



Consumer Preference and Satisfaction with Hotel Breakfast Buffet

Danica Ponteras

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

Bachelor of Hospitality Management

Bachelor's Thesis

2025

Abstract

Author(s) Danica Ponteras
Degree Bachelor of Hospitality Management
Report/Thesis Title Consumer Preference and Satisfaction with Hotel Breakfast Buffet
Number of pages and appendix pages 37 + 4
<p>This thesis examines the consumer preference and satisfaction with hotel breakfast buffet. In the field of hospitality industry, the breakfast buffet often serves as an important element shaping guest overall experience and satisfaction. This thesis looks into the different relationship between consumer preferences and satisfaction levels concerning hotel breakfast buffets, investigating to identify key factors that influence guest perceptions and expectations. Through a quantitative surveys with a diverse sample of hotel guests, the study delves into difference aspects such as food variety, service quality, presentation and customization, dietary options, and sustainability. The research uncovers how these elements contribute to guest satisfaction and highlights the importance of personalized offerings in catering to different tastes and dietary needs.</p> <p>Moreover, the thesis examines the role of travel purpose in shaping breakfast preferences, providing valuable insights for hotel seeking to enhance guest experiences. The findings highlight that a well-curated and thoughtfully presented breakfast buffet not only elevates guest satisfaction but also fosters loyalty and positive reviews, which are important in a competitive hospitality market.</p> <p>Primarily, this study offers practical recommendations for hotel operators aiming to enhance their breakfast services, highlighting the importance of listening to guest preferences and continuously innovating to meet evolving expectations. By understanding the delicate preferences and satisfaction drivers of hotel guests, hotels can better customize their offerings, design memorable mornings, and create lasting relationships with their guests.</p>
Key words Hospitality Industry, Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, Hotel Breakfast Buffet, Sustainability, Breakfast

Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Thesis Objectives.....	2
2	Hotel Breakfast Buffet	4
2.1	The Role of Breakfast in the Hotel Experience	4
2.1.1	Food Quality	5
2.1.2	Food Variety	6
2.1.3	Presentation and Customization	7
2.1.4	Cleanliness and Hygiene.....	9
2.2	Trends in Hotel Breakfast Buffets	10
2.3	Sustainability and Conscious Eating.....	12
3	Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction	14
3.1	Service Quality.....	14
3.2	Customer Satisfaction.....	15
4	Research Methodology	20
4.1	Quantitative Method.....	20
4.2	Method of Data Collection.....	21
4.3	Reliability and Validity of Research.....	21
5	Analysis and Findings	23
5.1	Survey result	23
5.1.1	Demographic Overview of Respondents.....	23
5.1.2	Satisfaction Evaluation	28
5.1.3	Suggested Improvement from survey respondents.....	28
5.2	Observation Research	30
6	Discussion.....	31
6.1	Conclusion	31
6.2	Personal Learning.....	32
7	References.....	33
	Appendices	38
	Appendix 1. Consumer Preferences and Satisfaction with Hotel Breakfast Buffet Survey Questionnaire.....	38

1 Introduction

The breakfast buffet at the hotel significantly impacts the overall guest experience. It's crucial for the hospitality industry to understand customer preferences and their satisfaction with this service. A delightful breakfast can establish the mood for guests' day, creating a memorable impression and possibly shaping their views on the hotel stay.

Hotel breakfast buffets hold significant value as they foster the belief that anything goes when you're in a hotel. It's a place to encounter fellow guests, leading you to remember them as Mr. Salmon and Mrs. Yoghurt throughout your stay. Here, you discover that some guests are comfortable combining cold and hot dishes on one plate. Additionally, when the omelet station is empty, unrest ensues (Freeman 2020).

Breakfast is essential in the food and beverage industry, regarded by guests as the most important meal. Traditionally, limited-service hotels offered continental breakfasts, but post-COVID recovery has seen a resurgence of buffet options. Furthermore, incorporating breakfast into hotel rates has become increasingly popular, with various establishments now offering a diverse array of high-quality morning choices (Williams 2023).

It's commonly said that breakfast is the most vital meal of the day, and this holds true. Breakfast "breaks the fast" following a night of rest, boosts your metabolism, and delivers the energy required to sustain you until your next meal (Marriott International, 2025).

Breakfast has long been a fundamental service in hotels, transforming from a basic morning meal into a significant factor in guest satisfaction. As travelers seek distinctive and unforgettable experiences, hotels are updating their breakfast selections to meet these changing preferences. For numerous guests, breakfast is vital in influencing their overall hotel experience. Instead of the lavish breakfast buffets that hotels have typically promoted, guests now prefer a more casual, nutritious breakfast option that allows them to eat while on the go (Nandi 2024).

Many hotels offer breakfast as a branding strategy to set themselves apart and attract more guests. However, various factors must be considered when selecting which food and beverage items to include in their breakfast buffet. Most of the data for these studies was collected from guests to identify breakfast attributes and their importance in the primary research.

Offering local and seasonal choices at the breakfast buffet enables guests to support community businesses while enriching their hotel experience. This approach can elevate guest satisfaction and elevate their overall holiday enjoyment. Guests possess varied breakfast preferences shaped by their cultural backgrounds, ages, and dietary requirements. Addressing this diversity is crucial

for ensuring a favorable hotel experience, which greatly influences guest satisfaction and loyalty. By recognizing and accommodating these differing preferences while upholding exceptional food and service quality, hotels can enhance their competitive advantage in the hospitality industry.

In today's digital age, online reviews and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) greatly influence guests' perceptions and choices. Positive reviews that emphasize outstanding breakfast experiences serve as effective marketing tools, luring in new customers and keeping current ones satisfied.

In the varied landscape of hospitality, breakfast has become more than simply the initial meal; it serves as a platform for innovation, cultural expression, and environmental care. The transformation of breakfast options, from nutritious Anglo-Saxon dishes to the lighter, traditional French "petit déjeuner," mirrors wider trends in consumer preferences that emphasize health, sustainability, and the pursuit of a distinctive dining experience (Aristote 2024).

Breakfast is one of the most cherished features of hotel stays and frequently generates reviews. It significantly shapes guests' perceptions of their entire experience. Firstly, there's the emotional element: while we might enjoy dining out at restaurants year-round, few experiences rival waking up to an array of delicious options paired with the aroma of freshly brewed coffee. It's reminiscent of Christmas morning! Additionally, breakfast brings together a diverse range of travelers, from families to business visitors (Marras, 2020).

1.1 Thesis Objectives

This thesis focuses on consumer preferences and satisfaction regarding hotel breakfast buffets, highlighting the importance of ensuring consistent food quality, variety, healthy and dietary options, cleanliness and hygiene, customization, and a pleasant dining atmosphere. It examines the difficulties in meeting guest expectations and identifies their preferences for breakfast buffets at hotels. By addressing these factors, the guest experience can be greatly improved, resulting in higher satisfaction levels for the hotel.

This thesis seeks to explore the various components of breakfast buffet services that influence consumer preferences and satisfaction, offering practical insights for hotel management and staff. By recognizing and addressing the diverse tastes of guests, the thesis strives to uphold superior food and service quality standards while evaluating how these preferences impact overall satisfaction.

The thesis draws inspiration from the author's perspective, highlighting how personal experience significantly enriches the research. With a background in managing hotel breakfast buffets, the author identifies key areas for improvement. This thesis discusses the relevance and sustainability of breakfast buffets within the hospitality sector. Understanding current trends and future demands is essential for the industry to adapt effectively. Breakfast buffets are typically part of guests' stays, yet numerous hotels encounter challenges in addressing the diverse expectations shaped by individual preferences and requirements.

As a traveler and the author of this thesis, breakfast is the most important aspect of a holiday, particularly when it's included in the hotel rate. This arrangement not only maximizes value but also allows you to savor both local and international dishes typically served in breakfast buffets. For travelers with busy mornings, the convenience of enjoying breakfast before heading out to explore the day is invaluable.

2 Hotel Breakfast Buffet

In the early 20th century, American hotels welcomed a surge of European tourists, revealing a stark contrast in breakfast preferences. Americans typically favored substantial breakfasts, enjoying items like pancakes, fried eggs, and various meats. Conversely, Europeans opted for lighter fare, such as fruits and pastries, with the occasional exception of Italian-style gelato breakfast sandwiches. To accommodate their European guests and the stereotype-defying Americans who preferred lighter options, hotels began offering "continental breakfasts." This was not only a way to satisfy diverse tastes but also a practical choice, as continental breakfasts are considerably cheaper to prepare than traditional, filling breakfasts like those served at IHOP. The term "continental" refers specifically to mainland Europe, including countries like France, Germany, and Italy, while conveniently excluding the United Kingdom, which, not being part of mainland Europe (or the EU nowadays), traditionally favors substantial breakfasts, similar to its former colony across the Atlantic (Hoeffner, 2025).

Continental breakfast is one of those phrases we often accept without questioning its meaning. This term originated in the late 1800s and early 1900s, referring to the customary breakfast foods consumed in "the continent," which means Europe. Unlike the heavy breakfasts typical in America, which include fried dishes, Europeans preferred a lighter morning meal. Although there's scientific reasoning behind why bacon and eggs pair so well together, it wasn't appealing to European tastes. To better cater to the increasing number of travelers from Europe, hotels began offering breakfast options that aligned with their preferences. Nowadays, higher-end hotels may enhance their offerings to include a deluxe continental breakfast, featuring more substantial hot items like eggs, bacon, sausage, and potatoes alongside lighter options. Travelers might even encounter made-to-order omelette stations and dishes such as biscuits and gravy. While it generally remains a self-service setup for filling plates, this approach presents a more varied food selection that attracts guests and justifies a higher price for their stay (Cox, 2024).

2.1 The Role of Breakfast in the Hotel Experience

The breakfast buffet stands out as a favored breakfast service option. Many hotel guests like having breakfast as part of their stay, which also benefits the hotel.

A quality hotel breakfast can significantly enhance the overall experience. Regardless of the hotel's size or amenities, a satisfying breakfast may distinguish between a good stay and an extraordinary one. Providing a delightful breakfast is crucial for guests to perceive they received good value for their money. Even with minimal options, serving quality food and beverages can set a positive tone

for a guest's day. The hotel breakfast serves as a moment to rejuvenate and ready oneself for the day ahead (Barten 2024).

The food and beverage manager's role is multifaceted and intricate. They oversee operations, manage staff, assess financial performance, ensure quality standards, address challenges, and refine processes, all while adapting to shifts in service delivery methods. Furthermore, the manager must stay attuned to industry changes (David Forskett 2019).

The hospitality sector focuses on crafting unforgettable experiences for its guests. Among the various elements that contribute to a positive experience, food and beverages stand out as essential. Whether dining in a five-star hotel restaurant, a quaint café, or a fast-food establishment, the quality of food and drink can significantly influence a guest's experience. The significance of food and beverage in hospitality encompasses multiple aspects, including nourishment, revenue generation, and brand enhancement. In this industry, high-quality food and drink are fundamental to guest satisfaction. Guests anticipate meals and beverages that not only satisfy their hunger but also create lasting memories. Factors such as taste, presentation, and the quality of ingredients are crucial to ensuring guest satisfaction (Admin 2023).

2.1.1 Food Quality

MacLaurin & MacLaurin indicate that food quality is one of the critical factors influencing customers' dining experiences. Commonly referenced elements include food taste, meal presentation, variety of dishes, freshness of ingredients, appropriate temperature, adequate portion sizes, and healthy options. Other factors were incorporated in studies focusing on different themes (Zaki 2021).

Food quality includes the physical attributes of a food item, like its appearance, texture, and flavor, as well as its microbial aspects. Crucially, it pertains to how consumers perceive the product; higher-quality items generally command better prices in the market (Akkerman et al., 2010).

While consumers anticipate food safety, it is regarded as a credence attribute, as the quality or safety of food cannot often be determined prior to consumption. Quality assurance, which is facilitated through independent certification, indicates that food products have undergone testing or auditing to verify compliance with established standards, thereby signifying superior quality (Tianxi Yang & Lili 2019).

Food quality can be assessed through various methods. For instance, fresh produce is frequently evaluated based on visual traits like size, shape, color, and the absence of blemishes, which may be improved by the use of pesticides and fungicides (Bansal 2017).

2.1.2 Food Variety

A hotel's breakfast buffet provides more than just a meal; it creates a memorable experience for guests by catering to various tastes, cultures, and dietary needs. A high-quality breakfast buffet usually includes a wide range of options. With everything from traditional continental dishes to local and global specialties, a well-curated buffet can please every palate. Each hotel with a breakfast buffet aims to offer guests a diverse selection of fresh, premium options that enhance their overall experience. Whether guests seek comfort food, local dishes, eco-friendly choices, or healthy alternatives, the buffet's variety clearly reflects the hotel's commitment to guest satisfaction (Thompson, 2024).

The typical food categories available at hotel breakfast buffets vary across hotels and countries.

The American Breakfast Buffet is a renowned breakfast choice and a staple in hotels globally. It is also among the most substantial options in the hotel sector, featuring fried eggs, crispy bacon, fluffy pancakes, and hash browns (Nichols, 2019).

Many chain hotels offer Continental Breakfast Buffets. A standard continental breakfast is neatly arranged and features a selection of fresh items, including fruits, muffins, cereals, bread, waffles, pastries, croissants, yogurt, juice, milk, fresh coffee, and tea. Additionally, you'll find butter, cream, jam or jelly, and sugar available. The most impressive breakfast options also feature items like bacon, sausage, eggs, French toast, and pancakes (Nichols, 2019).

The English Breakfast Buffet ranks among the world's most renowned breakfast styles. Much like the American version, the English breakfast is quite hearty. It typically consists of fried or poached eggs, bacon, mushrooms, tomatoes, sausages, beans in tomato sauce, and sometimes black pudding. Additionally, toast and sweet jam accompany the meal, always served with black tea and milk (Nichols, 2019).

Traditional and cultural breakfast buffets around the world vary widely and reflect the diversity of their consumers. The first meal of the day can be anything from light and simple to expansive and hearty, typically mirroring the local culture and environment. In warmer regions, lighter breakfasts are often preferred, while those in cooler areas tend to enjoy more substantial meals to warm up and provide energy before facing the cold. Across different countries, breakfasts showcase an array of flavors from sweet to savory, sometimes even blending both (Nichols 2019).

A traditional Finnish breakfast is usually straightforward, substantial, nourishing, and focused on local produce. Unlike many global breakfasts, it is neither heavy nor greasy. Typical items include rye bread, porridge, cheese, coffee, jam, fresh forest berries, smoked salmon, fresh vegetables,

and Karelian pasty served with egg butter, which is highly regarded in Finnish breakfast buffets. Finnish breakfasts frequently highlight locally sourced, seasonal ingredients that promote traditional and sustainable practices (Visit Finland, 2025).

Traditional Asian breakfasts boast remarkable diversity and flavor, differing significantly by region and culture. Rich in taste, color, and experiences, they often feature a mix of regional dishes from nations such as China, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Korea.

2.1.3 Presentation and Customization

Let's face it: standard hotel breakfast buffets can be quite predictable, featuring chafing dishes of scrambled eggs and lukewarm sausages. Now, picture guests entering and being welcomed by a vibrant, almost artistic spread of breakfast treats. The focus is on achieving that "wow" factor the moment they step into the dining area. We're not just serving food; we're providing an experience, a delightful beginning to their day that establishes a positive tone for their entire stay. As the saying goes, first impressions are the most significant, going beyond mere expectations (Thompson 2024).

Investing in creative breakfast buffet ideas goes beyond mere aesthetics; it focuses on enhancing guest satisfaction. When guests perceive that you've made a special effort to elevate their experience, they are more inclined to leave positive feedback and return for future visits. A memorable breakfast can significantly set your hotel apart. It's the unexpected delight that lingers in their memory, making their stay more pleasant and, ultimately boosting your hotel's reputation. Consider it a delicious investment in fostering guest loyalty (Thompson 2024).

According to an article, suggests ensuring the buffet is visually appealing. While good quality and well-prepared food are essential, the presentation also matters; everything on the buffet should look as delightful as it tastes. Choose your containers, utensils, and materials wisely to be both functional and aligned with your desired aesthetic. Staging the buffet attractively will significantly enhance your guests' overall experience, providing a valuable opportunity to elevate their perception of the service (Barten 2024).

In today's world, the appearance of food is often as crucial as its flavor, particularly for hotels aiming to impress their guests. We live in an era of imaginative presentations that can captivate customers before they even pick up a plate. Restaurants need to recognize that even the smallest details matter; standing out with unique, simple, and eye-catching elements can create a significant wow factor for customers.

Here are some innovative ideas for presentation creativity and personalization:

Small Bites, Big Impacts: Individual Servings and Interactive Stations

Customers enjoy choices and particularly value the experience of receiving something unique. Individual servings are wonderful as they appear more appealing and enticing. Think of mini quiches baked in muffin tins, bite-sized pastries, and yogurt served in shot glasses topped with berries, accompanied by skewers of fruit and cheese. Not only does it look delightful, but it also allows guests to easily grab and go while aiding in portion control. And honestly, who can say no to something adorable and bite-sized (Williams, 2025).

Unique Drink Presentation

Consider the manner in which the restaurant enhances its beverage station. One effective strategy involves the utilization of glass beverage dispensers equipped with spouts. These dispensers can infuse water with fresh fruits such as berries, oranges, cucumbers, and mint; they not only present an aesthetically pleasing display but also offer a refreshing twist. Another innovative concept is to establish a “make-your-own” fresh juice station that provides a selection of various vegetables and fruits, including carrots, celery, apples, oranges, cucumbers, and grapefruits. This initiative can serve as a healthful juice enhancer. Furthermore, serving smoothies in individual glass bottles embellished with colorful paper straws presents a practical and visually appealing method of presentation. Additionally, creativity can be applied in the labeling of the beverages. Rather than utilizing conventional signs, consider employing chalkboard labels or attaching small tags with twine around the bottles or dispensers. Such meticulous attention to detail demonstrates a commitment to excellence in every facet of the buffet (Williams, 2025).

Elevating the Everyday: Think Beyond the Chafing Dish

It is universally acknowledged that lukewarm scrambled eggs presented in a large metal pan do not elicit enthusiasm among guests; therefore, it is advisable to serve them in an aesthetically pleasing glass dish to attract attention. Alternatively, one might contemplate establishing an omelette station, allowing guests the opportunity to select their preferred toppings, including mushrooms, cheese, bell pepper, onion, tomato, ham, and spinach. Furthermore, employing tiered stands can enhance visual appeal and optimize space utilization. A tower of muffins accompanied by a cascade of croissants is considerably more enticing than a flat arrangement. Additionally, consider utilizing wooden boards for pastries and small buckets for items such as granola or nuts (Williams, 2025).

2.1.4 Cleanliness and Hygiene

According to Besker et al. (2009), "Restaurant cleanliness is seen as a vital aspect in evaluating restaurant quality from the customer's viewpoint." The atmosphere and service quality are essential for maintaining a competitive advantage and ensuring ongoing revenue. Therefore, food and beverage managers should prioritize providing excellent service to attract new customers and nurture loyalty among existing ones. As a result, new diners continuously interact with the restaurant's staff, ambiance, and menu during their visit. Consequently, both the quality of food and beverages and the standards of service and environment are closely examined. This evaluation influences feelings of either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. A customer's perception of the food and beverage industry can change according to their level of satisfaction. Higher satisfaction can encourage repeat visits to a restaurant and lead to positive word-of-mouth endorsements. In contrast, increased dissatisfaction may result in more complaints and a lower likelihood of returning, which could discourage others from dining there as well (Soylu, 2022).

Maintaining cleanliness standards is vital for ensuring customer satisfaction. A 2008 study conducted by Brewer and Rojas found that 47% of consumers rate the importance of eating and drinking in a clean setting as extremely high. Moreover, 42.6% are concerned that food provided in restaurants can cause infections, and 60% are wary about the cleanliness of restaurants (Soylu 2022).

Cleanliness and hygiene are crucial aspects related to the premises, equipment, and staff. In recent years, their importance has grown significantly, particularly during and after Covid-19, and this trend has been supported by increasing legislative measures. Media attention on food hygiene, staff practices, and facility cleanliness has raised awareness of health and hygiene issues. Customers are now much more vigilant and willing to complain about cleanliness and hygiene concerns, often reporting these issues to regulatory authorities. Therefore, operations should focus on ensuring adequate cleanliness and hygiene levels by systematically designing processes and procedures as an integral part of daily practices, rather than implementing hygiene measures solely to avoid penalties (Cousins, 2023).

Consequently, cleanliness and hygiene are imperative for a successful breakfast buffet, not only for the satisfaction of guests but also for food safety and the reputation of the organization. It is essential to ensure that food and beverage products are prepared under hygienic conditions to provide customers with a pristine environment. In the context of food and beverage operations, adequate general cleaning is essential; the establishment should maintain a tidy and clean appearance, employees must don neat, clean, and well-presented uniforms, and staff should exhibit proper grooming. Conversely, inadequate personal hygiene standards among staff can foster a negative impression among customers.

2.2 Trends in Hotel Breakfast Buffets

Staying informed enables you to make more informed decisions, such as modifying rates during busy periods, providing services that your guests truly desire, or identifying areas where you might be losing revenue. In essence, understanding the numbers is crucial for maintaining competitiveness, drawing in more guests, and expanding your business. It's not merely about the numbers; it's about leveraging them to operate a thriving hotel (Broder 2024).

Change is the only constant in the hospitality sector. With guest satisfaction and experience at the heart of success, businesses need to keep up with the trends influencing the industry. This includes providing insights to help leaders make informed investments in people, technology, and processes. The hospitality sector has significantly advanced since the pandemic's challenges, with many businesses regaining their footing. Nevertheless, to remain competitive, companies must be agile, innovative, and responsive to evolving customer needs by embracing essential trends. For hospitality leaders, keeping pace with trends in the restaurant and accommodation sectors is crucial, yet this must align with the industry's core principles: delivering human-centric experiences that foster connections, comfort, and discovery (Luthy 2024).

According to Toast Tab Blog, a closer look at breakfast buffet trends reveals how increasing menu prices and evolving consumer habits influence the future of breakfast buffets. Below are some examples of these trends.

Trend 1: Health and Wellness Focus

Health and wellness have become central to breakfast offerings, reflecting a clear shift toward nutrient-rich dishes that energize both body and mind. Restaurants are incorporating whole grains, low-calorie meals, and superfoods such as chia seeds, quinoa, and acai bowls. Many breakfast menus and buffets now address various dietary preferences, including options that are low in sugar, gluten-free, and anti-inflammatory. There's an increased interest in functional foods like smoothies infused with adaptogens (e.g., ashwagandha, maca), designed to boost mental clarity and energy throughout the day (McCormick, 2025).

Millennials and Gen Z are embracing this trend, particularly as they place greater importance on their health and well-being compared to the indulgent breakfasts of the past. These consumers are more conscious of their food choices, opting for meals that are both nutritious and appetizing. This includes fitness enthusiasts, young professionals, and parents seeking healthy options (McCormick, 2025).

As consumers increasingly look for nutritious choices that sustain their well-being during the day, this trend will continue to be a key component in the breakfast market. With growing scientific evidence connecting diet to mental health, anticipate this trend to further develop into customized, functional breakfasts that cater to specific needs (McCormick, 2025).

Trend 2: Savory Breakfast Options

Savory breakfast choices are gaining popularity as diners look for alternatives to sugary morning meals. Classic breakfast items like pancakes and muffins are increasingly replaced by filling, savory options such as shakshuka (poached eggs in tomato sauce), breakfast flatbreads topped with ingredients like spinach and feta, or savory oatmeal bowls enriched with herbs, nuts, and olive oil. These savory breakfast options typically boast high protein content, providing sustained energy without the sugar crash (McCormick, 2025).

Adventurous eaters, food enthusiasts, and individuals aiming to lower their sugar consumption are turning to savory breakfasts. This trend resonates with health-conscious diners who recognize the detrimental impact of excess sugar in their diets. Additionally, it appeals to those seeking a heartier meal that provides longer-lasting satisfaction (McCormick, 2025).

Trend 3: Global Breakfast Influences

The trend of incorporating global flavors into breakfast buffets is on the rise. Dishes like Middle Eastern shakshuka, Japanese miso soup, and Mexican breakfast tacos provide vibrant, flavorful choices compared to traditional Western breakfasts. Additionally, fusion options, including Korean-inspired egg sandwiches with kimchi and Mediterranean egg bowls featuring za'atar, are becoming more prevalent (McCormick, 2025).

Multicultural communities, culinary adventurers, and food lovers are fueling this trend. As travel and globalization influence breakfast choices, individuals are more willing to experiment with various flavors and ingredients. This movement also appeals to second-generation immigrants who desire to see their cultural backgrounds represented in mainstream breakfast options (McCormick, 2025).

As international cuisines increasingly infiltrate the food industry, this trend is set to grow further. With a rising population and escalating interest in diverse cuisines, global breakfast options are likely to become staple offerings at buffets (McCormick, 2025).

Trend 4: Sweet and Savory Mashups

Sweet and savory breakfast mashups are gaining popularity, integrating unexpected flavors such as maple bacon donuts, fried chicken and waffles, or breakfast pizzas crowned with eggs and sausage. These dishes attract guests who desire a more indulgent commencement to their day, featuring bold combinations that blur the distinctions between dessert and breakfast (McCormick, 2025).

Food lovers and adventurous diners, especially younger patrons, are attracted to the imaginative flair of these dishes. Additionally, they are often very Instagrammable, which adds to their viral success online (McCormick, 2025).

This trend reflects a larger movement in culinary innovation, with flavor and texture blending becoming increasingly popular. Although some combinations might be fleeting, the overall trend of experimenting with sweet and savory flavors is expected to persist (McCormick, 2025).

2.3 Sustainability and Conscious Eating

Amid this blend of cultures, a key trend has emerged: a move towards sustainability and mindful eating. Consumers are becoming more conscious of the environmental effects of their food choices, leading to a growing demand for organic, locally sourced, and plant-based options. In response, the hospitality sector is integrating fresh produce, reducing food waste with innovative left-over solutions, and collaborating with local farmers to offer a true farm-to-table experience (Aristote, 2024).

Sustainability is another vital factor in the transformation of hotel breakfasts. Similar to Salamander Collection, numerous hotels are collaborating with local farms and artisans to ensure a consistent supply of fresh, seasonal ingredients, embracing a farm-to-table philosophy. This approach not only bolsters the local economy but also reduces the environmental effects tied to food transportation. At Salamander Collection, there is an emphasis on house-made offerings, including freshly baked breads, pastries, and cakes, alongside locally sourced produce, such as fruits harvested on-site and a variety of local butchers, farms, and seafood vendors. Gluten-free options have evolved from being simply available upon request; now, the group's restaurants feature an array of gluten-free dishes clearly marked on the menu (Nandi, 2024).

To promote environmental sustainability, breakfast offerings at your facility should minimize packaging by avoiding prepackaged individual portions and plastic. Replace disposable containers for honey, jam, sugar, cereals, and yogurt with glass jars and dispensers. Opt for reusable and returnable containers, along with unpackaged items, to prevent excessive waste. Consequently, the

environmental impact of the service will remain minimal, while also appearing more attractive and personalized (Marras, 2020).

Today, tourism must integrate sustainability concerns to ensure that future generations can meet their own needs (UNWTO, n.d). Assessing the optimal use of environmental resources in tourism and food, particularly regarding breakfast buffets, is crucial to promote more eco-friendly consumption practices. This approach aims to help conserve our natural environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions during the Anthropocene (Marras, 2020).

3 Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

3.1 Service Quality

A crucial aspect of delivering service products is that providers must project a customer-friendly image, even if this contradicts the true feelings of the server. This phenomenon is known as *emotional labor* (Hochschild, 1983; 2003).

Frontline workers, like food service staff, must display positive emotions such as friendliness, warmth, politeness, confidence, enthusiasm, and cheerfulness when interacting with customers. This requirement also entails that employees manage or conceal their own emotions during these exchanges, ultimately in return for financial compensation.

Delivering service involves more than just completing tasks; it requires the right attitude, genuine sincerity, and genuine concern for customers (Guerrier & Adib, 2001).

Customers' perception of a food service business and its employees significantly influences its success. Therefore, the advantages of genuine service quality, delivered authentically, are likely to arise from empowering service staff. This empowerment allows employees to act in ways they believe best serve their customers within a flexible strategic framework. Ultimately, this freedom enables more adaptable customer interactions while remaining aligned with the core values of the food service operation.

There isn't one universally agreed-upon definition of service quality. This idea has been viewed from various angles. Carol A. Reeves and David A. Bednar outline four dimensions of quality:

- **Excellence** represents the “mark of uncompromising standards and high achievement.” However, measuring it can be difficult, and the “attributes of excellence may change.” Furthermore, a sufficient number of customers must be willing to pay for excellence.
- **Value** encompasses various attributes, making it challenging to discern individual judgments. Furthermore, value and quality are not the same.
- **Adhering to specifications** involves minimizing errors, defects, and mistakes to enhance quality. It “facilitates precise measurement and leads to increased efficiency.” However, “consumers do not know or care about internal specifications,” making this viewpoint “internally focused” and “inappropriate for services.”

- **Meeting or exceeding expectations** remains essential. This viewpoint emphasizes expectations and assesses service through the customer's lens. However, "customers may not know their expectations," leading to potential confusion between customer service and customer satisfaction.

George E. Kroon suggests two other dimensions:

- **Market Perceptions**, which "is the market evaluation or ranking of how well you are doing compared to your competitors."
- **Strategic Quality** refers to the blend of price and quality that the company aims to deliver to the market (Hernon, 1999).

3.2 Customer Satisfaction

Expectations are high, and budgets are constrained. However, challenging times frequently offer significant growth opportunities. Emerging technologies and increasing customer expectations are elevating standards throughout the industry. Retailers that remain ahead of the curve will benefit greatly. The secret to success lies in effectively managing customer demands while avoiding unnecessary complexities in the business.

Customer satisfaction is described in literature as the mental state customers experience regarding a company when their expectations are either met or surpassed throughout the product or service's lifespan. It fosters customer retention, loyalty, and repurchase.

Wikipedia defines customer satisfaction as a term commonly utilized in marketing to assess customer experience. It gauges how well a company's products and services meet or exceed customer expectations. It is characterized as "the number of customers, or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a firm, its products or its services ratings exceeds specified satisfaction goals." Boosting customer satisfaction and nurturing customer loyalty are crucial for businesses, especially considering the vital need to improve the balance of customer attitudes before and after consumption.

The American Society for Quality (ASQ) defines customer satisfaction as a metric that assesses how pleased customers are with a company's products, services, and overall capabilities. Gathering customer satisfaction data, such as surveys and ratings, can assist companies in identifying the best ways to enhance or modify their offerings. An organization must prioritize customer

satisfaction, which is crucial for industrial firms, retail and wholesale businesses, government agencies, service providers, nonprofit organizations, and all their subgroups.

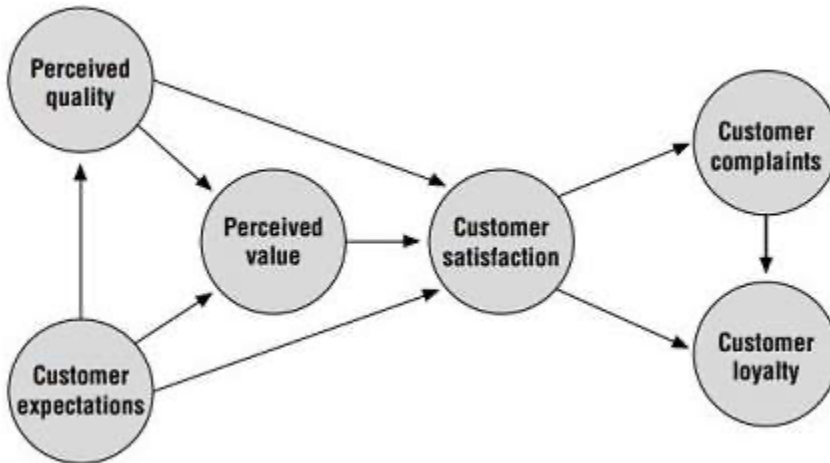


Figure 1. Model of Customer Satisfaction (ASQ s.a.)

Today, most organizations acknowledge the significance of customer focus, though many only offer superficial support for it. It's hard to find a Chief Executive Officer of a public company who doesn't assert that customers are vital to their business's success. Nevertheless, some leaders genuinely embody this belief more than others. For instance, MBNA, recognized as one of the most successful financial services firms in the last twenty years, actively measures customer satisfaction each day and incentivizes its staff monthly for surpassing customer satisfaction goals. In contrast, some organizations are hesitant to back their claims with actions. Decisions prioritizing short-term cost savings and profit maximization frequently overshadow investments in service quality and customer satisfaction (Hill, 2017).

Even if a company recognizes the financial advantages of having satisfied customers, why should it measure customer satisfaction? They might just strive to achieve the results they would want as customers themselves, which is a good starting point. However, research indicates that suppliers' understanding of customers' needs is often incomplete. Their grasp of the customer experience and how well it aligns with expectations is usually even less accurate. For those serious about the significance of satisfied customers, it is crucial to have objective measures to gauge their success. While feedback from customer service personnel is valuable, it is subjective. Tracking complaints is essential, but it won't provide a comprehensive view. Not all dissatisfied customers take the time to complain, and even if they do, a complaints metric doesn't reflect how well you are satisfying

and keeping customers who don't voice their concerns. It is well-known that satisfied customers can still choose to leave. Consequently, simply being a good supplier that meets customer needs isn't sufficient anymore. Today's discerning consumers will evaluate whether the value your business provides exceeds what is available elsewhere. Only by delivering the best value and ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction can you successfully maintain their loyalty (Hill.2017).

An objective and precise assessment of customer satisfaction serves as the most reliable predictor of future loyalty. A customer satisfaction measurement program will allow for:

- Understand how customers view your organization and if your performance aligns with their expectations.
- Identify areas of PFIs (priorities for improvement) where enhancing performance will yield the highest increase in customer satisfaction.
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the overall business implications of tackling the PFIs.
- Identify "understanding gaps" where your staff misinterpret customers' priorities or are unable to fulfill their needs.
- Establish goals for enhancing service and track progress using a customer satisfaction index.
- Compare the performance to other organizations.
- Boost profits by enhancing customer loyalty and retention.

Every project begins with the establishment of objectives and planning a detailed critical path. The initial phase of research involves clarifying customers' specific requirements and their criteria for selecting suppliers. This clarity allows for the design of an appropriate questionnaire that asks relevant questions. The process is carried out through exploratory research, often using focus groups in consumer markets or conducting one-on-one in-depth interviews, which are typical in business markets. It is crucial that the questionnaire for measuring customer satisfaction is based on the key requirements identified by customers themselves, rather than on assumptions made internally about what they believe might be significant to the customers (Hill, 2017).

The accuracy of a CSM study relies on two key factors. First, it's crucial to ask the right questions, which is where exploratory research comes into play. Second, these questions should be posed to the appropriate audience—a customer sample that genuinely reflects your overall customer base. Three elements contribute to the reliability of this sample: it needs to be representative, randomly selected, and sufficiently large.

Once they are sure they'll ask the right questions to the right people, they can develop the final questionnaire and initiate the main survey. The first step is to decide how to conduct the survey. It may involve interviews or self-completion questionnaires, which can take various formats, such as postal, point of sale, or electronic. Regardless of the survey type chosen, maximizing response rates will be crucial (Hill, 2017).

At this juncture, the survey may finally be executed. Following the generation of a set of results and the establishment of a satisfaction index, it is beneficial to ascertain how the performances compare with those attained by other organizations (Hill, 2017).

A valuable enhancement to a CSM study is implementing a mirror survey, which involves asking the same set of questions to your employees. This helps uncover how well they comprehend what matters to customers and how effectively they are fulfilling customer requirements. Generally carried out with self-completion questionnaires, a mirror survey often reveals that issues with customer satisfaction stem from employees' inaccurate perceptions of the customer viewpoint, known as "understanding gaps" (Hill, 2017).

Once the data is analyzed and a report is generated, it is essential to offer prompt feedback to both employees and customers. Lack of adequate feedback often prevents organizations from fully benefiting from their Customer Success Management (CSM) process. Effective actions can only be taken if employees grasp the survey results and their implications (Hill, 2017).

An Overview of the Customer Satisfaction Measurement Process:



Figure 2. Customer Satisfaction Measurement Process

4 Research Methodology

This chapter aims to employ quantitative research methodologies to explore consumer preferences and satisfaction regarding hotel breakfast buffets. The objective is to identify the pivotal factors affecting consumer satisfaction with hotel breakfast buffets and to evaluate the extent of their influence.

As stated by Hassan (2024), quantitative research constitutes a systematic endeavor that primarily emphasizes the quantification of data, variables, and interrelationships. It utilizes statistical, mathematical, and computational techniques for data collection and analysis. Quantitative research frequently establishes patterns, tests hypotheses, and forecasts outcomes. This study aspires to present the design descriptively, with a focus on gathering numerical data that elucidates guest preferences and satisfaction levels. Additionally, it aims to delineate the correlation between various buffet attributes and overall customer satisfaction.

The survey is designed to collect structured data to evaluate satisfaction with different buffet features, gather quantifiable insights into consumer preferences, and analyze how these factors relate to customer loyalty and behavior. Additionally, it's crucial to include background information in the survey to categorize respondents and highlight variations in satisfaction levels related to personal details.

4.1 Quantitative Method

Quantitative research represents a systematic approach that primarily aims to quantify data, variables, and relationships. It utilizes statistical, mathematical, and computational methods for data collection and analysis. This research type is often utilized to identify patterns, test hypotheses, and forecast outcomes. It finds broad application in disciplines like psychology, sociology, economics, health sciences, and education. The quantitative research methodology focuses on quantifying data and generalizing findings from a sample to a wider population. It relies on structured methods for data collection and uses statistical analysis to interpret the results. This research approach is objective, with findings generally presented numerically, facilitating comparison and generalization (Hassan, 2024).

The quantitative method of this thesis is based on a structured questionnaire, part of the survey design. The questions were implemented using the Webropol survey platform. The survey particularly targets individuals who have stayed in different hotels and tried different kinds of breakfast. The survey was spread through multiple channels, social media like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and other online platforms. Including a direct invitation to certain people is part of the survey

design. This survey is targeting at least 100 responses, but unfortunately, only 29 respondents have participated in this survey. But it still offered insights from their perceptions and personal experience,

4.2 Method of Data Collection

The primary approach for collecting data was tailored specifically for this research to explore the varied aspects of customer satisfaction. The study utilized a quantitative research method, relying on a structured survey questionnaire as the main tool for data collection. This approach was selected for its effectiveness in collecting standardized information from a wide range of hotel guests in a short period.

The survey questionnaire aimed to address the following areas:

- Demographic data (age, gender, nationality, frequency of hotel stays)
- Breakfast behaviour (type of breakfast preferred and time spent at buffet)
- Satisfaction ratings regarding several buffet aspects include food quality, variety offered, staff service, cleanliness, value for money, and the availability of dietary options.
- Inviting open questions and recommendations for further comments and suggestions.

The study employed a convenience sampling method, focusing on hotel guests. This tactic facilitated easy access to participants. Surveys were electronically distributed through social media platforms. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. They were encouraged to reflect on their latest hotel breakfast experience. Although the goal was to reach 100 respondents, ultimately, 29 completed surveys were collected and analyzed. While the response rate was below expectations, the data still provided valuable insights into guest preferences and satisfaction.

4.3 Reliability and Validity of Research

Ensuring the research process's reliability and validity was crucial in conducting this study. These elements enhance the overall credibility, consistency, and trustworthiness of the findings. The research employs a quantitative method to boost reliability by cross-verifying data from various sources. Although a survey targeted a diverse population, the low response rate may impact the trustworthiness of the quantitative results. Reliability pertains to the consistency and stability of the

measurement tools and data collection methods. To improve reliability, a standardized survey questionnaire was administered to all respondents, ensuring uniformity in the questions and rating scales. Pilot testing was performed with a small group of participants to refine the survey layout and clarify ambiguous items before the full distribution. Data were meticulously double-checked during entry and analysis to avoid errors and inconsistencies. It's important to recognize that the limited sample size of 29 respondents may restrict the reproducibility of results; however, future surveys might reveal different trends.

Validity refers to how accurately the research measures its intended targets. This study focuses on consumer preferences and satisfaction, aligning closely with established research questions. The survey items were crafted through an extensive review of relevant literature and input from hospitality experts, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of breakfast buffet satisfaction. Face validity was confirmed by making sure that the questions were clear, pertinent, and suitable for the research topic, as validated during the pilot test. To enhance the quality of the research, several recommendations are proposed. The limited demographic diversity and the convenience sampling method may have influenced external validity, as the findings might not represent all hotel guests or encompass various hotel categories.

5 Analysis and Findings

This chapter provides an analysis of the findings from a survey focused on customer satisfaction with the hotel's breakfast buffet. The survey evaluated various elements of the buffet experience, such as service quality, food standards, food variety, restaurant cleanliness, value for money, and the availability of dietary choices. Notably, cleanliness received the highest ratings, indicating that a tidy environment and helpful staff significantly contribute to guest satisfaction. Food quality and service also received positive feedback, suggesting effective management of the buffet. Conversely, the availability of dietary options received the lowest rating. Guests aged 35-44 reported the highest levels of satisfaction across most categories, particularly appreciating the hotel's cleanliness and food quality. Female respondents emphasized the significance of healthy options and demonstrated higher engagement in completing the survey. Guests who frequent hotels more often tended to rate the value for money and food variety slightly lower, likely reflecting their elevated expectations or wider comparison criteria.

5.1 Survey result

This survey sought to evaluate preferences and satisfaction levels related to hotel breakfast buffets. A total of 29 participants took part in the study designed to investigate consumer satisfaction with these buffets. Although the initial goal was to gather 100 responses, time limitations and reduced guest availability led to a smaller sample size. Nevertheless, the responses obtained offered valuable insights into guest preferences and factors influencing satisfaction.

5.1.1 Demographic Overview of Respondents

Age Distribution: As illustrated in Figure 3, the majority of respondents are middle-aged adults. In detail, 45% belong to the 35-44 age bracket, 17% are between 25-34, and 14% are split evenly between the 18-24 and 45-55 ranges. The smallest group, at just 10%, consists of respondents aged 55 and older, reinforcing the notion that middle-aged guests are significant customers for hotels. This demographic often possesses more travel experience, higher service expectations, and a greater awareness of health and nutrition.

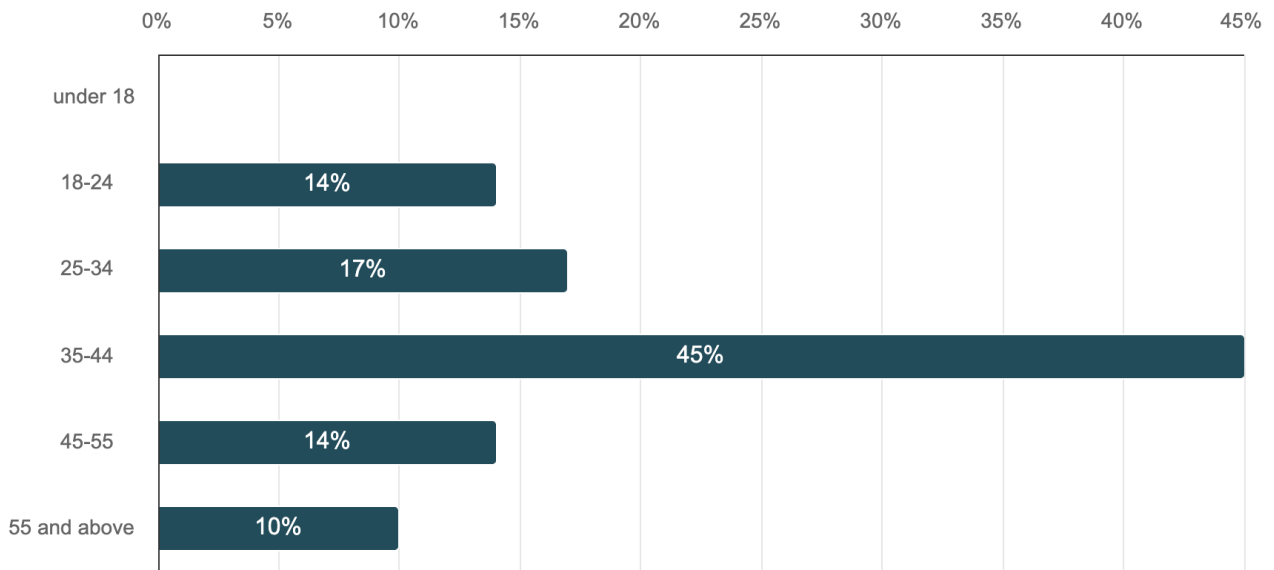


Figure 3. Respondent's Age

Gender Respondents: As Figure 4 shows, 90% of the respondents are mostly female. This indicates that the point of view and experience shared in similar preference, through female guests slightly favoured healthy and light options. In particular, female guests expressed strong appreciation for food transparency. They favored buffets that offered labelled dishes healthy alternatives and fresh fruits and vegetables. These findings reflect broader consumer trends, where women are often more proactive in managing dietary choices and are more attentive to health. Relates information when dining out.

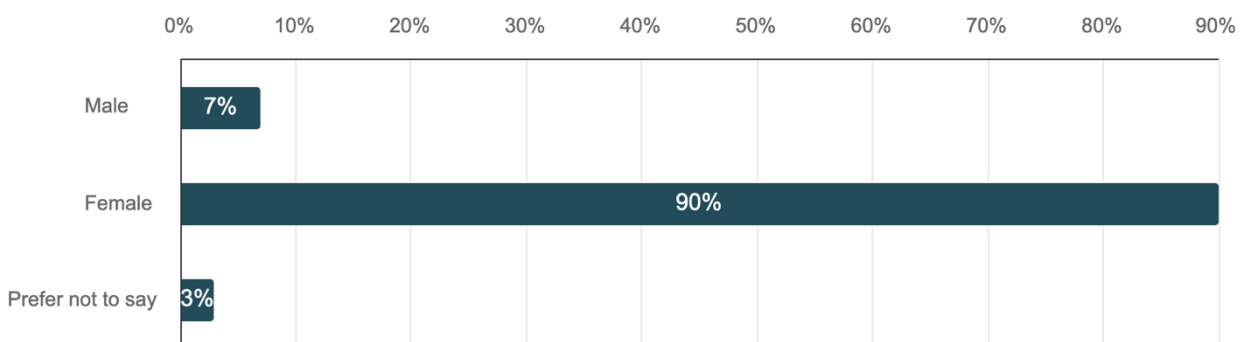
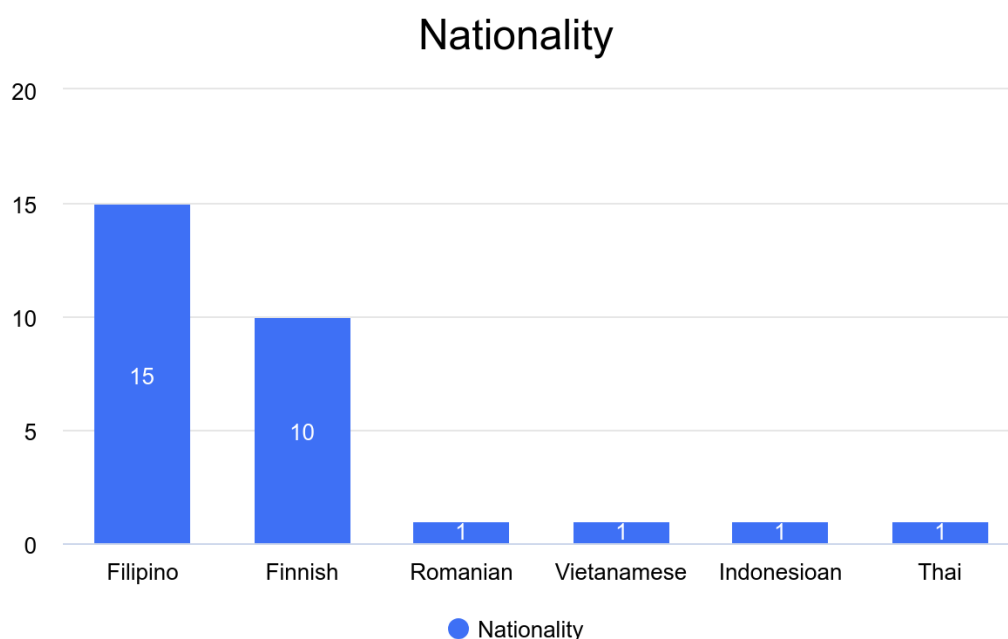


Figure 4. Respondent's Gender

Nationality: Figure 5 illustrates that 15 respondents originally from the Philippines are now residing in Finland. There are 10 Finnish respondents, along with one each from Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, and Romania. The satisfaction levels reported by these respondents were closely linked to the authenticity and quality of the local food offerings, as well as the consistency of the service. For local respondents, breakfast represented a comforting experience, and they especially valued it when hotels provided well-prepared familiar dishes. Additionally, international guests emphasized the importance of hygiene and dietary options. Both local and international respondents concurred on the significance of staff friendliness and personalized service.



Graphmaker.org

Figure 5. Respondent's Nationality Bar Chart

How often do you stay in hotels? As illustrated in Figure 6, 48% of participants stay at hotels occasionally, while 31% do so rarely. Eleven percent of respondents stay frequently, and ten percent stay very frequently. Guests who rarely stay at hotels tend to compare the buffet experience more to home-cooked meals. In contrast, frequent hotel visitors prioritize the variety of food, consistency of service, and convenience.

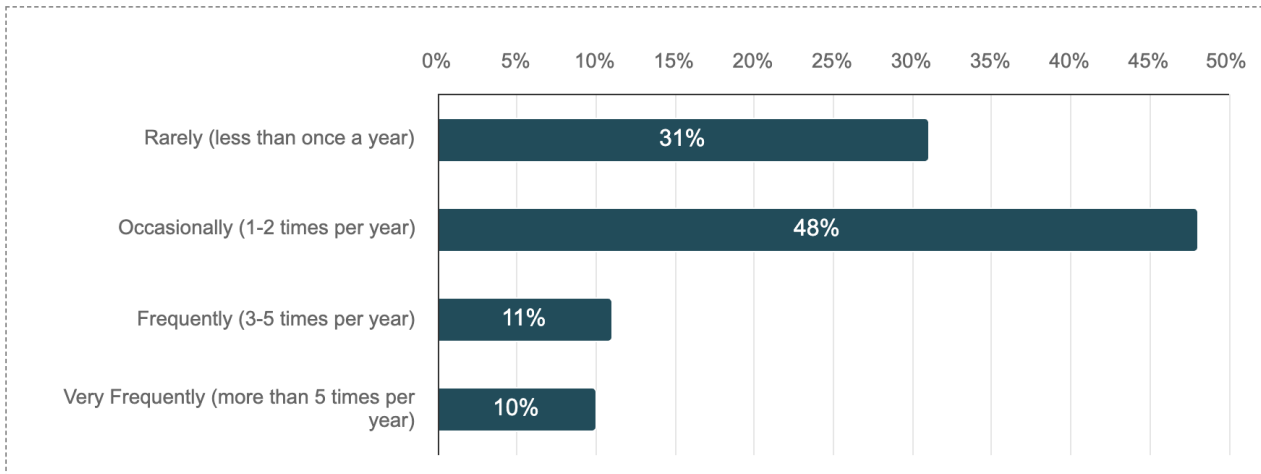


Figure 6. Respondent's Answer to Question: How often do you stay at hotels?

Breakfast holds great significance. As illustrated in Figure 7, 71% of respondents consider breakfast crucial during a hotel stay, whereas 25% regard it as simply important. For many guests, breakfast serves not just as a convenient, time-efficient choice but also as a prime indicator of the hotel's quality and hospitality standards. Providing a fulfilling breakfast improves the overall guest experience, impacts customer satisfaction, and boosts the chances of receiving positive reviews and repeat bookings. Conversely, 4% of respondents feel breakfast is unimportant because they wish to avoid additional charges.

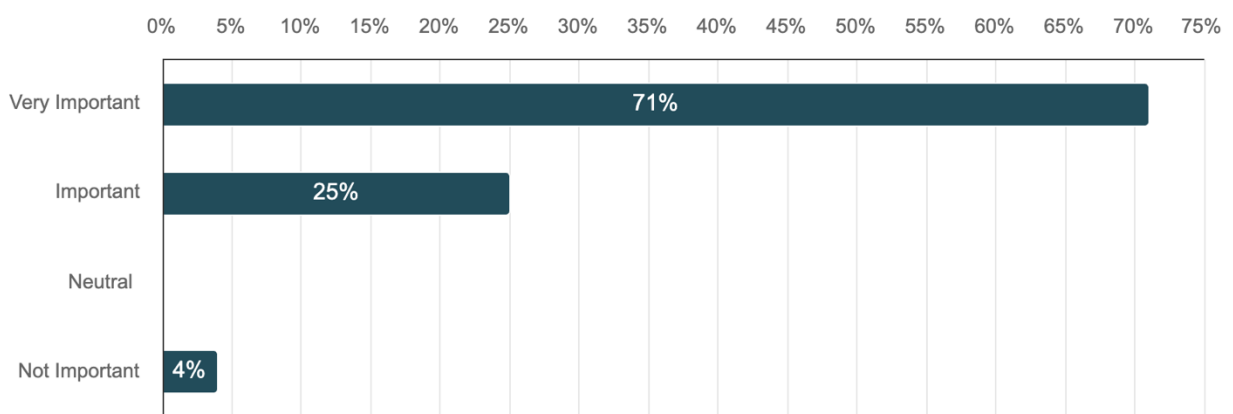


Figure 7. Respondent's Answer to Question: How important is Breakfast to you during a hotel stay

Preferred breakfast types: As illustrated in Figure 8, 59% of respondents favor the American breakfast, while 55% prefer Continental options. Additionally, 48% opt for healthy alternatives, and 31% enjoy local cuisine. This question aimed to determine which breakfast styles guests appreciate most, helping the company tailor its offerings to customer preferences.

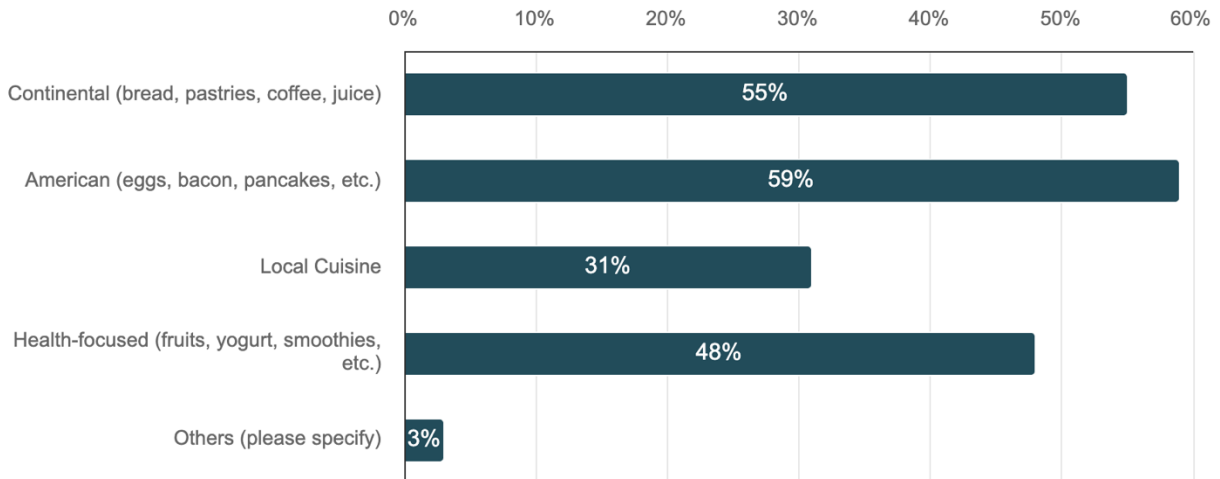


Figure 8. Types of breakfast

Time Spent at the Breakfast Buffet: As shown in Figure 9, most guests (47%) generally spend 30-45 minutes at the breakfast buffet, while 32% usually take 15-30 minutes, and 21% spend over 45 minutes. These results indicate that speed, accessibility, and efficient food choices are crucial, particularly for guests with limited time. Nonetheless, comfort and ambiance are also significant for those who prefer to enjoy breakfast leisurely during their stay.

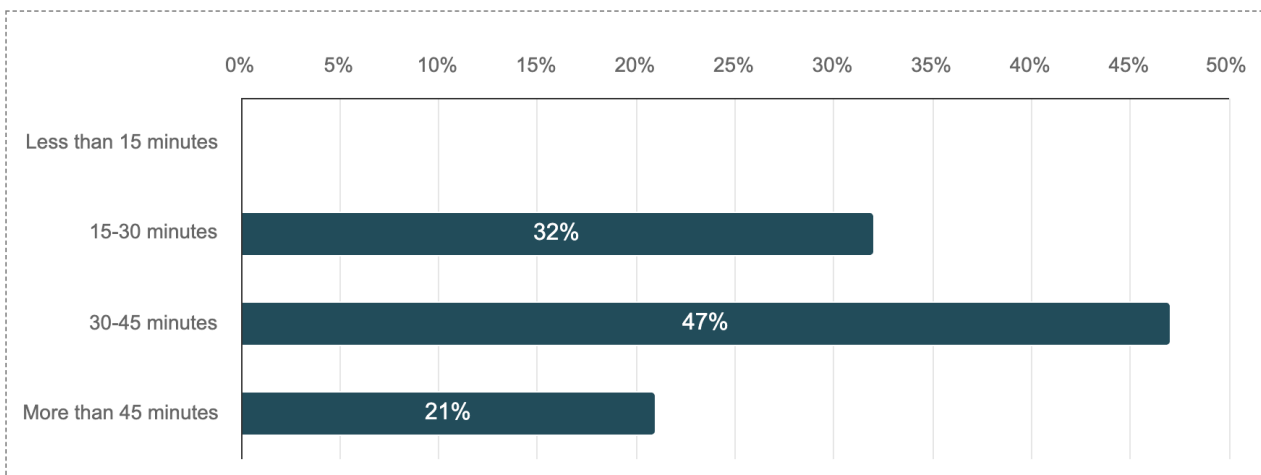


Figure 9. How much time do you typically spend at the breakfast buffet?

5.1.2 Satisfaction Evaluation

Aligning with customer expectations minimizes negative feedback and lowers service recovery expenses. This approach enhances operational efficiency by prioritizing what guests find most valuable.

The chart below illustrates that Cleanliness achieved the highest satisfaction rating at 57.1%, reflecting strong customer care and selection. Food quality followed with a score of 48.3%, ranking second, while staff service received a rating of 42.9%. The second-lowest rating was 37.9% for value for money, and the lowest was 31% for the availability of dietary options. Insights from satisfaction surveys and reviews guide strategic decisions related to food service, food quality, and staff performance.



Graphmaker.org

Figure 10. Satisfaction chart

5.1.3 Suggested Improvement from survey respondents

In the hospitality sector, where experiences influence perceptions, customer feedback is vital. Actively collecting, analyzing, and responding to feedback keeps services relevant, competitive, and unforgettable. It reveals gaps and opportunities that staff might miss, helping hotels, restaurants, and service providers identify areas for improvement. The feedback collected not only demonstrates strong guest engagement but also provides valuable insights for enhancing services.

Figure 11 illustrates that the majority of proposed enhancements are low to moderate in cost yet significantly impactful, especially regarding customer service, food labeling, local dishes, food variety, and dietary options. This feedback is straightforward to implement; it will show customers that their opinions are acknowledged and appreciated, leading to repeat bookings, enduring loyalty, and favorable word of mouth. Additionally, this aligns with customer preferences and demonstrates how the hotel breakfast buffet meets their needs as guests.

+ Number of respondents: 24	
Responses	
Maintain the cleanliness of the area	
For improvements, in my opinion there's not much to improve but maybe can do a special menu for a guest that are staying in the hotel like for example if more Finnish guests then have a special menu finish b-fast delicacy.	
More options for kids	
More variety	
Eat as much as you can	
I would suggest for hotel breakfast buffet that it is important to have a label in every menus for allergies customers and available menu for toddlers & kids as well as available staff always incase the customers need assistance.	
Speed of service should be improved	
none	
Coffee is imprt and healthy breakfast options that kids love to eat for breakfast.	
Nothing	
?	
Service	
There should be enough food and varieties for customers.	
about the staff., they are not friendly or even smiles they dont know .	
Having an option for the warm food to ask like omelet or pancakes	
Makebit more appetizing.	
Nothing	
More vegan food options	
More fresh selections	
Stuffs for newborn baby	
Breakfast should have a variety of choices.	
A frequent replenishment on the most consumed food	
Layout improvement	
none	

Figure 11. Improvement suggested by the respondents.

5.2 Observation Research

Throughout this thesis on consumer satisfaction with hotel breakfast buffets, several observations emerged. These insights were obtained not only from the survey results but also from the overall research process, which included data collection and analyzing respondent behavior. A prominent pattern was the strong satisfaction regarding the cleanliness of the dining area, the staff's service, and the food quality. Numerous respondents highlighted the significance of food quality and cleanliness, stressing that their satisfaction with staff service is essential.

Another important finding was how crucial customization options are; guests, particularly those aged 35-44 and female participants, showed a strong preference for personalizing the breakfast buffet area. This indicates a trend towards more health-conscious and personalized choices.

Respondents quickly noticed and remarked on minor details, such as enhancing the food's appeal, ensuring frequent replenishment of popular items, and offering a fresher selection. It's essential for respondents to have breakfast included in their accommodation. Although often underestimated by management, these small elements significantly influence perceived satisfaction. This insight highlights the importance of focusing on operational details in the hospitality industry.

Significant reflection highlights the difficulty in achieving the target of 100 survey respondents. Due to time constraints, only 29 guests participated in the survey. This underscores the importance of time management and planning in future research, which may restrict the statistical generalizability of the results but still reveals meaningful trends.

6 Discussion

This thesis offers important insights into the indicate factors influencing consumer satisfaction in hotel breakfast buffets. Aligned with current literature in hospitality and consumer behavior, the findings reveal not only the aspects of the breakfast experience that guests value the most, but also how various demographic factors like age, gender, and frequency of hotel stays affect their expectations and preferences.

Based on the author's insights gathered through surveys and observations, this research highlights the overall impression of the hotel, including decisions related to repeat stays and recommendations. For many, it serves as a first and lasting impression of the hotel's hospitality standards.

This study also discussed areas for improvement. Frequent replenishment of the most consumed foods guarantees timely delivery to customers. Respondents indicated that the breakfast buffet should feature a greater variety of choices, more fresh selections, and additional vegan options; this is why the availability of dietary options ranked the lowest.

This study explored the breakfast buffet experiences of the respondents. One participant highlighted the necessity of having high-quality, nutritious food for breakfast, emphasizing its significance as an important meal for everyone. Most respondents shared positive feedback, expressing gratitude that breakfast is included in their accommodation, as it offers convenience for customers to start their day.

6.1 Conclusion

This thesis investigates the factors that impact consumer satisfaction in hotel breakfast buffets, concentrating on guests' preferences, demographic effects, and specific aspects including food quality, food variety, staff service, cleanliness, value for money, and dietary choices. Although there are limitations in the survey sample, the research provides useful insights for hotel managers. By highlighting essential aspects such as food variety and customer service, hotels can improve guest satisfaction and boost customer loyalty.

In summary, the breakfast buffet serves not only as a meal service but also as a crucial interaction in the hospitality sector. Future studies could expand on this research by considering various hotel types and guest demographics to delve deeper into consumer preferences and satisfaction.

6.2 Personal Learning

Through writing and working on this thesis, “Consumer Preference and Satisfaction with Hotel Breakfast Buffet” has been an insightful and rewarding journey. However, this experience comes with various challenges. Nonetheless, this journey has not only deepened my understanding of consumer behavior in the hospitality industry but has also enhanced my analytical, research, and critical thinking skills. I discovered that satisfaction is not based solely on the quality of the food but also on the overall dining experience, especially if effort is made to personalize the buffet area.

A key insight from this thesis is the impact of various factors—like trends, sustainability, and health-conscious eating—on the consumer experience journey, which significantly affects customer satisfaction.

During the research process, the author faced numerous challenges, especially in managing time and balancing family, work, study, and personal life. Effectively managing time emerged as one of the most significant hurdles. The difficulty in juggling research, analysis, data collection, and writing alongside academic and personal commitments was evident. At times, deadlines felt overwhelming, particularly during the data analysis stage. This experience highlighted for the author the significance of setting clear goals, minimizing distractions, and adhering to a timeline that can be applied to both career and studies.

The author enhanced their research and analytical abilities by conducting surveys and examining the outcomes. This process refined their capacity to interpret and value consumer feedback. In the hospitality sector, a key skill, they realized the significance of transforming raw data into actionable insights, essential for both business and academic objectives.

Overall, this thesis signifies not merely an academic requirement but also a major opportunity for personal development. This experience will be crucial as the author enters the hospitality and tourism industry. The author has honed skills in working independently, staying focused under pressure, and systematically addressing challenges with the customer's perspective in mind. Furthermore, the author has learned to translate theoretical knowledge into practical applications and communicate findings effectively. Although there were challenges, especially in time management, the author takes pride in the achievements and personal growth experienced throughout this journey.

7 References

Admin 2023. The Hospitality Daily, The Role of food and beverage in hospitality. URL: <https://the-hospitalitydaily.com/food-and-beverage-in-hospitality/>. Accessed: 10 February 2025.

Adyen 2024. Balancing Customer Experience and Business Efficiency. URL: [https://www.adyen.com/index-reports/retail-baltics-finland?msclkid=fb3b2e4fb88d14c749ed49ba3290b538&utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=2024_06_AD_FI_SEARCH-NONBRAND-RETAILREPORT_MA_CONS_CON_RSA_GENERIC_\[EN\]&utm_term=customer+satisfaction&utm_content=Retail+report+2024](https://www.adyen.com/index-reports/retail-baltics-finland?msclkid=fb3b2e4fb88d14c749ed49ba3290b538&utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=2024_06_AD_FI_SEARCH-NONBRAND-RETAILREPORT_MA_CONS_CON_RSA_GENERIC_[EN]&utm_term=customer+satisfaction&utm_content=Retail+report+2024). Accessed: 20 February 2025.

Ahmed G., Tager, M., & Zaki, M. 2021. The effect of food quality, service quality and tangibles on hotel restaurants. URL: https://journals.ekb.eg/article_206790_99ab0d9e3dd3e2d58b29bab10ba27490.pdf. Accessed: 3 March 2025

American Society for Quality 2025. ASQ, Learn about Quality. URL: <https://asq.org/quality-resources/customer-satisfaction>. Accessed: 25 February 2025.

Aristote 2024. New Breakfast Trends in Hospitality: Healthy, Sustainable, and Quick Options. URL: <https://www.call-the-service.com/new-breakfast-trends-in-hospitality-healthy-sustainable-and-quick-options/>. Accessed: 10 February 2025.

Bandaru, S. 2015. Development, analysis and applications of a quantitative methodology for assessing customer satisfaction using evolutionary optimization. URL: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1568494615000162>. Accessed: 10 March 2025

Bansal, M. 2017. The Concept of Food Quality and Food Safety. URL: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/agricultural-and-biological-sciences/food-quality>. Accessed: 6 March 2025.

Barten, M. 2024. Hotel Breakfast: Types, Overview and Tips to Impress Your Guests. URL: <https://www.revfine.com/hotel-breakfast/>. Accessed: 26 February 2025.

Broder, C. 2024. Hotel Industry Statistics: The Hottest Trends and What They Mean for You in 2025. URL: <https://thehotelgm.com/hotel-management/hotel-industry-statistics/>. Accessed: 8 February 2025.

Buffet Breakfast 2020. Hadley Freeman Column. URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentis-free/2020/may/23/if-this-is-the-end-of-the-buffet-breakfast-its-not-just-the-toast-ill-miss>. Accessed: 07 October 2023.

Cousins, J., Foskett, D. & Graham, D. 2019. Food and Beverage Management, pp 70-71. Accessed: 07 February 2025

Cox, C. 2024. The Continental breakfast: What it is and Why Hotel chain serve it. URL: <https://www.foodrepublic.com/1725227/what-does-continental-breakfast-mean/>. Accessed: 15 March 2025

David, F., Cousins, J., Graham, J., & Hollier, A., 2019, 2023. Food and Beverage Management, pp 23. Accessed: 07 February 2025.

Hassan, M. 2024. Quantitative Research Methods, Types and Analysis. URL: <https://research-method.net/quantitative-research/>. Accessed: 20 March 2025

Hernon, P., Danuta, A., Nitecki, N., & Altman, E. 1999. Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction: An Assessment and Future Direction. Page 9. URL: https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/48604778/s0099-1333_2899_2980170-020160905-24097-1ly9c10-libre.pdf?1473145240=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DService_quality_and_customer_satisfactio.pdf&Expires=1744153873&Signature=bMaQFXofyv87o-4cltfs8GMT5L3GBmMGjGftrhAeM5xO~K5L4A340v5p3d5Prps4S-Ah-wTXAQw5wN1FTrt2dhT39UVRk6mRoWjze0Cg2fkvXG9IOd504M4gPV7BuRTkAr0mYk7SksGm-IEcofL4Ct-RIF6kM8FU8gfnnPkIIBHzqpevzJkl3CWAWqGOVnj8yKBhbdcmvIA9p99eynsICQUsqjll-jlW6z77FZIOYvNtch6YpoxGUyLw7vHACOXcWX5FJZ-6NlIEzNiTGYNyJX8c257SlbwFX-W0OPWpSH8E5KojLymqVmmablLytsi-q~Ua4SAp7x7jpN-hq0q3Ta1w_&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJ-LOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA. Accessed: 25 February 2025.

Hill, N., Brierley, J., & MacDougall, R. 2017. How to Measure Customer Satisfaction, Second Edition. URL: file:///Users/danicaponteras/Downloads/9781315253107_previewpdf.pdf. Accessed: 20 February 2025.

Hoeffner, J. 2025. Why Hotels Call Their Morning Buffets Continental Breakfasts. URL: <https://www.thetakeout.com/1794567/continental-breakfast-name-origin/>. Accessed: 15 March 2025

Luthy, B. 2024. Hospitality Insights EHL. URL: <https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/hospitality-industry-trends>. Accessed: 8 February 2025.

Marras, C. 2020. How you can offer 5-star Eco Breakfast in your Hotel. URL: <https://ecobnb.com/blog/2020/07/eco-breakfast-hotel/>. Accessed: 15 March 2025

Marriott Bonvoy Traveler, 2025. Marriott International Inc. URL: <https://traveler.marriott.com/hotel-dining/free-hotel-breakfast-buffet-hacks/>. Accessed: 07 February 2025.

Mccormick, J. 2025. Breakfast Trends and Breakfast Stats. URL: <https://pos.toasttab.com/blog/on-the-line/breakfast-trends>. Accessed: 10 February 2025.

Nandi, K. 2024. Hotels Passion for Hospitality since 1966. URL: <https://hotelsmag.com/news/hotel-guests-opt-for-on-the-go-easy-meals-over-elaborate-buffet-spreads/>. Accessed: 25 February 2025.

Nandi, K. 2024. Hotels Passion for Hospitality. Hotel guests opt for on-the-go, easy meals over elaborate buffet spread. URL: <https://hotelsmag.com/news/hotel-guests-opt-for-on-the-go-easy-meals-over-elaborate-buffet-spreads/>. Accessed: 7 February 2025.

Nichols, D. 2019. What breakfast looks like in 50 countries. URL: <https://www.thedailymeal.com/1362823/what-breakfast-looks-like-49-countries/>. Accessed: 5 March 2025.

Tastan, H. & Soylu, A.G. 2022. The Impact of perceived cleanliness on customer satisfaction. URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/2308252>. Accessed: 26 February 2025.

Thompson, L. 2024. Amazing Breakfast Buffet Ideas for Hotels: Wow Your Guests. URL: <https://buffetinspiration.com/breakfast-buffet-ideas-for-hotels/>. Accessed: 25 February 2025.

Thompson, L. 2024. Amazing Breakfast Buffet. URL: <https://buffetinspiration.com/breakfast-buffet-ideas-for-hotels/>. Accessed: 20 April 2025

Visit Finland, 2025. Guide to Finland's traditional and iconic foods. URL: <https://www.visitfinland.com/en/articles/finlands-traditional-and-iconic-foods/>. Accessed: 20 April, 2025

Wikipedia 2025. Customer Satisfaction. URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Customer_satisfaction. Accessed: 25 February 2025.

Williams, C. 2023. Breakfast is King: Elevating the guest experience through food and beverage innovations. URL: <https://www.hospitalitynet.org/opinion/4117604.html>. Accessed: 08 October 2023.

Yang, T. & He, L. 2019. Evaluation Technologies for Food Quality. URL: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/agricultural-and-biological-sciences/food-quality>. Accessed: 6 March 2025.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Consumer Preferences and Satisfaction with Hotel Breakfast Buffet Survey Questionnaire.

Welcome!

Thank you for taking the time to participate in my thesis survey. I am conducting this survey to gather your experience with the hotel breakfast buffet. The survey will take approximately 4 minutes to complete. All responses are anonymous.

1. What is your age?
 - Under 18
 - 18-24
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45-55
 - 55 and above
2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Prefer not to say
3. What is your Nationality?
4. How often do you stay at hotels?
 - Rarely (less than once a year)
 - Occasionally (1-2 times per year)
 - Frequently (3-5 times per year)
 - Very Frequently (more than 5 times per year)
5. How important is breakfast to you during a hotel stay?
 - Very Important
 - Important
 - Neutral
 - Not Important
6. Which type of breakfast do you prefer? (Choose multiple option)
 - Continental (bread, pastries, coffee, and juice)

- American (eggs, bacon, pancakes, etc.)
- Local Cuisine
- Health-focused (fruits, yogurt, smoothies, etc.)
- Others (please specify)

7. How much time do you typically spend at the breakfast buffet?

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-30 minutes
- 30-45 minutes
- More than 45 minutes

8. On a scale of 1-5, 5 is the highest. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the breakfast buffet?

Food Quality:

- 1 Very unsatisfied
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Very satisfied

9. On a scale of 1-5, 5 is the highest. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the breakfast buffet?

A variety of food options:

- 1 Very unsatisfied
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Very satisfied

10. On a scale of 1-5, 5 is the highest. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the breakfast buffet?

Service provided by the staff

- 1 Very unsatisfied
- 2
- 3

- 4
- 5 Very satisfied

11. On a scale of 1-5, 5 is the highest. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the breakfast buffet?

Cleanliness of the area

- 1 Very unsatisfied
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Very satisfied

12. On a scale of 1-5, 5 is the highest. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the breakfast buffet?

Value for money

- 1 Very unsatisfied
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Very Satisfied

13. On a scale of 1-5, 5 is the highest. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the breakfast buffet?

Availability of dietary options

- 1 Very unsatisfied
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Ver satisfied

14. Have you encountered any issues during your breakfast buffet experience?

15. What improvement would you suggest for the hotel breakfast buffet?

16. Do you prefer hotels with complimentary breakfast included in the room rate? Why or why not?

17. Is there anything else you would like to share about your breakfast buffet experience?

18. How likely are you to recommend a hotel breakfast buffet based on your experience?

- Very Likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very Unlikely