



Evaluating and Enhancing customer Experience: Case study of Seoul88

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The main aim of the thesis was to the evaluation and enhancement of customer experience at Seoul88, to enhance its customer satisfaction, service quality and expectation in a competitive hospitality market. The study discovers key factors that influencing customers satisfactions, including elements attracting customers, unique features differentiating seoul88 and the challenges impacting the customer experience. By examining the alignment between the customer expectation and actual experience, the research provided the insight into Seou88 strength and areas of improvement. The research was driven by the recognition that a memorable customer experience was essential for sustaining a competitive advantage in the restaurant market.

Quantitative approach has been used as a research methodology where online survey and Net Promoter Score measurement were used to collect the data. The research followed the SERVQUAL model, EDT and SOR model, while the survey featured with multiple choice, scale based and open-ended questions to measure the service quality, satisfaction and expectations. Conducted on a mobile responsive platform with ensured anonymity, the data analysis highlighted seoul88, strengths and areas enhancement.

Based on the survey finding, the thesis proposed several targeted strategies key findings to identified weakness, including enhancing staff training to improve service consistency, expanding menu options and implementing digital feedback system to capture real time customer view. These initiatives aim to increase customer satisfaction and strength restaurant position in market.

The result offered actionable recommendations for Seoul88 to maintain its competitiveness in the restaurant industry. The major result of the thesis is, it suggests to focused on the service quality, menu diversification and cultural authenticity. By focusing on the areas, the restaurant can enhance the customer loyalty, enhance new customer and ensure long term success. This research provides to the broader field of customer experience management in hospitality sectors, adjusting the business operations as per customers' expectations.

Keywords: customer experience, customer satisfaction, customer expectation

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1 Introduction

The restaurant sector operates in an increasingly competitive landscape in hospitality in where success not only depends on food quality but also depend on the complete customer experience. Homburg, Jozic and Kuehnk (2017, 377-378), Customer experience has evolved from a less consideration to a key strategic focus as businesses recognize that delivering memorable interactions gives an advantage to the restaurant to stay ahead in the market. Becker and Jaakkola (2020) In recent years, many restaurant businesses have witnessed significant challenges in delivering customer experience strategies that keep up with evolving customer expectations. In Klaus and Maklan's study (2013, 227-246) the measurement of customer experience is explored, highlighting how customer sentiments are influenced by their interactions with the product and service completely aligning with their expectations in a complete manner. In this context, a systematic evaluation and enhancement of customer experience have become the cornerstone of sustainable growth in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

The aim of this thesis is to evaluate and enhancing customer experience at seoul88 by discovering keys factors that influence customer satisfaction, loyalty and expectation. The study primarily centres on identifying the key factors that contribute to improve customer satisfaction, service quality, and the overall experience of the customer, including factors that attract customers, unique features that differentiate seoul88, and the effectiveness of its service quality. The objective of the research is to collect data on customers preferences, satisfaction and areas where the restaurant offering may not meet expectation. Ultimately, the goals is to provide a comprehensive understanding on how well the restaurant offerings meet the customer needs and recommend strategies for Seoul88 to strengthen its competitive position, ensuring consistent customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The research used the theoretical framework such as SEVQUAL, Expectation Disconfirmation theory and the Stimulus Organism Response (SOR). The research part of thesis was conducted using a quantitative research method to ensure a comprehensive analysis. The methods used were a survey, and the Net Promoter Score, which is administered to measure customer willingness to recommend the restaurant. By analysing the survey results within the theoretical framework, the study identifies the areas of improvement to elevate the customer experience at seoul88.

The thesis is structured into five Sections, where Section one provides an introduction that establishes research content and objectives, and the second section presents the seoul88. The theoretical framework defines underlying concepts such as customer experience,

satisfaction, and expectation. Section 4 explains planning and implementation of the online survey, Net promoter score, analysis of collected data, and present findings. The final part summarizes the whole content of the thesis and recommendations for improving customer experience. In this report, free version of “Grammarly ” has been used to make the text more connected.

2 Seoul88 restaurant

Seoul88 (2025) is a highly rated restaurant that brings the taste of Korean cuisine to the heart of Finland's capital. Committed to excellence, it blends traditional culinary techniques with a modern dining atmosphere, attracting both local food enthusiasts and global visitors alike. The restaurant aims to provide a unique and immersive dining experience, utilizing high-quality products sourced both locally and overseas to ensure unparalleled quality.

The restaurant showcases an array of Korean specialties, from classic bibimbap and sizzling bulgogi to mouth-watering Korean barbecue and spicy kimchi-based stew. The menu balances authentic Flavors with adding innovative twists to appeal to diverse tastes. Complementing the cuisine, the restaurant offers traditional and modern beverages which are carefully chosen to enhance the dining experience.

Sustainability and being ethical form the core of the soul88 philosophy, the restaurant partners with local farmers and suppliers who share its commitment to freshness and quality. Integrating this approach with traditional culinary practices ensures every dish is crafted with authenticity and attention.

Seoul88 is more than a restaurant and cultural hub where patrons can experience the warmth of Korean hospitality. Through themed dining events and special occasion celebrations, it encourages a vibrant community space that promotes cultural exchanges and appreciation of Korean tradition with its inviting ambiance, excellent customer service, and passion for gastronomic perfection. Seoul88 restaurant is a top option for those seeking a Korean dining experience in Helsinki that will leave a lasting impression.

3 Theoretical framework

This research explored the customer experience across different services at restaurants, some of the theories that have been discussed about the subject matter of the study are customer satisfaction, expectation, service quality, and areas of improvement in the customer experience. To analyse how the restaurant enhance customer experiences to develop

customer satisfaction and loyalty. The research is drawn in three theoretical frameworks, SOR, EDT and SERVQUAL models.

SOR response model theory mainly describes the impact of environmental factors, including restaurant atmosphere and service encounters, on customers' emotion and behaviours (Huang, 2023). Expectation Disconfirmation Theory estimates consumer satisfaction based on expected service and experience. The SERVQUAL Model identifies service quality as reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness. Walter, Edvardsson and Ostrom (2023, 236- 258) state, this study evaluates customer experience enhancement strategy, emphasizing initiatives taken to augment service delivery and atmosphere. The theories offer a conceptual framework to examine the impact of service quality on restaurant's customer experience, satisfaction, and behaviour.

3.1 Key concepts in customer experience

The key concept in customer experience focuses on how restaurants can create memorable and positive interactions that enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. Understanding the key concepts of customer experience allows businesses to design strategies that adapt to evolving customer expectations and improve overall satisfaction.

The foundational concepts of customer experience, satisfaction, service quality and Net promoter score are important for a restaurant's success. This section explores these concepts to demonstrate how restaurants can enhance their service. By understanding and managing these elements effectively, restaurants can meet customers' needs and achieve sustained business success.

3.1.1 Customer experience in restaurant industry

Customer experience is a diverse concept which mainly comes from customer interactions with a company, both directly and indirectly. Customer experience is not just giving good service but about how customers feel throughout their entire interaction with a business. Meyer & Schwager (2007, 118) define that customer experience is the subjective, personal response that consumers develop through their interactions with a business, this comprehensive concept includes every aspect of what the company offers from product and service quality to promotional activities, product presentation, and consistency. In restaurant businesses, customer experience begins when they learn about the place in advance. According to Kotler & Keller (2016, 148) providing clear and valuable information early on is essential, as customers often research extensively before making dining decisions. Therefore, by facilitating access to relevant details and supporting the customer throughout

their decision-making process, restaurants can enhance trust and increase interest in their brand.

In the restaurant industry, the SOR model is crucial in understanding how various factors shape customer experience and influence customer behavior. Liu & Jang (2009) stated that, this framework has been widely applied to hospitality settings demonstrating how service escape directly impacts customer emotions and behavior. Enhancing this experience requires careful attention where three interconnected components connect to the shape of customer satisfaction. Branding, customer expectations, and customer satisfaction. According to Keller (2013), Branding establishes its identity, reputation, and image, communicating authentic and quality standards through consistent visual elements and marketing messages that connect emotionally with the customers. Branding elements shape the customer expectations about service and quality based on previous visits where the brand promises to establish a baseline for measuring actual experience. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985, 41-43) explain that the quality of service, cultural awareness, and the use of technology can benefit the restaurant industry that help to shift the customer perception.

3.1.2 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction explains how a company's products or services align with customer expectations. According to Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser and Schlesinger (1994, 124-125) satisfaction drives the service profit chain where the positive customer experience translates into loyalty behaviour that directly impacts financial performance with research demonstrating that even small improvements in rates can yield substantial profit increases.

Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory states that customer satisfaction is a result of the difference between the customer expectation and actual performance. Bennett and Rundle-Thiele (2004, 514-520). The expectations are formed before the customer experience, and satisfaction results from whether the expectations are confirmed, exceeded, or denied. When the performance of the actual service is more excellent than the expectations, there is positive disconfirmation, leading to satisfaction. When the quality of the service is poor the negative performance leads to dissatisfaction. In restaurant, the use of EDT aids in understanding the customers' expectations and ensuring service delivery meets or exceeds such expectations.

Customers can expect high-quality products, efficient service, and cultural immersion in the dining experience. Homburg, Koschate, and Hoyer (2005), By offering customized recommendations, quick service, and a pleasant dining atmosphere the customers will experience positive disconfirmation, reinforcing verbal communication and loyalty. Mittal and Kamakura (2001) argue that satisfaction does not guarantee customer loyalty, with brand

perception and emotional connection entering the equation . This implies that restaurant will have to look beyond the basic satisfaction measures and undertake emotional engagement strategies such as providing a unique selling dining experience and applying exceptional marketing (Schmitt,2011).

3.1.3 Service quality assessment

According to Parasuraman et al (1985), Service quality is the outcomes of as service delivery process that reflects how successfully the service reconcile with customer requirements, satisfaction, and feeling shaped by trust and tangible indicators. It includes how the service is provided and what the customer gets, helping businesses stand out and earn more by keeping customer satisfaction. Kotler & Keller(2009) argues that Services are difficult to judge before purchasing, so people review the price, and staff behaviour. Checking service quality helps businesses improve wising tools like Servqual, which compare customers expectation and experiences.

According to Daniel and Berinyuy (2010, 31-38), The Servqual model is a systematic approach to measuring the service quality with five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. The model analyses the difference between the customer's expectations and the service's performance, enabling companies to see areas for improvement The dimensions can be used in various ways at restaurant. Reliability ensures food quality, order accuracy, and service provision consistency. Responsiveness ensures the restaurant can respond quickly to customer inquiries, take online bookings, and deal with complaints promptly. Assurance captures the professionalism of the staff in recommending dishes, as well as in the preparation of customer orders, to ensure confidence and trust. Empathy is conveyed through personalized service adapted to cultural tastes and dietary needs to provide a more diverse dining experience. Tangibles cover the cleanliness of the restaurant, the atmosphere, and the provision of digital ordering systems to provide more convenience.

Brady and Cronin (2001,34-39), Although SERVQUAL remains in widespread usage, other researchers contend it may be unable to capture the customer's evolving expectations, particularly in the digital age. The model is an alternative framework that analyses the performance of the service instead of comparing expectations with perception (Lee, Lee, and Yoo 2000, 217-220). This means restaurant can use several different frameworks for measuring the quality of the service to get a complete overview of the customer experience.

3.1.4 Net promoter score theory (NPS)

Net promoter score framework serves as a key measurement method for customer experience in restaurant settings. Reichheld (2003, 51-54) argues the methodology quantifies customer loyalty through a single question about recommendation likelihood which categorizes responses into promoters (9-10), passive(7-8), and detractors (0-6).

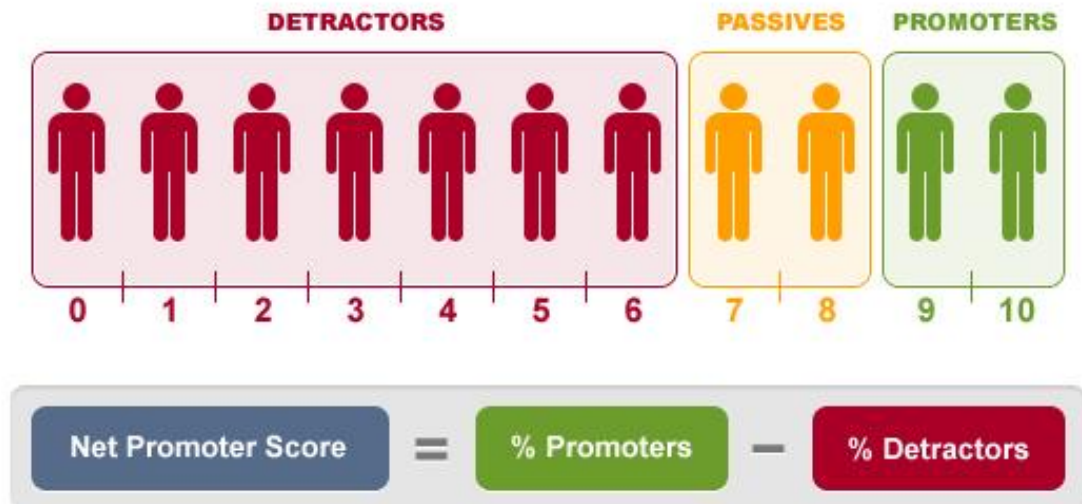


Figure 1: NPS calculator according to Fred Reichheld(n.d)

The NPS calculation (promoters% - Detractors%) enables long-run tracking of customer loyalty trends. Keiningham, Aksoy, Cooil and Andreassen(2008, 51-57) argues, NPS creates a distinguished value when paired with follow-up questions that identify the specific operational drivers to score. Despite its simplicity, optimal measurement requires complementary metrics such as effort score and touch point-specific satisfaction ratings to provide a comprehensive vision of both emotional loyalty and functional excellence (Kristensen & Eskikdsen 2014, 202-210).

Beyond measurement, NPS functions as a strategic enhancement mechanism through its closed-loop feedback system that addresses detractor concerns, reinforcing positive experiences for maintaining their advocacy and cultivating strong loyalty among passives (Reichheld, 2003). In Aggregate, NPS data reveals systemic patterns that enable strategic resource allocation toward high-impact improvements while simultaneously attending to a customer-centric organizational culture through shared metrics and language. This enforcement framework provides an actionable vision for service recovery, loyalty reinforcement, and targeted engagement strategies. Morgan and Rego (2006) demonstrated that restaurants implementing such systems experience measurable improvement in

repurchase intentions and positive word of mouth confirming NPS's practical value in enhancing the overall customer experience.

3.2 Understanding customer experience in restaurant industry

According to Berry, Carbone and Haeckel (2002, 85-89), understanding customer experience encompasses the collective impressions and emotional reactions, customer develop through their interaction with a business, extending beyond the simple provision of food and services in the restaurant. The industry required prioritizing the entire customer journey, develop emotional connections that enhance customer satisfactions and loyalty. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) state that customer experience is a complex concept which include including service, emotional engagement, and brand perception. It requires comprehensive strategies that balance tangible elements, such as food quality and ambiance, with intangibles factors like customer interaction and brand storytelling. Homburg, Jozic and Kuehnl (2017) stated that the intangibles aspects, such as personalized service are critical for differentiating restaurant and creating memorable experiences that strengthen customer loyalty.

The systematic examination of the customer experience within a restaurant establishment requires closely analysis of customer behavioral patterns and perceptual mechanism throughout the service delivery process.

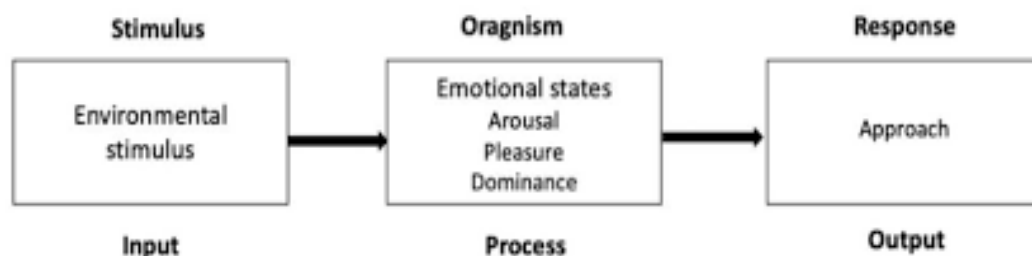


Figure 2: Implement of SOR on understanding customer by Mehrabian & Russell

The model understanding customer experience evaluates influence on customer emotions and behavioral responses during interaction with the company. The models provide restaurants with a systematic framework for enhancing customer experience by mapping how environmental and service elements influences customer emotion and behavior. Meyer and Schwager (2007) demonstrate that SOR theoretical models offered as a foundational framework for understanding customer experience as comprehensive concept that encompass consumer evaluative process during restaurant service encounters, from first seeing the environments through enjoying the dining to share feedback. The model's stimuli encompass all the tangible elements and intangibles elements to create customer impression, while the organism component captures how customers internally process these experiences through

cognitive and emotional responses (Nusairat, Hammouri, Al-Ghadi, Ahmad and Eid, 2020). The responses component connects this internal process to measurable behaviors outcomes including customer behaviors, post visit and loyalty behaviors.

The objective of this model on customer experience is not only to study the direct connection among service factors and satisfactions but also identifies the actionable perception for restaurant to improve their offerings. The models illustrate that the studies may focused on how enhanced staff training for personalized service strengths emotional bonds with customers. The research also evaluates how digitals tools, such as customer feedback or loyalty program used by restaurants could enhance the customer experience and build long-term success.

The models indicates that to achieve a competitive advantage, business must focus on creating compressive customer experience that blend both tangible and intangible. Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2018, 234), by evaluating the emotional and behavioral responses that result from the different aspect of customer journey, business can adopt their strategies to maintain the customer comfort, joy, enjoyment and loyalty in a growing competitive market.

3.3 Service Quality's Role in Customer Experience

According to Parasuraman, Berry and Zeithaml (1985), customer satisfaction and experience in the restaurant are significantly impacted by the service quality. High quality services enhance Customer perception, brand loyalty and drives positive comments which give restaurant a competitive edge in business market (Ladhari, 2009). Measuring service quality allows restaurants to identify gaps, tailor's experiences and evolving customer expectations. Thos section examines the Serviqual models in assessing service quality, the influence of technology and practical strategies for optimizing customer experience in restaurants.

The SERVQUAL model remains one of commonly used approach for analysing the quality of the service. Gaur and Agrawal (2006, 317-330.) present the SERVQUAL model, which points to five dimensions of the quality of the service: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness. This conceptual framework predicts the seminal work of personalized service quality through five dimensions reliability (consistency in the delivery of promised services), responsiveness (promptness in response to customer requirements), and assurance. (competence and courtesy of the personnel), empathy (personalized care), and tangibles (physical setting, equipment, and appearance of the staff). With the help of systematic approach, restaurants can measure the difference expectation and experience by the customers. These dimensions are central to comprehending how restaurants can satisfy and

exceed customer expectations. Kim and Moon's (2009) research shows that the quality of the service determines customer satisfaction, which in turn determines business and verbal communication recommendations. Technology in the digital age also plays a major role in customer experiences.

The application of the model in the context restaurant can be used to assess its level of quality in the service as well as areas for improvement to provide a smoother and more satisfactory experience for the customer. Digital aspect, self-service kiosks, mobile order apps, and AI-based recommendations make it convenient and customized, leading to higher customer satisfaction (KEI, 2018). The SERVQUAL model has also its own limitation such as it is unable to capture the evolving nature of customer expectations, particularly in the digital aspect (Brady and Cronin, 2001). The critics argue that applying the gap between expectations and perception in the model may fail to capture the customer's absolute satisfaction since expectations vary significantly among different demographic groups and cultural backgrounds (Parasuraman, Berry and Zeithaml, 2002).

Digital interfaces, mobile ordering, and AI-based personalization has impact the Service quality in the technology-based hotel field, which requires other dimensions beyond the traditional SERVQUAL dimensions (Wirtz and Lovelock, 2021). A performance-based approach in the context of Seoul88 can make the strategy for the provision of the service more streamlined by focusing on real-time inputs of the customer as well as operating efficiency with theory-driven strategies the research indicates the emotional connection in the impact of customer service quality perception (Homburg, Jozić, and Kuehnl, 2017). Personalized interactions, responsiveness to customer preferences, and anticipatory resolution of issues enrich the dining experience, enhancing brand-positive relationships and customer loyalty (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). The restaurants still adjusting to shifting consumer expectations, and the integration of legacy and innovative strategies to approach service quality can be a valuable lesson in Customer optimization.

3.4 Experience measured as customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is a key to success in any business, especially in the hospitality industry as it directly impacts in customer recognition, word-of-mouth communication, and profitability (Oliver, 2014). Toister (2021) business is driven by the customer by what they feel, or need and the role of business is to measure as well as understand the needs to fulfil which aligns the customer expectation. The fulfilment of customer's expectations with quality services will help to return them to the business.

The Expectation Disconfirmation Model is the most used framework for the measurement of satisfaction, evaluating whether the provision of the service meets, surpasses, or falls short of customer expectations (Sánchez-Rebull, Rudchenko, and Martín, 2018). A customer's experience surpassing expectations guide to satisfaction through positive disconfirmation, while negative disconfirmation guide to dissatisfaction (Oliver, 2014).



Figure 3: Expectation Disconfirmation Model on customer satisfaction by Oliver, 1970

The model evaluates the customer experience through four interconnected terms: expectation, perceived performance, disconfirmation, and satisfaction (Mill, 2011). Pre-consumption expectations are shaped by marketing and promotional efforts, while perceived performance reflects customers' subjective interpretation of service encounters (Parasuraman et al, 1998). A customer's experience surpassing expectations leads to satisfaction through positive disconfirmation, while negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction (Oliver, 2014). (Mill 2011.8) observes that confirmation does not guarantee satisfaction as the relationship between these variables is complex. According to Spreng, Mackenzie and Olshavavsky (1996, 15-32), Companies implement EDT through a comparative survey or gap analysis to identify the important priorities, allowing for targeted enhancements to service elements that most significantly influence customer experience quality.

The objective research indicates that restaurants with high customer satisfaction ratings will likely enjoy higher customer loyalty and profitability (Homburg, Koschate, and Hoyer, 2017). In the context of a restaurant, delivering high-quality food, good service, and a cozy environment can lead to positive disconfirmation and higher customer satisfaction. An effective customer feedback mechanism can provide the company with important information about areas of improvement, enabling it to adjust its service strategies in advance (Ladhari 2009, 325-330). However, there are concerns among some researchers that even though there is a direct connection between customer satisfaction and loyalty, which does not guarantee the return of the customer (Mittal & Kamakura, 2001). Emotional connection, brand identity, and general experience are other determinants of customer behaviour (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Kumar, Pozza and Ganesh (2013) study suggests, firms

should go beyond the quest for customer satisfaction to create more engagement through customized interactions and loyalty programs.

In competitive restaurant markets, the customers' expectations are always in a state of flux. Digital platforms have made it easy for consumers to easily compare options and switch to the competition in the case of a non-fulfilment of expectations Bolton, Kannan and Bramlett (2000, 95-108). This calls for the business to be in a state of continuous innovation and upgradation of its offerings. By embracing the latest technology, such as mobile ordering, AI-based recommendations, and real-time feedback systems, the restaurant can enrich the overall dining experience and engage customers at a higher level than satisfaction

3.5 Cultural influence on customer experience

Cultural variations highly influence customer expectations, perceptions of the restaurant, and the customer experience (Orr & Hauser, 2008). Cultural variations in the restaurant should be understood and applied in multicultural restaurants like Seoul88 to deliver personalized and satisfactory customer interactions. Different cultures have varying expectations regarding the nature of the service, communication, and hospitality, which necessitates a flexible and open-minded restaurant management approach. Patterson and Mattila, (2008) Research highlights significant cultural variations in the expectations of the service, namely between Asian and Western consumers. Asian consumers often anticipate high-touch service emphasizing attentiveness, respect, and warmth, which reflects collectivist cultural orientations (Hofstede, 2001). Individualistic cultures among Western consumers anticipate efficiency, act independently, and clearly define frameworks for the service (Liu, Furrer & Sudharshan, 2001). In the context of Seoul88, such differences indicate the requirement for a balanced strategy toward the service with varying degrees of engagement and personalization.

Nonetheless, cultural generalizations may oversimplify customers' behaviour and produce rigid service strategies that ignore personal tastes (Reimann, Lünemann & Chase, 2008). Minkov and Hofstede (2012) Critics argue that general cultural frameworks such as those of cannot capture intra-cultural diversity in addition to customers' evolving expectations due to globalization. Companies should, thus adopt a more flexible approach, including real-time customer feedback and responsive service strategies, rather than relying solely on preconceived cultural standards. Mattila and Patterson (2004) state Cultural sensitivity can be applied practically in restaurants through cultural awareness training for the workers. The workers can be trained in cultural etiquette, communication, and dining traditions to provide tailored experiences for diverse clients.

3.6 Role of feedback in enhancing service quality

Customer feedback is a critical instrument for firms to find areas for enhancement and connect service offerings with customer expectations (Suharto, Shankar & Nguyen, 2019). Customer view is most important in the hospitality industry, and customer feedback can shape the quality of the service, brand image, and customer experience (Gupta & Harris, 2010). Online reviews are various channels through which to obtain valuable information regarding consumer preferences and pain points. Studies by, Sparks and Browning (2011) indicate that companies that take up customer feedback send a message of continuous improvement, strengthening customer confidence and brand credibility.

For a restaurant, the use of customer feedback can lead to targeted improvements in the business. Online reviews at websites such as Google and TripAdvisor is open recommendations to the general public, shaping future customers' opinions. online recommendations can make a restaurant more attractive and drive customer loyalty. Moreover, real-time complaint systems such as surveys after a restaurant visit and ratings through mobile apps enable companies to promptly rectify the situation and tailor the experience to customers (Mauri & Minazzi, 2013). With an efficient feedback mechanism, Company can quickly resolve customer complaints, resulting in higher satisfaction and loyalty. However, all the mechanisms for giving feedback do not yield reliable information. Customers may provide biased, hyperbolic, or emotional remarks, which yield incorrect conclusions. Online reviews may also be ruined by false inputs, which are very favourable or very unfavourable, thus that mislead business performance ratings (Filiari 2015, 46-54). Restaurants will have to adopt a balanced strategy towards collecting and interpreting the views of the customers, both qualitative as well as quantitative sources of information for a comprehensive understanding.

To ensure the credibility of the collection of the feedback, Net Promoter Score (NPS) can be employed by the restaurant, which measures or tracks customer loyalty and satisfaction using a simple scale (Reimann Lünemann & Chase, 2008). Sentiment analysis by artificial intelligence can also be applied to distinguish between good criticism and non-representative or outlier comments (Homburg, Ehm & Artz, 2015). By combining data analytics with customer feedback, restaurant can make data-driven decisions in order to enhance its offerings in order to ensure sustainable growth and competitiveness.

4 Developing a concept for enhancing and evaluating customer experience

This chapter aimed to measure and enhance customer experience at seoul88 restaurant by developing and implementing a service evaluation framework. In this chapter, we describe the theoretical basis of a questionnaire, methodological implementation, and outcomes of the research conducted for this thesis. The functional component involved creating a tailored questionnaire for lunch and dinner service using net promoter score to measure customer satisfaction.

The research employed a quantitative research method to systematically collect the data that could be statistically analyzed, providing measurable insight into how customers perceive their experience. The following analysis of survey results through visual data representations evaluates both strengths and weaknesses in customer experience based on the collected research data, ultimately notifying targeted service improvement recommendations.

4.1 The survey theory

The customer experience evaluation for seoul88 restaurant was done by conducting an online survey that applied quantitative research methods. (Adam & Lawrence 2019,104) state that Online surveys represent a powerful research tool that allows researchers to connect with many people at the same time and gather large amounts of data. The online survey based on quantitative methodology was the most appropriate in this study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 414). The studies show online surveys gave flexible design components cost-effective operations and accessibility to more participants (Sadan, 2017). DiPietro, Parsa and Gregory (2011, 985-990) shows that quantitative research provides restaurants with their specific assessment number and percentages to monitor how their experiences evolve with time. The online survey was used for the primary data collection method; the obtained result helps to analyze customer experience and used for improvement in the future.

The survey is widely used in the hospitality industry to measure factors like customer satisfaction, service quality, and expectation which are essential for building loyalty and ensuring business sustainability (Kandampully & solnet,2019). (Bell et al.,2022) stated that the advantage of using a survey strategy efficiently collects data in the digital world and gains insightful information. It anonymously helps people connect with the clients and invites honest feedback (Mason 2022, 83-82). However, limitations exist such as difficulty in assessing respondent seriousness, potential technological barriers, and low response rate (Dillman, Smyth & Christian, 2014). In order to lessen this problem, the questionnaire included a cover letter (appendix 1) which made the survey with easy clear instructions and safe data procedures.

The survey consists of a variety of question types to collect the detail information from customer maintaining engagement with relevant questionnaire. The questionnaire combined multiple choice and scale-based questions to make clear, measure responses with a limited number of open-ended questions to capture customer perspective (Burn, Honer & Semley, 2017, 108). Multiple choice questions allowed participants to select from specified options, scale-based (1 to 5) Likert scales measured agreement with statements about service experience and few closed-ended questions-maintained ease of data processing which allowed customers to share unanticipated feedback (flower, 2014).

The survey was based SERVQUAL model where we mainly evaluate service quality in five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Daniel & Berinyuy, 2010). This model was complemented by the expectation disconfirmation theory which believes that customer satisfaction is mainly depends on whether the actual service meets or exceeds expectations (Oliver,1980). By integrating these frameworks, the survey captured insight into customer satisfaction and service quality. In addition, Net Promoter Score was implemented to categorize customers as promoters, passive, or detractors based on their likelihood of recommending restaurants, providing clear measures of customer loyalty and brand advocacy

Thus, this survey attempted to generate a baseline measurement of customer experience at seoul88 through strategic planning and the restaurant could monitor operational improvements over age. The response was analyzed to discover the customer loyalty, service, and brand advocacy area requiring enhancement scenery of the customer experience the statistics provided an aspect of what the customer wanted and what was achieved but needed to be improved. The research uses customer feedback to develop strategies that improve customer experience and support the restaurant for further development and linear growth into the competitive market.

4.2 Survey implementation description

Firstly, the survey research development started with a detailed discussion with the client. In the meeting, the client specified the data they aimed to collect from each service. Collaboratively, we evaluated such as the questionnaire's user friendlies for respondents, placements of the survey forms, methods of storing responses, and the approach to analysing the findings. A draft of the questionnaire was designed to meet both clients and thesis objectives Answer as it was approved by the clients before the survey began.

The survey questionnaire was developed using Google Forms where user can send their responses via online and QR codes were distributed at various points in the restaurant which allow the user to participate into survey directly in a convenient . The questionnaire consists of six items which were aimed at evaluating key aspects way of the customer experience,

service quality, satisfaction, and expectation. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix 2. The whole survey was designed to ensure customer privacy. No personally identifiable information was even collected; it was 100 percent anonymous. The survey period was during the 3 weeks starting from April 1, 2025, to ensure the widest representativeness possible amongst customers. The study duration permitted data collection from different days of the week and across different meal periods, focusing on the lunch service, which is one of the significant strong points of Seoul88's customer base.

The survey was done on a mobile-responsive online platform so the participants could easily access it from their smartphones. The survey skipped logic to improve the user's experience on the survey so that it does not contain irrelevant questions. It was a much more streamlined process and less frustrating for customers. The responses were encrypted, and the data was stored on password-protected servers to maintain confidentiality. The platform offered analytics features to do preliminary data analysis while collecting data.

Quantitative methods were used in the survey design to collect the detail perceptions of customers regarding our business. The estimated completion time was 10 to 15 minutes, so customers had enough time to post their reviews to provide quick and informative feedback. The customer enhancing survey for Seoul88 was carried out with a structured way of getting meaningful data while observing the ethical research ways. The usage of the survey was to get feedback from customers on different aspects of their experience, what led the customers to the restaurant, whether their expectations were met or not, the unique characteristics of a restaurant, and what are the measure need to be taken to improve the customer satisfaction including other areas of the restaurant.

From the survey 36 valid responses were collected, which relatively present the sample size of the customer base which is not quite a representative figure for the customer base but still added some value in understanding customer satisfaction and their overall experience in seoul88. According to the survey results, the results from the survey were utilized to come up with ideas to improve customer experience. Beside evaluating customer experience, the idea behind the study is to provide practical advice to the client on how to enhance customer satisfaction. The goal was to identify minor adjustments and initiatives that could evaluate customer satisfaction from fulfilling basic expectations to exceeding them.

4.3 The survey result

The sub-section illustrates the comprehensive examination of the survey responses which provides the methodical analysis of each question to uncover insight into customer experience. Customer experience is main aspect in this type of businesses because it is one of the most important influencing factors of customer faith and satisfaction. Understanding what attracts customers to the restaurant and identifying what the trade element is helps Seoul88

Restaurant to make better improvements to meet the customer needs. This knowledge allows restaurants to focus on the target what does it best and a make change to improve the areas that need to be enhanced.

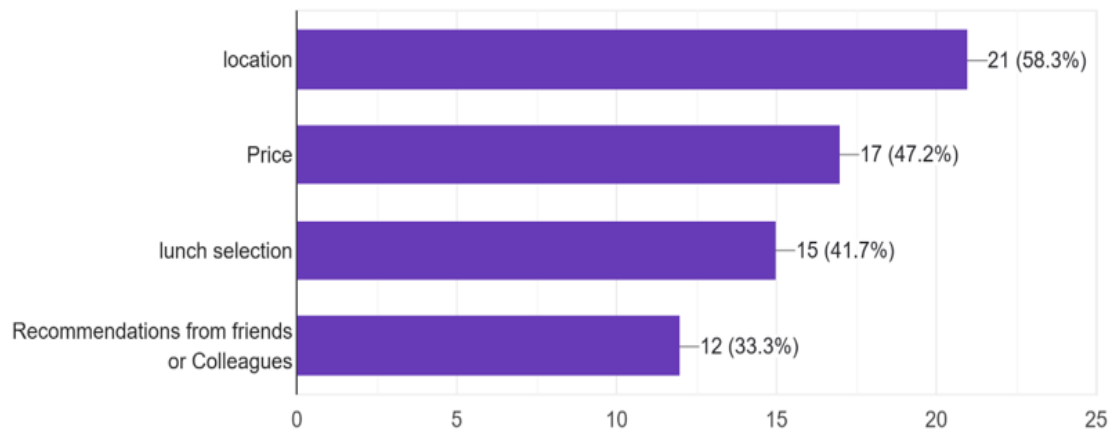


Figure 4: Factors attracting customer (n=36)

The number of participants in survey appears more than actual participant even though the total participant in the survey was 36. The difference appears because each participant can choose multiple answers from the questionnaire. As seen in the figure 4 the numbers indicate the same response is answering the different questions because of that the result is dissimilar than expected result (n=36).

The Restaurant's location was the most attractive factor for people as it played a part in 21 respondents (58.3%) of the complainants coming to the restaurants as demonstrated in Figure 4. Due to its central location, Seoul88 is well-positioned to serve numerous businesses, providing convenient access for nearby professionals. This suggests that location still matters even when it comes to restaurants as evidenced in existing literature that shows a significant role of location choices. Locations have frequently been pointed out as a competitive advantage by any restaurant in an area that is convenient and may play a significant role in keeping regular customers.

Besides locations, price with 17 respondents (47.2%) and lunch selection with 15 respondents (41.7%) were also the key attraction factors which meant that customers were also driven by the price and a good variety in the lunch. These results are consistent with studies highlighting that competitive pricing and diversifying menus are the keyways for the restaurant that stand out in a long-term business market. Moreover, 12 respondents (33.3%) indicated that they were influenced by recommendations from friends or colleagues which

highlights that word of mouth plays a significant role in attracting customers to the restaurant.



Figure 5:- what Differentiate compared to another restaurant (n=35)

As shown in figure 5, the question got responded by 35 customers where the lunch selection with 14 respondents (40%) and price with 10 respondents (28.6%) stood as the most different aspects of seoul88 compared to other restaurants. The results also show that customers prefer restaurants offering good value and wideness of menu item offerings which are often interpreted as value and variety. In contrast Ambience with 5 respondents (14.3%) and authenticity with 1 (2.9%) which were much less mentioned as shown in figure 4. While ambience and authenticity do contribute to the overall experience, they neither seem to be as important to customers' perception of Seoul88. Moreover, they suggest that the restaurants are perceived more from a value proposition or menu selection type than because of the atmosphere or the fact that the restaurant is perceived as very authentic as Korea.

This feedback highlights that competitive pricing and menu diversity are the restaurant industry's key differentiators when customers have a vast choice of dining options.

Considering this, seoul88 should these elements of the dining restaurant experience remain essential, the restaurant may concentrate on improving what customers value most, competitive prices, and diverse lunch options. Simultaneously, the restaurant could consider

enhancing important aspects of the dining experience particularly focused on ambiance and authenticity in order to offer customers a memorable experience.

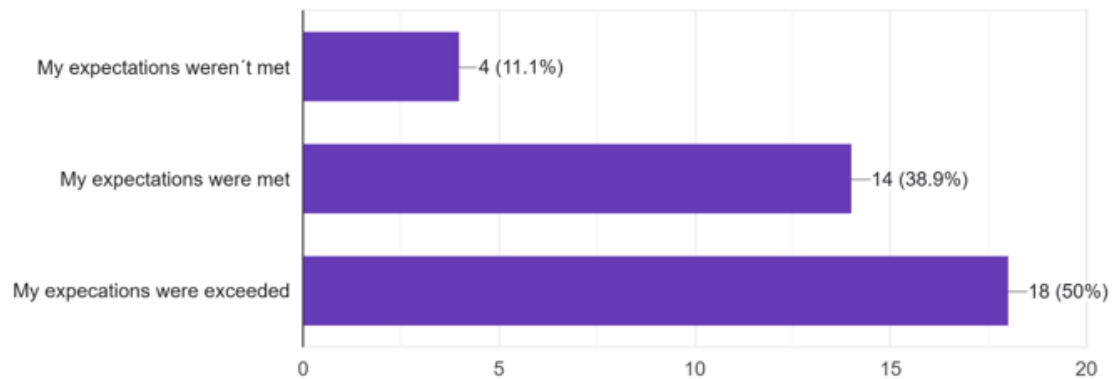


Figure 6: Meet Service quality to customer expectations (n=36)

Quality service is crucial for any organization, especially in the hospitality industry where customer experience closely analyses the service such as how they treat customers, how quickly they serve, and how well the expectations are met.

According to our recent survey, the question shows the majority of 36 participants. The customer feedback analysis shows that seoul88 has generally performed well in delivering service quality that aligns with the exceeded customer expectations. As shown in Figure 5, the data indicates that in total 88.9% of the survey, customers had expressed satisfaction with their experience, especially with the 18 respondents (50%) reporting that seoul88 exceeded their service expectations and 14 respondents (38.9%) state their expectations were quite fulfilled. Only the 4 respondents (11.1%) of customers felt that their expectations were not met.

This result highlights that seoul88 successfully delivered service and suggests a healthy potential for customer loyalty and positive recommendations. However, the small percentage (11.1%) of dissatisfied customers indicates room for enhancing customer service quality. The issue arises from service inconsistencies during busy periods when a high number of customers creates operational pressure and an increase in workload. To overcome this aspect seoul88 should implement an enhanced staff training program, standardize service procedures, and develop efficient service recovery strategies when issues arise.

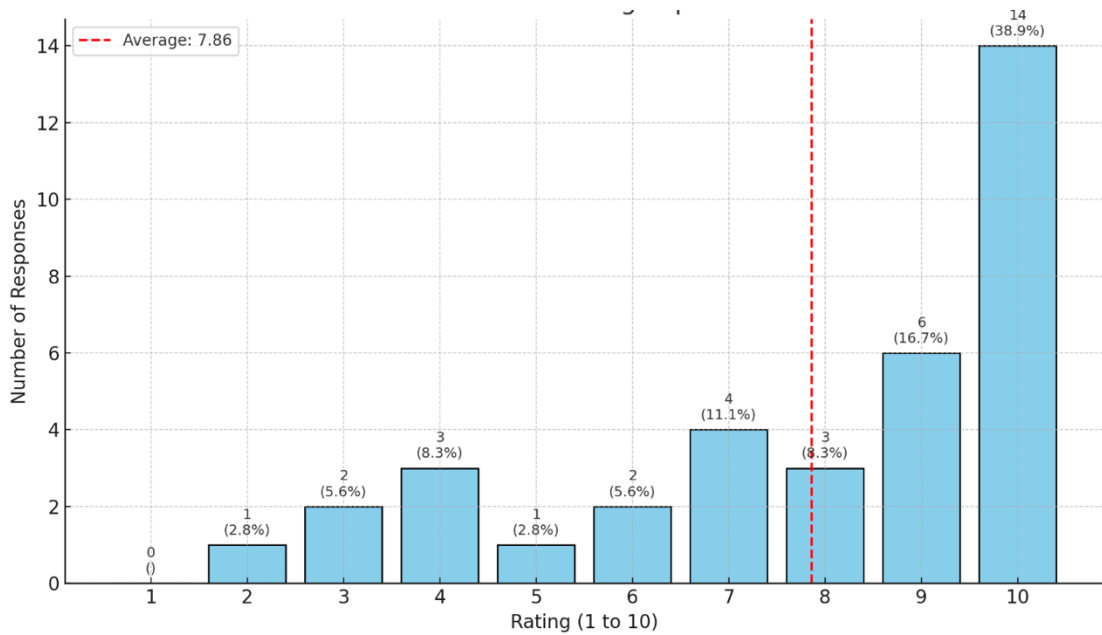


Figure 7: Customer satisfaction rating (n=36)

Based on the survey results, a total of 36 respondents rated their satisfaction level on a 1 to 10-point scale which generally shows a positive result. The distribution peaked at rating 10 which was selected by the 14 respondents (38.9%) which indicates a substantial proportion of customers experienced a high level of satisfaction. In addition, 6 respondents (16.7%) with a rating of 9 which further corroborates the prevalence of positive experiences among the surveyed customers.

The mean satisfaction score is estimated to be around an average of 7.86, but most of the ratings are markedly bounced toward the high-end scale suggesting that the average score should be strong. Despite the overall feedback, a smaller percentage included lower ratings, ranging from 2 to 6 which suggests the dissatisfaction of customers. 2 respondents (5.6%) with a rating of 6, and 1 respondent (2.8%) gave a rating of 2 which highlights that the customer have complete negative experience.

The survey data indicate that seoul88 maintains a strong performance in customer satisfaction. However, the presence of lower ratings suggests that inconsistencies in service or food quality need more research. Addressing these areas could improve the overall customer satisfaction and increase customer loyalty.

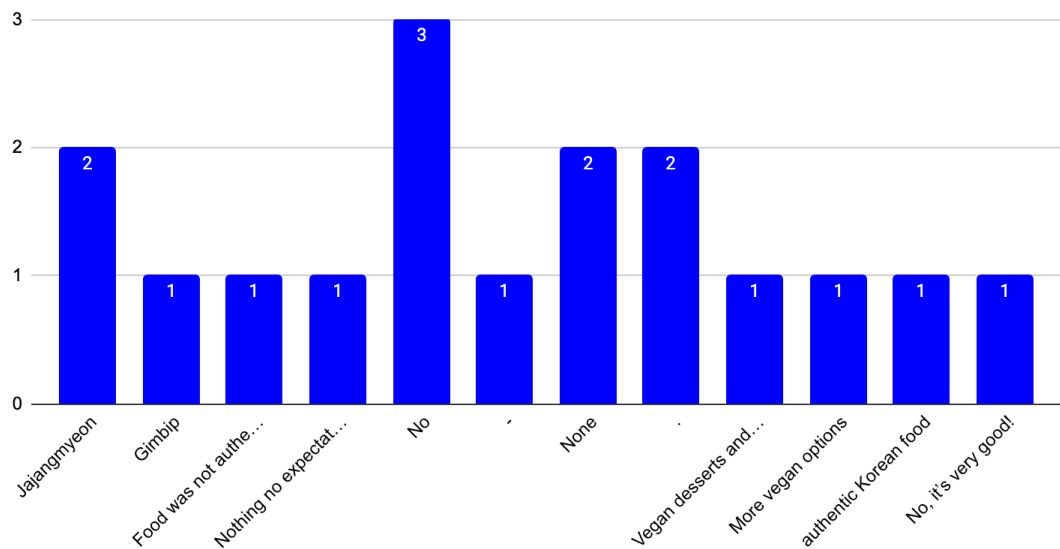


Figure 8: product gaps development (n=17)

As shown in Figure 8, the question got 17 responses, the survey result identifies a significant gap in the seoul88 menu offering where the customer revealed dissatisfaction with the absence of the desired food option. Specifically, 3 respondents noted a lack of food including vegan options, while 2 respondents missing authentic Korean dishes and specific Korean cuisine, these areas where the menu falls short of expectation. The gap demonstrates a clear misalignment between customer expectations and current menu offerings which potentially affect customer satisfaction even when the food quality is excellent. Modern diners increasingly expect restaurants to accommodate dietary preferences and provide genuine culture through authenticity in ethnic cuisine. The growing vegan and vegetarian options movement represents a substantial market segment that seoul88 is currently underserving while the customer's request more authentic Korean options which indicates that customers want to know more about the Korean culinary tradition.

The customer feedback indicates dissatisfaction with the menu description which did not match what actually they were expecting could lead to disappointment during the overall experience. By identifying these areas of gaps such as vegan option, lack of regional authenticity and unclear menu description seoul88 can significantly enhance customer expectation and satisfaction. This improvement can strengthen seoul88 in a competitive business position and reinforce its reputation as leading among other restaurants.

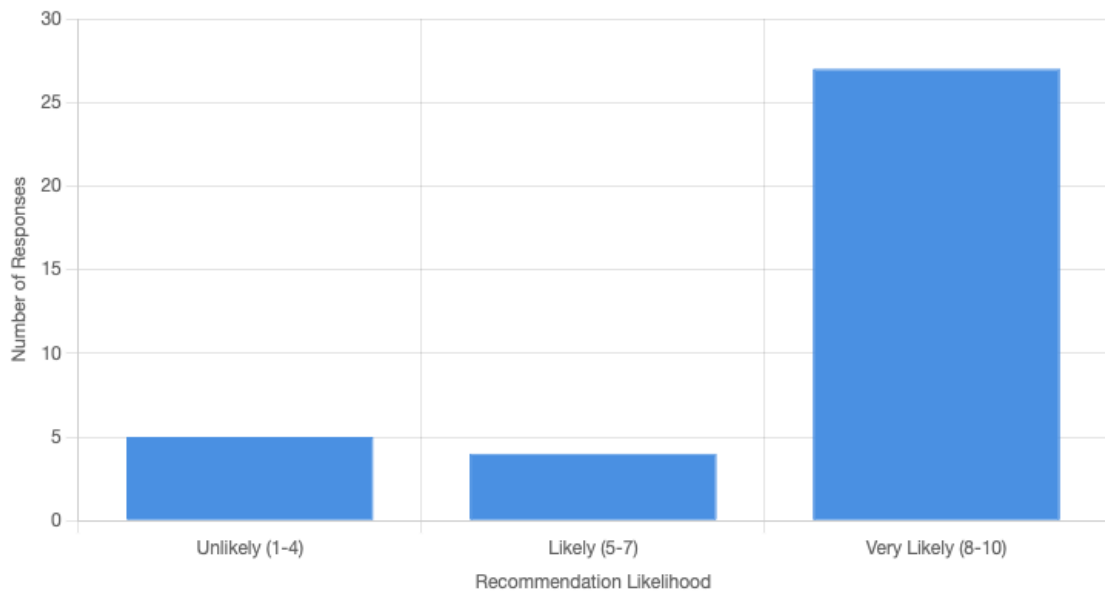


Figure 9: Service Recommendation(n=36)

According to the correct Net Promoter Score (NPS), the evaluation rating should be categorized as follows: 0 to 6 “unlikely”, 7 to 8 “likely” and 9 to 10 “very likely”. However, there was a mistake while creating the question, we initially used an incorrect scale of 1 to 4 “unlikely”, 5 to 7 “likely” and 8 to 10 “very likely”. This has since been adjusted to align with the standard NPS measurement. The rating provided by the respondent reflects the perception of their likelihood to value using a scale similar to the net promoter score framework.

As shown in Figure 9, 36 responses were collected and 27 respondents emphasized that they are very likely(8-10) to recommend the restaurant which promotes positive word of mouth that is essential for long-term success in the restaurant industry. However, 5 respondents rated unlikely (1-4) which indicates a risk of negative feedback where customers share unfavourable experiences more frequently than positive ones which can affect the restaurant's reputation. In addition, 5 respondents rated likely(score 5-7) which reflects modern enthusiasm.

Although the restaurant has a high percentage of promoters, having a percentage of detractors could indicate that something is wrong. So, it means people tend to talk more about bad experiences rather than good ones which can impact the business reputation and potential customers.

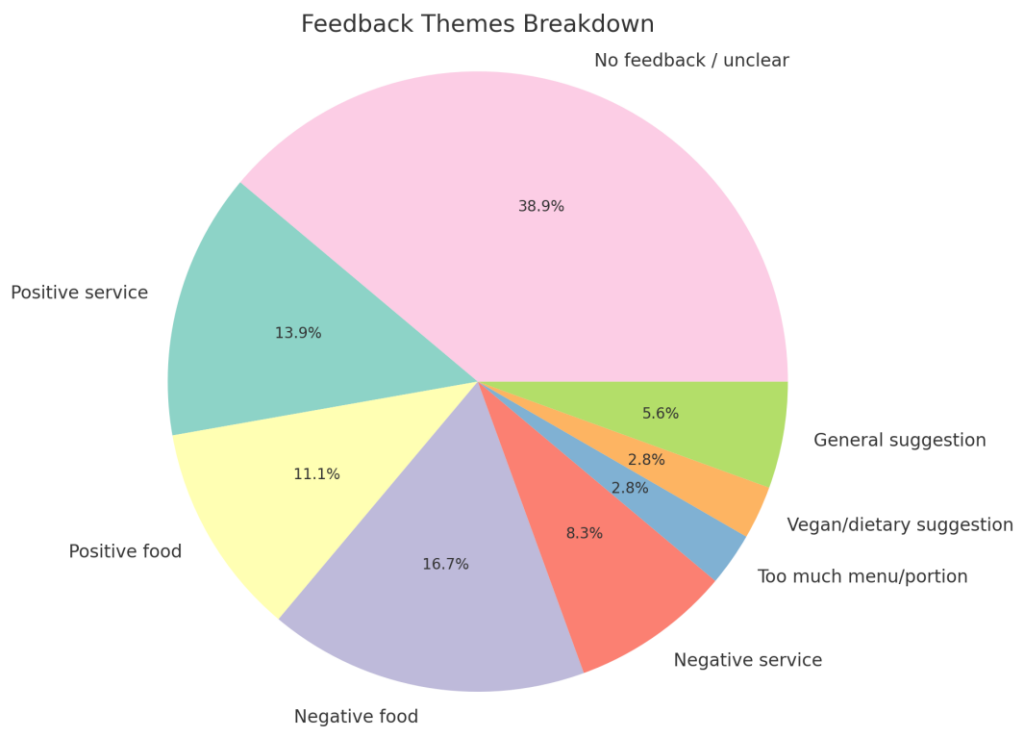


Figure 10:- feedback on open-ended answer (n=24)

The feedback analysis from open ended answer questionnaire offers a valuable understanding of the customer experience and highlights the opportunity for enhancement. Nearly 30.6% of responses contained positive feedback praising our excellent food quality, service, and thoughtful touches like complimentary coffee with cake offerings. The data reveals specific areas requiring focus on improvement to elevate our overall guest experience. Food quality concerns were mentioned by 16.7% of respondents who noted issues with over-seasoning, inconsistent texture(either too greasy or dry), and a limited variety of menu options. Service efficiency during the peak period emerged as another key opportunity area with the responses of 8,3%. The comment suggests that restaurants need to better manage staffing during peak periods and create more efficient service without losing personal attention.

The general suggestion 5.6% request the proper food and service, which highlights that customers believe basic food and service are essential for a great experience. Additionally, by implementing target improvements including comprehensive culinary reviews focused on preparation consistency, strategic staff training adjustment for peak periods, and regular innovation on the menu incorporating guest feedback. This enhancement will not only increase customer satisfaction but also change casual diners into passionate advocates who recommend our restaurant to others.

4.4 Suggestions for enhancing customer experience

Based on the survey feedback received from customers, the survey result offers insight strengths and weaknesses of customer experience which can be enhanced through continual improvement. Firstly, the restaurant ambiance must need to be improved in order to make it more welcoming and inviting to customers. Recent customer experience feedback has revealed the key areas of improvement for development across three main categories customer food, service, and additional offerings, The suggestion for developing the customer experience of soul88 restaurant is based on the customer feedback which is presented in figure.

Category	Development suggestion
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -improve food quality - make good Korean cuisine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reduce greasiness - offer vegan desserts
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expand menu option - streamline food choices - maintain high service standards
Extra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -offer coffee and cakes - test dessert options - thanks to customers at the end

Figure 11: Suggestions for enhancing customer experience

From the study it is noticed that there are inconsistencies in the service quality, enhancing the efficiency of the service through intensive staff training will allow faster and more responsive interactions, and create a seamless dining experience. Additionally, expanding the menu options with Korean-inspired dishes and customizable choices will cater to varied tastes, while streamlining the menu layout will simplify navigation and improve decision-making for customers. Maintaining high service standards through regular training programs will equip staff with the knowledge and Interpersonal skills needed for exceptional customer service.

Furthermore, soul88 can enhance customer experience by offering coffee and cake on the weekends to create a unique attraction and encourage repeat visits. Testing new dessert options through customers will allow the restaurant to refine the menu based on direct

feedback. Training staff to personally thank customers as they leave will create a warm, welcoming atmosphere along with enhancing loyalty. Strengthening online ordering and delivery platforms aligned with market campaigns and exclusive online offers will enhance the brand and attract more customers. By implementing these suggestions, seoul88 can enhance and create a more inviting atmosphere, elevate food and service quality, and leverage digital opportunities to enhance customer satisfaction and strengthen its market presence.

5 Conclusions

The objective of this thesis was to evaluate and improve the customer's experience in Seoul88, by identifying the areas of improvement such as increasing quality of the services, customer satisfaction, and customer expectation. The study aims to explore the key factors contributing to customer satisfaction and service quality, understand what attracts customers, assess how well the dining experience meets expectations, and propose solutions to improve the overall experience. It also examined factors that contribute to challenges in delivering a consistent dining experience. Using a quantitative research approach with online surveys, the study collects data from a diverse customer base, reflecting and indicating broad across various customers. The finding confirms seoul88 strong performance with an average satisfaction and net promoters score reflected notable customer loyalty. The Net promoter score analysis indicates a strong likelihood of customer recommendation, highlighting the restaurant's positive reputation. This favorable word of mouth serves as a strategy for attracting new customers and sustaining customer growth.

The survey results highlight that Seoul88 delivers a commendable customer experience while expressing customer overall satisfaction. However, the research identified the key areas requiring attention to sustain and elevate this success. Service inconsistencies during peak hours, limited menu diversity, particularly demand for authenticity and the need for more culinary immersive ambiance were noted as challenges. Customer feedback also emphasized the importance of stringer digital engagement, such as real-time feedback to remain responsive to remaining needs. By investing and enhancing staff training, expanding menu offerings, and enhancing the dining atmosphere, seoul88 can address these weaknesses and further strengthen customer satisfaction.

The insight from this study provides seoul88 with actionable strategies to solidify its market position. Implementing recommendations, such as staff development programs, menu diversification, and leveraging digital tools will enhance customer consistency and customer engagement. By creating a more culturally authentic and welcoming environment and

maintaining a customer-centric approach, Seoul88 can boost retention, attract new customers, and ensure long-term business in the competitive restaurant industry.

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Free version (Grammarly) has been used to edit the text language.

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Assessing and Improving Customer Satisfaction: A Survey on Seoul88.

B I U ☒ ✕

Thank you for dining at *Seoul 88*! This questionnaire aims to gather insights into customer experiences at Seoul88, focusing on satisfaction, service quality, and areas for improvement. We value your feedback and would love to hear about your experience. This short survey will help us improve our food, service, and overall atmosphere to serve you better. Your responses are greatly appreciated and will remain confidential.

Image title



Appendix 2: Questionnaire question

1. What attracts you to visit the Seoul88 restaurant?

- location
- Price
- lunch selection
- Recommendations from friends or Colleagues

...

2. what did you find different in the Seoul88 restaurant?

- price
- lunch selection
- ambiance
- Other...
.....



3. Did our services meet your expectations?

My expectations weren't met

My expectations were met

My expectations were exceeded

Other...

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied were you with your overall dining experience at Seoul88? Overall Satisfaction



5. Was there any food you desired but didn't find? what was it?

Short answer text

6. Would you recommend our services to a friend?

Unlikely- likely- Very Likely



7. Did we manage to impressed you? if not, what could we work for improvement?

Short answer text