

ABSTRACT

Centria University of Applied Sciences	Date January 2021	Author Til Kumari Gurung
Degree programme Bachelor of Business Administration, Business Administration		
Name of thesis CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN RESTAURANT BUSINESS. An initiative for successful business		
Centria supervisor Katarina Broman	Pages 27 + 2	
Instructor representing commissioning institution or company Sandhana Krishnan Cattavarayane		
<p>The aim of this thesis was to discuss customer satisfaction and explain how it is related to successful operation of a business. Customer satisfaction is the measurement of customer expectation with the products and services provided by the company. A company need to be customer centric and design the products and services accordingly to acquire new customers and to avoid brand switching nature of the existing customers. A business enterprise needs to understand their customers’ demand, taste and preference and act quickly to survive in this competitive business world.</p> <p>This thesis was commissioned by Southern Spice Oy, which provides restaurant services. The main focus of this thesis was to explore the steps considered to satisfy the customers during this pandemic situation. Moreover, to find out the efforts taken to acquire new customers and retain the existing customers during this challenging situation. Additionally, to analyse the challenges faced to cope the pandemic situation.</p> <p>This thesis was divided into five different parts that consist of introduction, theoretical background, research methodology, empirical study and conclusions respectively. In theoretical parts different terms related to customers such as customer satisfaction, customer relationship management, customer loyalty, customer and business co-relation, service gap and dissatisfaction and so on are discussed. Also, the author’s own views regarding the topics are discussed and other secondary sources were used as references to proof the author’s statement. Moreover, the company was introduced, and SWOT analysis was discussed in the second part of this thesis.</p> <p>A qualitative research method was used for the empirical study. A well-designed questionnaire was sent to different participants. The result of the survey shows that majority of the customers are satisfied with the company services. However, based on the result the author suggests that the proper market research and business plans implementation should be done to reach wider customer group and to sustain in this difficult situation.</p>		

<p>Key words business environment, customer satisfaction, demand, preference, restaurant</p>

CONCEPT DEFINITIONS

CRM

(customer relationship management) is define as a software package, process, system or technology which manage all aspects of customers interactions which help to deal with customers, service, sales, marketing, online transactions and orders.

THL

(Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare) is a research and development institute under the Finnish ministry of social affairs and health.

ABSTRACT
CONCEPT DEFINITIONS
CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2 RESTAURANT BUSINESS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION.....	3
2.1 Brief introduction of the restaurant.....	3
2.2 SWOT analysis of the restaurant	4
2.3 Understanding customers.....	6
2.4 Customer satisfaction	7
2.5 Customer satisfaction and business co-relation	7
3 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION.....	9
3.1 Customer relationship management (CRM)	9
3.2 Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.....	10
3.3 Customer satisfaction and company profit.....	10
3.4 Service gap and dissatisfaction	11
3.5 Customer feedback and communication.....	12
3.6 Challenges faced by company to satisfy the customers	12
4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	14
4.1 Quantitative Research	14
4.2 Qualitative Research.....	15
4.3 Validity and Reliability.....	15
4.4 Processing and analysing of data.....	16
5 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION.....	26
REFERENCES.....	29

FIGURES

FIGURE 1. Gender of participants	17
FIGURE 2. Age group of participants	18
FIGURE 3. Information about restaurant	19
FIGURE 4. Reasonable price level	20
FIGURE 5. Restaurant menu	21
FIGURE 6. Restaurant service.....	22
FIGURE 7. Safety measures	23
FIGURE 8. Restaurant recommendation	24

1 INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction is the measurement of customer happiness towards the company's products, services and capabilities. Nowadays, there is large number of companies producing different products and services. Globalization has made it possible to reach wider range of customers to the producing companies. Similarly, customers are able to choose suitable products and services for them. Therefore, it is important for a company to be focused on customer demand and satisfaction and manufacture their products accordingly to sustain in a competitive market and also to gain high profit. Therefore, a business growth, profit, survival is directly related to satisfied customers.

Customers and their satisfaction with a company products and services are considered the key elements to run any business successfully. A business firm might need to consider customers along with other related stakeholders to sustain in a competitive business market. Hence, it is important for a business enterprise to focus on customer demand, satisfaction and expectation towards company products and services along with profit demand and expectation of other related bodies of a company such as shareholders, investors and so on.

Moreover, for long run survival of a business in this global business world every form of organization whether it is small, medium or large company or any business sector for instant manufacture, restaurant, hotel business and so on need to develop their marketing by centralizing the customers. So, customer satisfaction is an important element for every size of an organization, the current status of an organization does not matter. An organization cannot deal with customer satisfaction it might be difficult for them to survive in a competitive market. If a company could understand its customers and their demand and expectation towards the company product and services, they might take first initiative to fulfil those demands of the customers which make them differed from other companies. It makes any company easier to run and sustain in a dynamic business market.

The main purpose of this thesis is to explore the steps considered to satisfy customers by the newly opened business in this pandemic situation. Similarly, different efforts taken to acquire new customers and change them into loyal customers. Moreover, to find out challenges faced by business to cope this pandemic situation and sustain in a long run among their competitors. This thesis will use qualitative re-search method to find out the level of customer satisfaction and other aimed purposes of the thesis.

well-designed questions will be asked, and the customers will be interviewed, and data are collected and finally analysed.

This thesis will be divided into five main parts. The first part will be introduction. Introduction part includes objectives of the study, research approach, limitation of the study and views about the topic customer satisfaction. Similarly, second part will be theoretical background which also includes views regarding different customer satisfaction related terms such as customer satisfaction and loyalty, company profit, service gap and dissatisfaction and so on. All the related terms are discussed, and scholars' views from different secondary sources such as books, eBook, internet are used to prove and support the statement. Similarly, the third part research methodology describes the whole research process. This section also explains reliability and validity. The detail of the empirical study is discussed in part four. The final part includes conclusion and future recommendation.

Moreover, there might be some limitation while doing research and preparing the final thesis. The research is commissioned by newly opened restaurant in Helsinki. This restaurant does not have any secondary data which could be used and compared to the new findings. Most of the customers are from South and North part of India and majority of them from Finland. Due to language barrier, it might be difficult to communicate and explain about the purpose of the interview and to collect reliable responding from the participants during survey. Similarly, due to the pandemic Corona situation it might be difficult to do direct face to face interview with the customers.

2 RESTAURANT BUSINESS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

This chapter of the thesis will give an insight of the customer satisfaction, understanding the customers, co-relation between the success of a business and satisfied customers and the important concept of customer relationship management. Information within this chapter is drawn from various online sources and is evidence- based. Also, self-knowledge is used to discuss the various topics which can be used as a strong foundation to develop a research questionnaire in future.

2.1 Brief introduction of the restaurant

Southern Spice Oy was established on 2nd of August 2020. It was originally founded in Copenhagen Denmark in the year 2015. It is the first Scandinavian restaurant that specializes in the Chettinad (name of a place in southern India) food tradition of India. There are many branches newly opened in different parts of northern Europe example Sweden, Norway and Finland. There are many restaurants around Helsinki serving cuisine of Northern Part of India. However, Southern Spice oy is the first restaurant serving cuisine of southern part of India. The most interesting fact of this restaurant is that all the food and recipes are prepared and served by authentic south Indian chiefs who are specially brought from India and are experienced in Chettinad food tradition. (The South Indian 2020.)

India is rich in heritage of spice cultivation and trade. It has its own tradition of celebrating guests, understanding their needs and serving them in the humblest way. India has physical and cultural diversity therefore, there are many distinctive Indian cuisines based on regional, religious and social differences. (Sen 2015, 9.) This restaurant contributes to expanding southern culture, tradition and cuisine in international market. The targeted customers of this restaurant are people from different parts of Asia who are deprived of their home cuisine and also the Finnish population.

2.2 SWOT analysis of the restaurant

The SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It is a framework for analysing organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In any type of business SWOT analysis plays a vital role to know the strengths of that company, to find the weakness and minimize possible risks along with possible opportunities and threats to survive in a competitive business environment. Additionally, SWOT analysis identifies the internal and external influences which assist in studying in-ternal and external environment of a business. Likewise, SWOT analysis combines the result of the analysis of internal and external environment. SWOT analysis summarizes the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in order to carry out overall audit of the strategic position of a business and its working environment. Moreover, strength and weakness can be found within the organization whereas opportunities and threats arise from outside the organization. (Yeates, Cadle, Eva, Hindle, Paul, Rollason & Turner 2014, 49-50.) This thesis mentions the SWOT analysis of this restaurant to present more detail information about four different important elements of a company.

Below this thesis has mention and discuss more in detail about SWOT of this restaurant.

STRENGTHS

- First restaurant in Finland serving southern cuisine of India
- Authentic South Indian chef and recipes
- New flavour and taste
- Price and menu
- Healthier food and recipes

WEAKNESSES

- Opened during pandemic situation
- Mostly targeted customers are Indian

OPPORTUNITIES

- Possibility to develop own brand and quality
- International expansion

THREATS

- High competition with the existing restaurants
- Unsatisfied customers

In the SWOT analysis, the main strength of this restaurant is that this is the first restaurant in whole Fin-land serving the authentic southern cuisine. It serves different varieties of Dosa which is one of the most popular cuisines of southern part of India (The South Indian 2020). Likewise, it has authentic taste and flavour in every cuisine it serves. Moreover, this restaurant has brought experienced and authentic chef from south India which make it possible to get all those treasures of taste and spice among native and international customers. Similarly, in Finland there are many restaurants serving North Indian cuisine. This restaurant creates an opportunity to bring new taste among customers in Finland. Also, it has huge menu with varieties of options in cuisine and also various options such as vegan, gluten free, lactose free and so on. Additionally, the price of the cuisine is affordable. Likewise, south Indian cuisines are healthier in comparison to north India cuisines for instance southern cuisine Idly (steam rice cake) is listed in world healthier breakfast.

Moreover, there are some weaknesses which might affect the operation of newly opened restaurant. This restaurant was opened during this pandemic situation. As many renewed businesses are closed

due to the raising effect of Corona virus. Many customers prefer to stay home due to safety reasons. When customers are not visiting to the place it might not be able to provide all those facilities and services to satisfy its customers. Similarly, this restaurant is mainly focusing on Indian customers and cuisine are prepared according to their preferences and taste which might dissatisfy non-Indian customers. Likewise, there might be high competition with the existing restaurants as they are familiar with the taste and preferences of the Finnish customers. It is newly opened and might need to learn more about their customers taste and preferences. However, there might be an opportunity to create own brand image as this is the first restaurant serving south Indian Cuisine in Nordic countries. Also, it has great opportunity to expand its culture, food and tradition among different international market.

2.3 Understanding customers

Understanding customers is the process of knowing each customer regarding their demand, preference, taste and choice. This process helps a company to design and produce their products and services which might be easily consumable to the wider range of the customers. According to Jiao & Zhang (2005) the company should aim to capture and understand customers' needs effectively and transfer them into specifications of product offerings which could help a business to achieve best profit performance. Understanding a customer not only helps in achieving profit performance but also helps to create strong customers relationship. A company need to be quick and proactive to fulfil customers demand so that customers could trust and build loyalty towards company products, services or brand. Understanding customers tends to build products and services that customers could buy, delight them and solve their pressing needs. (Coppenhaver 2018, 15.) Moreover, companies that fail to understand customer and ignore customers' perception of quality are giving their customers reasons to switch to other brands (Kureemun & Fantina 2011, 19).

2.4 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the measurement of customer expectations with the company products and services. As a business entrepreneur we might need to understand the term customers satisfaction which is a very important concept in marketing. Our manufactured goods might not have any value until it is consumed by a customer. Likewise, their feedback is also important to improve our quality product and services. Due to globalization and wider market, it is difficult to reach every customer's desire as their taste and preference changes day by day. Therefore, a business enterprise might need to consider those factors which might affect customers choice or preferences. There is the high possibility of brand switching by unsatisfied customers. Those customers who are not satisfied with the products, and services offered to them are likely to switch to those products that meet their needs or their expectations. (Willie 2019, 20.) Moreover, company must retain their existing customers and obtain new ones. Without this a company cannot grow and even a non-profit organization will not survive for long (Kureemun & Fantina 2011,16). Additionally, satisfied customers could be the loyal customers who might prefer our services and products for long run. Also, those loyal customers help us in acquiring new customers.

2.5 Customer satisfaction and business co-relation

We might consider that there is the direct relationship between a sustainable business and a satisfied customer. In recent market the capacity of firm to interrelate both customer's and stakeholders is an important element for the accomplishment of the company's goal and their success. In this competitive business world, a business can survive and grow if they could meet the expectation of their customers, can act quickly than other competitors to introduce new products design and services. (Angelini 2018.) Therefore, a company need to be customers centric rather than products and profit centric. They need to perform various surveys and ratings to reach wider range of customer, need to collect information and data related to the customers. All those collected data should be analysed and mined using special tools and techniques to generate patterns and intelligence, which reflect how the business is functioning. Additionally, those collected data can be used as feedback into the business so that it can evolve to become more effective and efficient in serving customer needs (Maheshwori 2015, 1.) This might help a business enterprise to determine how to best improve or make changes on its products if necessary.

3 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

This chapter of the thesis will present the important customer satisfaction and customer relationship terms like customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, company profit, service gap and dissatisfaction, customer feedback and communication. Similarly, some possible challenges faced by company to satisfy their customers are listed and a new trending concept of customer relationship management is also discussed. Different books, eBooks, internet and other secondary sources are used to prove the statement.

3.1 Customer relationship management (CRM)

CRM is the process of managing relationship between customers and the company. CRM can be defined as a software package, process, system or technology which manage all aspects of customers interactions which help to deal with customers service, sales, marketing, online transactions and orders. (Baran & Galka 2013.) CRM is the process of managing the relationship between the company and the customers. It could be with the existing customers or the new customers. CRM is the trending new concept in marketing. It helps to understand the customers need, their behaviours, interaction between the company and the costumers, to expand the market, to increase the sales and so on. A company can manage the customers relationship by making proper plans and strategies and by using the available technologies. Nowadays, the technology is changing and updating day by day. Every company around the globe use different means of marketing such as social media, newspaper and so on to acquire new customers and to advertise their company products and services. Some companies might face challenges to deal with such new tools and technologies. Nowadays, the companies are facing challenges to keep up with the digital innovation changes, to develop new theories, model and methods in order to learn, respond and adopt their position in competitive environment. Besides this CRM has faced many challenges such as lack of CRM understanding, poor planning, lack of CRM skills among employees, lack of enough budget to train employees, to reach customers, lack of systematic software systems and others. (Straker & Wrigley 2016.)

Therefore, it is important for a growing business enterprise to consider those challenges and find possible solutions. If a company can adopt CRM concept there might be easy flow of customers.

3.2 Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty

Customer loyalty refers to the process of repetitive business with the same company or a brand. Customer continue to receive our services or products when they are satisfied with our services and products. Similarly, unsatisfied customers tend to switch the brand more often. When a customer believe that our product quality is lacklustre, then customer will perceive poor quality in what we do and how we do it. Conversely, satisfied customers could enter into a relationship with a company with a preconceived notion that there is quality imbued in every products and services. (Kureemun & Fantina 2011,14.) Likewise, satisfied loyal customer tends to recommend our services or products to their friends, relatives or communities which might contribute to acquiring new customers. To retain their existing customers and to acquire new customers a business might need to formulate and implement new plans and policies. Any business organization needs to continually monitor its business environment and its own performance, and then rapidly adjust its future plans. This might include monitoring the industry, the competitors, the suppliers and the customers (Maheshwari 2015, 2). Additionally, for a newly opened business creating a loyal customer might be difficult. A new business might need to think and plan their business activities differently and initially than their existing business competitors.

3.3 Customer satisfaction and company profit

In today's business world every business organization is customer centric. The development of customer centric marketing is incredibly important to all organizations, irrespective of size or industry. When our products and services are as per customers preference and taste it automatically attracts them towards our company. (Lowenstein 2014.) The more we understand our customer, the more opportunities we will get to maximize our profit from sale (Hunter 2012, 47). Every company needs to change the way to view their customer. Each customer has their own unique needs that required unique solution from a company. When a company is able to view their customer in this way company will discover new opportunities to satisfy them and customer will be willing to pay more for their solutions. (Hunter 2012, 22.) Satisfied customers prefer to use our services and products among many other alternatives. They might be more enthusiastic towards our new products and services. When they are satisfied with our new service, they tend to recommend those new products or services to their

relatives, friend and communities which might save marketing cost of a company. Moreover, when a company pay more attention towards their customers for instance by maintaining proper communication, by providing quality services and so on. They might create a satisfied customers and satisfied customers always bring good things about the company in the market. This might present a business in a distinctive manner among other competitors.

3.4 Service gap and dissatisfaction

Service gap is the difference between customer expectation and the delivered services. In present time, customer satisfaction is an interesting and dynamic concept. This concept varies from time to time. The things which are considered good today regarding customer services might not be same tomorrow. Customers are now demanding more individualistic and customized services and no longer willing to accept delay in service. The delay in service might create dissatisfaction. Hence, it is necessary to identify and prioritize the customer expectation for service quality and incorporate these expectations into a service process for improving quality. (Kaur, Sharma & Kapoor 2012, 1.) There might be many factors influencing customers expectation such as customer past experiences regarding our services and products, previous communication with the services personnel and third-party references. Due to globalization and technology customers are well informed about each and every products brand and quality. It creates high market competition and challenges to satisfy the customers. Similarly, there could be many gaps which a business company might considered to avoid service gap and satisfy the customers. Firstly, the company need to know the customers actual expectation from our products and services. They might need to do adequate market research, focused more on the customer relationship, maintain smooth communication among customers. Likewise, in some cases company knows about the customers taste and preferences but unable to provide it. It might be due to poor service design, absence of client-oriented standards, an inadequate task standardization, inadequate goal setting. Moreover, sometimes delivered service might not meet the described service quality to the customer. This might mislead our customers. Likewise, when the service does not match the service promised by the company initially it might demotivate our customers to consume our products and services.

3.5 Customer feedback and communication

In any type of business organization customer feedback works as a main tool to develop and improve the organizational services and products. Additionally, it might be used as a tool to satisfy their customers. In today's e-commerce many customers post online review of products and services after consumption. This review generates electronic word of mouth effect to influence future consumer purchase decisions and therefore have significant value. When a customer consumes our products or use the existing products customers tell or write about their experiences regarding our services and products. A company get a better opportunity to modify those products and services as per customer preference and taste. Similarly, the pro and cons mentioned in customer reviews can provide a guideline for a company to maintain their strength and improve their weaknesses. Additionally, a company can response to consumer as a service recovery strategy to commit to improve services. (Xu 2019, 141-142.) Therefore, a company might need to use different way to collect those feedback from the customers which might help them to improve their products and service quality and prepare them to act initially and provide improve version of their ser-vices. Likewise, communication play vital role in customer satisfaction and success of a business. In this case sales representative might create a favourable situation for both the company and the customers. The proper way of communication helps to create both emotional and business relation with the customers. They might prefer to visit our company frequently and consume our services and products.

3.6 Challenges faced by company to satisfy the customers

Due to globalization and development in technology customers are informed about all kinds of brand, products and services around the world. This has created challenging situation to satisfy the customers. The desire and preference of the customers are changing swiftly, and a company need to act initially with improve version of products and services. This might help a company to sustain among their competitors. If they are late to act accordingly, they fail to retain their customers. For example, in this pandemic corona situation people prefer to order everything from home they might prefer to maintain social distance for both physical and mental health. And if a company fail to plan policy considering the situation, they are surely losing their potential customers.

Moreover, there might be different challenges such as customer expectation and reality, unpredictable crisis, market competitors and globalization which a company need to consider in time to satisfy their customers.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the specific procedures to identify, select process and analyse the information regarding the specific topic. It is a systematic way of collecting information and gaining knowledge out of it with a methodology so that the derived knowledge can be used to make decisions. Research is a process of planning, acquiring, analysing and disseminating relevant data, information and insights to decision makers in ways that mobilize the organization to take appropriate actions that in turn maximize business performance. (Sachdeva 2008, 9.)

According to Kothari (2004, 2) research is an academic activity and as such the term should be used in a technical sense. It is a search for knowledge through objective and systematic method of finding a solution for particular subject matter. Similarly, research methodology is a science of studying how research is done systematically. In this part we study the various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying the research problems along with the logic behind them. It is necessary for the researcher to know not only the research technique but also the methodology (Kothari 2004, 8).

4.1 Quantitative Research

Quantitative methods emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaire and surveys or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data. Haviz & Maris (2018, 2) mentioned that general purpose of the quantitative research is to collect and analyse the data to explain, predict or control phenomena of interest e.g., describe current conditions, investigate the relationships and study causes and effects. According to Apuke (2017, 1) quantitative research deals with qualifying and analysing variables in order to get results. It involves the utilization and analysing of numerical data using specific statistical techniques to answer questions like who, how much, what, where how many, and how. It also describes the methods of explaining an issue or phenomenon through gathering data in a numerical form. Quantitative methods can be categorized into survey research, correlation research, experimental research and casual-comparative research.

4.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methods focus on collecting and analysing non-numerical data such as text, video or audio to understand concepts, opinion or experiences. This method emphasizes on understanding people views, experiences and extracting final result from it. According to Gupta & Awasthy (2015,14) qualitative research is a form of social science where focus is on understanding people's world interpreting their experience and making sense out of it. According to Carson, Gilmore, Perry & Gronhaug (2001, 69) qualitative research method is suitable where the research emphasis is on in-depth understanding of how, why and in what context. It is most appropriate where the explanation and understanding of behaviour or activities matter more than specific measurement.

In this thesis I conducted direct interview and ten different questions were prepared and given to the participants. The participants were the selected customers of this restaurant. Due to this pandemic situation, it was not possible to interview large number of customers however, qualitative research method was used, to collect information and analysed the result. Moreover, I have been working in this company from the first day of the company. Therefore, it was possible to observe the customer activities and behaviours too.

4.3 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are important concept in research process. They evaluate the quality of research. Reliability is about the consistency of a measure and validity is about the accuracy of a measure. Reliability refers to how consistently data are collected. Reliability can be failed if a wording of a survey is confusing or if the survey interviewer misinterprets a question. Hence, all the questions asked must be easily understandable by the interviewee. (Lee 2004, 211.)

Moreover, validity refers to the ability of the survey questions to accurately measure what we claim to measure (Lee 2004, 211). For instance, a list of questions designed to measure customer satisfaction of a given service should measure customer satisfaction and not another related concept. Additionally, reliability and validity can be enhanced by carefully planning the survey research process.

4.4 Processing and analysing of data

In this thesis the survey was done using the qualitative research method. This research survey was conducted in Southern Spice Oy restaurant. For collecting data and analysing them seven customers were selected. For valid and reality, I wanted to interview the regular customer of this restaurant who can give more development ideas to this restaurant. All those selected customers were asked 10 different structured questions. All those questions are based on the restaurant service and customer satisfaction. The answer that was collected in the form of data have been analysed through Microsoft Excel in the figure. And further the detail explanation of the collected result is done below each figure. Additionally, two questions regarding restaurant interior and feedback collected through participants were discussed in a paragraph without any figure.



FIGURE 1. Gender of participants

The above bars (FIGURE 1) show the gender, the number of male and female participants who participated in the survey. Out of the total participants which was seven the majority of the participants were male which is four in number and the remaining three participants were female.

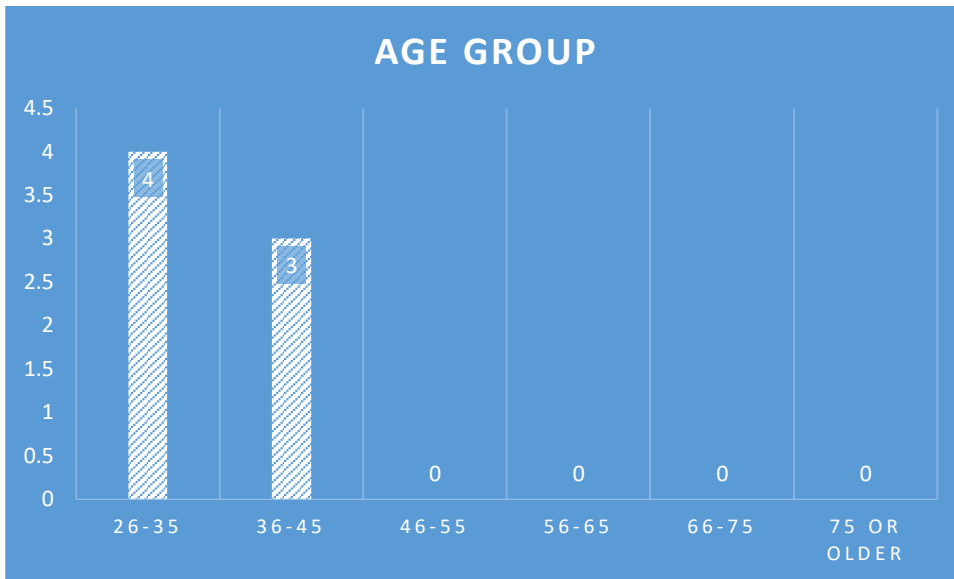


FIGURE 2. Age group of participants

The above figure shows the age group of the respondents. The majority of the respondents are between age 26-35 and the remaining of the respondents are between 36-45. As the total number of respondents is only seven the I was not able to collect information from other age groups.

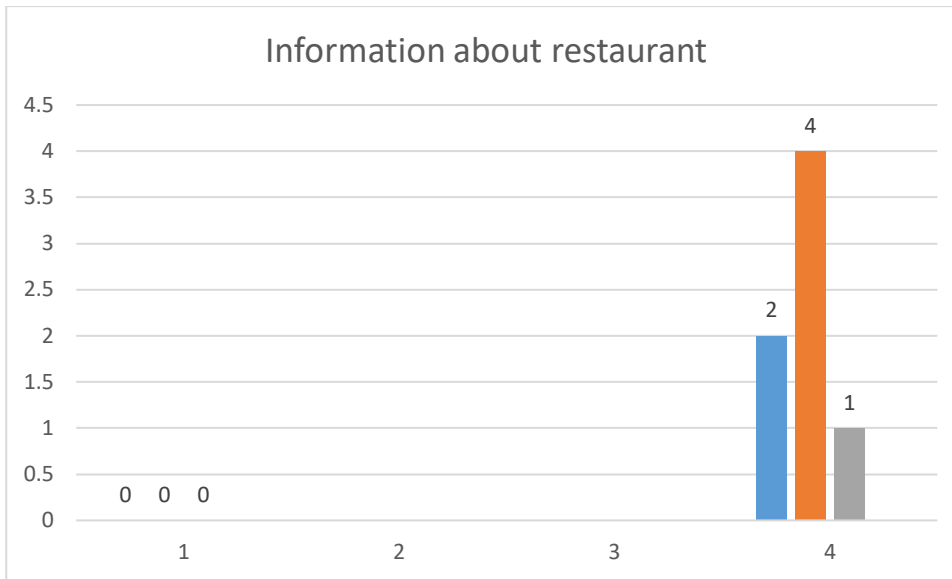


FIGURE 3. Information about restaurant

The above bars (FIGURE 3) show the result of how customers knew about the restaurant. The majority of them came to know about the restaurant through friends/ relative's recommendation. Out of total respondents two of them got to know about the restaurant through online sources such as Facebook, Instagram. Similarly, one of the respondents knew about the restaurant through other source which is newspaper. According to the respondent there was some news about restaurant rating in Helsingin Sanomat.

Due to this news, he was enthusiastic to experience South Indian cuisine. He added that it was a good experience for him. He enjoyed the food and preferred to recommend this restaurant to his friends and relatives.



FIGURE 4. Reasonable price level

The above bar (FIGURE 4) presents the views of participants about the price level of the restaurant. It shows that majority of respondents which is five respondents are satisfied with the price level of the restaurant. However, minority of them which is two out of total respondents are not satisfied with the price level. Dissatisfied customers suggest lowering the price level so that more customers can be acquired by the restaurant. Likewise, they suggest increasing in food quantity served on the same price.



FIGURE 5. Restaurant menu

The above bars (FIGURE 5) show the customers' response about the restaurant menu. Participants were asked about the satisfaction of the menu. It shows that majority of them are satisfied with the existing restaurant menu. However, out of total respondent two of participants are not satisfied with the menu and same number of the respondent have some comments regarding the menu. It shows that dissatisfied customers want to taste more varieties of south Indian dishes. Moreover, other group of respondents mentioned that menu has very limited options for appetizer and typical South Indian cuisine.



FIGURE 6. Restaurant service

The above bars (FIGURE 6) show the participants' response regarding the restaurant services. Participants were asked to rate the restaurant service with different rating options as excellent, very good, quite good, satisfactory and poor. It shows that majority of them are satisfied with the restaurant service and rate them as excellent service. Likewise, out of total respondent three of them rate it as very good and none of the participants are dissatisfied with the services provided by the restaurant.

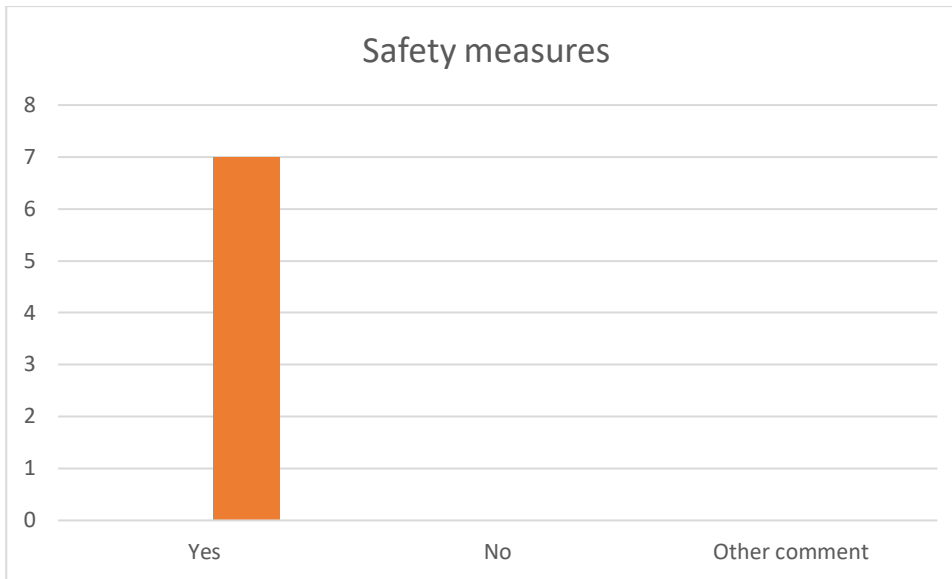


FIGURE 7. Safety measures

The above bar (FIGURE 7) represents the respondents' answer regarding the safety measures followed by the restaurant. The participants were asked if the restaurant was able to follow the safety measures recommended by THL (Finnish institute for health and welfare) during this pandemic situation. The total number of participants were agreed that restaurant was able to follow the safety measures as recommended by THL. The respondents mentioned that the restaurant has applied the table distance rule, all the serving staffs as well as other staffs are seen using proper gloves, masks and maintain proper distance. Additionally, there were stickers mentioning 2-meter distance which had helped to maintain distance between other customers.

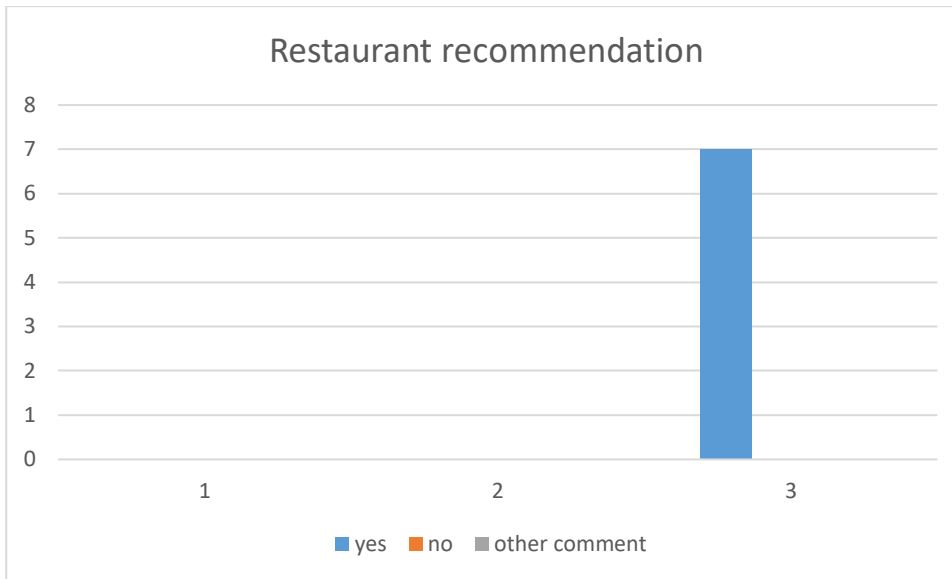


FIGURE 8. Restaurant recommendation

The above bar (FIGURE 8) shows the participants' results for the question regarding the restaurants recommendation to others. All the participants were positive regarding the restaurant. They preferred to recommend this restaurant to other group of people. Moreover, they mentioned that the people who prefer to eat spicy and South Indian cuisine will definitely visit this restaurant. Similarly, it was found that many of them came to visit the restaurant through friend's recommendation and are satisfied with the service, food quality provided by the restaurant and prefer to visit again with their families and relatives.

Moreover, the participants were asked about the interior of the restaurant. As nowadays customers are more interested to spend time on a very quiet and peaceful environment. Majority of the participants were satisfied with the interior of the restaurant. The wall of this restaurant is filled with the handmade paintings imported specially from south India. It shows the food culture, tradition of South Indian people. They mentioned that interior of the restaurant reflects the South Indian culture as the walls are filled with the Paintings and south Indian arts. Likewise, they feel blessed to enjoy both healthy South Indian cuisine and city view through the window. Also, South Indian musical instruments playing as background music make the restaurant more authentic place to enjoy authentic Indian cuisine.

Similarly, participants were asked to give some feedback which might be used as a development idea by the restaurant. There were many feedbacks given by the respondents. Majority of them suggested to add more varieties in the menu. Some of them mentioned to increase the quantity of food serviced. Similarly, some respondents mentioned that it lacks kid menu. Likewise, they said that restaurant needs to do more market advertisement to reach wider range of customers. Similarly, participants suggest maintaining consistency in food quality and taste. Regular customer feels that there were changes in food taste every time they visit the restaurant. Additionally, they mentioned that this restaurant was not in-home delivery applications like Foodora, Wolt to order food online.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Indeed, customer satisfaction is an initiative for a successful business. It helps a business to grow and sustain in a competitive business environment. A company need to consider customers' demand, taste and preference as main elements to maintain customer relation and to acquire new customers. A company need to understand the types of customers, different between satisfied and unsatisfied customers, need to do survey and ratings to collect information's regarding customers. Similarly, need to use different tools and technology to measure and maintain long term relationship between customers and company.

A business might need to understand that satisfied customers are the main source of their income. They need to produce services and products based on customers' needs rather than company profit need. They need to understand that company has direct co-relation with the customers satisfaction. If the customers are not satisfied there is a high possibility of brand switching. Additionally, to improve company service and product quality customers feedback play a vital role. Every business needs to consider positive and negative review to design or improve its products and service quality.

The main purpose of this thesis was to explore the steps considered to satisfy the customers by the newly opened restaurant in this pandemic situation. Similarly, to find out the efforts taken to acquire new customers and change them into loyal customers. Moreover, to observe possible challenges faced by the restaurant to cope this pandemic situation.

To explore the best result, I was doing internship in this restaurant. I got an opportunity to directly observe and analyse the situation and environment of this restaurant. I used qualitative method and ten different questions were prepared and some customers were directly interviewed. The participants of different age group and gender were asked those structured questions regarding restaurant menu, price, services, safety measures used, about interior environment and lastly customers' feedback was collected to create development ideas for future.

Moreover, the survey shows that the majority of the participants were satisfied with the services and food of this restaurant. Due to pandemic situation this restaurant was not able to do sufficient market advertisement, but the survey shows that the customers tried to find this restaurant themselves as their friends recommended them to visit this restaurant. Likewise, participants were agreed that the prices

were reasonable, and food served was authentic and healthy. They mentioned that this restaurant was able to follow all the safety measures recommended by Finnish Institute of Health and welfare which creates a feeling of safety to all the visiting customers. Likewise, participants were amazed to see all those South Indian food culture and traditions painted in the restaurant wall and highly satisfied with the interior of this restaurant which could help them to attract a greater number of customers. However, majority of the participants were not satisfied with the varieties in restaurant menu, they suggested to add more options for both adults and kids' consumption. Additionally, many feedbacks were collected which could be used as development ideas in future.

This thesis explores that there is lack of proper market research and business plan as this restaurant was opened in this pandemic situation. During this recession period many businesses might go bankrupt which shows that there might be high possibility of business loss. However, this restaurant has considered many things to satisfy its customers. This restaurant has offered suitable discounts for special occasions such as birthday and other celebrations. During this period, they have offered many discount pro-grams such as Syö viikko and December deal which could attract more new customers. For the safety of their customers, they have managed to receive only 50 guests and proper distance between tables. All the serving and other staff were found using proper gloves and masks which make both customers and staff comfortable to communicate. Additionally, the proper humblest way of receiving and serving of customers has really helped to retain their customers for long term. There are many regular customers who would like to recommend this restaurant to others and visit more often with different groups of friends and relatives.

However, there are some challenges which might affect the proper operation of this restaurant. The corona pandemic situation is a challenge itself for every newly opened restaurant. Due to this pandemic situation, they were not able to do proper market advertisement to reach wider range of customers. They are not able to apply any home delivery application yet. Likewise, customers are afraid to visit restaurant directly and restaurant is providing free delivery to customers who want to eat South Indian Cuisine. However, Free delivery might not bring profit to the restaurant. Moreover, restaurant was not able to apply for a visa for an authentic kitchen chef from South Indian which creates problems in creating and enlarging the menu and food varieties.

I want to suggest the commissioner of this thesis that they need to do proper business plans and policy to survive in this difficult situation. As it is a newly opened restaurant, they need to maintain consistency in food quality to acquire new customers and to retain existing one. Moreover, proper

advertisement, price level, food quantity and quality, menu options are the things to be considered to satisfy the customers.

This thesis survey also helped to achieve the objectives set by commissioner of this thesis. They got to know about customers' taste and preferences. It has helped them to understand their customer needs and also to better improve their service quality.

I got an opportunity to learn about the business activities closely as I was working from the opening of this restaurant. I learned that business operation needs proper planning to sustain in competitive business environment. For a profit earning strategy customer satisfaction is a key element to be considered. A business owner should be able to take quick decision and actions which might help to grab the opportunities and act differently among their competitors.

REFERENCES

- Angelini, A. 2018. The value of the customer relationship. Torino: Giappichelli. Available at: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cop-eboks/detail.action?docId=5413436>. Accessed 28 February 2020.
- Apuke, O.D. 2017. Quantitative research methods a synopsis approach. Kuwait chapter of the Arabian journal of business and management Review, 6(11), 40-47. Available at: <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/docview/1954228511/fulltextPDF/324709EB5DA24BACPQ/6?accountid=10007>. Accessed 18 November 2020.
- Baran, R.J. & Galka, R.J. 2013. CRM, The foundation of contemporary marketing strategy. UK: Routledge.
- Carson, Gilmore, Perry & Gronhaug. 2001. Qualitative Marketing Research. London: SAGE publications. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-eboks/reader.action?docID=1046478&query=qualitative+research+verses+quantitative+research+methods>. Accessed 20 November 2020.
- Copenhagen, R. 2018. From Voices to Results- Voice of Customer Questions, Tools and Analysis: Proven Techniques for Understanding and Engaging with Your Customers. United Kingdom: Packt Publishing Limited. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-eboks/reader.action?docID=5371696&query=understanding+customers>. Accessed 10 December 2020.
- Gupta, R.K. & Awasthy, R. 2015. Qualitative Research in Management; methods and experiences. 1st edition. New Delhi: SAGE publication. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-eboks/reader.action?docID=2007211&query=qualitative+research+methods>. Accessed 19 November 2020.
- Haviz, M. & Maris, I.M. 2018. Teaching quantitative research method with three methods of learning. *Al-Ta'lim Journal*, 25(3), 234-247. Available at: <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/docview/2211925814/324709EB5DA24BACPQ/10?accountid=10007>. Accessed 18 November 2020.
- Hunter, M. 2012. High-Profit Selling: Win the Sale Without Compromising on Price. Nashville: AMA-COM. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-eboks/reader.action?docID=863946&query=customer+and+company+profit>. Accessed 16 December 2020.
- The South Indian 2020. Available at: <http://southindian.fi/about/>
- Jiao, J. & Zhang, J. 2005. Product portfolio identification based on association rule mining. *Science Direct*. 37(2), 144-172. Available at: <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.centria.fi/ehost/command/detail?vid=7&sid=ae2ec94b-01ac-4438-a8dd-62b5b45a59cf%40pdc-v-sessmgr01>. Accessed 27 February 2020.

Kaur, Sharma & Kapoor. 2012. Customer Satisfaction in Banking Industry; A Gap Analysis Approach. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Management Research and Innovation*, 18(4), 8. Available at: <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/doi/pdf/10.1177/2319510X13481894>. Accessed 16 December 2020.

Kothari, C.R. 2004. *Research methodology; methods and techniques*. 2nd edition. New Delhi: New Age International Ltd. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-ebooks/reader.action?docID=431524&query=research+methodology>. Accessed 12 November 2020.

Kureemun, B. & Fantina, R. 2011. *Your Customers' Perception of Quality: What it means to Your Bot-tom Line and How to control it*. Portland: Productivity press. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1446753&query=understanding+customers>. Accessed 10 December 2020.

Lee, D. 2004. *Survey Research: Reliability and Validity*. *Library Administration & Management*, 18(4), 211. Available at: <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/docview/216638096/F1D7986BA2ED4910PQ/3?accountid=10007>. Accessed 25 November.

Lowenstein, M.W. 2014. *Customers Inside, Customers Outside: Designing and Succeeding with Enterprise Customer- Centricity concept, practices and Applications*. New York: Business Expert Press. Available at: ProQuest E-book Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cop-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1596823>. Accessed 28 February 2020.

Maheshwari, A. 2015. *Business Intelligence and Data Mining*. New York: Business Expert Press. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-ebooks/reader.action?docID=1911815&query=customers++satisfaction+and+business+co-relation>. Accessed 11 December 2020.

Sachdeva, J.K. 2008. *Business Research methodology*. Mumbai: Global Media. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-ebooks/reader.action?docID=3011363&query=research+methodology>. Accessed 15 October 2020.

Sen, CT. 2015. *Feasts and Fasts: A history of food in India*. London: Reaktion Books limited. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-ebooks/reader.action?docID=1864179&query=southern+cuisine+of+India>. Accessed 10 January 2021.

Straker, K. & Wrigley, C. 2016. Emotionally engaging customers in the digital age: the case study of "Burberry love". *Journal of fashion marketing and management*. 20(3), 276-299. Available at: search-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi. Accessed 28 February 2020.

Willie, M.M, 2019. Customer Satisfaction and Medical Scheme Complaints in South Africa. *World Medical Journal*. 65(1), 4-11. Available at: <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.centria.fi/ehost/detail/detail?vid=5&sid=ab003a00-1ac3-4d34-ae16-cef1bb3a7860%40sdc-v-sessmgr03&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2Z>. Accessed 29 February 2020.

Xu, X. 2019. Online customer textual reviews on hotels' product and service attributes. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 43(1), 141-163. Available at: <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/doi/pdf/10.1177/1096348018764573>. Accessed 16 December 2020.

Yeates, Cadle, Eva, Hindle, paul, Rollason & Turner al. 2014. Business analysis. 3rd edition. Swindon: BCS learning and development limited. Available at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.centria.fi/lib/cop-ebooks/reader.action?docID=1759634&query=importance+of+swot+analysis+to+a+business>. Accessed 10 January 2021.

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Gender

2. Age
 - A. 36-45
 - B. 46-55
 - C. 56-65
 - D. 66-75
 - E. 76 or older

3. How did you get to know about this restaurant?
 - A. Online
 - B. Friends/ relatives recommendation
 - C. Other, which?.....

4. Do you think the price level is reasonable?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Any other comments.....

5. Are you satisfied with the restaurant menu?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Any other comments.....

APPENDIX 1/2

6. Are you satisfied with the restaurant services? How would you rate them?
 - A. Excellent
 - B. Very good
 - C. Quite good
 - D. Satisfactory
 - E. Poor

7. Do you think this restaurant is able to follow safety measures recommended by THL (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare) during this pandemic situation?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Any other comments.....

8. What do you think about the interior of this restaurant?
.....

9. Do you think you can recommend this restaurant to others?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Any other comments.....
|

10. Any other feedback?
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME: