

Savouring Satisfaction: Effect of Service Quality, Perceived Value, and Word of Mouth on Dining Experiences

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Abstract

This study is conducted to propose a design of a cohesive research model that can scrutinize the combined effect of all three rudiments of restaurant service quality extents, i.e., physical environment, service, and food, on customer satisfaction with complete mediation of customer perceived value and moderation of customer word-of-mouth. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 305 diners of 6 full-service upscale restaurants in Karachi. The dining experience they shared becomes the basis for testing the research question using SPSS. The mediation test shows that restaurant service quality and customer perceived value were significant factors of customer word-of-mouth intentions, with full mediation of customer perceived value. Results also suggest that Word of Mouth does not mediate between consumer perceived value and customer satisfaction in the restaurant industry. This new model and comprehensive research findings will play a vital role in understanding and explaining complex relationships among all such variables, like restaurant service quality, perceived service value, customer satisfaction, and word-of-mouth intentions in the vast industry of restaurants.

Keywords: *Restaurant Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Perceived Value, Word-of-Mouth Intentions, PLS-SEM*

JEL Classification: *M31, L83*

INTRODUCTION

Demand for dining out and fast food has risen as there is a surge in urban middle classes, especially in cities like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. In 2024, Pakistan's food service profit sector generated nearly PKR 1,371.5 billion (US\$10.3 billion), marking a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.2% from 2014 to 2024 (Global Data, 2024). At the same time, competition in the restaurant industry has intensified. Restaurants are finding it difficult to retain their customers and keep them satisfied (Shahhosseini & Khalili Nasr, 2024). Restaurants

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often offer superior food quality, service quality, and enhanced ambiance to satisfy customers (Cheng et al., 2025; Singh & Karthik, 2024; Wang et al., 2025).

Customer loyalty in this competitive age largely lies in high gratification and sustenance. This has caused extensive research in services marketing that focuses on identifying the factors that improve customer satisfaction levels. The resulting research highlights that customer satisfaction with restaurants to be strongly influenced by price perception, food and service quality, and quality of physical surroundings (Michael, Johnson, & Renaghan, 1999; Ryu, Han, & Jang, 2010; Steven, Knutson, & Patton, 1995; Varki & Colgate, 2001).

Customers today are more aware of options. Thus, poor service or atmosphere can simply not be tolerated for good taste in the quest for an authentic, exotic experience in ethnically based restaurants. In order to achieve a reasonable amount of customer satisfaction, it is necessary to provide a first-rate overall dining experience. This may be achieved by providing quality food, excellent service, and a complementary atmosphere. However, the empirical test of whether customers in this sector are motivated by food quality, attentive services, and a hospitable environment is yet to be tested.

Contrary to the buying experience of a tangible product, service customers have no set key checklist based on which they evaluate their overall experience (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2002; Reimer & Kuehn, 2005). However, due to their tangibility, indicators such as price and physical objects (cutlery, décor, furniture, layout) offer customers a basis to form judgments (Bitner, 1992; Zeithaml, 1981). This causes business owners to focus on the identified essential elements, such as the price factor and the physical offerings, that determine the level of customer satisfaction, which leads to brand loyalty.

Core marketing priorities today have become a superior quality of food/service and customer gratification since they are requisites of consumer brand loyalty, defined by recurrent purchases and positive reviews (Han & Ryu, 2009; Y. Liu & Jang, 2009). The intense competition has led today's market to formulate the assumption that the key to gaining customers is (proven to be true by various real-life scenarios) offering higher quality service and gaining brand loyalty (Han & Ryu, 2007). Service industries (like restaurants) have customers using restaurant reviews/images, food, employee services, and physical offerings as indicators of appraising the experience. The perfect ratio of these vital attributes can lead to positive perceptions about the business that will formulate higher customer satisfaction and thus increase brand loyalty. However, there is very little research is there to provide evidence that factors such as customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and word of mouth can indeed raise restaurant quality perceptions.

However, despite the importance of food service quality being indicated, there is very little knowledge among restaurateurs, managers, and academics about how these factors and in what amount affect the judgment of a consumer whether the service quality is up to the mark or not. Notably, no previously available data has examined the three indicators of consumer perceived value, service quality assessment, and word-of-mouth together. Additionally, concurring the trifecta is essential for formulating customer satisfaction, despite word-of-mouth; an important determinant remains unexamined.

Thus, this study aims to bridge the apparent lack of such data by creating an inclusive

model that scrutinizes said determinants (physical offerings, food, and service) moderated by word-of-mouth, in forming opinions on restaurant service quality and customer perception of offerings. This study aims to be of practical use while contributing academically. The study aims to build a useful model that includes the determinants of customer service quality level and customer perceived value on customer satisfaction. While dining out is increasingly popular and competition in the restaurant industry is fierce, there's still limited understanding of how food quality, service, and atmosphere—combined with customer-perceived value and word-of-mouth—shape overall satisfaction. This study fills that gap by offering a more enhanced model to help restaurants understand what drives customer loyalty in today's market. In practical life, the study shall contribute by offering restaurateurs, managers, and intellects the opportunity to make better decisions and further build on the information this study offers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Restaurant Service Quality

Customer perceptions in the restaurant industry have, in recent times, shown to be majorly affected by three essential components; food, employee service to customers, and the physical environment/offerings (Cheng et al., 2025; Singh & Karthik, 2024; Wang et al., 2025). The relationship between customer satisfaction, employee service quality, and the frequency of visits ultimately contributes to increased customer loyalty in a structured restaurant environment (Kayumov et al., 2024). The study aimed to conclude by exploring the trifecta affecting service quality, which highlighted physical quality, service quality (interaction), and post-execution quality (Namkung & Jang, 2008). Findings in a separate study were based on the mid to upscale restaurant category to decipher the key factors that influence a consumer and lead to a satisfied or dissatisfied experience. They also used the three quality factors, i.e., atmosphere, food, and services, to measure the perceived quality of customers/diners in the context of restaurant experience. The model was further built up by (Jang & Namkung, 2009), who incorporated the measure of stimuli and emotions specific to a particular restaurant. The study specifically worked with three essential components of atmospheric, product and service that helped build customer perceptions of service quality. The study thereby aimed to provide more information on the determinants of restaurant service quality. (Ryu et al., 2010) Research further built up and explored the correlation between prices and the trifecta influencing restaurant service quality perceptions: physical environment, service, and food, as well as customer satisfaction, while discussing consumers' motivation when choosing fast food options. These studies collectively portrayed a similar concept where customer perception, behavioral motivation, and satisfaction correlate with their restaurant service perception. However, it is notable that none of such studies aimed to inculcate the influence of word of mouth while understanding customer perceived value and customer satisfaction for restaurant service quality (Cheng et al., 2025; Singh & Karthik, 2024; Wang et al., 2025).

Consumer Perceived Value

Customer perceived value is the total product of a consumer's comparison of the received perceptive advantages and costs borne while engaging in said activity (C. Y. Kim & Cha, 2024). Customer perceived value can only be gauged by a customer, as a service provider cannot evaluate a subjective matter such as this effectively, and think as each customer to be able

to calculate this accurately. Bitner (1992) explains customer perceptions and beliefs and how they correlate directly to a company's service. In the concerned industry, for example, physical offerings affect the perceptive value of the eatery and convey the expected standards of service (Balaji et al., 2025; Kim & Cha, 2024). These physical conditions include seating arrangement, décor, additional items, and their craft (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2002). Mattila (1999) identified that an inn's services are essential for the value perceived by business travellers to be gauged. Han and Ryu (2009) study built a strong connection between a customer's perceived value and the eatery's physical offerings, including the spatial format, décor and additional environmental conditions. Liu and Jang's (2009) study focused on the restaurant industry and the relationship between customer perceived value, ambience, customer behaviour, and emotional response to the service (Balaji et al., 2025). The study offered conclusive evidence of a strong correlation between the restaurant ambience and customer-perceived value (Gong et al., 2025). The findings also showed that a customer's perceptions do affect the behavioural motivations displayed later. Jang's study also unearthed the discovery that the mediator between emotional response and behavioural tendencies is customer-perceived value, while also being an effective factor influencing behavioural intentions.

Customer Satisfaction:

The studies/research conducted on consumer satisfaction and buying and perceptive behaviour in the field of food and edibles has been extensive in recent years (E. W. Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997). Studies have emerged where the multiple determinants of satisfaction have been explored. This displayed that a customer's experience in a particular field and his/her service quality standards increase together (Öksüz et al., 2025). The increased awareness about health and the restaurant environment in recent times has led to a more stringent policy being adopted by restaurants while offering edibles (Glanz et al., 2007; Kozup, Creyer, & Burton, 2003; Skeer, George, Hamilton, Cheng, & Siegel, 2004). Additionally, restaurants focus on the methods/style/taste of the food offering. Malik et al. (2012) describe customer satisfaction as an effective amalgamation of meeting customer brand expectations along the lines of customer satisfaction. Meeting the needs and wants of customers is integral to customer satisfaction, which, in turn, is the crux of effective marketing of any product offering (Spreng et al., 1996). Firms market products that offer customer satisfaction and post-delivery gain profits (Yi & Zeithaml, 1990). Customer satisfaction is essential for service success, and researchers agree that an underlying process is involved in forming consumer satisfaction (Yi & Zeithaml, 1990). Satisfaction is best described by Hunt (1977) as an evaluative process where consumers compare the perceived value of the offering before consumption to their "received" value. Formulating a definition of satisfaction based on previously available theories and evidence, Engel et al (1982) explain satisfaction as "an evaluation that the chosen alternative is consistent with prior beliefs with respect to that alternative" (p. 501). The pre-emptive expectations and their variance with the actual experience are shown to be the overall judgment process that forms a customer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Similarly, (Zairi, 2000) describes satisfaction as accomplishing a deep, unfulfilled desire. Additionally, as consumers' satisfaction leads to recurrent purchases and brand loyalty, it's very important for a restaurant (Mittal & Lassar, 1998). Full satisfaction is usually a product of the full appeasement achieved from using a product/offering (Oliver, 1981).

Customer satisfaction, in its true essence, is the process of comparing the offering to

determine whether it actually matches the consumer's needs/wants. Consumer dissatisfaction exists due to the performance of the service being subpar, and usually, products that perform beyond expectations are what consumers require for satisfaction. (Kotler, 2012). Customers can also be dissatisfied with the product itself, even if any one aspect of the product doesn't please them. So, it is the case of restaurants, the variability in food, price, quantity, type of service, and ambience may lead to a sub-par experience (Öksüz et al., 2025).

Word of Mouth Intentions

Customer decision-making is shown to be influenced by word-of-mouth content as well (Allsop et al., 2007; Hong et al., 2025), and has been shown to prompt a post-purchase positive impact. Arndt (1967) is credited as one of the researchers who aimed to research the influence of WOM on consumerism. Arndt (1967) detailed WOM as any personal level of oral communication, where the communicator tells another person about a brand/service/offering without any apparent corporate motive (Lin et al., 2022). Stern and Dietz's (1994) recent study aimed to describe the said practice by contrasting the way Word of Mouth works compared to traditional advertising methods. Her findings stated that "WOM differs from [advertising . . .] in its lack of boundaries. . . .WOM involves the exchange of ephemeral oral or spoken messages between a contiguous source and a recipient who communicate directly in real life . . ."

WOM is an important marketing tool for service industries, especially restaurants (Glynn et al., 1999). Owing to the rapid growth of the internet influence and other communication methods, WOM has become a vital marketing source (Liu et al., 2011). WOM also varies from community to community and differentiates when talking about the various levels of communication in various cultures (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994). South Korea is a part of some of the few existing communist states today (see Hofstede, 1980), yet word-of-mouth communication is believed to be crucial for sales in such areas. A current study conducted by CSV explains how the consumer receives an experience of a service, and then is judged (Anderson, 1998). Using personal communication skills and word of mouth, one consumer prompts another to make a similar experience occur. When consumers have a pleasant experience, they are more likely to try to share their experience with friends, family, and peers, and as a restaurant, this WOM conduct is essential for businesses to flourish. Satisfaction, as anticipated, is positively correlated to WOM (Glynn Mangold et al., 1999).

Hypotheses Development

Quality is the associated intrinsic value a consumer places upon the service/product offering. Although quality has various perceptive definitions, the most popular accepted definition is perhaps that quality is the perceived value of a company's product/service and its performance compared to that of other brands/substitutes and its main traits in the view of a consumer (Taylor & Baker, 1994). Similarly, Han and Hyun (2015) described the term by mentioning how a tourist may compare one tourist offering to that offered by other rivals/vendors. Studies conducted on hospitality, service, quality of physical offerings, and food are essential traits of selection (Chua et al., 2015; Mattila, 2001; Ryu et al., 2010). A restaurant product's success and growth include tangible offerings such as the food, physical décor and offerings, and intangible offerings like waitering services and interactive dining experiences (Mattila, 2001; Ryu et al., 2010).

Chua et al. (2015) attribute loyalty to be built over time when consumers feel that they're satisfied and thus make frequent repurchases. This satisfaction arises from various traits of "quality," such as product quality, physical décor, ambience, and service quality. Lobo (2008) discusses customer satisfaction with respect to hospitality and proves that any consumer's assessment of the quality of the service/product offering's outcome leads to consumer satisfaction. Ryu et al. (2010) studied the process behind a consumer's satisfaction, focusing on and proving a notable link between a restaurant's consumer satisfaction, such as the food quality, ambience, and quality of service. The findings showed a strong relationship between customer satisfaction and motivation, which led the customer to revisit and recommend the product to others. The evidence above validates the case that the patron's perspective of the food quality, service quality, and environment strongly influences restaurant customers' experience satisfaction. Based on the above literature, the researcher designed the following hypothesis.

H1: Service Quality of restaurants significantly influences the consumer perceived Value.

H1a: Servers' Quality significantly influences the consumer's perceived Value.

H1b: The food Quality of restaurants significantly influences the consumer perceived Value.

H1c: Physical Environment Quality of restaurants significantly influences the consumer's perceived Value.

The one recurrent issue has been academics ignoring the importance of consumer perceptive value, eventually leading to satisfaction (Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Sirdeshmukh, Singh, & Sabol, 2002). With recent times showing a shift to consumer-centric approaches, it is essential to note that perceived value contributes heavily to purchase patterns and brand. Describes the perceived value of a product as the consumer's judgment of whether the utility/value of the product before and after consumption correlates or not. Woodruff (1997 p. 141) defines perceptions of value as the exchange between what the customer receives, such as the benefit and satisfaction, and what the consumer gives in exchange, i.e., price, money, etc. The exchange must be of value to the customer for the transaction to be deemed satisfactory (Holbrook, 1994) and thus can alter decision-making (Neal, 1999).

In light of the instruction level for consumers, Burke (2002) and Li et al. (1999) show that the higher the consumer's instruction level, the better they feel about using the internet as a medium for shopping because internet education corresponds to their understanding of e-commerce. A study by Lohse et al. (2000) showed that buyers with good family assets spend more on internet shopping than people with small salaries. The family asset defines their education level and ownership of personal computers and the Internet. Wolfenbarger and Gilly (2003) also discovered that availability and comfort level define the amount spent on online shopping. It saves time and effort since the people working throughout the day are left with a small amount of time, and the internet makes it easier for them to access a wide range of markets while resting at home. Avery (1996) also presents the view that when people cannot go to a particular market to buy a product, they feel comfortable buying online. Moreover, customers who have to run stores that cover a long distance feel it is easier to shop online and get the required item delivered home. The utility achieved from consumption is the ultimate goal in a positive relationship between business and consumer. Many marketing

moguls use similar strategies as many use complementary services (food delivery, multiple cash payment options), and discounts/value-added deals (encouraging more money spent) to gain more customers by providing superior value. Thus increasing customer retention and brand loyalty (Patterson & Spreng, 1997). Surviving examinations affirm that shoppers buy based on behavioural expectations (Han & Ryu, 2007, 2009; Namkung, 2010a). Brown and Reingen (1987) showed that customer-perceived value was a vital driver of consumer loyalty toward online suppliers (service sector). As per Anderson (1998), customer-perceived value was connected with consumer loyalty in administration ventures. Namkung and Jang (2007) additionally affirmed that customer-perceived value. McDougall and Levesque (2000) announced that customer-perceived value and perceived service quality were the two most notable forerunners of consumer loyalty across four industries in the service sector: restaurant, dental services, hairdresser, and auto service.

H2: Consumer perceived value has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

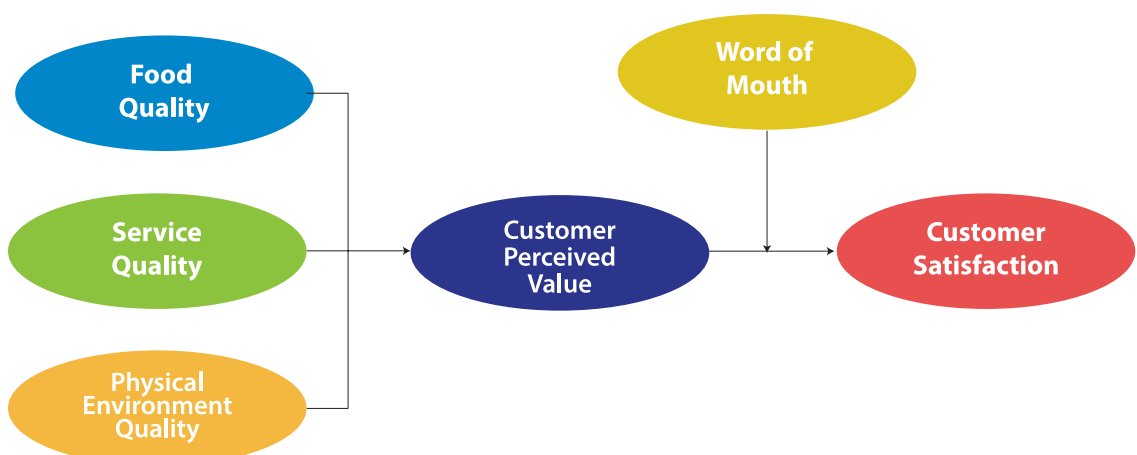
H3: Consumer perceived value of the restaurant mediates the positive relationship between the restaurant service quality (servers' quality, food quality, and physical environment quality) and customer satisfaction.

It has been proved by several studies that customer satisfaction is directly associated with WOM intentions (Han & Ryu, 2007, 2009; Namkung & Jang, 2007; Oliver, 1981; Ryu et al., 2010). Mangold et al. (1999) also declared that positive word-of-mouth approval was linked with customer satisfaction in a university's food service eatery operations. Fundamentally, it impacts customer perceived value, and customer perceived value and restaurant image together affect customer satisfaction. It was additionally found that consumer perceived value and restaurant image (Yang & Peterson, 2004). Because of the discoveries of past research, the accompanying hypotheses are produced:

H4: Word of mouth of the customers of the restaurant moderates the positive relationship between consumer perceived value and customer satisfaction.

Based on the above hypotheses, the conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling

The population for this study comprises consumers who have dined at restaurants, as their experiences and perceptions are critical for evaluating service quality, perceived value, and customer satisfaction. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to collect data. Purposive sampling might not fully represent the broader population. Still, it worked well for this study because it allowed researchers to focus on people with real dining experience, precisely the insight needed to explore service quality, value, and customer satisfaction. The sample included individuals from diverse demographic backgrounds to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Data were gathered targeting restaurant customers who could provide insights into their perceptions of service quality (servers' quality, food quality, and physical environment quality), perceived value, customer satisfaction, and word-of-mouth intentions. A sample of 290 respondents was required as the total number of items is 29 in this research. According to Kline (2023), for each item in the research, 10 responses should be collected. Eventually, 305 responses were retained for data analysis.

Measures

Methodology Measures Based on previous research (Ryu & Jang, 2007; Zeithaml et al., 1996), survey research was conducted to review three main dimensions of restaurant service quality (i.e., physical environment, food, and service), customer perceived service value, customer satisfaction, and WOM intentions. A Likert scale with five items ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) was used to measure all the variables and constructs. A scale of six items, which was developed by, was used for measuring Food quality (FQ) (e.g., "Food was delicious"). For measuring service quality (SQ), a scale consisting of five items was used (Brady & Cronin Jr, 2001) (e.g., "Employees served me food exactly as I ordered it."). Ryu & Jang (2007) developed different items for measuring the quality of the physical environment (QPE), 6 of which were utilized in this study. Consumer Perceived value was measured by six items (e.g. "This restaurant offered good value for the price") (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Many authors have done remarkable work on the scale development and utilization of the scales for customer satisfaction (CS). Still, only four items from those previous studies were used in the questionnaire for this research (Oliver, 1997). As a final point, three items were used to assess word-of-mouth intentions (WOM). Respondents' agreement was evaluated with the help of a Likert scale containing 5 points with items using sentences like if they intend to communicate about the restaurant to others positively, make positive recommendations to other diners, and most importantly, motivate their family and friends to go to that eatery.

Procedure

The field overview approach was utilized as a part of this review. The information was gathered from clients at six full-benefit eateries, which offer adequate mood in a vast metropolitan region in Karachi. A pilot test was conducted with 30 genuine clients at an eatery as a preparatory trial of the final form. These different strides guaranteed that the things chosen had worthy psychometric qualities concerning the physical environment, food, service, customer satisfaction, customer perceived value, and WOM intentions in a restaurant context.

We reached out to the administrators of the eateries to present the review and asked for authorization to gather information. During the information accumulation preparation, respondents were chosen in various circumstances on a single day. They continued it to various days of different weeks to guarantee a sufficient portrayal of the population. Respondents were about to finish eating and were waiting for the dessert. We approached them to ask them to share their eating background before they exited their table. An overview of this study was given to them, and they were assured that this data would be collected only for instructive purposes and that their responses would be recorded anonymously. If the client consented to take an interest, they were given a questionnaire to finish, which was gathered before they cleared out the eatery. Four hundred eighteen diners of these six restaurants were reached, and 346 consented to take an interest; 305 respondents finished all the vital things to be incorporated into all information investigations announced below (a 72 per cent response rate was calculated). The cafes spoke to a wide statistical foundation over various feasts' particular circumstances (lunch/supper, size of gathering, event, etc.).

Analysis

The analysis of the sample data was conducted using SmartPLS 4. Since the conceptual model consisted of complex relationships (including a mediator and a moderator) and the variables were constructs based on abstract ideas, partial least squared structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Demographic Analysis

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents (N = 305). The sample presents nearly equal gender distribution, with 51.1% male and 48.9% female participants. Most respondents (67.2%) fall within the 21 to 30 age group, followed by 15.7% aged 31 to 40, while only 3% are above 40 years old, indicating a predominantly young sample. Regarding education, 61.31% hold a graduate degree, 20.66% have an undergraduate degree, and only 5.25% possess a doctorate, reflecting a well-educated sample. Regarding profession, 39.67% are full-time employees, 22.62% are part-time students, and 18.69% are non-working students, demonstrating a mix of professional and academic backgrounds. A smaller proportion of respondents are self-employed (11.15%), unemployed (4.26%), or retired (0.98%), indicating diverse occupational representation in the sample.

Table 1. *Demographic Analysis*

	Demographics	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	156	51.10
	Female	149	48.90
Age	Less than 21	43	14.10
	21 to 30	205	67.20
	31 to 40	48	15.70
	41 to 50	6	2.00
	Above 50	3	1.00

Education	Matriculation/O level	4	1.31
	Intermediate/A level	13	4.26
	Undergraduate	63	20.66
	Graduate	187	61.31
	Masters	7	2.30
	Doctorate	16	5.25
	Other	15	4.92
Profession	Student and not working	57	18.69
	Student and part-time working	69	22.62
	Student and full-time working	3	.98
	Full-time working	121	39.67
	Retired	3	.98
	Self-employed	34	11.15
	Unemployed	13	4.26
	Other	5	1.64

Measurement Model Assessment

As a first step of PLS-SEM, the items' and constructs' reliability and validity were assessed through measurement model assessment.

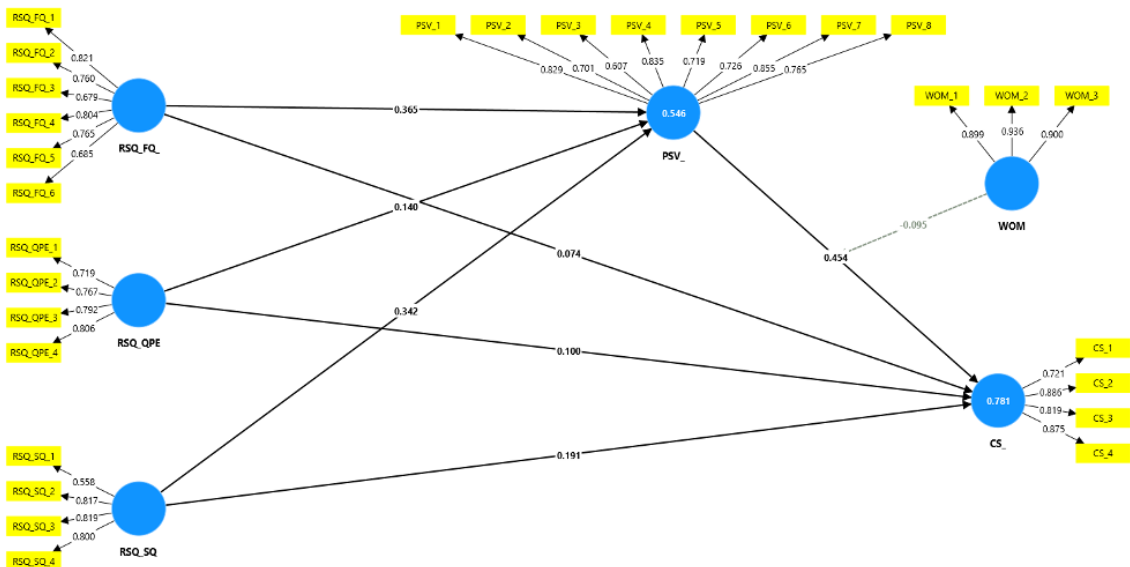


Figure 2. Structural Model

The reliability and convergent validity of the constructs were assessed using outer loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). All outer loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70 for most of the items, confirming indicator reliability and consistency. Although PSV_3 (0.607) and RSQ_SQ_1 (0.558) outer loadings are relatively low, their AVE is above 0.5. The reliability of all the constructs is supported, as all constructs have Cronbach's alpha and CR values above 0.70, indicating strong internal

consistency. The AVE values exceed the 0.50 threshold, demonstrating acceptable convergent validity.

Table 2. *Reliability and Convergent Validity*

Item	Outer loadings	Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
CS_1	0.721	CS	0.845	0.897	0.685
CS_2	0.886				
CS_3	0.819				
CS_4	0.875				
PSV_1	0.829	PSV	0.893	0.915	0.576
PSV_2	0.701				
PSV_3	0.607				
PSV_4	0.835				
PSV_5	0.719				
PSV_6	0.726				
PSV_7	0.855				
PSV_8	0.765				
RSQ_FQ_1	0.821	RSQ_FQ	0.847	0.887	0.569
RSQ_FQ_2_	0.760				
RSQ_FQ_3	0.679				
RSQ_FQ_4	0.804				
RSQ_FQ_5	0.765				
RSQ_FQ_6	0.685				
RSQ_QPE_1	0.719	RSQ_QPE	0.773	0.854	0.595
RSQ_QPE_2	0.767				
RSQ_QPE_3	0.792				
RSQ_QPE_4	0.806				
RSQ_SQ_1	0.558	RSQ_SQ	0.744	0.840	0.572
RSQ_SQ_2	0.817				
RSQ_SQ_3	0.819				
RSQ_SQ_4	0.800				
WOM_1	0.899	WOM	0.899	0.937	0.831
WOM_2	0.936				
WOM_3	0.900				

Note: RSQ_FQ=food quality, RSQ_QPE= physical environment quality, RSQ_SQ=service quality, PSV=perceived customer value, CS=customer satisfaction, WOM=word of mouth of other customers

Discriminant validity was assessed using the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio, where values below 0.90 indicate that the constructs are distinct (Table 3). While most HTMT ratios remain within acceptable limits, CS and RSQ_SQ (0.878), CS and WOM (0.822), and other moderately high correlations suggest potential overlap, indicating that these constructs may not be entirely distinct. Further validation through the variance inflation factor (VIF) assessment was used to confirm construct independence.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

	CS	PSV	RSQ_FQ	RSQ_QPE	RSQ_SQ	WOM
CS						
PSV	0.834					
RSQ_FQ	0.819	0.750				
RSQ_QPE	0.765	0.664	0.786			
RSQ_SQ	0.878	0.773	0.805	0.755		
WOM	0.822	0.750	0.702	0.646	0.678	

Note: RSQ_FQ=food quality, RSQ_QPE= physical environment quality, RSQ_SQ=service quality, PSV=perceived customer value, CS=customer satisfaction, WOM=word of mouth of other customers

Table 3 presents the explanatory power of the model using R^2 and adjusted R^2 values for the endogenous variables. The R^2 value for CS is 0.781, indicating that 78.1% of its variance is explained by the predictor variables, which suggests a strong explanatory power. Similarly, the R^2 for PSV is 0.546, meaning that 54.6% of its variance is accounted for by its predictors, indicating a moderate explanatory power. The adjusted R^2 values (0.777 for CS and 0.541 for PSV) remain close to the R^2 values, confirming that the model does not suffer from overfitting and maintains good predictive accuracy.

Table 4. Explanatory Power

Endogenous Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
CS	0.781	0.777
PSV	0.546	0.541

Note: PSV=perceived customer value, CS=customer satisfaction

Table 4 assesses multicollinearity among the predictor variables using variance inflation factor (VIF) values, where a VIF below 5 indicates the absence of severe multicollinearity. All VIF values in the model are well below the critical threshold, with the highest being 2.615 for PSV predicting CS, suggesting that multicollinearity is not a significant concern. This indicates that the predictor variables are sufficiently independent, ensuring the stability and reliability of the model's estimates.

Table 5. Multilinear Collinearity

Exogenous Variables	CS	PSV
PSV	2.615	
RSQ_FQ_	2.467	2.040
RSQ_QPE	1.903	1.802
RSQ_SQ	2.047	1.785
WOM	2.319	

Note: RSQ_FQ=food quality, RSQ_QPE= physical environment quality, RSQ_SQ=service quality, PSV=perceived customer value, CS=customer satisfaction, WOM=word of mouth of other customers

Table 6 presents the results of hypothesis testing, including direct, indirect, and moderated effects. All direct effects are statistically significant, with food quality ($\beta = 0.074$, $p = 0.020$), physical environment quality ($\beta = 0.100$, $p = 0.007$), and service quality ($\beta = 0.191$, $p = 0.000$) positively influencing customer satisfaction (CS). The indirect effects show that food quality ($\beta = 0.365$, $p = 0.000$), physical environment quality ($\beta = 0.140$, $p = 0.001$), and service quality ($\beta = 0.342$, $p = 0.000$) significantly enhance perceived customer value (PSV), which in turn positively affects CS ($\beta = 0.454$, $p = 0.000$). Mediation analysis further confirms that PSV

significantly mediates the effects of food quality ($\beta = 0.166$, $p = 0.000$), physical environment quality ($\beta = 0.064$, $p = 0.002$), and service quality ($\beta = 0.156$, $p = 0.000$) on CS, supporting the role of perceived value in the satisfaction process. Additionally, word-of-mouth (WOM) of other customers significantly moderates the relationship between PSV and CS ($\beta = 0.095$, $p = 0.000$), reinforcing the importance of customer influence on satisfaction levels. These findings suggest that enhancing service-related attributes and leveraging positive WOM can significantly improve perceived value and customer satisfaction.

Table 6. Hypotheses Testing

Path	Path Coefficient	Standard deviation	T stat	P values	5.00%	95.00%	Decision
Direct Effect							
RSQ_FQ -> CS	0.074	0.036	2.048	0.020	0.016	0.136	Supported
RSQ_QPE -> CS	0.100	0.041	2.454	0.007	0.033	0.166	Supported
RSQ_SQ -> CS	0.191	0.041	4.637	0.000	0.124	0.259	Supported
Indirect Effect							
RSQ_FQ -> PSV	0.365	0.054	6.728	0.000	0.275	0.453	Supported
RSQ_QPE -> PSV	0.140	0.046	3.041	0.001	0.066	0.217	Supported
RSQ_SQ -> PSV	0.342	0.053	6.469	0.000	0.257	0.429	Supported
PSV -> CS	0.454	0.041	11.018	0.000	0.386	0.522	Supported
RSQ_FQ_ -> PSV -> CS	0.166	0.025	6.552	0.000	0.124	0.207	Supported
RSQ_QPE -> PSV -> CS	0.064	0.022	2.859	0.002	0.028	0.101	Supported
RSQ_SQ -> PSV -> CS	0.156	0.031	5.068	0.000	0.108	0.209	Supported
Moderated Effect							
WOM -> CS	0.171	0.041	4.123	0.000	0.103	0.240	Supported
WOM x PSV -> CS	-0.095	0.025	3.757	0.000	-0.133	-0.050	Supported

Note: RSQ_FQ=food quality, RSQ_QPE= physical environment quality, RSQ_SQ=service quality, PSV=perceived customer value, CS=customer satisfaction, WOM=word of mouth of other customers

CONCLUSION

This study is conducted to propose a design of a cohesive research model that can scrutinize the combined effect of all three rudiments of restaurant service quality extents, i.e. physical environment, service and food, and customer perceived value on customer satisfaction with moderation of word-of-mouth intentions in the context of the restaurant industry in Karachi city. The study results show that all three rudiments of restaurant service quality extents, i.e. physical environment, service, and food, were major determinants of customer satisfaction, where customer perceived value is the mediator. At the same time, word of mouth is a moderator. It also shows that the customer's perceived value is a predictor of customer satisfaction, along with the moderation of word-of-mouth. It also depicts that restaurant service quality can positively determine customer satisfaction with the full mediation of customer perceived value and the moderation of word-of-mouth. Additionally, outcomes of the current study reinforce the quite positive influence of restaurant service quality and customer satisfaction on word-of-mouth intentions and loyalty behaviours.

Theoretical Implications:

From a hypothetical stance, this review makes essential commitments to the accommodation of writing past reviews. Although this review has a few levels of likeness with some past reviews, it is imperative to see how this review is extraordinary from past reviews. To the best of our knowledge, the study is the main review that examined the connections between physical environment, service and food, and customer perceived value on customer satisfaction with moderation of word-of-mouth intentions in the context of the restaurant industry. This review proposes a theoretical model that unequivocally represents the impact of the image of the restaurant on customer satisfaction under the mediation of customer perceived value, with the specific end goal of comprehending a thorough assessment of the eatery experience. This review thoroughly explains the three segments of eatery administration quality and word-of-mouth intentions regarding customer conduct.

A perceptible finding of the current review is that customers' perceived value is filled in as a flawless go-between over a picture fulfilment method. As it were, the eatery picture, derived from the eatery quality, decides the customer's perceived value, which thus influences fulfilment. Due to the non-huge picture fulfilment way emerging from the ideal middle person, the intervening impact of the picture was found over the nature of physical condition/sustenance quality/benefit quality-picture esteem.

Managerial implications:

The service quality function greatly supports the restaurant's image regarding eateries. Since every one of the three components matters to clients' apparent picture of the eatery, the eatery director has to know the relative significance of each of these components to the eatery's picture to comprehend the particular role of each component better. The discoveries of this review additionally uncover that out of each of the three parts, the nature of food was the best supporter of the restaurant. The outcomes can also be significant in organising restricted business assets to upgrade clients' charming eatery experiences that reinforce client esteem, thus consumer loyalty and great behavioural goals.

For restaurateurs, the discoveries in connection with the intervening part of customers' perceived value propose that accomplishing consumer loyalty depends not just on the restaurant's ability to provide perceived value to customers but also on building an ideal restaurant image. Subsequently, the connection between eatery picture, price perception, the customer's perceived value, consumer satisfaction, and customer word-of-mouth intentions is something that restaurateurs are anxious to heighten to build client loyalty behaviour (i.e. intention to return, willingness to recommend). These findings can guide policymakers and industry regulators in shaping food safety standards, hospitality benchmarks, and staff training programs that enhance customer satisfaction and service quality across the broader service sector.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH:

Due to the use of a convenience sampling approach for data collection from restaurant customers who feasted in an upscale restaurant, the speculation of the outcomes should be cautiously led. For example, the results ought to be deciphered with an alert when connected

to various eateries. Future reviews may extend this exploration by contrasting the relative significance of three measurements of restaurant service quality on picture and price perception, as well as the incentive between various sorts of ethnic eateries. The greater part of the respondents were based on graduate or undergraduate students. The exploration could have been made more illustrative in the first place by having a variety of respondents. For future reviews, more eateries might be incorporated to build the unwavering quality of the examination. Furthermore, the nature of the physical condition of restaurants, services, and food in the present review was measured by general things that are broadly acknowledged and utilized in past reviews. Future specialists may need to fuse moderating factors into the proposed research framework. For instance, the discoveries of this review show that the nature of food and services was the most persuasive indicator of the customers' word-of-mouth intentions regarding upscale eateries.

Notwithstanding, it is expected that diverse degrees of realness can influence the relative significance of three segments of restaurant service quality on the word-of-mouth intention. In this manner, the role of different deals/packages/free vouchers can be additionally analyzed as a moderating factor between three measurements of restaurant service quality, customer satisfaction, and word-of-mouth intention. Additionally, research would be important to broaden our discoveries by joining situational or individual qualities (e.g., novices versus repeaters) as mediators in a reasonable structure. Understanding customer contrasts given individual and situational attributes is another open door for further research.

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