

Customer satisfaction for restaurants

An analysis of TripAdvisor reviews

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Master's Thesis
International Business Management
2020

DEGREE THESIS	
Arcada	
Degree Programme:	International Business Management
Identification number:	7391
Author:	Georgii Gabrichidze
Title:	Customer satisfaction for restaurants – an analysis of
	TripAdvisor reviews
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Abstract:

Customer satisfaction is the gap between a customer's initial expectations of a product or service and when they utilize the product or service. Social media, on the other hand, is an interconnected platform that allows customers to interact with sellers and at the same time allows customers to interact with other customers on the same platform. TripAdvisor is one of the many applications, available on the internet, which serves the traveling community. TripAdvisor holds up to 490 million active monthly users and receives 7000 new reviews per hour. The aim of this study was to analyze customer satisfaction of 9 hamburger restaurants in Helsinki with an average rating above 3 stars according to TripAdvisor, excluding large fast-food chains. A content analysis of TripAdvisor reviews was applied to achieve the aim of the study. The study was limited by the investigated number of restaurants, period of reviews and the choice of the platform. The analysis showed that quality of food and quality of services are the most mentioned topics in the reviews. Customers value the freshness of ingredients and the 'home-made' feature more than the atmosphere in the restaurant and its location. It was also revealed that the most popular topic of positive comments on the food was regarding the taste of the French fries. Failing to keep customers satisfied can negatively affect the restaurant's ratings as well as decrease customer loyalty.

Keywords:	Customer Satisfaction, TripAdvisor, Customer Reviews, Burger, Restaurants
Number of pages:	48
Language:	English
Date of acceptance:	

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to indeed.com (2020), customer satisfaction determines whether consumers are happy with the products or services offered to them by the company. Customer satisfaction is directly linked to customer retention and companies' sustainability. Measuring customer satisfaction provides data on how a company will perform in the future while measuring sales indicates the company's performance in the past or present. Lumoa (2020) suggests that there are several reasons why customer satisfaction is of great importance for any organization: (1) Retaining customers is much cheaper than acquiring new ones, (2) Reputation is powerful, (3) It is a crowded marketplace, (4) Customer satisfaction busts growth, (5) Customer satisfaction improves employee morale. Considering all this it is safe to say that it is crucial for companies to monitor and improve customer satisfaction.

The restaurant business is a good example of a business that depends heavily on high customer satisfaction and retention. According to Walker (2011), restaurants can be divided into several categories (although sometimes one restaurant can fit into several categories): (1) Quick-service restaurants, (2) Family restaurants, (3) Casual restaurants, (4) Dinner houses, (5) Ethnic restaurants, (6) Fine-dining restaurants. This thesis will focus on customer satisfaction in burger restaurants in Helsinki. Burger restaurants are a good example of restaurants that can fit into different restaurant categories.

Burgers are arguably one of the tastiest creations of the food industry and Finland homes some of the best burger restaurants in Europe (Clayton-Lea, 2019). Burgers are so popular that in 2015 in France alone the number of consumed burgers reached 1,19 billion (Lusinski, 2016). Here are some statistics on burgers from the Facts Legend (2018):

- In the USA 50 billion burgers are eaten annually.
- Hamburgers and cheeseburgers make up 71% of total beef served in hotels in the US.
- 60% of sandwiches sold around the world are hamburgers.

McDonald's sells over 75 burgers per second.

However, the burger industry is not presented by fast-food chains exclusively. There has recently been a rise of mid-range burger restaurants, which use high-quality ingredients and share the backstory of products that they get from local farms. Nixon (2018) in her blog states (based on an American study) that 3 out of 5 customers find it important to know where the beef of their burger comes from. This approach allows them to sell burgers for a significantly higher price, than fast-food restaurants, as 40% of customers are willing to purchase burgers with "premium" ingredients at a slightly or even significantly higher price. The demand for white meat in burgers is also on the rise in America. 46% of customers wished there more chicken burgers and 42% of clients wanting more turkey burgers (Nixon, 2018).

As for Finland, according to TripAdvisor, there are 114 burger restaurants in Helsinki alone. Out of different possible perspectives of analysing the local market, this study will pay attention to the customer reviews of the restaurants. One of the key components of a successful restaurant is knowing your customers' demographic and needs combined with encouraging them to give their feedback and react to it (Wilson, 2016). The more feedback a restaurant can get the better. However, one should not turn encouraging customers to incentivize them to leave feedback in exchange for some sort of benefits. Nowadays customers have a variety of feedback tools, such as point of sale system (POS), email or text, popular review websites (Yelp, TripAdvisor, Google, etc.) (Wenzl, no date).

This study will focus on the TripAdvisor platform as a database, due to its simple interface and large user involvement. According to TripAdvisor statistics, 72% of consumers often or always browse through reviews before deciding what to eat. TripAdvisor has up to 490 million active monthly users and 7000 new reviews per hour (G., 2020).

1.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this thesis is to analyze customer satisfaction of 9 hamburger restaurants in Helsinki with an average rating above 3 stars according to TripAdvisor, excluding large fast-food chains.

The two research questions of this study are:

- Rq1: What is the perceived customer satisfaction with hamburger restaurant in Helsinki?
- Rq2: What are the main criteria for the customer satisfaction?

This is important for new restaurants entering the Helsinki restaurant marketplace, for existing restaurants to develop their service concepts and for a better understanding of customer satisfaction in the restaurant business in general.

1.2 Structure of thesis

The study consists of five chapters. The literature review, presented in chapter 2, includes scientific data on customer satisfaction, its' importance and measurement, and customer satisfaction in the restaurant business. Chapter 3 describes the research methods used in this thesis. Research results are presented and analysed in chapter 4. Finally, chapter 5 discusses the research results and provides conclusions.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Customer satisfaction

Scientists have come up with several definitions of customer satisfaction throughout the years. Oliver (2014 p. 8) proposed that satisfaction is the customer's fulfilment response from receiving a service or product. Rai (2008 p. 104) came up with a basic formula to describe customer satisfaction:

Customer satisfaction = Customer Perception of Service Received – Customer Expectation of Customer Service

There are different models to describe customer satisfaction. Kano et. al. (1984) outlines three types of product requirements that affect customer satisfaction:

- Must-be requirements. If those requirements are not met, the customers will feel major dissatisfaction. However, since customers expect those requirements to be provided in any case their fulfillment will not increase the satisfaction level. Being a basic criterion of any product must-be requirements will only lead the customers to not be dissatisfied. If the supplier fails to fulfill the must-be requirements that will lead to a complete loss of the customer's interest in the product.
- One-dimensional requirements. Those types of requirements are usually specifically demanded by the customers. An increase or decrease in the fulfillment of these requirements will directly lead to customers' satisfaction levels to go up or down respectively.
- Attractive requirements. Attractive requirements have the highest effect on customers' satisfaction with the product. Customers do not ask specifically for those requirements and neither do they expect them to be fulfilled. For this reason, there will be no dissatisfaction in case of attractive requirements absence.

Kano's model provides a great opportunity for discovering different product features and choosing the ones that need more attention. Making minor changes in the right attribute

can have a greater effect on customer satisfaction level than implementing major changes to the attribute with a lower impact on the mentioned level (Sirely et al., 2007 p.3). The Kano model provides also assistance in trade-off decisions during product development. If there are two product attributes that cannot be implemented at the same time due to various reasons (technical or financial) then it is possible to evaluate their relative effect on customer satisfaction. Finally, discovering and implementing new ways to fulfill attractive requirements result in market differentiation (Smith & Antony, 2011 p.23). In figure 1 we can see that must-be-requirements are shown with the curve line approaching the requirement fulfillment line from the bottom, but not crossing it. This means that meeting the must-be-requirements will not guarantee customer satisfaction. Attractive requirements are also shown with the curve line, but the line is above the requirement fulfillment line and is in direct ration to customer satisfaction. This ratio occurs due to the fact that customers do not ask for their fulfillment, nor do they expect it. Figure 1 also shows that not meeting attractive requirements will not decrease customer satisfaction. Finally, one-dimensional requirements are shown as a straight diagonal line. Those requirements are in direct ration with both customer satisfaction and requirement fulfillment. However, as shown in figure 1, meeting attractive requirements will boost customer satisfaction at a higher rate, than meeting one-dimensional requirements and not meeting must-be-requirements will decrease customer satisfaction more than not meeting the onedimensional requirements.

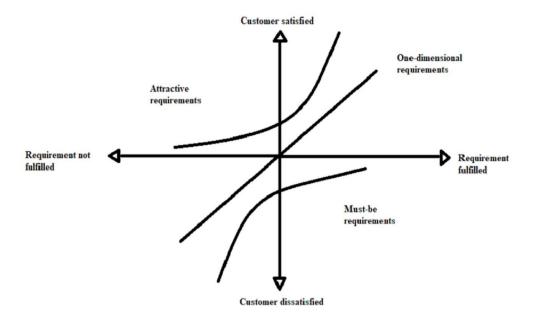


Figure 1. Kano's model of customer satisfaction (Berger et al., 1993, p. 3).

Another model to describe customer satisfaction and quality service is the Gap model by Parasuraman et. al. (1985). This model demonstrates the connection between customers' expectations of the service and their experience of one and it also explains the reasons for possible customers' dissatisfaction. The model consists of five gaps:

- **Gap 1.** This is the gap between customer expectations and management's idea of those expectations. This gap occurs when the actual services do not meet the customer's perception of those. Another reason for this gap might be inaccurate marketing research and bureaucracy caused by several layers of the management hierarchy. The best way to close this gap is for the company to learn more about its' customers and build strong connections with them. This might be achieved through relationship marketing (Zeithaml & Bitner 1996 p. 40).
- **Gap 2.** This is the gap between management's vision of customer needs and the parameters of expected service quality by the customers. The reasons for this gap are inadequate to service quality control and implementing wrong standards by the management. This gap might be closed by implementing customer satisfaction

measurement systems to reach the desired level of quality (Zeithaml & Bitner 1996 p. 43).

- Gap 3. This is the gap between service quality parameters and the actual delivery of the service. This gap is the result of poor teamwork and deficiencies in human resources policies which leads to uncoordinated service delivery and loss of harmony with service quality specifications. The way to close this gap is to invest time and resources into personnel training, proper recruitment and role dispersion as well as into the ability to match demand with supply (Zeithaml & Bitner 1996 p. 45).
- Gap 4. This gap occurs when the company fails to deliver its' service to the customer as promised through external communications. The reason for that might be miscommunication between advertising, sales personnel and actual operations. Companies give high promises to potential customers through advertisement which results in excessive customer expectations. The gap might be closed by giving a precise explanation of service delivery to the employees in tandem with setting effective horizontal communication between advertisement, sales team and operations departments (Zeithaml & Bitner 1996 p. 47).
- Gap 5. This gap is also known as the customer gap and it takes place between expected service and experienced service. This gap cannot be closed directly. In order to close the customer gap, the supplier must close all the previous gaps. Receiving and analyzing customer feedback is the key component in understanding the reason for customer dissatisfaction (Zeithaml & Bitner 1996 p. 38).

2.2 Advantages of customer satisfaction and its elements

When a company constantly conducts customer satisfaction surveys it builds a strong relationship with its customers. It also helps customers realize that the company actually cares about them. Thus, customer satisfaction is a great determining tool for whether new products or services are truly fulfilling customers' needs.

Critical analysis of customer satisfaction surveys helps determine several aspects:

- What causes the company to lose clients?
- What are the strong and weak sides of the company compared to competitors?

Another positive outcome of active customer satisfaction surveys is that the employees can see how they are evaluated by their direct customers and can either be motivated to continue the good work or make some improvements in cases of negative reviews (Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2010 p.3).

The main goal of the public companies in the market is to get the highest possible profits and earn money for the shareholders. This goal can only be achieved if the customer experience is on high enough level for them to repurchase the products and the services continuously. It costs a lot of money for companies to attract new customers. Having loyal customers repurchasing from the company also saves the company money for marketing and advertising new products and services. Plus, it is much easier to deal with existing customers since they already know what to expect from products or services. Studies show that not only do satisfied customers recommend products and services to their relatives and friends but also that those referral customers tend to be more loyal, than the ones attracted through advertising and sales personnel (Hill et. al., 2007).

The main factor for having satisfied customers is the employees, especially when it comes to the companies selling services. Good customer service leads to a good reputation and positive thinking towards the company is society (Hill et. al., 2007).

According to Vranesevic & Vignali (2010), only 4% of dissatisfied customers complain directly to the company. Over 90% of dissatisfied customers do not wish to do business or contact the company. Finally, each dissatisfied customer will tell on average 9 other people about his negative experience. On the other hand, retaining a satisfied customer costs 4-5 times less than capturing a new one. Satisfied customers are not only ready to pay more for a product or a service, but also spread the good word about the company to 5 people on average.

According to Inghillery & Solomon (2010), there are 4 elements of customer satisfaction:

- Quality of product or service.
- A friendly and caring delivery.
- Perfect timing.
- Effective problem-solving mechanism.

A perfect product is a product with no flaws that fully covers customers' needs. Product developers have to make sure their product is perfect because different problems might occur in the later stages.

After developing a product or a service it requires high-level delivery. It is crucial to take into account that several companies might produce similar products or provide similar services. In order to be successful on the market, a company must deliver their products or services on the level that will outline among the competitors. Good product/service and good delivery go hand to hand. The flaws in one of them will make the efforts of creating the other one senseless (Inghillery & Solomon, 2010).

Another aspect customers pay attention to is delivery time. They base their opinion on the previous experiences comparing the delivery times. If the product or service has not been delivered in time they might label the product or service as 'bad'. The younger generation is more impatient when it comes to product/ service delivery time compared to the elder generations. However, customers might be willing to make exceptions for some special products or services when it comes to delivery times since they realize the exceptional quality of those. It is essential for companies to understand this (Inghillery & Solomon, 2010).

It is very unlikely that any company will have a perfect product/service and a perfect delivery of those. People tend to make mistakes. It is extremely important to be ready for the customers to reach out for solutions for the problems with products or services. And if the company provides its customers with effective solutions, they will become more loyal than the ones who haven't had any issues. In other words, companies should be able to act effectively and fast in times of crisis (Inghillery & Solomon, 2010).

2.3 Customer life cycle

Modern business has made a switch from product- or process-centric to customer-centric or customer life cycle-centric (Culter & Sterne, 2000). According to Rouse (2007), a customer life cycle defines the development of phases that the customers go through when considering, buying, utilizing and preserve loyalty to a product or service.

If a company has a goal to get as much revenue as possible from every new and existing customer, it should have an understanding of the customer life cycle. According to Johnson (2017), a customer life cycle consists of 5 stages: reach, acquisition, conversion, retention, loyalty.

Culter & Sterne (2000) introduced a life cycle that consists of those stages (see Figure 2).

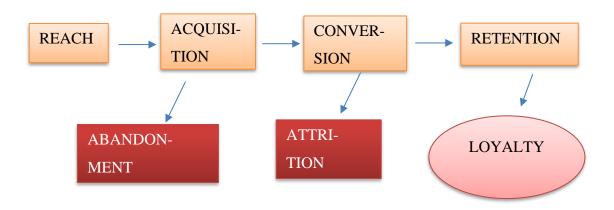


Figure 2. The Customer Life Cycle from Introduction to Loyalty (Culter & Sterne, 2000 p. 26).

Reach

Any customer life cycle begins with the company reaching its target market and making its way to the loyal customer base. It is necessary to catch potential customer's attention in order to aware of the product or service as well as interested in purchasing it. This is the only way to develop a relationship between the company and the customer (Culter & Sterne, 2000).

Acquisition

As soon as the company manages to catch customer's attention the acquisition stage takes place during which customer participation becomes the primary goal. As soon as some potential customer shows interest towards the company the new prospect might be considered acquired. This stage will be the end of the customer life cycle for some clients due to abandonment (Culter & Sterne, 2000).

Conversion

In case of success, this stage will transfer potential customers into paying customers. It is advised that during this process companies not only sell their products or services but also focus on building relationships with their customers (Johnson, 2017). As shown in Figure 3 the customer life cycle can end at this stage due to attrition if the customer does not receive enough value.

Retention

At this point, the purchase has been done. The customer is satisfied with product or service quality and had an overall good customer experience. This leads to a relationship between the customer and the company and some level of trust. At this point, the company's objective is to maintain a high quality of products/services and high-level customer service in order to keep customers coming back for those products/services. Consistent retention is the reason why maintaining an existing customer is so much cheaper than acquiring a new one (Culter & Sterne, 2000).

Loyalty

The main goal of every customer life cycle is acquiring customers and making them loyal to the company. This is an essential aspect of succeeding in any competitors-filled markets (Johnson, 2017). Loyal customers are the ones that often return to the company, buy products/services, recommend the company to other people and are often willing to try new things. Some loyal customers may even seek the products that the company doesn't

produce. This information can be used by the company during future product development to better cover customers' needs. Another good thing about this information is that it is free and takes a small effort to get (Culter & Sterne, 2000).

2.4 Customer satisfaction in the restaurant industry

When it comes to the restaurant industry the biggest factors affecting customer satisfaction are quality of service and quality of products. The staff of the restaurant is dealing with the customers face-to-face on daily basis. It is extremely important for the restaurant to gather data from the clients on products and services in order to attract new customers and maintain the existing ones (Hill & Alexander, 2006 p. 213).

Yet another way to describe customer satisfaction is the process that begins with customers creating their expectations of a product/service and ends with the customers sharing their experience of the very product or service. The problem is that different customers will have individual and subjective expectations and those expectations can be affected by a number of factors, both internal and external. For example, if a customer will have high expectations from the restaurant the chances are that it would be difficult for the restaurant to meet those expectations (Zeithaml et al., 2017).

There are several aspects that affect customers' satisfaction at the restaurants: Value for money, Quality of food, Service, Menu variety and Atmosphere.

Value for money

Very often when rating any restaurant, the term 'value for money' comes along. Even though customers have very subjective opinions when it comes to value for money it is still one of the most important aspects when it comes to the restaurant business. There are several ways for the restaurant owner to know whether his food has good value for money ration, for example on websites like TripAdvisor. Restaurants usually get good points in this aspect on TripAdvisor, so if, for some reason, a restaurant scores low in the 'value for money' section it means that the pricing policy needs to be reevaluated. No customer

would return to a restaurant that in his opinion hustles customers out of their money (The Fork Manager, 2016).

Quality of food

Quality of food consists of a variety of qualities that make food appealing to the customers. Those qualities consist of those conditioned by senses: Taste, Smell, Color, Texture, Shape and Appearance. Other conditions are hygienic and chemical (Ha & Jang, 2012).

Every food manufacturing process requires high food quality since food items might get affected by contamination at any time. A lot of customers demand a certain quality of food standards when it comes to ingredients because of their diet, nutritional requirements (halal, vegetarian, etc.) or medical conditions (allergies, diabetes, etc.) (Edwards, 2013).

The quality of food is not limited by sensory and sanitary qualities. The industrial processing of food, starting from its collection to delivery to the final customer should be traceable. If customers are happy with the food quality in the restaurant they tend to visit the restaurant again (Al-Tit, 2015).

Service

Service is a committed action in favor of another person. Service does not create a new product itself, but it affects the quality of the existing one. There is a big number of services which are combined with four features (Zeithaml et al., 2017):

- A service is intangible and immaterial. It cannot be seen, tried, transported, packed, etc.
- Service production and consumption are indissoluble.
- The quality of service is mixed and fluid. It is affected by time, place and also by the person providing the service.
- Service is provided once and cannot be stored for further sale.

In the restaurant business, the quality of service is understood as the service is provided by restaurant staff. This service is affected heavily by interactions between customers and employees (Ha & Jang, 2010). If the restaurant manages to keep the quality of service on a high level the errors in service will be minimal, which will result in retaining existing customers and attracting new ones (Tresfom & Birch, 2011).

Menu variety

According to Le Cordon Bleu, by creating diversified menus restaurants increase their chances of fulfilling different customer tastes. In other words, a larger menu variety leads to a broader audience and improved customer satisfaction. However, having an overly large variety of options can have a negative effect. This phenomenon is described by psychologist Barry Schwartz at the official TED conference (2005) as a 'paradox of choice'. If customers are presented with an extremely large amount of options they tend to think they are missing out on some opportunities. This results in a decreasing customer satisfaction level. Restaurant owners should also take into account the price of having a large variety of options on the menu.

Atmosphere

Restaurant atmosphere is an abstracted feeling that customers get when visiting one. It can be affected by a number of factors: decor, furnishing, music, cleanliness, etc. Because there are so many variables influencing the restaurant atmosphere it is uneasy to keep it in balance. A single factor that goes out of line can lead to bad consequences for the business (Grullon, 2018).

2.5 Customer satisfaction measurements and methods

According to Hill & Alexander (2006), since customer satisfaction relies greatly on how customers evaluate the service, the restaurant should not judge about customer satisfaction based solely on the knowledge gained inside the restaurant. All the information retrieved from the customers plays a huge role in understanding how well the business is actually doing and how satisfied the customers are with the service quality. Analyzing

customer feedback also shows the weak spots of the restaurant that need to be improved. With the correct use of customer feedback restaurants can certainly maintain customer satisfaction on a high level.

There are several models for customer satisfaction measurement. One of those models is The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) (Park et. al., 2008). This model can be seen in Figure 3.

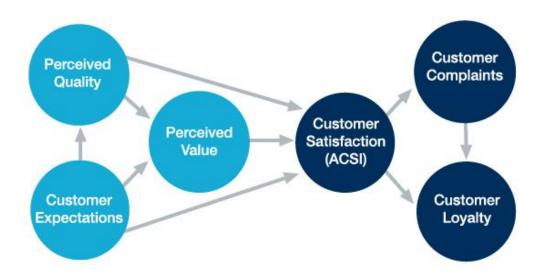


Figure 3. The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI, 2020).

The ACSI model is a cause-and-effect model with indexes for drivers of satisfaction on the left side (customer expectations, perceived quality, and perceived value), satisfaction (ACSI) in the center, and outcomes of satisfaction on the right side (customer complaints and customer loyalty, including customer retention and price tolerance)' (theacsi.org). The indexes in the model are multi-variable components that are determined by a number of questions and are assessed on a scale from 0 to 100. Through survey and model structure it is possible to determine the level of effect of the indexes to the left on the indexes to the right connected by arrows (Impacts). The ACSI model is used to fully understand the connection between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

The European Customer Satisfaction Index (ECSI) is a variation of the American Customer Satisfaction Index. It describes customer expectations, perceived quality, perceived value, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty models, the same way as ACSI does (Van Haaften, 2017). Figure 8 shows the ECSI model.

When it comes to differences between ECSI and ACSI the first one is understanding customer loyalty. In ECSI customer loyalty is not limited by customer retention. It also includes the chance of recommending the company to other potential customers and the overall growth of existing customers. Another significant difference is that the ESCI does not observe customer complaints as a consequence of satisfaction. Finally, the ESCI presents the corporate image as a latent variable in the model and suggests that it has a direct effect on customer satisfaction, customer expectations and loyalty (Van Haaften, 2017).

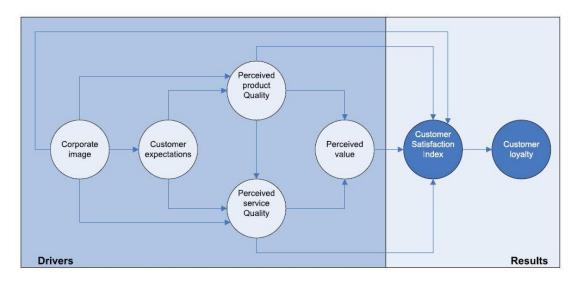


Figure 4. The European Customer Satisfaction Index (van Haaften, 2017).

In figure 4 we can see latent variables of the ECSI model. A certain Corporate Image leads to Customer Expectations. When customers become clients, they Perceive Product or Service Quality. Based on that Perceived Value is created. Those are the driving factors of customer satisfaction and they have an impact on the Customer Satisfaction Index and, eventually, Customer Loyalty.

The final instrument that will be described is SERVQUAL, which is an instrument used to measure customer expectations with the perception of service through 5 dimensions. Those dimensions represent service quality (Parasuraman et. al., 1985). The gap model that has been described earlier has been developed by the same authors to the principal dimensions of service quality. Parasuraman et. al. (1985) designed a questionnaire consisting of paired items, those items consisted of 22 expectation items and 22 perceptions items. Those items were organized into 5 dimensions which were believed to match customers' idea of service quality dimensions.

The questionnaire has to be filled during a face-to-face interview and it provides more accurate results when applied to a large size sample. The standard summary of SERV-QUAL items can be seen in table 1. However, it is possible to add various items into SERVQUAL according to the individual needs of companies conducting the interview (Parasuraman et. al., 1985).

Table 1. The SERVQUAL 22-Scale Items (Parasuraman et. al., 1994 p. 207).

	1. Providing services as promised.
	2. dependability in handling customers' service problems
RELIABILITY	3. Performing services right the first time.
	4. Providing services at the promised time.
	5. Maintaining error-free records.
	6. Keeping customers informed about when services will be performed.
RESPONSIVENESS	7. Prompt service to customers.
	8. Willingness to help customers.
	9. Readiness to respond to customers' enquiries.

	10. Employees who instill confidence in customers.				
	11. Making customers feel safe in their transactions.				
ASSURANCE	12. Employees who are consistently courteous.				
	13. Employees who have the knowledge to answer customer questions.				
	14. Giving customers individual attention.				
	15. Employees who deal with customers in a caring fashion.				
ЕМРАТНУ	16. Having the customers' best interest at heart.				
	17. Employees who understand the needs of their customers.				
	18. Convenient business hours.				
	19. Modern equipment.				
TANGIBLES	20. Visually appealing facilities.				
TANGIBLES	21. Employees who have a neat, professional appearance.				
	22. Visually appealing materials associated with service.				

2.6 Social media and customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is defined as the gap between a customer's initial expectations of a product/service and when they utilize the product/service (Nunkoo et.al, 2019). Social media, on the other hand, is an interconnected platform that allows customers to interact with sellers and at the same time allows customers to interact with other customers on the same platform (Sashi, Brynildsen and Bilgihan, 2019). The connection between social media and customer satisfaction has grown stronger year by year due to organizations' continuous goal of achieving a high level of customer satisfaction, by improving customer service and inevitably enabling stronger customer relationships.

2.6.1 Impact of Social media on Customer Satisfaction

Social media has served as an important platform to measure customer satisfaction because companies now understand that the success of the brand lies in the hands of customers and how they perceive, react and communicate their experiences regarding the quality of service they receive. Information on social media spreads quickly and in minutes, thousands of individuals can have access to the related information. This is exercised through word of mouth, a powerful tool which if managed properly can favor the company's image and if not, then it can become the downfall for the company. Similarly, opinions can easily be shared on various social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TripAdvisor, which can help shape and influence potential customers' perceptions regarding purchasing a certain product or service (Maria et al., 2019). This has a lot to do with the fact that customers are more likely to believe reviews and experiences from other customers than from the brand itself (Hu and Yang, 2020).

2.6.2 Importance of TripAdvisor to Consumers and Businesses

Since the advent of the internet and the increase in social media platforms, travelers have started to become heavily dependent on such platforms to plan their vacations and trips. TripAdvisor is one of the many applications, available on the internet, which serves the traveling community. Through TripAdvisor, travelers can check user reviews and ratings of different hotels and their offerings, compare prices to match the one which suits their budget and finally book the preferred hotel or restaurant of choice more easily and in the comfort of their home (Filieri, 2015).

According to research, TripAdvisor holds more than 10 million members, who are registered on their website. Similarly, in terms of user-generated content, it harbors more than 20 million user reviews on almost half a million hotels globally (O'Connor, 2010). Likewise, according to a study conducted, it was noticed in terms of statistics, approximately 8 percent of travelers use TripAdvisor over other similar applications available on the internet for planning their vacations (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). The demand and usage of TripAdvisor were further acknowledged when in the year 2007, it was listed in the Top 25 Milestone for Travel in USA Today (O'Connor, 2010).

TripAdvisor is not only important for consumers but it is equally important for restaurants and hotels in tracking customer satisfaction. TripAdvisor's dashboard which measures customer satisfaction allows owners to track their business service performance through individual ratings of factors such as room, location, building cleanliness, and recommendations by other consumers. Another feature that can be accessed by the businesses is the trend feature, which provides a comparison chart on the rank of the property when compared to their competitors in the nearby locality. All these features can help businesses in tracking customer satisfaction more efficiently (Mathe-Soulek, Aguirre and Dallinger, 2016). Restaurants and hotels can analyze where they are falling short in terms of customer service and which specific offerings of theirs have been well received by the public. According to the information generated, they can create better strategies that will help increase their overall profitability and productivity, side by side.

2.6.3 TripAdvisor: Measuring Customer Satisfaction

TripAdvisor analyzes customer satisfaction in numerous ways. Firstly, it utilizes its main feature which also adds value to their brand i.e. ratings and reviews feature. Consumers who are planning their trips can visit the website and read through user-generated feedback on various restaurants and hotels. The review system works on a 5-point scale, from which businesses on TripAdvisor can analyze how satisfied consumers are with their service. The reviewers/raters have to rate their experience on issues such as how overall service they experienced was, the ease of check-in, the room amenities, etc. An important feature embedded in the review system is the recommendation feature. It asks the reviewer whether they would recommend the hotel or restaurant to their friends or family depending on their experience. Since people believe facts when it is supported by visual evidence, TripAdvisor allows users to upload pictures with their reviews. So if a consumer has had a bad experience with the restaurant food, then they can upload a picture with their review as proof of their experience. The next immediate step for the restaurant in this scenario would be to adopt corrective measures to satisfy the consumer by reaching out to them to investigate the issue. In the situation the restaurant chooses not to take immediate corrective measures, they will risk losing future customers, through bad word of mouth of their service, which will spread on other social medial platforms as well and may inevitably harm their brand image (O'Connor, 2010).

TripAdvisor inspects all user-generated content very carefully to ensure its adhering to their content regulations and guidelines. Since ratings provided by users are in the form of both quantitative and qualitative, it is easier to track customer satisfaction levels for restaurants and hotel businesses. One limitation however of the platform is that reviews cannot be deleted, so it is important for hotels and restaurants to continuously monitor their ratings and feedback coming from their customers, in order to avoid future problems that may negatively impact their brand reputation if customers are not satisfied (O'Connor, 2010).

3 METHOD

Based on the research questions and literature review the author has done a content analysis of TripAdvisor reviews. Content analysis is one of the research methods that focus on making sense of the content, which can either be presented texts, images or audio data. This content is often unstructured. Content analysis provides opportunity to make conclusions from chosen samples using an inductive, deductive or abductive process. The shift from an unstructured data to the answers to the research questions is achieved by using guidelines for conclusions, based on previous research, experience or existing theories, and a strict coding of data (White & Marsh, 2006).

3.1 Sample

The sample consists of 142 customer reviews, written on TripAdvisor during the time period 01.09.2019 until 01.09.2020. The reviews are taken from nine hamburger restaurants that are located in Helsinki and have an average rating of over 3 stars. The sample does not include fast-food chain restaurants. According to the TripAdvisor official website, as of November 14, 2020, those restaurants are (ranked highest to lowest):

- A. **Friends & Brgrs, Helsniki** (**Aikatalo**). The restaurant was opened in 2014 by six friends in Pietarsaari and since then expanded to Helsinki, Espoo, Oulu, Seinäjoki, Tampere, Turku, Vaasa and Jyväskäla. According to their official website, Friends & Brgrs produce patties, buns and sauces by themselves in order to improve the quality of their burgers (friendsand-brgrs.fi).
- B. **Naughty Brgr.** Naughty Brgr is the creation of the Finnish Top Chef winner Akseli Herlev who has spent over 10 years in background work to come up with the right ingredients for the burgers (naughtybrgr.com).
- **C. Just Vege.** The restaurant has been operating since 2014, offering both vegetarian and vegan burgers (justvege.fi).
- D. **Bites Burgers, Vallila.** A burger joint with a good reputation and gaining popularity. The menu consists of only 4 burgers, sides and drinks (bites.fi).

- E. **Social Burgerjoint.** At Social Burgerjoint burgers are cooked on a charcoal grill. The restaurant was founded by Mika Tuomonen (2012 Master-Chef Finland winner) and Herkko Volanen. It is now a part of Kotipizza Group and as of 2020 is presented in Helsinki, Hamina, Kerava, Lahti, Oulu, Porvoo, Tampere and Vaasa (burgerjoint.fi).
- F. Woolshed, Helsinki. The Australlian gastropub, located in Helsinki and Turku. Woolshed cooks mince burger meat at the spot and make the patties by hands (woolshed.eu).
- G. **The Lucky Bastard.** The restaurant is presented in two large shopping centers: ITIS and Tripla. The menu consists of only burgers, salads, sides and drinks (theluckybastard.fi).
- **H.** MorriSon's. American style restaurant located in the center of Helsinki and in Turku. It has the largest menu of all the restaurants presented in this list (morrisons.fi).
- **I. Stone's Gastropub.** The restaurant is a part of the S Group. The cooks bake their own buns and fry the patties over a charcoal grill (raflaamo.fi/fi/helsinki/stones).

3.2 Data collection and coding of data

By manually looking at each review one by one, during week 46, 2020 the data was coded in MS Excel (See appendix 1 for a screen shot of the Excel table). By looking at the reviews of the posts manually, opposed to an automatic software procedure, a first understanding of the reviews was also generated. The reviews were then coded in Excel with the following columns: Review number, Restaurant, Review date, Gender, Language, Customer satisfaction, Rating, Comment according to topics. To understand what motivates clients to give good, average or bad ratings to the restaurants (research questions 1), the reviews were divided into 5 topics. Those topics have been chosen because they had been mentioned the most in the comments from the sample. Those comments topics are Quality of food, Quality of service, Atmosphere, Price, Location. If a review described

more than one topic it has been broken down into parts and each part was put in a suitable column.

Customers' gender has been coded as Male, Female or N/A (Not Available), if it was there was no info in the customer profile on gender and it was impossible to guess customers gender with certainty. Language was coded as Finnish and Foreign. Gender and language were added to better understand the background of the reviews.

The reviews with 4 or 5 stars were coded as Positive, reviews with 3 stars – Neutral and reviews with 1 or 2 stars – Negative. If reviews were written in any language besides English, they were translated with Google Translate. The ratings were coded according to the customers' reviews on a scale from 1 to 5.

3.3 Analysis

After the customer reviews have been coded into MS Excel (see appendix 1) it was possible to analyze them using MS Excel features. Adding filter to the top row with variables made it possible to discover how many reviews were positive, negative or neutral, which topics appeared more often and weather the comments had been written in Finnish or a foreign language. The data analysis for research question 1 was included in a different table for a better visualization (Table 2).

In order to understand what the main criteria for the customer satisfaction are (research question 2), each review was analyzed individually with the use of the same coding system. The factors that had been mentioned by a majority of customers in each comment topic were considered to be decisive in shaping customer satisfaction. Deeper analysis was made on the reviews that described specific aspects of satisfaction. For example: some of the customers, who wrote about the quality of food, did not just state whether their food was tasty or not, but they also went into details of what in particular made their food taste the way it did. This data made it possible to better understand the motives behind some of the reviews.

4 RESULTS

The results are presented according to the two research questions:

- Rq1: What is the perceived customer satisfaction with hamburger restaurant in Helsinki?
- Rq2: What are the main criteria for the customer satisfaction?

4.1 Research question 1

From 01.09.2019 until 01.09.2020 there was a total of 142 reviews on TripAdvisor for the restaurants that have been chosen for this study. Those reviews have been analyzed according to Customer satisfaction, Gender, Language and Comments according to topics. The results are presented in table 2.

As it can be seen from table 2, 62,7% of reviews were positive, 19,7% were neutral and negative reviews made up 17,6%. When it comes to genders, 34,5% of reviews were left by male customers, 26,8% by female customers and for 38,7% of reviews it was impossible to trace gender. The most common topic of customer reviews according to table 3 was quality of food (43,8%). It was followed by quality of service (24,7%), price (13,4%) and atmosphere (10,7%). The least mentioned aspect was location (7,4%).

Table 2. Summary of customer reviews.

Var	iable	Number (N = 142)	Percentage
Customer satisfac-	Positive	89	62,7%
tion	Neutral	28	19,7%
	Negative	25	17,6%
	Male	49	34,5%
Gender	Female	38	26,8%
	N/A	55	38,7%
Language	Finnish	43	30,3%
	Foreign	99	69,7%
	Food	131	43,8%
Comments accord-	Service	74	24,7%
ing to topics	Atmosphere	32	10,7%
	Price	40	13,4%
	Location	22	7,4%

Table 3 shows, that out of 49 reviews left by male customers 59.2% were positive compared to 71,1% for female customers. 28,6% of male customers left neutral reviews compared to 13.2% of female customers. Finally, 12.2% of male clients left negative reviews compared to 15,8% of female customers. As for clients with no information on gender in their profiles, 60% of them left positive reviews and 16,4% left neutral reviews. Negative

reviews went as high as 23,6%. It is worth mentioning, that customers with no information about their gender left more negative reviews than male and female customers combined.

Table 3. Analysis by gender.

Customer satisfac-	Gender					
tion	Male % Fem		Female	%	N/A %	
Positive	29	59,2%	27	71,1%	33	60,0%
Neutral	14	28,6%	5	13,2%	9	16,4%
Negative	6	12,2%	6	15,8%	13	23,6%

As for language, only a third of reviews (30,3%) has been written in Finnish. Table 4 shows that Finnish-speaking reviewers tend to leave fewer positive comments than all the other reviewers (44,2% compared to 70,7%). While the difference in neutral reviews is 23,3% in Finnish compared to 18,2% in foreign languages, Finnish-speaking customers tend to leave almost 3 times more negative reviews (32,6%) than foreign customers (11,1%).

Table 4. Analysis by language.

Customer satisfac-		Lang	guage	
tion	Finnish	%	Foreign	%
Positive	19	44,2%	70	70,7%
Neutral	10	23,3%	18	18,2%
Negative	14	32,6%	11	11,1%

4.2 Research question 2

Table 5 shows how many times different topics were brought up in the reviews according to the level of satisfaction – positive, neutral and negative. Quality of food was mentioned in positive reviews more than in neutral and negative combined: positive 65,6%, neutral 20,6% and negative 13,7% respectively. 71,9% of reviews mentioning quality of service were positive. This was also the only topic where negative reviews took a larger share than neutral reviews: 23% and18,9% respectively. Atmosphere was the only subject that was not mentioned in negative reviews. 71,9% of reviews with comments on atmosphere were positive and 28,1% were neutral. Price was bought up in 55% of the positive reviews, compared to 22,5% for both neutral and negative comments. Finally, location was the least brought up topic in the reviews. However, location was mentioned by customers in positive reviews by a relatively higher percent than for the other topics - 77.3% of location mentions were positive reviews.

Table 5. Analysis by comments according to topics.

Cus-			Quali							
tomer	Qual-		ty of		At-				Lo-	
satisfac-	ity of		ser-		mos-				ca-	
tion	food	%	vice	%	phere	%	Price	%	tion	%
Positive	86	65,6%	43	58,1%	23	71,9%	22	55,0%	17	77,3%
Neutral	27	20,6%	14	18,9%	9	28,1%	9	22,5%	4	18,2%
Nega-										
tive	18	13,7%	17	23,0%	0	0,0%	9	22,5%	1	4,5%

Since there were five topics or criteria that were relevant to explain the different levels of customer satisfaction, each of them was analyzed separately in order to better understand the review or rating of customer satisfaction.

4.2.1 Quality of food

There were 117 reviews that mentioned quality of food and had specific details on that topic. 56,4% of those reviews were mentioning quality of food positively (Figure 5). Among those reviews the most mentioned factor was quality of fries (34,8%). For example, one of the users claimed in his review that "Also fries were better than usual, very crispy!". Quality of fries was followed by quality of patty (24,2%). Another user mentioned, that "The burger is really juicy and the meat is tender". The next popular topic was freshness of ingredients (13,6%). It was stated by one of the users in the reviews, that "The ingredients have always been fresh". Another user wrote "They use the best ingredients and turn them into fantastic burgers". Quality of buns and 'home-made' features were mentioned in 10,6% of the reviews. One user wrote "Fantastic brioche bun" and another user stated "The burgers are freshly made each day and are very delicious. I would recommend this restaurant to anyone who likes a great homemade burger and fries". Finally, the least mentioned aspect was the portion size (6,1%) (Figure 5). One of the users commented "Ruoka oli todella maukasta ja annokset on tosi hyvät kokoiset", which was translated as "The food was really tasty and the portions are really good sized".

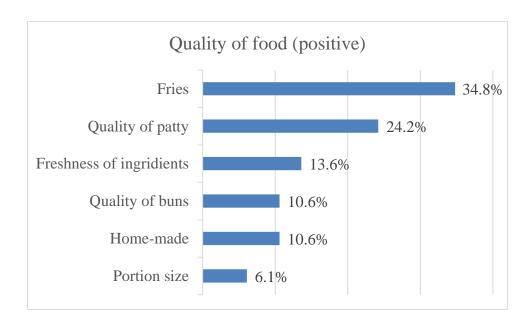


Figure 5. Quality of food (positive).

As for negative comments, bad flavor held the first place with 29,4% of all negative comments on quality of food. An example of such comment said "Ruoka ei tehnyt vaikutusta. Kasvisruokaa joka yritti matkia epäonnistuneesti liharuokaa, kuten burgeria ja kebabia", this comment was translated as "The food was not impressive. Vegetarian food that tried unsuccessfully to mimic meat dishes like burgers and kebabs". It was followed by portion size and quality of fries (both at 23,5%). A user commented "The burger tastes good. Also, the chocolate shake. Fries are very average. However the burgers are too small, it's a shame...". The quality of the patty was the fourth most mentioned at 13,7%. Another user stated that "the meat of the NYC burger was close to being bland in taste". Complaints about freshness of ingredients were at 5,9%. For example, a user wrote "Ranskalaiset oli nahkeita, sen makuisia, että olisivat olleet eilen tehtyjä ja tänään lämmitetty uudelleen", which was translated as "The French fries were leathery, tasting like they were made yesterday and reheated today". Quality of buns at 3,9% was closing the list (Figure 6).

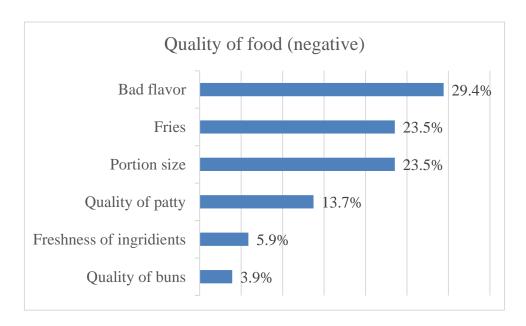


Figure 6. Quality of food (negative).

4.2.2 Quality of service

Out of the sample, 80 customers mentioned the quality of the service in their reviews. 57,4% of customers that were satisfied with the quality of the service mentioned staff attitude (Figure 7). For example, one user wrote "Staff very friendly and helpful". Diverse menu (children's menu, vegetarian and vegan options, etc.) was mentioned by 19,1% of clients. Another user stated "Burgers for all tastes and types including vegan options". The following factors were waiting time (12,8%), unlimited soft drinks (8,5%). Lastly, comments on pet policy made 2,1% of the positive reviews on quality of service. One of the comments left stated "Dogs welcomed here said the cute sign on the door, plus points for that!".

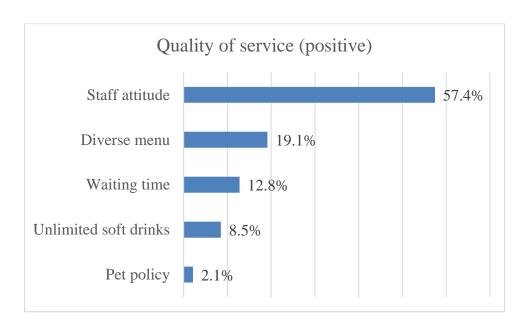


Figure 7. Quality of service (positive).

Similar to satisfied customers, clients unsatisfied with the quality of service mentioned staff attitude more than any other factor (51,5%). One user stated "Slow, unprofessional and unfriendly service did not make my day". Waiting time was another major factor with 36,4% of unsatisfied client reviews. Fewer people complained about meal serving (9.1%). Another user wrote in his review "Self-made ketchup also good and rich [in] taste but

[the] ketchup shot on the tray is not so good looking. They don't use any cups for ketchup.". Complaints about hygiene were at the bottom of the list with 3% (Figure 8).

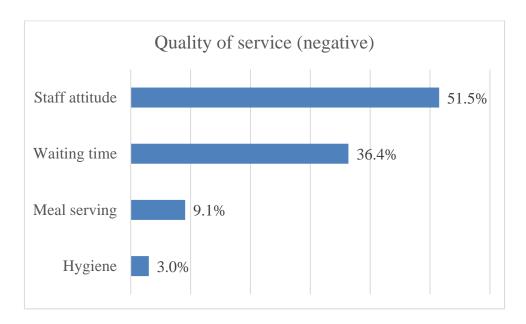


Figure 8. Quality of service (negative).

4.2.3 Atmosphere

The majority of positive comments on atmosphere were dedicated to restaurant interior (73,9%). Cleanness was mentioned by 21,7% and only 4,3% of clients commented on space. A user claimed "The place was spacious enough, so although it was busy, there were quite a few seats available at that time."

For negative comments interior and space were mentioned 40% of the negative comments. Cleanness made up for 20% of the negative comments on the atmosphere.

4.2.4 Price and Location

Comments on the price level did not include any specific criteria. 66,7% of customers were happy with the prices, while 33,3% believed that the prices were too high.

As for location, 90,5% of customers mention it positively and only 9,5% mentioned it in a negative way.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to analyze customer satisfaction of nine hamburger restaurants in Helsinki with an average rating above 3 stars according to TripAdvisor, excluding large fast-food chains. The collected data helped to answer the two stated research questions.

Based on the analysis of the TripAdvisor reviews it can be stated that while most of the top burger restaurants managed to meet customer expectations in most aspects and keep their satisfaction high, some were having issues with meeting must-be requirements (Kano et al., 1984). Those restaurants have had both lower ratings and fewer reviews, than the others from the sample. This indicates that failing to keep customers satisfied will negatively affect the restaurant's ratings which may lead to a decrease in customer loyalty (Johnson, 2017). However, if the restaurants' management pay attention to customer reviews and make necessary changes according to customer expectations and requirements, they might get a chance to restore the level of customer satisfaction.

As it was mentioned in the theoretical part of this study, previous research (Zeithaml et al., 2017) suggested that the key components of customer satisfaction in restaurant business are Value for money, Quality of food, Service, Menu variety and Atmosphere. These topics proved to fit quite well with the results from this study. However, Menu variety has become one of the aspects of quality of service that were identified in this study, and location has been added as the fifth topic instead. These could be seen as additions to previous studies on the topic.

According to the data collected from TripAdvisor, the vast majority of customers' comments were on food quality. The fact that quality of service, the second most popular topic in the reviews, was mentioned less frequently than quality of food, can indicate that customers do not have high expectations from the service in burger restaurants. It is not a surprise either, that price was the third most popular topic in the reviews since it matches the results of a previous study on the customer satisfaction in the restaurants (Zeithaml et al., 2017). However, the fact that only 13,4% of comments mentioned price might indicate, that clients have an idea of an approximate hamburger price in non-fast-food restaurants in Helsinki and that they perceive that the price-level is correct.

Considering that only 10,7% of customers wrote about the atmosphere can imply that the burger restaurants do not focus too much on the inside interior and design to sweep the clients off their feet. This is interesting as restaurants differentiating with interesting design or other types of atmosphere related variables could generated a "buzz" in reviews and that way attract new customers. Location again was the least mentioned topic in the reviews, which may indicate that when it comes to burgers customers do not care that much about restaurants location. Another reason for such a low-rate mentioning might be that since most of the burger joints in Helsinki are located either in the city centre or in large shopping centres, clients take the location as granted and do not consider it worth commenting about.

When it comes to quality of food, surprisingly, the most popular positive comments were dedicated to fries. The fact that so many clients felt the need to compliment restaurants on their fries partly shows that the burger restaurants investigated went past standard French fries cooking and came up with better ways of preparing them. This is an important sign for existing and up-coming burger restaurants. They need to pay attention to their fries, since they might make a difference and help gain loyal customers.

Quality of patty and quality of buns were popular topics in the positive comments. This is not surprising, since they are the core ingredients of the burger. However, the fact such aspects as freshness of ingredients and 'home-made' were mentioned, should be a good indicator for existing or future burger restaurants to not only use fresh local products, but also to promote that aspect in their marketing campaigns.

When quality of food affected customer satisfaction in a negative way, bad flavor appeared to be the most common topic. It is worth mentioning though, that some of the investigated restaurants are top rated restaurants regarding food quality. Friends and Brgrs and Naughty Brgr received overwhelmingly positive reviews about the quality of their food, while others received a higher number of negative reviews on the quality of their food, the flavor in particular.

Another interesting fact is that even though portion size was barely mentioned in the positive comments it is the second most mentioned (alongside with fries) when it comes to negative reviews on food quality. This could be a sign for the burger joints that customers perceive meal portion as a must-be requirement. In another words, serving clients satisfactory or well sized meals will probably not have a large positive impact on the company's rating, but failing to meet the portion size requirements could definitely hurt the restaurant's image.

The quality of service aspect was presented by staff attitude on both sides of the customer satisfaction spectrum, which should be a warning signal for the burger restaurants. Even though there are not as many service requirements compared to fine dining restaurants it is still worth investing into employee trainings to make sure that the staff is friendly and helpful.

The second most recognized positive aspect of quality of service was a diverse menu. The fact that the menu diversity was not mentioned in the negative comments gives a reason to view it as an attractive requirement for the customers. Vegan and vegetarian options have been mentioned several times in the reviews, so it might be worth for burger restaurants to expand their menus and add new burger options for the clients on meat-free or plant-based diets.

The number of complaints about waiting time might be connected to customers' expectations that burgers ought to be cooked and served fast. As discussed in the literature review it is typical that customer expectations do not meet the outcome, creating a gap and thus lower satisfaction (Zeithaml & Bitner 1996 p. 38). However, it could also be caused by a large queue in the kitchen. For the purpose of keeping customers satisfied when it comes to waiting time, burger restaurant managers could instruct their staff to warn their clients about possible delays.

5.1 Limitations and further research

This study has limitations. The sample size was relatively small, as well as the period of analysed reviews. This means that there may be aspects that could not be analyzed. The restrictions that were implemented upon restaurants in Helsinki due to the corona virus

pandemic in 2020 caused a decrease in restaurant visits and, respectively, the number of new reviews on TripAdvisor.

Another limitation is the platform of choice – TripAdvisor. While it is a widely used platform for sharing views on restaurants, it might not be the most popular platform of choice for the locals. The fact that only 30% of the reviews were written in Finnish may signalize that the top Helsinki burger joints' image on TripAdvisor is shaped overwhelmingly by foreigners. Further research based on different platforms (like Google Business, eat.fi, etc.) may bring new perspective and understanding of customer satisfaction in burger industry among the locals. However, when translating reviews from Finnish into English the author faced challenges. Google Translate was used but Google does not always translate text correctly, especially if some words are written in a local slang. This may have led to minor misinterpretations of the customers' point in the comments.

As it was mentioned previously, some aspects of customer satisfaction (restaurant location, price) have not been a topic of customer reviews as often as quality of food or service. In order to get a broader perspective on those topics, survey questionnaires could be used and handed to customers at the restaurants. If the questionnaires will have separate fields for different topics, clients might be more willing to express their opinion on them.

This study struggled to provide proper analysis of differences in customer satisfaction between gender, since the large share of reviews from the sample were left by users with no gender identifications. Moreover, age analysis was also impossible to conduct in this study. Hence, these aspects could be studied through other types of methods.

5.2 Conclusions

This study aimed to provide deeper analysis of customer satisfaction in burger restaurants. Based on this study some conclusions can be made. Since quality of food was the topic of most comments in the reviews it is important that restaurants pay major attention to that aspect. Freshness of ingredients and 'home-made' feature are also attractive requirements and seems to effect customer satisfaction. Failing to provide expected portion size

can as well result in a large negative reaction from the clients. Further, based on this study staff attitude is the most important part of the quality of service. In another words the staff attitude may directly affect customer satisfaction and restaurants' ratings. The same rule seems to apply to the waiting time.

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APPENDIX 1. SCREENSHOT OF THE MS EXCEL TABLE

