

**Yunesh Bhattarai**

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND  
RETENTION**

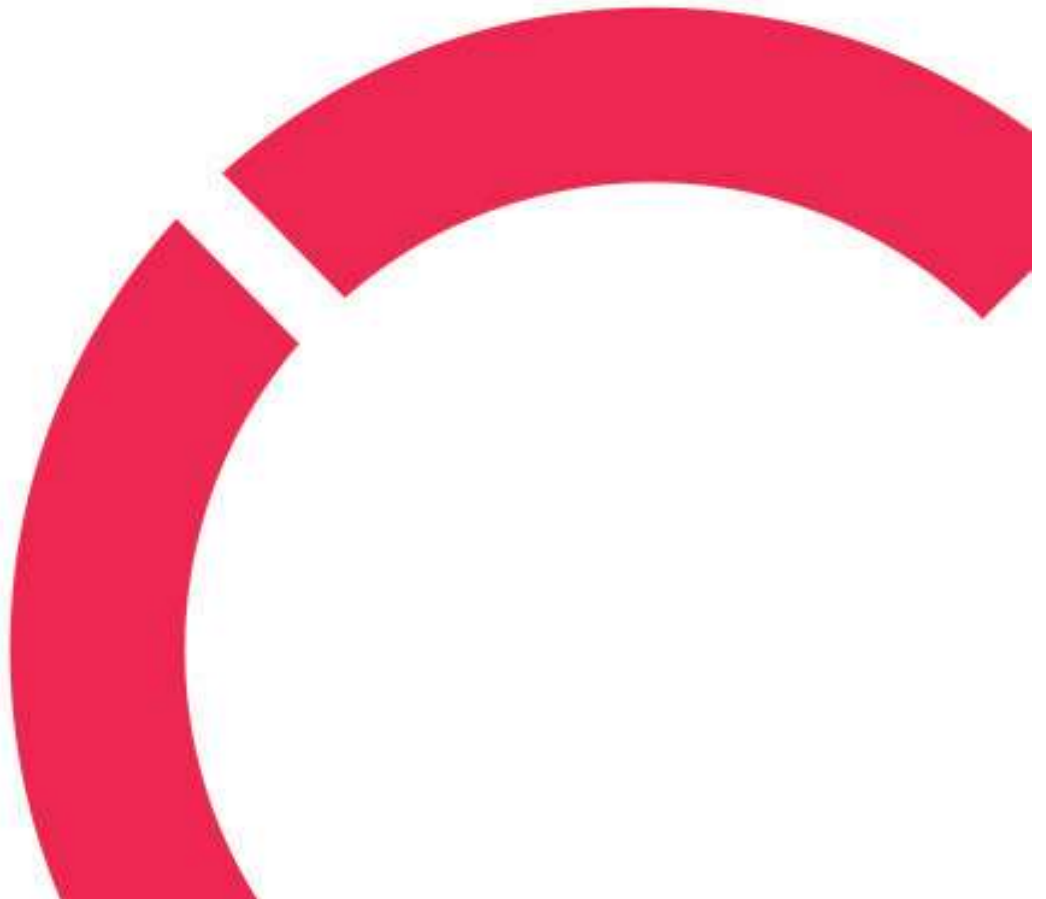
**Study of Kebabish Restaurant**

**Thesis**

**CENTRIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES**

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## ABSTRACT

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| <p>The aim of this thesis report is to discuss customer satisfaction and the situation of retaining current and old customer of a restaurant as a case study. There are challenges and difficulty to satisfy each customer's needs and fulfil their taste.</p> <p>The effort of the thesis was to make restaurant running, satisfying for the customer's need is here discussed too. To gain a customer's attraction and satisfy needs is really challenging. So, the thesis tries to cover up the starting of a business to the build up as a running business company.</p> <p>The growth and sustainability perspective is considered through customer retention, using the idea of customer delight. Further, measure to transform loyal customers towards advocates for the restaurant as goodwill ambassadors.</p> |                              |                                   |
| <b>Key words</b><br>Customer advocacy, Customer retention, Customer satisfaction, Strategy analysis.  |                              |                                   |

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction is critical and plays a pivotal role in the success of organization. In this age of globalization, it is crucial to retain existing customers and devise such strategies so that customers remain loyal with product or services provided. To deliver the requisite level of satisfaction desired, customer have in minds, a company needs to have a clear understanding of competitors as well. There is usually a motivating factor in customer satisfaction and retention process, which forces them to buy a specific product, and give assessment and feedback after consuming that specific product.

The objective of this thesis is to attain customer satisfaction and use as a driving force for retention and optimal goal to achieve customer advocacy so that act as promoters. The case for “Kebabish Restaurant” is the reflection of a successful customer journey that leads the business towards a profitable as well as competitive market in Kokkola area. The study aims to examine the relationship in between customer satisfaction and retention.

To have a successful organization and sustain it in the long run requires carefully devising customer relationship and key component to maintain and retain customers is satisfaction. Delivery of desired expectations as well as the perceived value in return to payments is another key factor to be a successful organization. Furthermore, ever changing scenarios and vast range of product or services offered from rapid innovation in start-ups make it more challenging for businesses to grow or even remain in competition.

Primary data has been collected using a questionnaire from customers/paper survey and the quality related data has been viewed in different food delivery channels such as wolt, foodora and google reviews. Exploring texts and journals written by different authors about customer satisfaction and retention has been done. The thesis is based on the quantitative research method.

Kebabish has a lot to offer for customers, a diverse variety, ranging from pizzas to kebabs from evening to late night. The restaurant has a large number of loyal customers because of delivering quality products. The taste and service provided is of excellent standard and renowned in town. The growth can be seen from the turnover and bottom-line results which eventually are a payoff from hard work, dedication, and continuous improvement of both quality and service, which has made the customers loyal to restaurant and finally turned to be the advocates for the product and for the restaurant.

## 2 THE COMMISSIONER

Mr. Saroj Ghimire is the commissioner of this thesis, and he is the founder, directing manager and the sole owner of Kebabish in Kokkola. He moved to Kokkola, Finland, in 2010 September as a full degree student of Centria University of Applied Sciences and completed the degree Bachelor of Business Administration in year 2014. Besides his study, Saroj was also working two part time jobs in Itella Oy (known as Posti) as an early newspaper deliverer and a part time worker with construction and painting buildings and a full-time construction worker during summer holidays. He has also worked as a restaurant kitchen worker for about a year in a restaurant located in Sievi, Finland.

In 2020, Saroj started an Indian restaurant and a pizzeria under the same roof which was later expanded into a bigger restaurant by merging with the adjacent restaurant. This merger made Kebabish, the one of the two restaurants which is opened in the night-time, but the prime location of Kebabish has a competitive edge over others in the night-time specially.

Indian restaurant and pizzeria are not so common in Finland besides a few examples that, we have noticed in the capital of Finland. Almost all the Indian restaurants and most of the ethnical pizzerias are operated by people of foreign backgrounds. The products of this restaurant and products are mainly targeted to the residents and to immigrants who miss the Asian cuisine and Indian spices from their motherland. This restaurant prepares authentic Indian dishes like chicken, beef, and fish portions and all pizza portions. The supply chain is well managed, specially the Indian spices, timely and right prices with the right taste for the customers.

According to the commissioner, the main reason behind starting Kebabish back in 2020 was the unavailability of Indian restaurant and the food items in the town. As Indian dishes are impossible to find in Finnish restaurants Saroj decided to start the restaurant in the heart of Kokkola which also contributes targeting sales in the night as it's in the middle of hotels, bars and pubs situated in Kokkola. Even though, the initial target group of the restaurant was he immigrants who are used to using the products, locals and even people from western culture and travellers from other countries who are interested in buying and trying the product. (City of Kokkola, 2021).

The top business priority is always to improve customer experience but now badly need to design the employees experience, thoughtfully. Employees' satisfaction results in higher employee retention and customers get better services. The key to achieving customer experience excellence is directly proportional to employee excellence experience. (Goss, 2022).

This restaurant also provides an opportunity to other locals to taste and experiment a new taste in the town. Kebabish has also been an interesting workplace for a student like me and a few more other work mates and contributing to the Finnish economy at the same time on micro level.

### **3 THE CONCEPT OF AIDA MODEL, ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING AND IDIC**

This chapter covers environmental scanning, both external and internal, discusses the opportunities and possible potential threats in the shape of competition and new entrants in the restaurant industry. The Internal analysis describes the current strengths of the business and identifies the weaknesses, possible mitigation and converts these identified weaknesses to useful business tool. Although AIDA model broadly used for marketing purposes but to explain this model here to understand customer psychology and achievement of desired results using the customer perspective. Likewise, IDIC philosophy of creating value for customers through following the steps engaged in identifying, differentiate, interact and customization.

In the following sub-chapter there is a brief description of each of the management best practices presented in contrast to the chosen topic that is customer satisfaction and leading towards customer retention. Here the point to discuss these theories is utilizing the mechanism already defined with practical approach to deal with customers and to provide knowledge for restaurant management. The goal is to devise and revise the implemented strategy that will result in standardised service and food of customer choice and taste, to achieve customer satisfaction and hence improve the customer retention.

#### **3.1 AIDA Model**

Human behaviour is best explained from advertisement to purchase by using the attention, interest, desire, and action (AIDA) model. The four stages show consumer progress through cognitive and affective behavioural decisions and help understand target audience over time. It also assists in finding the emotional reaction attached and analyse for subsequent stages. In the case of the restaurant industry, combining food related services and online ordering platforms, emerged as a driving force in food service market. (Song, Ruan & Jeon, 2021)

AIDA model provides the basic process and explains the philosophy that leads towards customer satisfaction and ultimately customer retention. Keeping in mind the behavioural decision making and emotional reactions of customers makes it possible to deliver desired satisfaction and retain long-term loyal business consumers. The resulting customer retention provides grounds for customer advocacy and



gives further direction so that they act as promoters, which is the ultimate achievement for businesses to have that level of customers. (Hanlon, 2022).

### **3.2 Environmental Scanning**

Environmental scanning is the process of monitoring, evaluating, and disseminating information from the external and internal environments to key people within an organization. It helps organizations identify opportunities and threats in the external environment, as well as changes in the internal environment that may affect the organization's performance. Environmental scanning can be used to inform strategic planning and decision-making, as well as to identify potential risks and opportunities for the organization (Pathshala, n.d.).

Environmental scanning includes monitoring a wide range of information sources, such as competitor activities, economic trends, social and demographic changes, technological innovations, and changes in government regulations. Although various analysis tools for strategic purposes widely used, for example pest analysis, porter forces, but the SWOT analysis is more relevant for the purpose of this report. S-W comprises of internal factors and O-T as external influential factors. (CIMA Strategic Analysis tool, 2007)

#### **3.2.1 Internal Analysis**

The Internal analysis refers to the process of evaluating a company's internal strengths and weaknesses to identify opportunities for growth and improvement. This can include a review of the company's financial performance, management structure, operations, and other internal factors that may impact its ability to achieve its goals. The results of an internal analysis can be used to develop strategies for improving the company's competitive position and achieving its business objectives. Internal analysis focused upon businesses strengths as a tool for competitive edge and weaknesses to realize first, then possibilities to transform into strengths. The entrepreneurs' vision turns weaknesses into strengths by adding ideas and innovation to grow and excel business. (Schooley, 2023).

The analysis is a crucial part, there are many ways to conduct internal environmental analysis, but the simplest form and observation is through functional analysis. The competency of business functions depends on expertise and appropriateness of resources within the company, for example in marketing, operations, human resource management, and culture. The combination of these organization functions provide dimensions of internal environment that are relevant when doing research. Managers and owners need to focus and identify internal factors to take advantage of existing opportunities and avoid possible potential threats. (Indris & Primiana, 2015)

### **3.2.2 External Analysis**

The external environment helps the company to identify the external factors, trends, and emerging issues in an innovative business idea. By analysing and scanning these external factors such as political, social, and economic a business can make a new plan as per the factor to withstand in future also. By this the company can make new plans which will help to satisfy the customer and indirectly retain the customer to the company. (Kenton, 2022).

Competitors analysis can be defined as analysing the competitors within the market. A competitor plays an important role in different areas such as innovation and creating plans. Also, it indirectly affects customer satisfaction and customer retention. It is very important to identify the customer on the market (Czepiel & Kerin, 2012). By the help of competitor analysis, the company can focus on creating unique value proposition. This creates a unique place in the market in between the competitors.

Similarly, what needs to be in focus is how the competitor analysis affects the customer satisfaction and customer retention. Firstly, what is important in competitor analysis is that it helps to create the opportunity and threat by observing the competitor in the market. By this the company can create uniqueness in their offered product. This helps the company to develop a different product from others and aims at satisfying its customer. For example, the product coke as a cold drink offer is different and unique from others and satisfies its customer. It is different for its customer by its taste that it offers to its customer. This is because it has competed its competitor with its unique value addition in the product. (Simon and Gomez, 2005).

Like that, competitor analysis helps the company not only develop a strategy to lead in the market by beating its opponent but also to satisfy its customer by serving something different that the customer wants. And this satisfaction leads to the retention of the customer to the company. Therefore, competitor analysis plays a very important role in customer satisfaction and customer retention. (White, 2022).

### **3.3 PEST Analysis**

The PEST analysis scans the external environment of the market including political, economic, social, and technological aspects (Çitilci & Akbalık 2020, 337). For this, one can know the impact of external environment in its business. Generally, this is a simple tool for analysis purpose but it still considers numerous factors in an organizational context both short term and long term. Based on a PEST analysis a company can devise its strategies and find a way for growth and development. The specific business environment analysis is also mandatory in contrast to general analysis. (Ho, J. K. K. (2014).

#### **3.3.1 Political Analysis**

The political analysis of the PEST analysis in environmental screening is analysis of political factors within the environment. It mainly focuses on government policy, changes in legislation, law rules which apply to the country or territory and tax and employment law. And different countries have different laws that rule the country, meaning the law of Finland is different from the law of the USA. And each country is run by their own laws and policies that govern the country, therefore the political aspect of environment scanning is very important in starting a business. (Kenton, 2022).

The success or failure of a business determined by political stability and commercial restrictions. Taxation, labour, trade, and environmental restrictions are some of the factors taken into consideration while setting up a business. Businesses need to look around in the process of expansion while broadening their horizons. The procedure of licensing, approval for new products, transparency and government priorities have a significant impact on the strategy of the companies. The above-mentioned political factors

when carefully considered, are evidently beneficial for firms in the environment they are going to operate. (Bonnici and Galea, 2014)

### **3.3.2 Economic Analysis**

The economic analysis consists of the economic factors which target on key factors such as interest rates, exchange variable, demand and supply and different micro and macro-economic indicator (Willy 2012, 27). For example, the economic factor demand and supply analysis helps a business to know the current demand of their product in the market and how to supply it to the customer through supply chain management. This helps the company to generate revenue. The economic factor exchange rate has a major impact on any business because businesses nowadays transfer to international markets global business and in global business the exchange rate plays a very important role in export and import of products in between two trading countries. (The Economic Times, 2023).

Therefore, economic factors also help a company to know the economic environment in detail with the analysis of both micro and macro- economic variables. It not only helps in maintaining balance in the market and business but also helps the business to overcome different economic crises in future. (Kenton, 2022).

### **3.3.3 Social Analysis**

The social analysis consists of social factor such as culture, values, and norms. The human being as a social animal needs to identify the social factor at first. Therefore, social factor have a major impact on the life cycle of a human, and it directly affects the customer satisfaction and customer retention. Social factors also include buying habit, taste, and preference. Therefore, the social factor has important impact on the business or company so there should be need of social analysis. (PESTLE Analysis Contributor, 2015).

Social analysis helps to know the social factor of the targeted area and thus, helps to make plans effectively to attract the targeted customer. For example, people of Sweden and Finland may have different taste preferences and lifestyle along with preferences. Thus, to establish the business in Sweden one should know the social background of Sweden and to start the business in Finland one should be aware of the social factor of Finland (it depends on the business type which social factor is to be taken). If the business is a restaurant, then taste, buying behaviour as social factors matter a lot. Therefore, social analysis is mandatory for successful business. (Pathak, 2020).

The cultural factor have their own importance in social analysis because every society and country is run by a certain culture and food habits. Thus, when one knows the cultural aspect of the target area one can develop a product of their customer choice which helps to meet customer satisfaction and indirectly leads to customer retention. Therefore, social analysis also plays an important role in creating a relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention. (Monterrosa, et al., 2020).

### **3.3.4 Technological Analysis**

The technological analysis of the environment scanning is used to analyse the technological aspect of the environment. Technology nowadays is developing day by day and there can be seen a huge technological change in comparing the environment before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. That pandemic caused a huge devastating change in the technological aspect and the consumer now is very hungry to adopt that new technology because it makes the work done easily. This analysis includes the understanding factor in the technological advancement which helps the business to upgrade their technological factor. For example, in the past days there was not any system of online delivery and the customer who craved some product at midnight or wanted just in time then it was hard for them to get that product but after an online delivery system came, then the work is done in easy manner and the customer gets benefitted through it. (The Economic Times, 2023).

Therefore, in short, technological advancement has a major impact on both the customer and business as well. It makes the work easier and the world narrower through the internet. Thus, one should be

aware of the technological advancement in the business environment to make changes in the workplace and system as well. The technological aspects, for example infrastructure upgradation and competency to use, updates both in hardware and software, play a vital role in today's business environment. Technology enables the companies to be more productive, efficient and provide ready information for timely and effective decision making. Technology assists in digital marketing and use of other e-channels as a tool to flourish the business and achieve goals. (Perera, R. 2017).

### **3.4 IDIC Philosophy**

The IDIC model involves four stages in its process that are identify, differentiate, customize, and interact and is designed to establish a healthy relationship with customers. The process explains the conversion of current customers to the satisfied stage and helps to gain the loyalty of customers and retaining relationship for the long-term. The competitive business environment makes it hard to retain the existing customers and fulfil the desired level of satisfaction. To remain competitive and have more satisfied customers one needs to understand customer expectations that lead toward satisfied customers. The judgement of satisfaction for example measured by rate of retention, and gives the idea how much the satisfaction level is and identification of grey areas in business that need improvement. (ER, 2020)

The IDIC four component philosophy provides an essential base to evaluate customer perception about product and analyses of different perceptive and concerns involved. The outcomes of IDIC identify factors resulting in better customers satisfaction and giving direction for customer retention, ideally the customer advocacy. Further, in this study, the dimension of customer relationship management and lifecycle is discussed detail as well as the impact on customer satisfaction. It is utmost important to recognise this process to attain customer satisfaction and eventually success for the company. The IDIC components are explained below in the figure as well. (Peppers & Rogers, 2004).

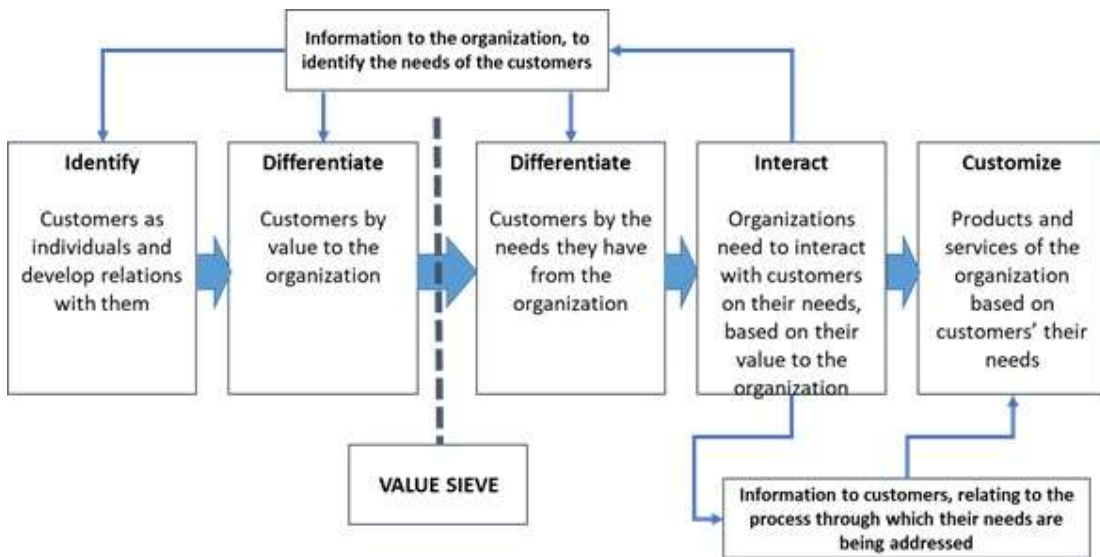


FIGURE 1. Idic Model (Peppers & Rogers, 2004)

The above figure is the IDIC model prepared by Pepper and Rogers which explains how a business maintains a relationship with customer. It consists of four stages that are to identify, differentiate, interact, and customize. The first one is to interact with customers as individuals and develop a relation with them which helps to make a strong bond with their customer. Then the next one is to differentiate the customers by value to the organization and also differentiate by the needs they have from the organization. This differentiation is based on the customer's as well as the organizations point of view. Similarly, after differentiation, the next part with the organization need to interact with customers on their needs, based on their value to the organization. (Peppers & Rogers, 2004)

This process helps to know customer's needs and demand on the product. And if the organization can't interact with the customer, the process goes back to the first step with the information to the organizations, to identify the need of the customer. And the final step is to customize the products and services of the organization based on their customers' need and demand. On this step, information related to the customers through the process are addressed to fulfil the customers' needs. This is the overall process of the IDIC model which is shown Figure 1 above. (Peppers & Rogers, 2004)

## **4 EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND CO-CREATION LEAD TOWARDS CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

In this chapter the impact of employee satisfaction and co-creation is discussed in contrast to customer satisfaction. There are management studies showing positive trends in terms of increased satisfied customers depending upon satisfied employees. Similarly, the co-creation in process of creating and setting up product or services with the engagement of customers producing the desired level of customer needs and wants hence achieving satisfaction.

### **4.1 Employee Satisfaction leads towards Customer Satisfaction**

The management practices for improved employee satisfaction show positive results, not only in terms of customer satisfaction but increased productivity and profitability for the company. In this chapter, the emphasis is to evaluate the relationship and possible positive impacts of employee satisfaction on different segments specially to achieve a higher level of customer satisfaction. There is a strong link between the customer satisfaction and customer satisfaction. Also, customer and employee satisfaction are two sides of the same coin therefore, it is very important for any organization to make its employees happy to get happy and satisfied customer. (Chamberlain & Zhao, 2019).

Jeon and Choi (2012) in their paper explain that employee satisfaction has a big impact on customer satisfaction therefore, the company should focus on recruiting confident employees who can dispose pro-social dispositions. Although the relationship is unilateral, both are related in some manner. Therefore, the company should target on making its employees happy and confident and this should be done from the very beginning that is from the recruiting process.

Employee satisfaction is one of the most influencing factors when it comes to organizational success because employee satisfaction is key to operating the business smoothly which in result delivers its products and services that satisfy its customers. In this paper the researcher finds out that customer satisfaction has a causal relationship with employee satisfaction and employee satisfaction plays a huge role in the satisfying the customer through delivering good service. (Kurdi, et al, 2020).



## 4.2 Co-Creation and Customer Satisfaction

A synergistic process of creating, delivering, and exchanging value with key actors is involved in service/goods consumption for mutual benefits. Mutual benefits enable organizations as well as customers to fully involve and indulge in the process, from ideas to design and creation toward delivery. And it's not only up to delivering but rather the exchange of value with customers. In the restaurant case, the process of creating a menu according to the taste and expectations of the customer in consultation with existing and potential customers help achievement of satisfaction in terms of taste, quality, price, and environment. (IGI Global)

Ursula and Nicola (2012) in their paper explain about the impact of the co-creation performance with the customer satisfaction and company support. In their research work they find out that a company that supports their customers helps to increase the degree of co-creation. The resulted degree of co-creation positively affects customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and service expenditure. Finally, due to satisfaction over the co-creation, the customers are more likely to spend more on the product and service they love. Therefore, from this paper it can be clearly seen that co-creation is directly related to the customer satisfaction although value creation is another aspect of the customer satisfaction, but co-creation also helps to make the customer satisfied with the business or organization and the business is more likely to grow if the degree of co-creation increases through the company support towards customers.

The scope of co-creation is as broad as the term itself containing a wider spread area as well as an implementation surface in numerous ways for example to improve the quality of service as a mean to delivering the best to customers, in the restaurant business specifically. Restaurants develop customer-oriented products and services that best suit the demand or need of the hour. Engaging the customer boosts the customer satisfaction and gives a sense of inclusion with more innovative ideas on customer perspective, and ultimately the business delivers that best serves its customers. Although, a business collects customer feedback and experiences, the idea is to include experiences and preferences in product and service design for better customer satisfaction. (Sharma, V. & Bhat, D.A.R. 2020).

### 4.3 Customer Delight – Retaining

The customer delight in simple terms is the process to meet customers' expectation by creating a positive experience with a product or brand. The delight is to please someone greatly or to charm someone and customer delight is to offer customers something beyond expectations or in addition to they are paying. It is different than that of customer satisfaction as it focuses on brand building with long-term positive experience whereas customer satisfaction simply explains how to meet the customers' expectation. By customer delight, the customer retention or customer remaining loyal to the company increases.

Edwin and Sheryl (2013) in their paper "From customer satisfaction to customer delight: Creating a new standard of service for hotel industry" explain how industry is moving from customer satisfaction to customer delight in this era of competition. Rather than meeting customers' expectation, nowadays the company tries to retain its customer through customer delight by creating long-term positive impact on the customer.

Similarly, different factors affect the customer delight such as the employee factor, contextual factor, and customer factors. Employee engagement, effort, behaviour, and commitment come under employee factors whereas customers' joy, emotions, comfort, and expectations come under the customer factor and finally, non-employee service, value that company delivers and other services come under the contextual factor (Barnes & Krallman, 2019). If a company can fulfil all these factors, it can create customer delight, and this also helps in customer satisfaction and customer retention of the company.

Therefore, customer delight is a way to create brand equity along with long-term positive impact on customer retention as it focuses on meeting customers' expectation along with long term positive impact over it. Also, restaurants in Kokkola are aiming at providing customer delight through different value creation which can be seen through a survey made on Kebabish. Therefore, customer delight is also one of the most important factors to create customer satisfaction as well as customer retention. It not only creates brand and value but also creates a long-term positive impact on the customer by meeting their expectation towards the product and service. (Edwin & Sheryl, 2013).

## 5 CUSTOMER LIFECYCLE AND ITS APPLICATION (RETENTION AND ADVOCATES)

A business needs to prioritize the customer lifecycle for achievement of customer satisfaction as well as for retention (Wiley 1991, 118). The steps involved in customer lifecycle management are essential to have satisfied customers as a resultant goal. The idea is to make such decisions and take initiatives that are in the best interest of customers' choice and leads towards satisfied customers. The customer lifecycle comprises of varying stages involved in view of different authors, but we consider here for the purpose of this study, a five-stage process widely accepted and applicable in most of the scenarios. Awareness can be advertised, considering the studies in research, realize the sale to customers, retention through different support programs, and realization towards advocacy. Customer retention also included the factor of satisfaction as satisfied customers remained loyal with a business and convert into advocates in long-term relationship using the product or services provided which is shown in Figure 2.



FIGURE 2. Customer Lifecycle (Bloominari, 2019)

The figure above clearly shows the customer lifecycle in a simple manner. The first step is the awareness where the customer becomes aware of the product through different media such as social media, and other means of advertisement. Although it's not as easy as it seems as there are many advertisements in the social media where the customer only looks after some which they needed. Secondly, the customer does research on the product and brand they are interested in through revision of different sources such as blog spots, industry expert videos, articles. Through this step they start to evaluate the product and brand they need. Thirdly, they compare the product with different products based on price, service it delivers, free trials and others to know whether the product is good or not. After complete evaluation and comparison, the customer purchases the product. If they like the product and brand, they are more likely to retain it otherwise they may switch to another brand or product. By this way the complete customer lifecycle is completed.

Customer lifecycle management is the process of assigning metrics to each stage of the customer lifecycle for analysis and evaluating the performance (Amaresan 2022). Customer lifecycles consider to be an arc that builds from beginning as a first learning about product and business, gives direction towards final goal that is customer advocacy. The first step in this journey is the awareness about the business and products through different channels for example media, advertisement, or friend. Next, is to take those customers into consideration by educating the customer with solid knowledge base. Here the actual purchase going is executed and the important aspect to make it as smooth as possible. Also, at this stage the customer has been part of your database and used for future experience. After the actual purchase is done, the retention phase starts with creating a healthy relationship. Finally, the result of all the previous steps happens positively in the form of loyalty hence customer advocacy. The customer will work as an ambassador for the company by urging family and friends to buy from the same business. (Lahey, 2021).

The report comprises different aspects covering the dimensions involved in customer lifecycle management process. Analysing these dimensions helps realize the owner to take necessary measures and serve customers with satisfying taste and prestigious customer service experience whenever visits or order food.

The customer lifecycle management stages and the effects are maximized by taking some options to achieve best results associated with each step of customer experience. At awareness stage, collection of customer's data and using different tactical methods boost the impact of awareness. Tailoring your

communication and try to make it personal, returns in maximum results. Incorporating customer relationship software and offering a carrot help convert a customer from consideration to purchase. Once a Sale has done, try to know more about customer by capturing customer data of all kinds, can be used for future follow up. Encourage the sale by follow up and communication by providing support might result additional repetitive sales called Retention. Offer some referral and loyalty pro-grams, special client category with some perks and advantages, built brand loyalty and Advocacy. (Izquierdo, 2022).

### 5.1 Customer Retention

Along with Customer satisfaction, customer retention has rapidly become crucial in the business world because there are more and more products and services available to choose from customers and the market competition is also extremely high (Raab, G et al. 2016). Customer retention is the potentiality of a specific product or a company to keep hold of their customer or make them engage with the brand or company over a specific time period.

Customer retention is “the way of converting the new customers into regular clients through creating greater customer value and long-term customer satisfaction” which is shown in Figure 3 below.

(Adapted from Raab, G et al., 2016).

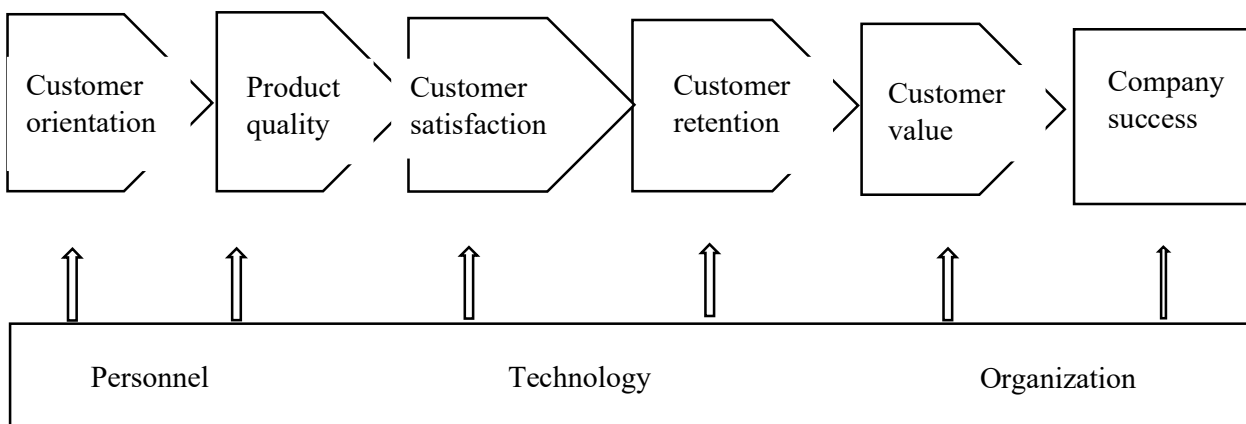


FIGURE 3. Concept of customer retention (Raab, G et al. 2016)

The figure above is adapted from an article of Raab, G et al. published in 2016 which explains the concept of customer retention in six steps. These cycles are further divided into three parts that are personnel, technological and organizational. Firstly, the product that a business delivers should be customer

oriented because business is all about fulfilling a customer need then only it can get success, therefore the product that a business delivers must be customer oriented. This customer orientation helps to maintain product quality as the customers choose good quality product over poor therefore, quality must be maintained to retain the customer. This customer-oriented quality product, satisfies the customer need and this satisfaction leads to customer retention towards the product. Customer retention creates value among the customers towards the product and all these in result make success for the company.

## **5.2 Customer Relationship Management**

Along with customer retention, there is also a need of customer relationship management, this helps the company in the long run. Different scholars write their view on customer relationship management but what is common is that it's a practice and strategy that a company adopts. Customer relationship management is realized through a step-by-step process and careful planning keeping in view those factors necessary for successful customer retention. Businesses need to realize the value of customer mind set and implement strategies best in line to achieve customer satisfaction and retention and put efforts to convert those retained customers to advocates, who propagate the message of the company in their close circles. Without proper management of each step involved it is hard to sustain a business in the long run as a profitable organization. (Totah, 2022).

There are many reasons that motivate a business to adopt the customer relationship management practice. As customer relationship management system helps the company to have access to customer information about past purchases and interaction history. It also helps to identify the trend of customers through their past data. Therefore, in short it can be said that customer relationship management helps to manage the customer relation and helps to access the data of customer history which helps the business to made plan a strategy for their business. (Chai, et al., 2019).

## 6 RESEARCH METHOD

The thesis consists of two parts which are the theoretical and the empirical. The theoretical part consisted of a literature review from different secondary sources such as books, articles and visual material which is reviewed and paraphrased by the researcher whereas the empirical part consists of the quantitative data through the means of quantitative research methods. Therefore, both primary and secondary sources of data are used in the research work by the researcher.

Quantitative methods give essential tools for decision making and to understand complex situations. There are a few stages involved to solve a problem, using quantitative methods. Identification of problem with its context is the first step in this process. Without a clear understanding of the problem, it's hard to search for possible solutions. After identification and the recognition of the problem comes the objective part, that is how to improve the problem by taking necessary measures to be successful. An analysis of the possible alternatives and actions is required to fix the problem. Decisions can be made by reviewing the conditions involved and comparing those alternative solutions. The finalise decisions can then be implemented to cater the needs and performance monitoring of the implementation. There are no exact rules defining this process or stages to follow. Rather the repetition of stages may occur at some level to ensure the desired results. (Waters, 2008).

The research work was carried out through the means of a questionnaire. The survey clearly targets the customer satisfaction, product quality and customer retention and the outcomes are further explained through the graphs and pie charts in a later chapter. A sample of 43 customers of Kebabish were answered the survey. And the sampling done was random and convenient without biasness. The questionnaire was sent out to the customers of the Kebabish restaurant.

The theoretical part of the research work helps in analysing the content of the research through different context whereas the empirical part helps in finding the results to fulfil the research criteria. The research is taken on the Kebabish restaurant located in Kokkola to know the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention. The research work is based on a descriptive analysis. There can be some limitation in this research work, but it will be helpful for other researchers to carry out the research work in that limitation.

In the literature review for the theoretical research, different philosophies and critically acclaimed management theories were applied to this case scenario. It involved analysing existing theories and methods to understand a particular business situation. The AIDA model helps explain the customer behaviour through the four stages and correlate with consumer progress. It helps to provide a way out regarding the research problem by relating to existing knowledge.

Furthermore, the environmental scanning broadly categorizes into internal and external so that a justifiable analysis can be done based upon the findings of scanning. Weaknesses and grey areas are identified for improvement of customer service, quality upgradation and competitive edge. The concept of external scanning came across with the suitable PEST analysis well known for impact of external factor upon businesses related to research problem. Opinions made are based upon the key findings of results from different factors.

The key benefit of the theoretical approach is to take benefit using the insights and experiences. The establishment of a healthy relationship with customers came across with another effective theory named IDIC. It helps to explain the customer perspective, concerns and provide a structure for interpreting the results and formulating the strategies based on evaluation. The theoretical approach in combination with empirical research methods provide a comprehensive ground to understand the problem in discussion.

The questionnaire survey is used as a primary data source and further analysis is done based upon the results from the participants. The purpose-based objectives are achieved which are the true results and findings from the answers. Further, the confidentiality and privacy are maintained and communicated so that the desired results can be obtained in a practical sense. These results can then be incorporated in planning and designing new products and services that ultimately leads towards strategy formulation. (Roopa, S., & Rani, M. S. (2012).

The questionnaire survey is conducted on Google forms and available to the potential participants to easily fill in the customers' feedback. The survey link was shared with customers at the counter after permission so that they could fill in the required information in their spare time. In this way, the results were collected during the last week of December 2022 till the first week of January 2023. However, few participants did not answered all the questions, some left few questions un-answered.



To conclude, the survey is a good piece of information for deriving concrete results specifically based on this limited information collected from the data of the questionnaire.

The reliability and validity are principal concepts while explaining about research quality. These tools are familiar for measuring quality and standards in both quantitative and qualitative research methods. In simple understanding, reliability means the consistency of a measurement whereas validity is the accuracy in the measurement. (Vu, T. T. N., 2021).

Reliability has one common property that is the consistency while performing qualitative research. Reliability is also explained as a score on a test for a specific population data. Various other techniques can also be used in interviews and observations to achieve the reliability, despite consistency. The task is to perform the questionnaire survey so that accuracy can be achieved and give better results so that the deviation from the original data will be minimal. (Vu, T. T. N., 2021).

Validity measure needs to be accurate to the extent very close to the tests or survey performed, so that clear and concrete results can be drawn. Ensuring appropriate methods to measure the validity depend upon thorough results and knowledge of the field. The sampling method and population chosen related to specific topic or study. During the data collection the other factors remained constant so that fare and relevant results validate the survey results. (Middleton, 2019).

## 7 ANALYSIS OF DATA

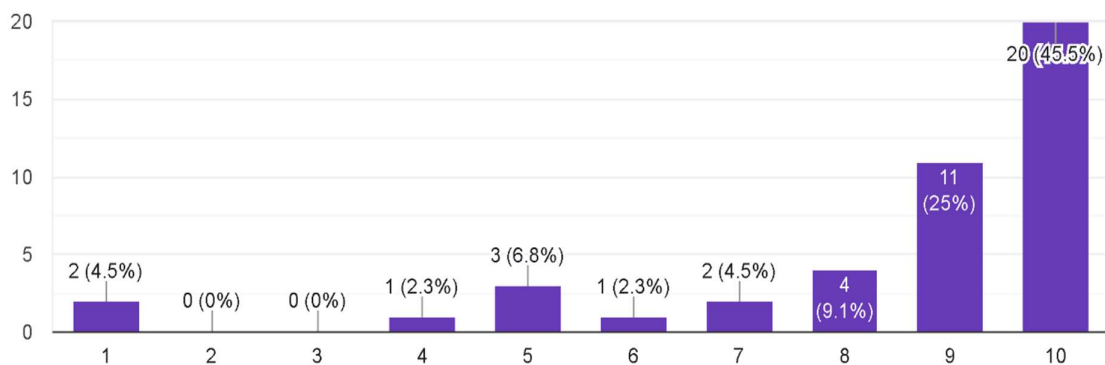
After distributing the survey through questionnaire to the customers of the restaurant, the researcher collected responses which help to know the restaurant's standing in market. The researcher got answers from 44 customers of the restaurant and to know the customer satisfaction and customer retention of the company. The survey is designed on four parameters namely service, quality, price, and customer retention. The questionnaire survey was conducted from 22nd of December 2022 till 7th of January 2023. The survey was designed in Google forms available free of cost, for online collection of data, via a shared link to participants, resultantly the analysis drawn is based upon the survey data explained below.

### 7.1 Service and Rendering of Service

This part of the analysis constitutes the very first question that is the satisfaction level of the customer in term of the service given by the restaurant. This point is crucial because in restaurants service is the point to analyse the satisfaction a customer gained. This helps us conclude towards better and improved services and also know at what point the Kebabish stands right now. It has been clearly seen that the majority of the customers are perceiving the anticipated level of service from the restaurant. The survey of the customer's result is shown in picture 1 below.

How satisfied are you about the service? (1=weak 10=Strong)

44 responses



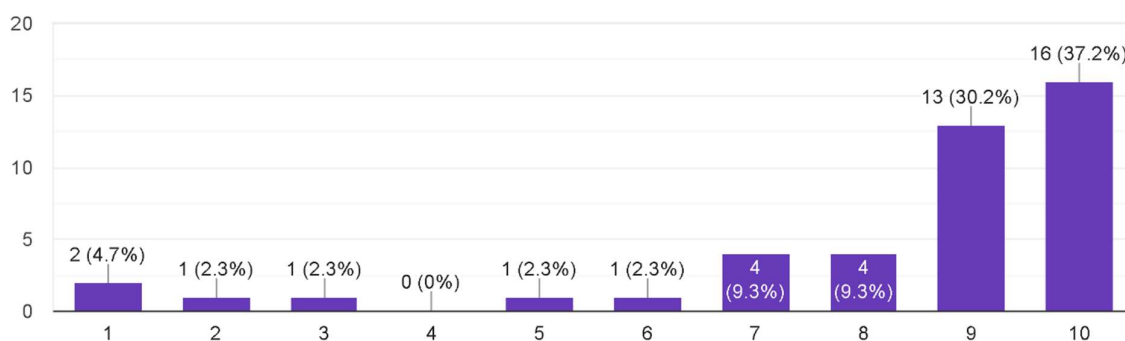
PICTURE 1. Service Delivered

The service that Kebabish provides as the result also clearly shows is given in the diagram. This clearly defines that the company offers better service to its customer. About 46 percent are strongly satisfied with the service of the restaurant and 4 percent are weakly satisfied with the service given by the restaurant, in total most customers are very happy and satisfied. This result shows that the customer is very satisfied by the service provided by the Kebabish restaurant. A maximum of the customers strongly agree with the satisfaction level of the service provided by the restaurant.

Additionally, the topic explains the rating level of customers in terms of service render where the rating is ranked from 1- weak to 10- strong. After the survey the result is shown below in the picture 2.

How would you rate this service render? (1=weak 10=Strong)

43 responses



PICTURE 2. Service Render

The above diagram clearly shows that the service rendered is best as most of the customer has rated it 10. In term of service rendered, about 39 percent of the customer are fully satisfied whereas only 5 percent are weakly satisfied by the service rendered of the restaurant. Out of 43, 16 customers rate the service leave out of the restaurant as 10 and 13 rate it 9 out of 10. 4 customer rate it 7 and 8 out of 10 whereas 1 customer rates it 2 out of 10. Also 1 customer rates it 5 and 6 out of 10. And only 2 customers rate it 1 out of 10 in terms of service rendered.

Therefore, it can be clearly seen that a maximum number of customers are satisfied with the service rendered by the Kebabish restaurant. And it can be said that the leave out customers that are satisfied

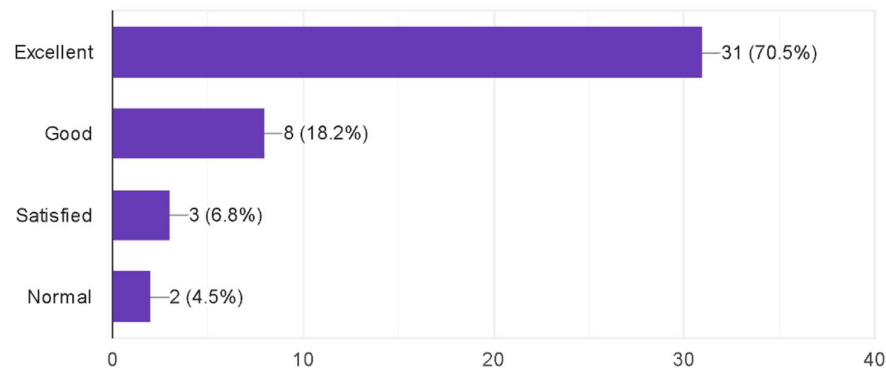
by the service and service render of the restaurant are more likely to retain in the restaurant. Only two customers are not satisfied with the service render of the restaurant.

## 7.2 Product and Price in reference to Quality

The product quality of the restaurant is divided into four parts which are excellent, good, satisfied, and normal. The researcher aims to know whether the restaurant delivers high quality product to its customer or not. The result from the survey through the customer is presented in the bar diagram below picture 3.

How is the overall quality of foods?

44 responses



PICTURE 3. Product Quality

The graph 3 above shows that most of the customer like the quality of food that the restaurant offers and only 1 customer has chosen normal which is clearly shown in the figure. As 73.8 percent of the customer find excellent quality in the served food whereas only 2.4 percent find its normal 16.7 percent find it good and 7.1 percent are satisfied by the product that the restaurant serves.

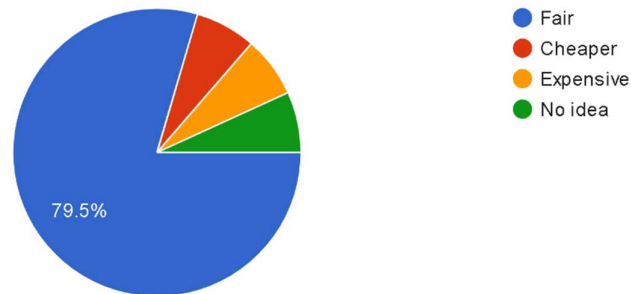
Out of 44 responses 31 customer find the quality of the food to be excellent and love the taste of the food too. Whereas 8 customers find it good which means in average quality. Similarly, 3 out of 44 are satisfied by the quality of the product that the company deliver and only 2 find it normal in terms of the quality of the product. In conclusion, it can be said the overall product quality that the restaurant

de-livers to its customer is excellent as a majority of the customer finds it excellent and only few customers find it average.

Furthermore, the price in reference to quality is divided into four aspects that is fair, cheaper, expensive and no idea. This part of the questionnaire wants to find out the price of the foods to customer regarding quality of food that the restaurant delivers. The result that came from the survey is shown in the figure 4 below.

In your view, the prices of foods with regards to quality of foods?

44 responses



PICTURE 4. Price in Reference to Quality

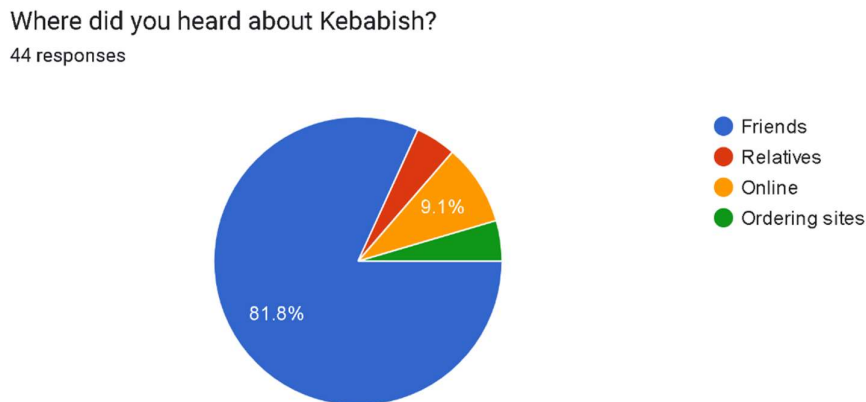
As the figure clearly shows 81 percent of the customers find the price fair in accordance with the quality and only 4.8 percent find it to be expensive and 7.1 percent feel to be cheaper and has no idea about the price in reference to the product.

From the figure, majority finds the price of the food to be fair in reference to the quality and thus finds it reasonable. Whereas some finds it cheaper, and few find it to be expensive and the remaining have no idea on the price. Therefore, it can be clearly seen that the restaurant offers good price to its customer and the customer are satisfied with it.

### 7.3 Visiting Factors and Recommendation to others.

The company visiting factor is the factor that makes the customer to visit the company once and again. For the survey mainly four factors are used to evaluate the company visiting factor which are through

friends, relatives, online and ordering sites. Although, the main factor contributing to visits is friends, and needs to develop some other reasoning and ideas that boost the visitors to come in person. They need to buy food from the restaurant directly instead of using other secondary mediums, for example online delivery channels. Based on these factors the customer visits the restaurant and the result of survey on these factors is given below in figure 5.



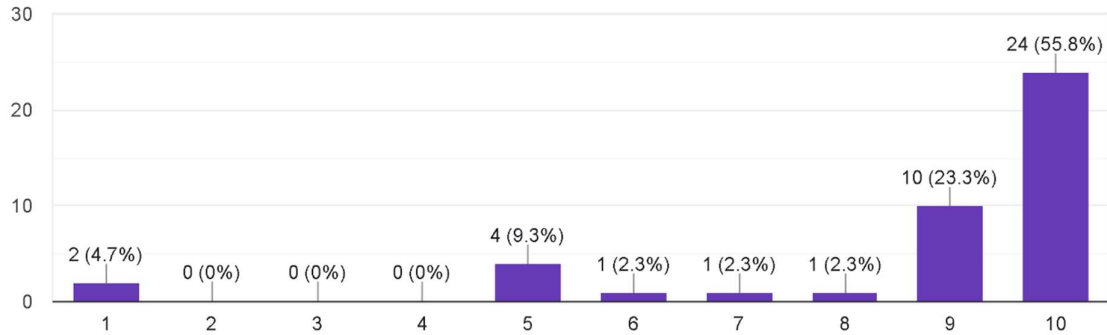
PICTURE 5. Company Visiting Factors.

From the above figure, most of the customer came through the influence of friends which means through the communication of friends, customer tend to visit the restaurant as 81 percent of the customers are influence by their peers and 9.5 percent through relatives and the remaining tend to visit through the influence of relatives and ordering sites. Only some of the customer came through the medium of relatives and ordering sites. Therefore, there are a lot of the retained customer of the restaurant who attract the new customer too. It can be said that customer satisfaction of the restaurant promotes the restaurant of the area.

Also, there are different factors that make customers recommend some product or company to other. In the restaurant business the product like the quality of food, taste, service of the restaurant and so on highly affect the customers. It also helps to know that the customer will remain loyal with the restaurant or not because more he/she recommend to other more they tend to retain to the restaurant. Therefore, the recommendation result of the restaurant is shown in the figure 6 below.

How likely would you recommend to others? (1=weak 10=Strong)

43 responses



PICTURE 6. Recommending Others.

From the survey it is seen that, most of the customers recommend the restaurant to others. About 58.5 percent of customers highly recommend the restaurant to other whereas only 4.9 percent don't recommend it to others. Among the overall of 43 responses, 24 strongly recommend the restaurant to others whereas 10 rate it 9 out of 10 meaning they will also recommend to other. 1 rate it 8, other 1 rate it 6 and 7 out of 10. Among 43 responses 4 responses are of average response that is 5 out of 10. Similarly, 2 responses show that they are not likely to recommend the restaurant to others.

From the overall responses it can be concluded that the recommending rate is high among all therefore, the customers tend to recommend this restaurant to other people as well. Also, this shows that customers like the products and services that the restaurant delivers, therefore they recommend the restaurant product and service to the other customers as well.

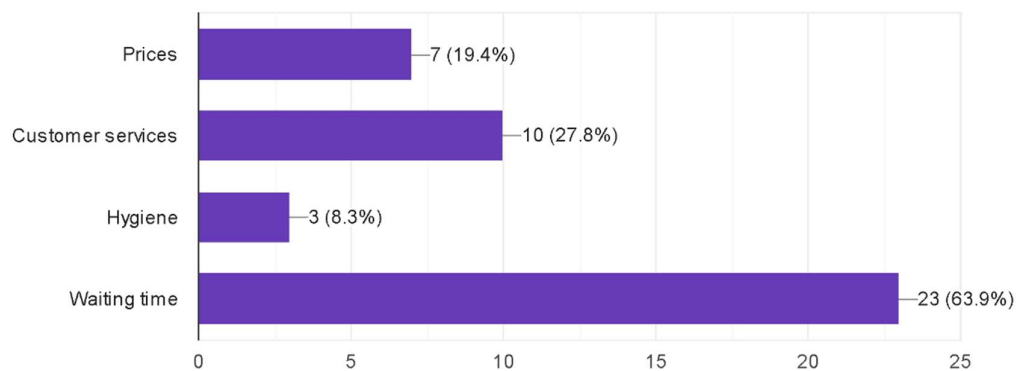
#### 7.4 Area of Improvement

Areas of improvement are the areas that the restaurant needs to work on or the area that the customers find lagging in the restaurant. Although food and services of the restaurant are good here are also different areas that the restaurant needs to work on. The area of improvement of the Kebabish restaurant is

divided into four parts that is price, customer service, hygiene and waiting time check after survey is explained in the figure 7 below.

In your opinion, what needs to be improved?

36 responses



PICTURE 7. Area of Improvement

From the above figure it can be clearly seen that time management is the core area of the restaurant which needs to be improves. Besides this customer service area needs to be improved and later price and hygiene. About 64 percent of the customers feel that they need to wait for some time to get their food on the table whereas 23 percent feel poor customer service. About 17 percent of the customers don't like the price with reference to the food that the restaurant delivers and only 5 percent feels that the hygiene of the company needs to be improved.

Therefore, the restaurant needs to work more on the waiting time. Sometime people have an urgency to go somewhere, if the product is not delivered on time, then it affects both the customer and the restaurant. Therefore, the product delivery should be on time and another area of improvement is the customer service. The customers find the customer service to be average, so the restaurant needs to work more on it. Thirdly the restaurant needs to revise the price change with the product that they deliver.



## 7.5 Recommendations to the Commissioner

After the completion of the study, researcher has drawn some recommendations which will be helpful for the commissioner and the restaurant overall. These are totally based upon the study, which is from a limited number of customers. The optimization of these results can be best described by implementing the necessary changes as anticipated.

After the overall research of the study, there are some recommendations that the researcher has discovered which need to be given to the commissioner. During the research analysis, in the improvement part, one of the areas of that need to be improved is the waiting time of the customer. While doing research work the researcher found out that there is a need of improvement in the waiting time of the restaurant with the adoption of the just in time approach. Although it is hard to adopt the just in time approach, the product should be delivered in time so that it helps the restaurant and the owner of the restaurant to attract more customer and retain its old customer.

Another area that researcher wants to recommend to the commissioner to work on is the employee recruitment. Although it is not shown in the analysis part but during the analysis the researcher discovered that the waiting time of delivery of product is due to a lack of employees either in the product serving area or in the production area. The researcher doesn't want to blame anyone but just wants to recommend the commissioner to hire more workforce so that the customer will get better service and this recruitment process should be done wisely based on the experience and working capability of the employee either hiring a chef or a waiter.

Furthermore, there needs to be some sort of advertisement and marketing for the restaurant because the majority of the respondents heard from their friends. The researchers' humble opinion is to employ the techniques of digital and social media marketing, for example an active Instagram page, updated daily the activities and advancements regarding customers with some attractive pictures. In addition, a Facebook page and website containing the necessary information regarding the menu and other allied services offered by the restaurant should be developed.

Moreover, a tactical approach to offer discounts situationally, like for example happy hours discounts/free drink in low sale hours increase the sales. This way the sale can be boosted and enhanced utilizing the idle capacity both in human resource as well as the infrastructure. The main idea is to

market the restaurant and achieve better financial results in terms of achieving cost efficiency as competitive edge. Another way is the use of Loyalty Discount Coupons, for example the 11<sup>th</sup> pizza would be free or the 6<sup>th</sup> pizza can be bought on 50% discount. Actual feasibility and careful calculations regarding offering of discount lies with the commissioner. The idea is to offer a discount without harming the profit margins, to attract more customers and long-term customer relations leading towards customer loyalty.

Additionally, researcher wants to recommend the commissioner is in the hospitality area. A restaurant is not only a place where a customer fulfils their hunger but also a place where they need relaxation from their hectic work schedule. Thus, there should be both hospitality and better food. In the Kebabish restaurant although the food is good, the hospitality factor needs to be improved. Hospitality helps to refresh and attract the customer. Although the hospitality is good at Kebabish restaurant, but it needs to be improved more.

The above-mentioned issues are the recommendations for the commissioner that the researcher found as an area of improvement for the restaurant. Therefore, if these areas are improved then the restaurant, not only attracts new customers but also satisfies and retains its old customers.

## 8 CONCLUSION

The overall paper is based on the topic of relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention taking the Kebabish restaurant as a case study for the thesis. The main aim of the thesis to identify whether there is any relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention, or how satisfaction affects its customer to visit the restaurant again.

Also, different factors are mentioned in the paper such as employee satisfaction, customer delight and different literature is reviewed, considering its importance on customer satisfaction and customer delight. The question is how the employee satisfaction and customer delight affect the customer satisfaction. The employee satisfaction leads to better service quality and total quality management which helps the company to serve the customer in a better way, as employees are the main backbone of the organization. This employee satisfaction helps to maintain customer satisfaction, and this directly or indirectly leads to customer retention and expansion of the overall business.

After the survey on the customers of the Kebabish restaurant, included in the analysis part, it is clearly seen that customer satisfaction is directly related to the customer retention. In the analysis part, it is seen that the customers recommend the restaurant to other customers which clearly shows that the customers of the restaurant are very satisfied with the restaurant and tend to retain more and recommend others to visit the restaurant. Thus, there seems to be a direct relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention. Also, different literature explained in the paper clearly says that customer satisfaction is directly related to the customer retention.

The commissioner is of the opinion that Kebabish restaurant is working well but there are always areas of improvement. Keeping in view the overall findings and research based on survey, identification of the grey area is done, and necessary measures are suggested for future growth and betterment of the business. The commissioner appreciated the efforts and finds those results realistic and straight to the point, enabling to strengthen the relationship with customers and sustainability of the Kebabish restaurant. Without continuous improvement and dedication to serve with quality as well as affordability, it's hard to stay in the competition, especially in the current evolving business conditions. Businesses need to stay focused and the only thing to contain is to remain adaptable to change.

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## APPENDIX 1/2

# Questionnaire

## Customer satisfaction

### Gender

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

### Age Group

- ☐ Below 20  
☐ 21-28  
☐ 29-35  
☐ Above 35

How would you rate this service render? (1=weak 10=Strong)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How satisfied are you with the service? (1=weak 10=Strong)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How is the overall quality of food?

- ☐ Excellent  
☐ Good  
☐ Satisfied  
☐ Normal



## APPENDIX 2/2

In your view, the prices of foods with regards to quality of foods?

- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Cheaper
- ☐ Expensive
- ☐ No idea

Where did you hear about Kebabish?

- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Relatives
- ☐ Online
- ☐ Ordering Sites

In your opinion, what needs to be improved?

- ☐ Prices
- ☐ Customer services
- ☐ Hygiene
- ☐ Waiting time

How likely would you recommend it to others? (1=weak 10=Strong)

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○