

Research Article

Assessing Service Quality and Customer Patronage of Campus-Based Restaurants in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The relevance of service delivery on customer patronage of campus local restaurants cannot be overemphasized. The study assessed the effects of service delivery on campus local restaurants in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The research objectives specifically assessed the effects of service delivery on customer patronage of campus local restaurants in Ekiti State, Nigeria; examined the impact of food quality on customers patronage of campus local restaurants; evaluated the role of service delivery in influencing customers satisfaction and loyalty to campus local restaurants; assessed the effect of restaurant ambiance and environment on customer experiences, and evaluated the importance of pricing and perceived value for money on customer decisions. A descriptive research design of survey type was employed for the study. The population of the study comprised students enrolled in selected institutions in Ekiti State, Nigeria. A sample size of 888 respondents were selected for the study using multi-stage sampling procedure. A self-structured questionnaire was developed to collect data for the study. Descriptive frequency counts, percentage, and multiple regression analysis were used to analyse the data. The study revealed that food quality, responsive customer service, appealing ambiance and perceived value for money significantly impact customer satisfaction and repeat patronage of campus local restaurants in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that the quality of food served at the campus local restaurants is an important determinant for patronage. The study concluded that maintaining high food quality, exceptional customer service, a clean and inviting restaurant environment and competitive pricing strategies in campus restaurants promotes customer patronage. The study recommends that there should be adequate investment in staff training, digital innovations, and maintaining high hygiene and food quality to sustain customer patronage.

Keywords

Service Delivery, Customer Patronage, Campus, Local Restaurant, Food Quality, Customer Service

1. Introduction

Service delivery in the restaurant industry is a critical factor influencing customer patronage globally. The hospitality sector is highly competitive, and restaurants must deliver excellent service to attract and retain customers [1]. High-quality service delivery encompasses various elements,

including food quality, customer service, ambiance, pricing, and cultural relevance, all of which significantly impact customer satisfaction and loyalty [2]. In a global context, restaurants face the challenge of catering to diverse customer preferences and expectations. According to [3], factors such

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as food quality, service quality, and physical environment are essential determinants of customer satisfaction in restaurants worldwide. The ability to provide consistent and high-quality service is crucial for restaurants aiming to succeed in the global market.

In Africa, the restaurant industry is growing rapidly, with increasing urbanization and a rising middle class driving demand for diverse dining experiences. However, service delivery in many African restaurants is often hindered by challenges such as inadequate training, poor infrastructure, and limited access to quality ingredients. [4] highlights the importance of improving service quality in African restaurants to enhance customer satisfaction and foster loyalty. Nigeria, as one of Africa's largest economies, has a vibrant restaurant industry that reflects the country's rich cultural diversity. In cities like Lagos and Abuja, the demand for high-quality dining experiences is on the rise. However, local restaurants in smaller cities face unique challenges and opportunities in delivering exceptional service, as [5] opined that customer relationship is a major challenge among small wineries and restaurants. These restaurants must balance traditional culinary practices with contemporary service expectations to meet the varied preferences of their customers [6]. The quality of food served in restaurants is a fundamental aspect of service delivery that significantly influences customer patronage. Customers expect not only delicious meals but also consistency in taste and presentation. According to [7], food quality is a primary determinant of customer satisfaction and repeat patronage in the restaurant industry. Restaurants that maintain high food quality can build a strong reputation and attract a loyal customer base.

Customer service is another critical component of service delivery that affects customer patronage. The interactions between restaurant staff and customers can greatly impact the overall dining experience. Friendly, attentive, and responsive service can enhance customer satisfaction, while poor service can lead to negative reviews and decreased patronage [8]. Effective training programs for staff can improve service delivery and customer retention. The ambiance and environment of a restaurant also play a crucial role in determining customer satisfaction. Factors such as cleanliness, decor, lighting, and seating arrangements contribute to the overall dining experience. A pleasant and comfortable environment can attract more customers and encourage them to stay longer [9]. Therefore, restaurants that invest in creating a welcoming and aesthetically pleasing environment tend to enjoy higher patronage rates. Pricing and perceived value for money are important determinants of customer patronage in restaurants. Customers are more likely to frequent restaurants where they feel they receive good value for their money. Transparent pricing and appropriate portion sizes are essential for ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty [10]. Restaurants that offer competitive pricing without compromising on quality can attract a broader customer base. Cultural and social factors significantly influence customer preferences and behaviors in

the restaurant industry. Incorporating local customs and traditions into the restaurant experience can resonate with the community and enhance customer loyalty among customers. As [11] stated, that understanding these cultural nuances is crucial for local restaurants aiming to build a loyal customer base. Service delivery is a critical component in determining customer satisfaction and loyalty, particularly in the highly competitive restaurant industry. In Ado Ekiti, Nigeria, local restaurants face significant challenges in attracting and retaining customers despite the growing demand for dining options. The problem lies in understanding the specific determinants that influence service delivery and, subsequently, customer patronage. Factors such as the quality of food, customer service, ambiance, pricing, and hygiene standards may play varying roles in customer decision-making processes. However, there is a lack of comprehensive research that examines these factors in the context of Ado Ekiti's local restaurants. This gap in knowledge hinders restaurant owners and managers from effectively addressing customer needs and improving their service delivery to enhance patronage. Therefore, this study seeks to provide actionable insights for restaurant owners and managers to improve their service delivery and increase customer satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

Food service delivery encompasses the processes, strategies, and systems employed to prepare, transport, and serve food to consumers. The evolution of food service delivery has been significantly influenced by technological advancements, customer preferences, and industry innovations [12]. Food service delivery refers to the mechanisms through which food is prepared, packaged, and distributed to customers, either within a commercial or non-commercial setting. According to [13], food service delivery includes in-house dining, takeout, catering, and online food ordering systems. The scope extends to institutional settings such as hospitals, schools, and corporate canteens, where meal provision follows structured delivery systems to ensure efficiency and hygiene [14].

Customer patronage is a crucial factor influencing business sustainability and growth. It refers to the degree to which customers consistently purchase products or services from a particular business [15]. Understanding the concept of customer patronage involves examining various factors such as customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, service quality, and perceived value. This review explores the concept, key determinants, and its significance in contemporary business environments.

Customer patronage is the behavioral outcome of customers' decisions to engage with and repeatedly purchase from a business. It is driven by multiple factors, including customer satisfaction, brand perception, service experience, and personal preferences [16]. According to [17], patronage behavior can be classified into habitual, emotional, and rational categories, depending on the motivation behind repeat purchases.

Businesses seek to enhance customer patronage by focusing on customer relationship management (CRM), improving product quality, and employing effective marketing strategies [18]. Studies suggest that businesses that offer superior customer experiences tend to enjoy higher levels of patronage due to increased customer loyalty and word-of-mouth recommendations [19].

Customer patronage is integral to business success, influencing revenue generation and market positioning. Businesses that consistently attract and retain customers tend to have better financial performance and competitive advantage [20]. Additionally, strong customer patronage leads to lower marketing costs, as loyal customers engage in positive word-of-mouth marketing [21].

In the digital era, businesses leverage technology to track and enhance customer patronage through personalized marketing and loyalty programs [22]. E-commerce platforms and social media also play a significant role in customer engagement and retention [23].

Service quality remains a pivotal determinant of customer patronage. High-quality service fosters customer satisfaction, which in turn enhances patronage intentions and behaviors. In the fast-food industry, for instance, the quality of service has been shown to significantly affect customer patronage [24]. Similarly, in the retail banking sector, factors such as the speed of processing information and the reliability of equipment are critical in influencing customer decisions [25].

Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that the sensory attributes of food such as taste, freshness, and presentation significantly impact diners' decisions to return to an establishment. For instance, a study conducted in Awka Metropolis, Nigeria, identified food quality as a primary factor affecting customer patronage in local food restaurants [26]. This underscores the necessity for restaurateurs to prioritize high-quality culinary offerings to attract and retain clientele. The relationship between food quality and customer satisfaction is well-established, with satisfaction serving as a mediator between food quality and re-patronage intentions. Research indicates that superior food quality enhances customer satisfaction, which in turn fosters loyalty and repeat business.

2.1. Theoretical Review

The study on assessing the effects of service delivery on customers' patronage of campus local restaurants in Ekiti State, Nigeria is anchored on several theoretical frameworks that explain consumer behavior, service quality, and customer satisfaction. These theories provide a foundation for understanding

standing how service delivery influences customers' decisions to patronize local restaurants.

The SERVQUAL model, developed by [27], is one of the most widely used frameworks for measuring service quality. It identifies five key dimensions that influence customer perceptions of service delivery: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Tangibility refers to the physical environment and equipment, reliability involves consistent and dependable service, responsiveness is the ability of staff to provide prompt service, assurance relates to employees' knowledge and courtesy, while empathy concerns personalized customer care. Studies have confirmed that higher service quality in these dimensions leads to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty in restaurant businesses [28].

2.2. Customer Perceived Value Theory

The Customer Perceived Value (CPV) theory, as proposed by [29], posits that customers evaluate services based on the trade-off between perceived benefits and perceived costs. In the restaurant industry, factors such as food quality, service efficiency, pricing, and convenience contribute to the overall perceived value. When customers perceive that the benefits of dining at a particular restaurant outweigh the costs, they are more likely to become repeat customers [30].

More importantly, the theoretical frameworks discussed provide valuable insights into the relationship between service delivery and customer patronage in campus local restaurants.

3. Methodology

The study employed descriptive survey research design and adopted Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted in this study. First stage, simple random (fish bowl without replacement) sampling technique was used to select four (4) institutions out of the fourteen (14) institutions in Ekiti State. At the second stage, simple random sampling was used to select 222 respondents from each of the four (4) institutions. The instrument was administered to eight hundred and eighty-eight (888) respondents in four (4) higher Institutions in Ekiti State. 222 was administered to Afe Babalola university, 222 was administered to Federal University Oye-Ekiti, 222 was given to Federal polytechnic Ado-Ekiti and 222 was administered to Fabotas college of health Ado Ekiti respectively. The data collected for the study was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

4. Results

Table 1. Socio Demographic data of the respondents (N=800).

Categories	Variables	Frequency	Percent
Age	18-30	74	56.1
	31-40	27	20.5
	41-50	22	16.7
	51+	9	6.8
Gender	Female	536	67.0
	Male	264	33.0
Religion	Christianity	704	88.0
	Islam	86	10.8
	Traditional	10	1.3
Ethnicity	Hausa	23	2.9
	Igbo	117	14.6
	Yoruba	597	74.6
	Others	63	7.9
Academic level	100 L	176	22.0
	200 L	205	25.6
	300 L	191	23.9
	400 L	186	23.3
	500 L	41	5.1
	600 L	1	0.1
Participating Schools	Afe Babalola University	200	25.0
	FABOTAS	200	25.0
	FUOYE	200	25.0
	The Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti	200	25.0
Place of residence	Off-campus (beyond 2 km radius	80	10.0
	Off-campus (Within 2 km radius)	285	35.6
	On-campus	435	54.4
Living arrangement	Living alone	194	24.3
	Living with family	219	27.4
	Living with roommates	387	48.4
	Above #100,000/month	309	38.6
	Below #20,000/month	133	16.6

Source; field work (2025).

According to Table 1, the majority of respondents (56.1%) are aged between 18-30 years, followed by 20.5% within the

31-40 age group, while 16.7% fall between 41-50 years, and only 6.8% are 51 years or older. In terms of gender, females make up a significant majority at 67.0%, while males account for 33.0%. Christianity is the predominant religion among respondents (88.0%), followed by Islam (10.8%), and a small fraction (1.3%) practice traditional beliefs. Ethnically, 74.6% of respondents are Yoruba, 14.6% are Igbo, 2.9% are Hausa, and 7.9% belong to other ethnic groups.

The respondents are fairly distributed across academic levels, with 25.6% in 200-level, 23.9% in 300-level, 23.3% in 400-level, and 22.0% in 100-level. However, there is a sharp decline in participation from 500-level (5.1%) and 600-level

(0.1%) students. Respondents are evenly drawn from four institutions, namely Afe Babalola University, FABOTAS, Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE), and The Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, each contributing 25.0% of the sample. A majority of respondents (54.4%) reside on-campus, while 35.6% live off-campus within a 2 km radius, and 10.0% live beyond 2 km from campus. Regarding living arrangements, 48.4% share accommodations with roommates, 27.4% live with family, and 24.3% live alone. Income levels among respondents vary, with 38.6% earning above ₦100,000 per month, while 16.6% earn below ₦20,000 per month.

Table 2. Family Related Socio Demographic data of the respondents (N=800).

Categories	Variables	Frequency	Percent
Parent/Guardian Occupation	Business owner	358	44.8
	Civil servant	286	35.8
	Farmer	51	6.4
	Other	48	6.0
	Unemployed	42	5.3
Family Socioeconomic status	Average	616	77.0
	High	146	18.3
	Low	38	4.8
Access to financial support	Family/Guardian support	689	86.1
	Living alone	1	0.1
	Scholarship or grants	10	1.3
	Self-funded	100	12.5
Household income level	#20,001-#50,000/month	187	23.4
	#50,001-# 100,000/month	171	21.4
	Above #100,000/month	309	38.6
	Below #20,000/month	133	16.6
Family structure	Extended (with relatives)	110	13.8
	Nuclear (parents and siblings)	640	80.0
	Other	4	0.5
	Single-parent household	46	5.8

According to Table 2, the majority (44.8%) have business owners as parents or guardians, followed by civil servants (35.8%), while a smaller proportion have parents engaged in farming (6.4%), other occupations (6.0%), or are unemployed (5.3%). The socioeconomic status of most respondents' families is classified as average (77.0%), while 18.3% come from high-income households and 4.8% from low-income back-

grounds.

Financial support for respondents primarily comes from family or guardians, with 86.1% depending on them. A small percentage (12.5%) are self-funded, while only 1.3% receive scholarships or grants, and a negligible 0.1% live independently without external financial support. Household income distribution indicates that 38.6% of respondents come

from families earning above ₦100,000 per month, while 23.4% earn between ₦20,001 and ₦50,000, 21.4% fall within the ₦50,001 to ₦100,000 range, and 16.6% have an income below ₦20,000 per month. In terms of family structure, a

Analysis of Data /Data Analysis

significant majority (80.0%) live in nuclear family settings (parents and siblings), while 13.8% are in extended family households. Single-parent households account for 5.8%, and a minimal 0.5% reported living in other family structures.

Table 3. Association between customer service and campus restaurant.

S/N	Customer Service	Response	Low	High	Value	df	P-value	Remarks
1	Friendly and helpful staff at the campus restaurant improve my overall satisfaction with the service.	I don't know	29	32	11.728 ^a	2	0.003	Significant
		No	49	63				
		Yes	181	400				
2	I am more likely to return to a campus restaurant that provides excellent customer service.	I don't know	33	38	7.094 ^a	2	0.029	Significant
		No	51	83				
		Yes	175	376				
3	I feel that the staff at the campus restaurant make me feel valued as a customer.	I don't know	31	38	44.630 ^a	2	0.000	Significant
		No	98	90				
		Yes	129	365				
4	I am satisfied with the level of attention given to me by the campus local restaurant staff during my visit.	I don't know	33	45	70.771 ^a	2	0.000	Significant
		No	118	94				
		Yes	108	358				
5	The manner in which staff at the campus restaurant interact with customers influences my decision to return.	I don't know	34	52	7.352 ^a	2	0.025	Significant
		No	64	88				
		Yes	160	353				
6	I am more likely to recommend a campus restaurant if the customer service is exceptional.	I don't know	35	37	13.254 ^a	2	0.001	Significant
		No	57	80				
		Yes	166	378				
7	Courteous and attentive staff make me feel comfortable and satisfied with my dining experience.	I don't know	31	41	10.658 ^a	2	0.005	Significant
		No	59	76				
		Yes	169	379				

As presented in Table 3, the study found that friendly and helpful staff at campus restaurants significantly improve overall customer satisfaction ($\chi^2=11.728$, $p=0.003$). Additionally, students are more likely to return to a campus restaurant that provides excellent customer service ($\chi^2=7.094$, $p=0.029$). Feeling valued as a customer was also a crucial factor, with a highly significant association ($\chi^2=44.630$, $p=0.000$), suggesting that students appreciate personalized and attentive service.

Satisfaction with the level of attention given by restaurant staff showed the strongest statistical significance in this analysis ($\chi^2=70.771$, $p=0.000$), highlighting the importance of

staff engagement in customer retention. Similarly, the manner in which staff interact with customers significantly influences students' decisions to return to a particular restaurant ($\chi^2=7.352$, $p=0.025$). The likelihood of recommending a campus restaurant increases when customer service is perceived as exceptional ($\chi^2=13.254$, $p=0.001$), further emphasizing the role of service quality in shaping restaurant reputation. Finally, courteous and attentive staff were found to significantly contribute to customer comfort and satisfaction during dining experiences ($\chi^2=10.658$, $p=0.005$). These findings collectively suggest that customer service plays a critical role in shaping students' dining decisions on campus.

Table 4. Descriptive analysis of campus restaurant.

S/N	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1	How would you rate the taste of the food served?	5.70	2.51	Lower
2	How clean is the restaurant, including the dining area and utensils?	6.00	2.63	Higher
3	How diverse are the food and drink options?	5.77	2.46	Lower
4	How friendly and professional are the staff?	5.88	2.68	Higher
5	How quickly is your order prepared and served?	6.03	2.58	Higher
6	How affordable are the meals?	5.56	2.68	Lower
7	How comfortable is the seating and dining environment?	6.07	2.57	Higher
8	How convenient is the restaurant's location?	6.29	2.52	Higher
9	How well do the portion sizes meet your expectations?	5.27	2.72	Lower
10	How well does the restaurant cater to dietary preferences or needs?	5.69	2.57	Lower
Grand Mean: 5.83				

As presented in Table 4 the convenience of the restaurant's location received the highest mean score (Mean=6.29, SD=2.52), indicating that students find campus restaurants easily accessible. Other highly rated factors include the cleanliness of the restaurant (Mean=6.00, SD = 2.63), staff professionalism and friendliness (Mean=5.88, SD=2.68), speed of service (Mean =6.03, SD=2.58), and seating comfort ($X=6.07$, SD=2.57).

Conversely, aspects that received lower ratings suggest areas for improvement. The portion sizes of meals had the lowest mean score (Mean=5.27, SD=2.72), implying that students may feel dissatisfied with the quantity of food served. Other aspects with relatively lower ratings include meal affordability (Mean =5.56, SD=2.68), food variety (Mean=5.77, SD=2.46), taste quality (Mean=5.70, SD=2.51), and accommodation of dietary preferences (Mean =5.69, SD=2.57).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

According to this study, the majority of respondents (56.1%) are aged between 18-30 years, followed by 20.5% within the 31-40 age group, while 16.7% fall between 41-50 years, and only 6.8% are 51 years or older. These findings align with studies by [31], who observed a similar age distribution among Nigerian university students. The dominance of the 18-30 age group is expected, as higher education enrollment typically falls within this range [32]. Regarding gender, females make up a significant majority at 67.0%, while males account for 33.0%. This is consistent with recent trends indicating a rise in female participation in higher education [33]. The growing gender disparity may be attributed to government policies encouraging female education (UNESCO, 2023). Christianity is the predominant religion among re-

spondents (88.0%), followed by Islam (10.8%), and a small fraction (1.3%) practices traditional belief. These statistics are reflective of Nigeria's broader religious demographics, where Christianity and Islam are the dominant religions [34]. Similarly, a study by [35] on student religious affiliations in Southwestern Nigeria reported a comparable pattern, attributing this trend to historical missionary influences and regional religious compositions.

Ethnically, 74.6% of respondents are Yoruba, 14.6% are Igbo, 2.9% are Hausa, and 7.9% belong to other ethnic groups. This ethnic distribution mirrors regional demographic trends, where Yoruba predominance is characteristic of Southwestern Nigeria [36]. Furthermore, ethnic diversity in tertiary institutions has been shown to influence social interactions and educational experiences [37].

The respondents are fairly distributed across academic levels, with 25.6% in 200-level, 23.9% in 300-level, 23.3% in 400-level, and 22.0% in 100-level. However, participation sharply declines in 500-level (5.1%) and 600-level (0.1%) students. This distribution is consistent with findings by [38], who identified similar trends in Nigerian universities, where student attrition rates increase at higher academic levels due to academic workload and financial constraints. Respondents are evenly drawn from four institutions, namely Afe Babalola University, FABOTAS, Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE), and The Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, each contributing 25.0% of the sample. This even distribution ensures a representative sample across different institutional types, consistent with recommendations by [24] on balanced sampling in education research.

A majority of respondents (54.4%) reside on-campus, while 35.6% live off-campus within a 2 km radius, and 10.0% live beyond 2 km from campus. Similar findings were reported by [39], who observed that proximity to campus influences stu-

dents' academic engagement and performance. Living arrangements also vary, with 48.4% sharing accommodations with roommates, 27.4% living with family, and 24.3% living alone. These patterns align with studies highlighting the socio-economic determinants of student housing choices [40]. Income levels among respondents vary, with 38.6% earning above ₦100,000 per month, while 16.6% earn below ₦20,000 per month. Economic disparities among students significantly affect their academic performance and well-being, as highlighted by [41]. The financial struggles of students with lower incomes necessitate targeted support policies [34]. These findings provide critical insights into the socio-demographic characteristics of students, aligning with recent studies on higher education demographics in Nigeria. Future research should further explore how these factors influence academic outcomes and student well-being. The majority (44.8%) have business owners as parents or guardians, followed by civil servants (35.8%), while a smaller proportion have parents engaged in farming (6.4%), other occupations (6.0%), or are unemployed (5.3%). The socioeconomic status of most respondents' families is classified as average (77.0%), while 18.3% come from high-income households and 4.8% from low-income backgrounds. These statistics are in line with recent studies by [42], which highlight the dominance of entrepreneurship and civil service jobs in Nigerian households.

Respondents' financial support primarily comes from family or guardians, with 86.1% depending on them. A small percentage (12.5%) are self-funded, while only 1.3% receive scholarships or grants, and a negligible 0.1% live independently without external financial support. This reliance on family aligns with studies by [43], who found that limited scholarship opportunities constrain financial independence among students.

Household income distribution indicates that 38.6% of respondents come from families earning above ₦100,000 per month, while 23.4% earn between ₦20,001 and ₦50,000, 21.4% fall within the ₦50,001 to ₦100,000 range, and 16.6% have an income below ₦20,000 per month. These findings reflect Nigeria's broader income distribution patterns as reported by the [34].

In terms of family structure, a significant majority (80.0%) live in nuclear family settings (parents and siblings), while 13.8% are in extended family households. Single-parent households account for 5.8%, and a minimal 0.5% reported living in other family structures. Family structure has been shown to influence academic performance and social development, with nuclear families often providing stable educational support, these findings provide critical insights into the socio-demographic characteristics of students, aligning with recent studies on higher education demographics in Nigeria. Future research should further explore how these factors influence academic outcomes and student well-being.

The findings indicate that the perceived importance of food quality in determining where to eat on campus was not sta-

tistically significant. However, the preference for restaurants that align with students' nutritional needs was found to be highly significant, suggesting that health-conscious choices play a role in dining decisions. Similarly, food quality as a primary factor in restaurant selection was statistically significant, reinforcing the idea that students prioritize the overall quality of meals when choosing where to eat. These results are in line with recent studies by [44, 45], who found that health awareness significantly influences students' food choices.

While consistency in food quality was expected to be a major determinant of return visits, the results did not reach statistical significance. Additionally, avoiding restaurants with poor-quality food, despite convenience, was not found to be a significant factor. Similarly, satisfaction with well-seasoned food and the use of fresh ingredients in meal preparation did not show strong statistical associations with students' choices. Recent research by [46] suggests that affordability and portion sizes may be more influential than specific aspects of food quality, these findings suggest that while food quality plays a crucial role in students' selection of campus restaurants, specific aspects such as nutritional value and overall food quality perception are more influential than factors like seasoning, ingredient freshness, or convenience. Further research is needed to explore the interaction between cost, meal accessibility, and dietary preferences in student food choices.

The study found that friendly and helpful staff at campus restaurants significantly improve overall customer satisfaction.

Moreover, students expressed a preference for campus restaurants that provide a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, with the association being highly significant. This supports findings from recent research by [47], which suggests that a positive ambiance directly influences dining satisfaction and emotional well-being. A study by [48] further corroborates this by demonstrating that a stress-free dining environment enhances students' overall experience, leading to repeat visits. The availability of a spacious and well-arranged seating area was another key determinant in students' decision to return to a campus restaurant. This is in line with findings by [39], who indicated that seating arrangements significantly affect restaurant preferences, as overcrowded and poorly organized spaces can deter customers.

Abbreviations

ABUAD	Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti
CPV	Customer Perceived Value
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
FABOTAS	Fabotas College of Health Science and Technology
FUOYE	Federal University Oye-Ekiti
SERVQUAL	Service Quality

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no Conflicts of Interest.

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