (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006) claims the customer is the final arbiter of how much to spend and where, when and what to eat. As such, any factor that influence customer satisfaction ought to be useful in guiding restaurant owners and managers to design and deliver the right offering.

1.2 Purpose of Study

This research intends to identify the determinants that influence customer satisfaction and to test empirically those determinants in the local Ghanaian restaurants setting because majority of work done has focused attention in other jurisdiction other done Ghana and Africa in general. As well this research will be relying on the expectancy disconfirmation model that characterize customer satisfaction process as multidimensional. That is a model that postulates that, consumers use more than one standard of comparison in forming a (dis)confirmation judgment about an experience with a product/service (Huiqun and Xin,2009).

1.3 Objectives of Study

This research seeks to ascertain the critical determinants that influence customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian local restaurant industry. Furthermore, the research seeks to contribute to a multidimensional approach to understanding and measuring the customer satisfaction phenomenon. Finally, this research would determine if the determinants of customer satisfaction can trigger customer loyalty.

2.0 Literature Review

Over the past few decades, the concept of customer satisfaction has attracted the attention of practitioners and academic researchers. Although widely used as a business performance indicator (Luo and Homburg, 2007) and consumer choice assessor, there is still lack of consensus as to what this multidimensional concept mean. Some researchers have conceptualize this concept as an emotional response to an evaluative process (Oliver, 1997). Others like (Cadotte, Woodruff, and Jenkins 1987; Halstead, Hartman, and Schmidt 1994; Westbrook and Reilly, 1983) also share a different view by claiming this concept to be an affective response process which in itself is cognitive in scope (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Howard and Sheth, 1969; Tse and Wilton, 1988). As well, operational understanding of this concept also includes behavioral dimensions which (Giese and Cote, 2002) referred to as conative dimension. Although, more current conceptualizations employ an emotional bent, which this research views as a simplistic approach to understanding this concept, it will be prudent if multidimensional definition of this important concept is employed. From the foregoing, this research views this concept typically as an emotional or cognitive response, which as well includes conative dimensions about pre/post purchase surprise inherent in a product/service acquisition and/or consumption experience.

Because of the relevance that acquiring, maintaining and retaining customers in this highly competitive restaurant industry is, researchers and practitioners have become increasingly concerned with implementing processes that reveal whether or not their customer are satisfied with the products or services they provide (Pettijohn, Pettijohn and Luke, 1997). Several models have come to be used by companies in the food service industry to test the concept of customer satisfaction, from transaction specific model, SERVQUAL model, SERVPERF model, DINESERVE, QUALITOMETRO, all of which have their roots in expectancy disconfirmation theory. This paradigm posits that

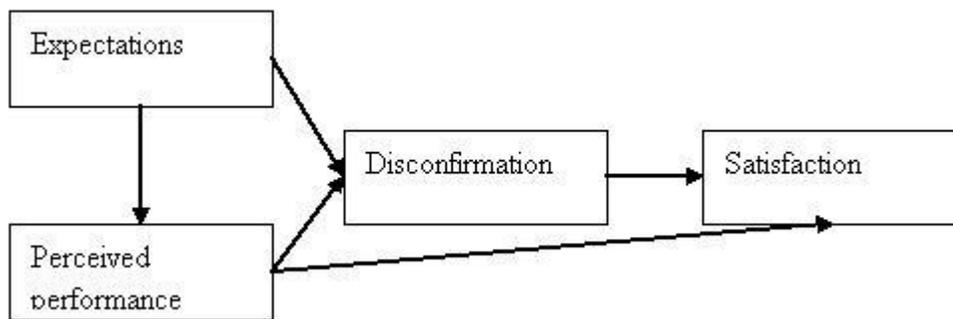


Figure 1. Sourced from Oliver (1977, 1980)

(Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor, 2004) tested a similar model amongst theme restaurants in America. Their study tested the effect that factors like food quality, service quality, atmosphere of a service setting and experience seeking behavior (which is thought to consist of three constructs; cognition seeking, sensation seeking and novelty seeking (Hirschman, 1984)) had on customer expectation and perception of products and service being offered by the theme restaurants. Results indicated that food quality and atmosphere of the restaurant setting made customer exhibit positive disconfirmation towards theme restaurant and consistently exhibited return intentions and intent to spread positive word of mouth.

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Use of the Expectancy Disconfirmation model can be made using direct or indirect questioning methods to test as well as measure customer satisfaction (Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor, 2004).

Indirect questioning, which has its origins in SERVQUAL methodology (Parasuraman et. al 1988), makes use of two set of questions about service encounter. The first set measures a customer's expectation of the encounter whereas the other set measures the perception (Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor, 2004). Customer satisfaction is assessed by subtracting the expectation scores from the perception score of each of each service attribute.

On the other hand direct questioning eliminates the need to calculate different scores. Instead, this approach uses likert type scale that contains options ranging from "worse than expected" to "better than expected" to measure expectancy disconfirmation (Yuksel and Rimmington, 1998).

Multi-attribute scales have been used over the year by researchers and practitioners to assess customer satisfaction in the restaurant setting (Kivela, Reece and Inbakaran, 1999, Pettijohn, Pettijohn and Luke, 1997; Stevens, Knutson and Patton, 1995). In order to find out how important each of these attributes is in determining restaurant choice, customers may be asked to rate relative significance of these attributes (Pettijohn, Pettijohn and Luke, 1997). These attribute scores assist policy formers in the restaurant industry to focus their improvement efforts on areas deemed most important by customers.

2.1 Determinants of Customer Satisfaction

Considering the pivotal role that customer satisfaction is playing in the food service industry, it is not surprising that variety of research in academia and in industry has been devoted to investigating the determinant of customer satisfaction (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982; Oliver, 1980; Barsky, 1995; Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). Majority of the research have indicated food quality, physical environment, service quality, price, and culture (Schwartz and Davis, 1981) as constituting important determinants which influence customer satisfaction in food service industry (Kim et al. 2009; Liu and Jang, 2009).

Food quality is amongst the important determinants of customer satisfaction in food service industry (restaurant) (Sulek and Hensley 2004). What is more, it is an essential requirement to satisfy the needs and expectations of restaurant customers (Peri, 2006). (MacLaurin and MacLaurin, 2000) in his research on theme restaurant seems to be in agreement when he claimed Hard Rock café ranked highest amongst its competitors because their customers were satisfied with the quality of food been offered. Food quality according to (Parasuraman et. al 1988) falls under one of their dimensions known as reliability. The SERVQUAL literature identifies reliability as the ability to perform promised services dependably and accurately. For the restaurant industry, reliability translates into the freshness and temperature of the food (the promise), and receiving the food error-free and as ordered the first time (dependably and accurately) (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006). Interestingly, these aspects or measures of reliability could also be interpreted to represent "food quality" (provided fresh, at the right temperature, and error-free) (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006). (Namkung and Jang 2008 and Schiffman and Kanuk, 2009) are in agreement when their research focused on presentation/ aesthetic appearance, healthy options, aroma, taste, freshness and temperature as some of the antecedents that constitute food quality and primary reason for visiting the restaurant. Clearly, it seems logical to postulate as well that quality of food may be influential in determining customer satisfaction and its satellite outcomes like return intention (Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor, 2004). This research proposes that:

H1: Food quality plays an influential role in determining customer satisfaction.

Varieties of research have also cited service quality in restaurant setting, as an important determinant of customer satisfaction (Kim et al. 2009) and its satellite outcomes like return intention (Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor, 2004). Service quality is a complex, elusive, subjective and abstract concept, which means different things to different people. The most common definition of service quality is the comparison customers make between their expectations and perceptions of the received service (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Grönroos, 1982).

Several well tested research instrument/model have been used to measure this multidimensional concept notable amongst them been the SERVQUAL instrument in the restaurant setting (Heung et al., 2000; Fu and Parks, 2001;

Namkung and Jang, 2008). The instrument identified five key dimensions of service quality – reliability, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Specifically, reliability is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. Tangibles are the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communications material. Responsiveness is the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service. Assurance is the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence. Lastly, empathy is the caring, individualized attention provided to the customer. This instrument as well consists of 22 items for assessing customer perceptions and expectations regarding the quality of service. A level of agreement or disagreement with a given item is rated on a seven-point Likert scale. The results are used to identify positive and negative gaps. The gap is measured by the difference between perceptions and expectations scores and indicates the level of service quality. If the result is positive, perceived service exceeds expected service. A negative result means low quality of service. According to this instrument, service quality occurs when perceived service meets or exceeds customer's expectations (Marković, Horvat, & Raspor, 2004). This research consequently hypothesizes:

H2: Service quality dimensions have significant impact in influencing customer satisfaction in the local restaurant industry

Subsequently, it is of essence to note that in the restaurant setting customers tend to be motivated by environmental stimulation such as music, lights, décor, cleanliness and servers attentiveness (Choi, Silkes and Adler, 2007). The above qualities which (Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor, 2004) refers to as atmospherics tends to be unique selling points for restaurant managers to their customers. These atmosphere qualities tend to be influential as well in determining satellite outcomes like repeated patronage (Wakefield and Blodgett 1994). This research hypothesizes:

H3: The atmospherics of a local restaurant setting play an influential role in determining customer satisfaction

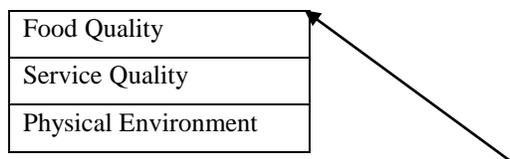
Again, the price of items on the menu can also substantially influence customers in that price has the capability of attracting or repelling customers (Monroe, 1989) especially since price functions as an indicator of quality (Lewis and Shoemaker, 1997). The pricing of restaurant items also varies according to the type of restaurant. If the price is high, customers are likely to expect high quality, or it can induce a sense of being “ripped off” (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006). Likewise, if the price is low, customers may question the ability of the restaurant to deliver product and service quality. Moreover, due to the competitiveness of the restaurant industry, customers are able to establish internal reference prices. When establishing prices for a restaurant, an internal reference price is defined as a price (or price scale) in buyers’ memory that serves as a basis for judging or comparing actual prices (Grewal et al., 1998). This indicates that the price offering for the restaurant needs to be in accord with what the market expects to pay by avoiding negative deviation (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006). This research further hypothesizes:

H4: Price is positively related to customer satisfaction of local restaurant

(Schwartz and Davis, 1981) also claim that not only does ambiance and other antecedent influence customer satisfaction but as well culture, because the underlying organizational culture helps to determine the value that customers place on the service. In other words, when a Ghanaian customer repeatedly chooses an ethnic/local restaurant like Ashanti Home Touch, Mama Lit Heavy Do, Las Palmas, La Paloma, Asanka, Afrikiko, Kenkey Boutique Mukaase, Lomnava or Abga-Maami, he/she may have more positive perception of the restaurant associated with its organizational culture, which may contribute to the value of the service. This research anticipates that:

H5: The perception of customers way of life positively influence customer satisfaction in the local restaurant setting

From the foregoing it is important to note that this research wants to ascertain through appropriate methodology if indeed the above stated determinant are influential in determining customer satisfaction (Weiss, Feinstein and Dalbor, 2004) as indicated in figure 2.



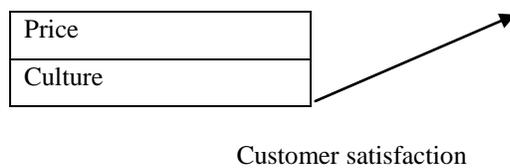


Figure 2.

3.0 Methodology

This section outlines the research design, research instrument, sampling and data analysis used to test the five critical determinants that influence customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian local restaurant setting.

The research design for this study is descriptive in scope. (Gay, 1992) claims that descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study.

Closed ended intercept survey questionnaires were used to acquire responses because they were more convenient for the participant to answer and for the researcher to interpret the respondent's results. The questionnaire used in this research tests the impact that the five determinants identified in the literature review have on customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian local restaurant setting.

The questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and adaptations from other research surveys.

The questionnaire followed a three parts format. The initial part of the questionnaire was designed to measure the demographic characteristics of the sample chosen. Demographic information included gender, age, occupation, meal types, particular local restaurant they often frequented. Subsequently, the questionnaire examined the respondents' perceptions about food quality, service quality, atmospherics, price and finally culture. The questionnaire did not ask separately about respondents' expectation prior to their visiting a local Ghanaian restaurant. Instead, a direct method of questioning was used to assess whether respondents' expectations have been met, negating the need for additional set of expectation questions. The twenty five (25) questions were identified based on the review of the literature and an adaptation from surveys developed by (Kivela, Reece and Inbakaran 1999 and 2000) and other researches. The study revised and added two more cultural attributes to suit the Ghanaian local restaurant setting in the hope of increasing the accuracy of the questionnaire. The study adapted twenty-three items broken down into three categories namely food quality; service quality, atmospherics from (Kivela, Reece and Inbakaran 1999 and 2000). Also one item related to price was adapted from (Shoemaker's 1998). The last item, culture with the help of observations and face -to-face encounter with two managers of two reputable local Ghanaian restaurants was developed. A five point scale with anchors "not important and very important", has not met expectation and has exceeded expectation" was used as a basis for responding to the questions which were asked.

An intercept approach which is a convenience sampling method was used to distribute and gather the 500 questionnaire from local restaurant in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This data which was gathered over a two week period involved fifty local Ghanaian restaurants which are also based in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

SPSS program was used to process data that was gathered. Statistical test such as Frequency, mean, , factor analysis, ANOVA and regressions were used in order that the study's objective of ascertaining the critical determinants that influence customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian local restaurant industry would be met.

First, descriptive statistics employing frequency and mean were used to evaluate the five categories' expectations and perceptions of local restaurant customers. The demographic profile and behavioral characteristics of respondent was analyzed after computing frequency distribution tables. The mean scores of the twenty five items were as well ranked.

In addition, factor analysis was conducted to identify the underlying dimension of respondents' perceptions and expectations of the attributes been considered. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess the reliability of each of the variables retained in each category. Only items with eigenvalues equal to or greater than one and factor loading of 0.4 or above was retained (Hair et al., 1998).

Again, regression analysis was employed to predict and examine the strength of association between dependent and independent attributes.

4.0 Analysis and Results

4.1 Response Rate

Five hundred respondents were intercepted to participate in this study. Two hundred questionnaires were answered to the satisfaction of the study, indicating a response rate 40%.

4.2 Characteristics of Respondents

As indicated in Table 1, the sample was made up of 102 male respondents (51%) and 98 female respondents (49%). Among the Two hundred respondents, those respondents aged between 18 and 22 years of age accounted for 30%, followed by the age group of 23 and 27 which also accounted for 33% respectively; also those falling within the age group of 28-32 accounted for 20.5%, followed finally by 33-40 which accounted for 16.5%.

The other characteristics are shown in Table 3. All the 200 respondents were asked to answer questions about the type of meal enjoyed and the local restaurant they visited two or more times during the past week. The results showed that 37 respondents (18.5%) enjoyed Banku with Okro soup/stew/hot pepper, 38 respondents (19%) enjoyed fufu with light soup/Nkontomire soup/Groundnut soup/palmnut soup; 30 respondents (15%) enjoyed Plantain/cocoyam/yam ampesi with Agushie stew/Nkontomire stew; 30 respondents (15%) enjoyed jollof/plain/fried rice/waakye with fish and chicken; 20 respondents (10%) enjoyed fried yam/potatoes with turkey tail/gizzard/chicken; 18 respondents (9%) enjoyed Red Red stew and fried plantain; 17 respondents (8.5%) enjoyed Tuo Zaafi with ground nut soup or green leaf soup followed finally by 10 respondents (5%) who enjoyed Kenkey with hot pepper and fried fish.

Ashanti Home Touch, Mama Lit, Asanka Local, Las Palmas and Yam/bayere Junction were the most visited local restaurants out of the eight local restaurants options. 69 respondents (34.5%) had visited Ashanti Home touch for their meals; 25 respondents (12.5%) had visited Mama Lit for their meals; 32 respondents (16%) had visited Asanka Local for their meal; 19 respondents (9.5%) had visited Las Palmas followed finally by 17 respondents (8.5%) who had enjoyed their meals at Yam/Bayere Junction. Table 4 provides a table illustration of the above characteristics.

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Female	98	49.0	49.0	49.0
Male	102	51.0	51.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 Gender.

Meal Type

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Kenkey with hot pepper and fried fish	10	5.0	5.0	5.0
Banku with Okro stew/soup/hot pepper	37	18.5	18.5	23.5
Fried yam/potatoes with fish/turkey tail/Gizzard/chicken	20	10.0	10.0	33.5
Red Red stew and fried plantain	18	9.0	9.0	42.5
Fufu with light soup/Nkontomire soup/Groundnut soup/palm nut soup	38	19.0	19.0	61.5
Plantain and Cocoyam/yam Ampesi with Agushie stew/Nkontomire stew	30	15.0	15.0	76.5
Jollof/plain/fried rice/Waakye with chicken/fish	30	15.0	15.0	91.5
Tuo Zaafi with ground nut soup or green leaf soup	17	8.5	8.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 3. Meal Type

Local Restaurant

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Las Palmas	19	9.5	9.5	9.5
Asanka Local	32	16.0	16.0	25.5
Ashanti Home Touch	69	34.5	34.5	60.0
Mama Lit	25	12.5	12.5	72.5
Agatha	12	6.0	6.0	78.5
Kata Wode So	14	7.0	7.0	85.5

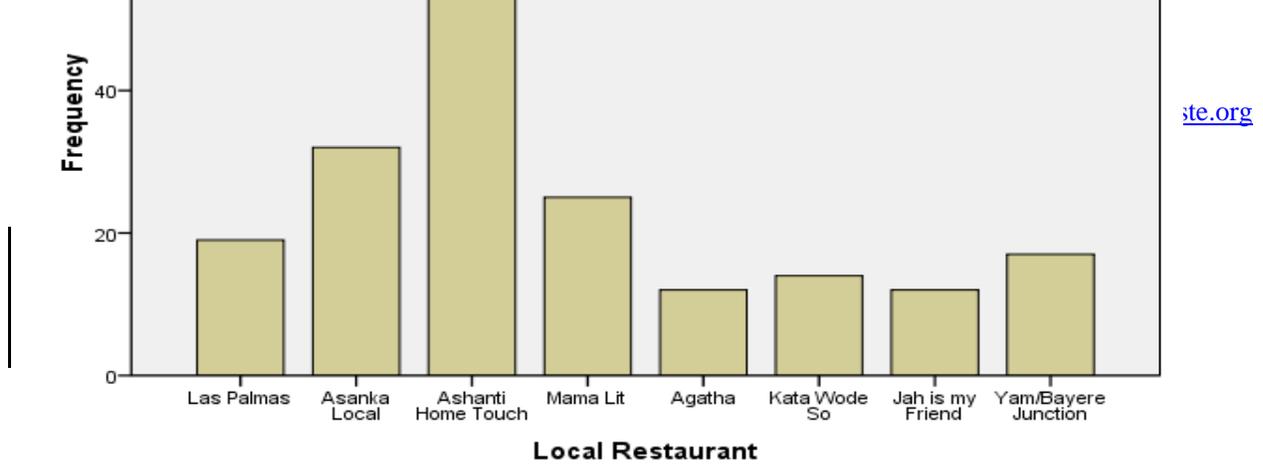


Figure 4. Local Restaurant.

4.3 Factor Analysis

To determine whether the data were appropriate for factor analysis, the data set was examined to ensure that the variables were not inter-correlated and that the variables were grouped properly. Bartlett's test of sphericity (using a chi-square test) was applied to test for inter-correlation, and Kaiser-Meyer- Olkins (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used to make sure that the variables were grouped properly. For data to be appropriate for factor analysis, the results of the Bartlett's test should be significant and the KMO value should be greater than .50. In the study, the value of KMO was 0.6642 and verified that the use of factor analysis was appropriate in the study. Bartlett test of sphericity value was 2.867E3 with the overall significance of the correlation matrix of .000, indicating that suitable for factor analysis.

Varimax rotation, a method of orthogonal rotation that centers on simplifying the factor matrix by maximizing variance and producing conceptually pure factors, was applied. The criteria for the number of factors to be extracted were based on eigenvalue, percentage of variance, significance of factor loading, and assessment of structure. A loading cut-off on 0.50 was adopted in this study. Only the factors with eigenvalue equal to or greater than 1 were considered as significant. The solution that accounted for at least 50% of the total variance was regarded as a satisfactory solution.

Service Quality

After analyzing the data with Principal Component Analysis of factor analysis with a VARIMAX rotation, 19 variables with a factor loading of .50 or greater were retained and it grouped the 19 variables into 5 components. Six variables were reduced from the original 25 variables because only factor loadings equal or greater than 0.5 were considered acceptable in a factor analysis (Hair et al., 1998). However, 9 variables were usable after rotation. The first factor was labeled as "Food Quality." It involved three variables and explained 37.527% of the variance in the data, with an eigenvalue of 9.383. It consisted of overall quality of the food, temperature of food and presentation of food. The second factor was labeled as "Service Quality." It included attentive staff, efficient staff, staff's knowledge about food, staff greeting customers. It explained 13.119% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 3.603. The third factor was labeled as "Price." It included good value for money and appropriate portion size. It explained 1.593% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 0.399. The other variables were ignored after reconceptualization of fit.

Appropriate portion size		0.564	0.425
Reasonable price item		0.74	0.567
% of variance explained	37.53%	13.12%	1.59%
Cronbach Alpha	0.822	0.839	0.515
Eigenvalue	9.383	3.603	0.399

Note: KMO was .6642. Bartlett test of sphericity value was 2.867E3, overall significance of the correlation matrix of .000

Table 5.

4.4 Regression Analysis

This section, investigates whether the three variables that were retained after reconceptualization of fit has an influence on customer satisfaction. Also, whether customer satisfaction does have an impact on satellite outcomes such as word-of-mouth endorsement and return intentions.

Table 5 explains the results of the regression analysis of the three retained variables as independent variables with customer satisfaction as the dependent variable. The co-efficient of determination (R^2) of 0.638 indicated that 63.8% of the variance in customer satisfaction was explained by the three retained variables. The R of independent variables (three retained variables) on the dependent variable, customer satisfaction is 0.799, which represents that the respondents had a positive and high satisfaction level with food quality, service quality and price. The F-ratio of 115.052 was significant ($p \leq 0.01$). From the above, when the research considered the five variables and customer satisfaction, only the three retained variables after reconceptualization of fit were found to be important. In conclusion, the results supports hypothesis 1, 2 and 4.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.799 ^a	.638	.632	.44118

a. Predictors: (Constant), PrQ, SQQ, FQQ

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	67.183	3	22.394	115.052	.000 ^a
	Residual	38.150	196	.195		
	Total	105.333	199			

a. Predictors: (Constant), PrQ, SQQ, FQQ

b. Dependent Variable: SAQ3

5.0 Conclusion

As the Ghanaian food sector continues to grow and Ghanaian consumers' perception for quality food been on the rise, the issue of customer satisfaction continues to engage the mind of academia and local restaurant managers. This research ascertained the critical determinants that influence customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian local restaurant industry. The descriptive statistics of respondents indicated that the sample that responded to the intercept survey was made up of 102 male respondents (51%) and 98 female respondents (49%). Among the Two hundred respondents, those respondents aged between 18 and 22 years of age accounted for 30%, followed by the age group of 23 and 27 which also accounted for 33% respectively; also those falling within the age group of 28-32 accounted for 20.5%, followed finally by 33-40 which accounted for 16.5%. The results also showed that 37 respondents (18.5%) enjoyed Banku with Okro soup/stew/hot pepper, 38 respondents (19%) enjoyed fufu with light soup/Nkontomire soup/Groundnut soup/palmtree soup; 30 respondents (15%) enjoyed Plantain/cocoyam/yam ampesi with Agushie stew/Nkontomire stew; 30 respondents (15%) enjoyed jollof/plain/fried rice/waakye with fish and

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After analyzing the data with Principal Component Analysis of factor analysis with a VARIMAX rotation, 19 variables with a factor loading of .50 or greater were retained and it grouped the 19 variables into 5 components. Six variables were reduced from the original 25 variables because only factor loadings equal or greater than 0.5 were considered acceptable in a factor analysis. However, 9 variables were usable after reconceptualization of fit. Hypothesis 1-5 were to find the relationship between food quality, service quality, atmospherics, price and culture with customer satisfaction. However, only the three retained variables (namely food quality, service quality and price) after reconceptualization of fit were used together with customer satisfaction to perform the regression analysis. Since all the three variables have significant impact on customer satisfaction, the local restaurant operators should pay more attention; continue to improve themselves in all spheres of their operations in order to exceed customer expectation.

The study clarified that service quality variables (which included attentive staff, efficient staff, staff's knowledge about food, staff greeting customers) have the most critical impact in determining customer satisfaction. The improvement of staff's knowledge about food might help the local restaurant operators achieve or exceed customer satisfaction.

After service quality, came food quality (which included overall quality of the food, temperature of food and presentation of food) and price (which included good value for money and appropriate portion size). The local restaurant operator should consider improving service quality, food quality and price in order to meet or exceed customer satisfaction.

5.1 Recommendation

These findings provided above suggest some important implications for the local restaurant operators in the Ghanaian food service sector. First, local restaurant operator should recognize that although the three retained variables showed a positive effect in determining customer satisfaction, local restaurant operators in Ghana should continue to maintain overall quality of the food, temperature of food, presentation of food, provide good value for money and appropriate portion size of food served. As well all other element within the key variables that were retained should be improved in order to meet or exceed customer expectation.

Another important implication for local restaurant operators is that they should institute continual training programs on how staff can be attentive, be polite, greet customers among others to attract new prospective customers and retain the existing customers. The above is obviously good for the local restaurants and thereon strengthens customer loyalty.

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