

Research Article

Dining Trends and Food Quality as Determinants of Customer Satisfaction: Evidence from Trisara Restaurant in Kathmandu, Nepal

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of dining trends and food quality on customer satisfaction in a prominent urban restaurant in Kathmandu, Nepal. Drawing on empirical data collected from 100 customers at Trisara Restaurant in Lazimpat, the research assesses key determinants of satisfaction, including food quality, ambiance, service effectiveness, and price perception. The study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design, supported by descriptive and comparative statistical analysis. Findings reveal that young adults aged 18–24 constitute the dominant dining demographic, demonstrating high willingness to try new restaurants and prioritizing food quality as their primary motivation for dining out. Taste, freshness, temperature, presentation, and service professionalism received strong satisfaction ratings. However, mixed perceptions were observed regarding price fairness and portion sizes. Ambiance, including décor, cleanliness, and comfort, also contributed significantly to overall satisfaction. The study concludes that consistency in food quality, competitive pricing, and enhancement of sensory and atmospheric elements are essential for improving customer satisfaction and fostering loyalty. The research enriches hospitality literature by offering context-specific evidence from Nepal's evolving urban dining culture and provides actionable recommendations for restaurant practitioners.

Keywords

Dining-out Trends, Food Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Restaurant Ambiance, Service Quality, Hospitality Management, Kathmandu

1. Introduction

The global restaurant industry has undergone fundamental transformation in recent years, shaped by urbanization, life-style shifts, rising disposable income, and evolving consumer expectations [14, 15]. Dining out has increasingly become an integral component of contemporary social life, particularly among younger populations, who view restaurant visits as both a leisure activity and a culinary exploration. International

surveys indicate that nearly half of consumers dine out at least once a week, with the highest frequency observed among youth and young professionals [14, 15]. This changing behavior has greatly influenced the dynamics of food service businesses, elevating the importance of service excellence, food quality, and innovative dining concepts [3, 17].

In the Nepalese context, the restaurant sector has expanded

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rapidly, with Kathmandu emerging as a major hub of culinary development. The growth of cafés, themed restaurants, fusion cuisine outlets, and lifestyle dining venues reflects an increasingly competitive market. As consumers gain access to diverse cuisines and dining styles, expectations regarding food quality, hygiene, ambiance, and service responsiveness have intensified [3, 16]. These shifts necessitate a deeper understanding of customer satisfaction drivers in order for restaurants to remain competitive and sustainable.

Trisara Restaurant in Lazimpat stands as one of Kathmandu's popular dining establishments known for its multi-cuisine menu, vibrant ambiance, and strong appeal to young consumers. The restaurant attracts a diverse clientele, including students, professionals, families, and leisure diners. As competition increases and customer expectations evolve, understanding how dining trends and food quality influence customer satisfaction becomes essential for maintaining market relevance.

Food quality remains one of the most influential determinants of customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry. Factors such as taste, freshness, temperature, presentation, portion size, and sensory appeal play a pivotal role in shaping customers' perceptions of value [2, 3, 5]. Similarly, ambiance, including décor, music, cleanliness, comfort, and overall atmosphere, significantly affects the dining experience [16]. Service quality, particularly staff responsiveness and professionalism, further contributes to satisfaction and revisit intention [7, 17].

Despite the restaurant sector's rapid growth in Nepal, limited academic research has examined customer satisfaction drivers within local dining environments, especially through empirical assessments conducted inside popular commercial restaurants. This study addresses this gap by assessing dining trends, food quality perceptions, and satisfaction levels among customers at Trisara Restaurant.

1.1. Background of the Study

The increasing popularity of restaurant dining in Nepal has been driven by urban migration, rising employment among youth, expanded social interaction spaces, and the influence of global dining culture. Kathmandu's dining landscape is now characterized by diverse eateries ranging from local tea shops to premium fine-dining venues. Trisara, located in Lazimpat, occupies a central position within this landscape due to its strategic urban location, modern ambiance, and multi-cuisine offerings.

As customers' dining preferences become more refined, restaurants must ensure consistent food quality, responsive service, comfortable environment, and value-based pricing. Understanding these factors is critical for maintaining customer satisfaction, enhancing loyalty, and achieving long-term competitiveness.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Although dining out has become increasingly common, the factors influencing customer satisfaction at individual restaurants in Kathmandu are not comprehensively documented. The growing competition among restaurants intensifies the need for establishments like Trisara to understand how customers evaluate food quality, ambiance, service quality, pricing, and overall experience.

Key problems identified include:

- 1) Rising expectations for food quality and sensory appeal
- 2) Increased emphasis on ambiance and experiential dining
- 3) Enhanced customer awareness of hygiene, freshness, and nutritional value
- 4) Price sensitivity among younger diners
- 5) Need for consistency in service delivery
- 6) Limited academic evidence specific to Nepal's urban restaurant market

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Primary Objective

To evaluate how dining trends and food quality influence customer satisfaction at Trisara Restaurant in Kathmandu.

Specific Objectives

- 1) To examine the factors driving the trend of dining out among customers.
- 2) To assess customer satisfaction with food quality, service, ambiance, and pricing at Trisara.
- 3) To analyze customer perceptions of food quality attributes such as taste, freshness, temperature, and presentation.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This research contributes to both academic understanding and practical decision-making within the hospitality sector. It holds significance for the following reasons:

- 1) For restaurant managers: Provides evidence-based insights to enhance food quality, service, and ambiance.
- 2) For hospitality practitioners: Highlights emerging trends in consumer behavior and preferences.
- 3) For researchers and academics: Fills a gap in literature related to Nepal's restaurant industry, particularly in the context of urban dining dynamics.
- 4) For Trisara Restaurant: Identifies strengths and areas for improvement, aiding strategic planning and customer retention.

1.5. Operational Definitions

- 1) Dining Trends: Patterns of behavior reflecting frequency, motivation, and preferences for eating out.
- 2) Food Quality: The perceived standard of food based on taste, freshness, texture, temperature, presentation, and variety.

- 3) Customer Satisfaction: The customer's evaluation of their dining experience, influenced by food quality, service, ambiance, and price fairness.
- 4) Ambiance: The environmental and atmospheric elements of a restaurant that shape overall dining comfort and experience.

1.6. Organization of the Study

This study is structured as follows:

- 1) Section 1: Introduction – Presents background, problem statement, objectives, significance, and key definitions.
- 2) Section 2: Literature Review – Discusses theoretical concepts and empirical findings related to dining trends, food quality, and customer satisfaction.
- 3) Section 3: Methodology – Describes the research design, sampling procedures, data collection, and analytical tools.
- 4) Section 4: Results – Presents data analysis and major findings.
- 5) Section 5: Discussion – Interprets findings in relation to literature and industry context.
- 6) Section 6: Conclusion and Recommendations – Summarizes key insights and suggests improvements.
- 7) Final Sections: Author Contributions, Abbreviations, Conflicts of Interest, and References.

2. Literature Review

This section synthesizes theoretical and empirical literature on dining trends, food quality, and customer satisfaction in the restaurant industry. The review integrates global studies, regional insights, and Nepal-specific references to establish a solid foundation for the current research.

2.1. Conceptual Review

2.1.1. Dining-out Trends

Dining out has evolved from a convenience-driven activity to a lifestyle choice influenced by social, cultural, and economic factors. Global data suggest increasing dining-out frequency, particularly among younger demographics who associate restaurant visits with social experiences, convenience, and novelty [14]. Urbanization has further contributed to this trend; as city populations expand, dining establishments become embedded in daily routines, offering social spaces for interaction, leisure, and exploration.

Digitalization has also transformed dining behavior. Consumers frequently consult online menus, social media reviews, and digital platforms before choosing restaurants, demonstrating the importance of online presence and perceived reputation [15]. Younger diners, especially Gen Z, value innovation, aesthetic presentation, and experiential elements such as live entertainment and themed environ-

ments. In cities like Kathmandu, the rise of cafés, fusion restaurants, and experiential dining venues aligns with these global trends.

2.1.2. Food Quality

Food quality is consistently identified as the most significant determinant of customer satisfaction and revisit intention [3]. It includes several sensory and functional attributes. Previous studies confirm that food quality and service quality jointly influence customer satisfaction and retention [1], such as:

- 1) Taste – the primary driver of satisfaction and loyalty.
- 2) Freshness – closely linked with hygiene and perceived value.
- 3) Temperature – influences sensory appeal and safety perception.
- 4) Presentation – affects first impressions and perceived quality.
- 5) Portion size – shapes value perception and customer expectations.
- 6) Variety – accommodates diverse preferences and dietary needs.

In social media-driven dining culture, visually appealing food presentation has become essential, influencing customers' expectations and influencing restaurant choice. Studies further indicate that food quality remains a dominant satisfaction factor even during challenging periods such as the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic, when health concerns became central to dining decisions [10].

2.1.3. Ambiance and Atmosphere

Ambiance encompasses restaurant design, décor, lighting, music, seating comfort, cleanliness, and overall atmosphere. Research consistently highlights ambiance as a significant driver of dining satisfaction and emotional response [16]. Pleasant ambiance can enhance perceived food quality, extend the duration of stay, and increase spending. Previous studies emphasize that ambiance interacts with food quality and service quality to shape revisit intention [3].

In Nepal, ambiance plays an increasingly central role as restaurants cater to experience-seeking youth who value comfort, aesthetics, and social media friendly environments.

2.1.4. Service Quality

Service quality influences customers' emotional experiences, perceptions of professionalism, and overall satisfaction. Key service dimensions responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibles directly affect dining evaluations and loyalty [7]. Friendly, attentive service elevates the dining experience and can compensate for minor deficiencies in food quality or pricing.

2.1.5. Price Perception and Value

Price perception reflects customers' evaluation of fairness

relative to quality and quantity. Younger diners tend to be more price-sensitive, adjusting dining choices based on promotional offers, portion sizes, and perceived value [13]. High prices can negatively influence satisfaction unless justified by superior food quality or ambiance.

In Kathmandu's competitive dining market, restaurants must balance affordability with quality to appeal to diverse customer groups.

2.1.6. Consumer Demographics and Preferences

Studies indicate that age, gender, occupation, and marital status influence dining preferences. Younger individuals prefer affordable, trendy, and socially engaging environments, while older customers often prioritize comfort, hygiene, and traditional flavors [10]. Gender-based studies suggest women may be more health-conscious and attentive to ingredient quality, while men may prioritize portion size and protein-rich options.

Occupational groups also differ in dining habits: students and professionals tend to dine out more frequently due to convenience and social motivations.

2.1.7. Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a multidimensional construct influenced by cumulative evaluations of food, service, ambiance, and pricing. High satisfaction increases revisit intention, positive word-of-mouth, and customer loyalty [17]. Restaurants that consistently exceed customer expectations develop stronger competitive advantages and long-term customer relationships.

2.2. Review of Empirical Studies

Numerous empirical studies explore determinants of customer satisfaction in hospitality contexts:

- 1) Previous studies found that ambiance, food quality, price, and service quality significantly influenced satisfaction among patrons of Nepalese restaurants in Finland [8].
- 2) Recent research demonstrated that service quality had the strongest impact on satisfaction in a fast-food context during the pandemic [10].
- 3) Studies observed that food quality consistently impacts customer retention across different restaurant formats [4].
- 4) Research emphasized that perceived price and food quality are critical antecedents of satisfaction and revisit intention [7].
- 5) Local Nepalese studies support the notion that ambiance, hygiene, taste, and service attitude significantly shape dining satisfaction, especially among youth.

2.3. Research Gap

Although international literature on restaurant satisfaction is extensive, limited academic research has focused on Ne-

pal's evolving urban dining environment. Existing Nepalese studies often examine generic constructs of satisfaction but seldom analyze dining-out trends using restaurant-specific data. Additionally, few studies integrate demographic influences, sensory food quality attributes, and ambiance perceptions in a unified framework.

This research addresses these gaps by offering a comprehensive case study of Trisara Restaurant, combining demographic analysis, food quality assessment, and satisfaction evaluation.

2.4. Concluding Remarks

The reviewed literature illustrates that food quality, ambiance, service quality, pricing, and consumer demographics collectively shape customer satisfaction. These factors interact in complex ways, influencing dining choices and revisit intentions. The scarcity of Nepal-focused empirical studies underscores the need for research that contextualizes global hospitality trends within the Nepalese dining environment.

This study contributes to existing literature by providing context-specific findings from Trisara Restaurant, enhancing understanding of how modern dining trends impact satisfaction in Kathmandu's competitive restaurant industry.

3. Methodology

This section outlines the research design, data collection procedures, sampling method, analytical tools, and ethical considerations adopted in this study. The methodological framework ensures that the findings are reliable, valid, and aligned with academic standards for hospitality and tourism research.

3.1. Research Design

A quantitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional research design was employed to examine the relationship between dining trends, food quality, and customer satisfaction at Trisara Restaurant. The study utilized a structured questionnaire administered to customers dining at the restaurant.

The design was chosen for the following reasons:

- 1) It allows the collection of numerical data suitable for statistical analysis.
- 2) It provides a snapshot of customer perceptions within a defined period.
- 3) It ensures replicability and comparability with similar studies in the hospitality field.

The structured questionnaire consisted of five major components:

- 1) Demographic Profile (age, gender, occupation, education, marital status)
- 2) Dining-Out Behaviors (frequency, willingness to try new restaurants, spending habits)
- 3) Food Quality Assessment (taste, freshness, temperature,

- presentation, portion size, consistency)
- 4) Service and Ambiance Evaluation
- 5) Overall Satisfaction and Recommendations

3.2. Nature and Source of Data

The study relied primarily on primary data, which were collected directly from customers of Trisara Restaurant. Secondary data from academic journals, hospitality reports, and previous studies supplemented the primary data to provide theoretical grounding and literature support.

Sources of Data

- 1) Primary Source: Structured survey responses from 100 customers.
- 2) Secondary Sources: Peer-reviewed journals, industry reports, books, and online publications related to hospitality, dining trends, and customer satisfaction.

3.3. Research Site

The study was conducted at Trisara Restaurant, Lazimpat, Kathmandu, a popular multi-cuisine dining establishment known for its ambiance, young clientele, and diverse menu offerings. The restaurant's strategic location in a busy urban neighborhood made it suitable for capturing data from a diverse customer base.

3.4. Population and Sample

3.4.1. Population

The population for this study included all customers visiting Trisara Restaurant during the two-week data collection period.

3.4.2. Sample Size

A sample of 100 customers was selected. This sample size was sufficient to generate meaningful descriptive statistics and reflect diverse demographic characteristics.

3.4.3. Rationale for Sample Size

- 1) Feasible within the study's time and resource constraints.
- 2) Adequate for representing typical customer behavior in a single-restaurant context.
- 3) Common sample size in academic hospitality studies examining customer satisfaction.

3.5. Sampling Method

The study employed purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique. Customers who had completed their dining experience were approached and invited to participate.

Purposive sampling was appropriate because:

- 1) It ensures selection of respondents with relevant recent

dining experience.

- 2) It enables direct access to customers willing to share their evaluations.
- 3) It is commonly used in hospitality research where customer flows vary by time and day.

3.6. Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through on-site distribution of questionnaires. Customers were approached after completing their meals and were provided a brief explanation of the study's purpose. Participation was voluntary.

Steps Followed:

- 1) Preparation of questionnaire based on literature and research objectives.
- 2) Pilot testing of questionnaire with 10 customers to ensure clarity.
- 3) Revision of questionnaire based on feedback.
- 4) Distribution of surveys to customers over a 14-day period at different times (lunch, evening, weekends).
- 5) Collection and organization of completed questionnaires.
- 6) Entry and coding of data using Microsoft Excel.

3.7. Data Processing and Analysis Tools

Data analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel. The following statistical tools and visualization techniques were used:

- 1) Frequencies and Percentages: For demographic variables.
- 2) Graphs and Charts: Bar charts, pie charts, and tables for visual representation.
- 3) Descriptive Statistics: To summarize customer responses on food quality, ambiance, service, and satisfaction.
- 4) Cross-Tabulation: To explore relationships between demographics and dining behaviors when needed.

These tools provided clear, interpretable insights into customer perceptions.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were adhered to throughout the study:

- 1) Informed Consent: Participants were informed about the research purpose and their right to withdraw.
- 2) Confidentiality: Responses were anonymized to protect participants' privacy.
- 3) Voluntary Participation: Customers chose to participate without incentives or pressure.
- 4) Respect and Integrity: Data were handled truthfully and objectively.

Restaurant management granted permission to conduct the study on-site.

3.9. Limitations of the Study

The study acknowledges the following limitations:

- 1) Single-site Focus: Findings are limited to Trisara Restaurant and may not generalize to all restaurants in Nepal.
- 2) Sample Size: Although adequate, a larger sample could provide more robust insights.
- 3) Purposive Sampling Bias: Results may be influenced by the characteristics of customers present during data collection.
- 4) Self-Reported Data: Survey responses may include biases such as social desirability or recall error.
- 5) Time Constraint: Data collection over two weeks may not capture broader seasonal customer behaviors.

3.10. Timeline and Budget

3.10.1. Timeline

A structured research timeline was followed, spanning from topic selection to report submission. Key activities included proposal approval, data collection, analysis, and final writing.

3.10.2. Budget

- 1) Estimated expenses included:
- 2) Printing and binding – NPR 7,000
- 3) Transportation – NPR 2,000
- 4) Miscellaneous – NPR 1,500
- 5) Total Budget: NPR 10,500

4. Results

This section presents the findings derived from the primary data collected from 100 customers at Trisara Restaurant. Results are organized based on demographic characteristics, dining behaviors, food quality perceptions, service and ambiance evaluations, and overall customer satisfaction. Descriptive statistics, including frequency tables and graphical interpretations, form the core of the analysis.

4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

4.1.1. Age of Respondents

The age distribution indicates that the majority of respondents were young adults.

- 1) 18–24 years: 62%
- 2) 25–34 years: 25%
- 3) 35–44 years: 7%
- 4) 45–54 years: 4%
- 5) 55 and above: 2%

Interpretation: Young adults dominate Trisara's customer base, reflecting the growing trend of dining out among youth who prefer social engagement, diverse menus, and urban dining environments.

4.1.2. Gender of Respondents

- 1) Female respondents: 56%

- 2) Male respondents: 44%

Interpretation: A slightly higher proportion of female diners suggests that Trisara appeals strongly to women, possibly due to its ambiance, aesthetic presentation of food, and social environment.

4.1.3. Occupation of Respondents

Respondents came from a variety of professional backgrounds:

- 1) Students: 63%
- 2) Teachers: 9%
- 3) Doctors, engineers, lawyers, nurses: 4% each
- 4) Pilots and police: 2% each
- 5) Others (army, banker, businessperson, etc.): 1% each

Interpretation: Students are Trisara's largest customer segment, indicating affordability, location convenience, and menu appeal to younger demographics. The presence of professionals shows the restaurant's broader market reach.

4.1.4. Education Level

- 1) Undergraduate: 62%
- 2) Graduate: 24%
- 3) High school level: 12%
- 4) Primary: 2%

Interpretation: Educated customers dominate the dining population, suggesting a customer base that values quality, hygiene, and diverse food options.

4.1.5. Nationality of Respondents

Nepali: 100%

Interpretation: All respondents were Nepali, indicating the restaurant primarily serves local customers and thus its offerings align with domestic dining preferences.

4.1.6. Marital Status

- 1) Unmarried: 71%
- 2) Married: 24%
- 3) Divorced: 5%

Interpretation: Predominantly unmarried customers reflect a youth-driven dining culture where social and leisure dining is more frequent.

4.2. Dining Behavior and Preferences

4.2.1. Dining Out Frequency

A majority of respondents dine out regularly, with moderate-to-high frequency. This reflects growing urban dining habits and lifestyle-driven dining choices.

4.2.2. Willingness to Spend on a Meal

Most respondents spend a moderate amount per meal, indicating price sensitivity balanced with willingness to invest in quality dining experiences.

4.2.3. Loyalty and Exploration

- 1) Many respondents prefer their favorite restaurants.
- 2) A significant number also expressed high willingness to try new restaurants.

Interpretation: This dual preference highlights variety-seeking behavior a key trend among younger diners.

4.2.4. Preference for Healthy Options

Most respondents consider healthy options while dining out.

Interpretation: Health-conscious dining is emerging as a strong trend, influencing menu development and ingredient sourcing.

4.2.5. Reasons for Dining Out

Respondents identified:

- 1) Food quality as the primary reason for dining out.
- 2) Ambiance as a secondary but important factor.
- 3) Socializing and relaxation also considered important.

4.2.6. Influence of Ambiance, Location, and Price

Respondents rated ambiance and location as strong influences on restaurant selection, while pricing received mixed reactions some found prices fair, while others considered them high.

4.3. Customer Satisfaction Components

4.3.1. Overall Satisfaction

The majority of respondents reported being satisfied or highly satisfied with their dining experience.

Positive contributors:

- 1) Taste
- 2) Freshness
- 3) Presentation
- 4) Staff behavior
- 5) Ambiance

4.3.2. Food Quality Evaluation

- 1) Taste: A high percentage praised the taste, consistent with expectations for multi-cuisine restaurants.
- 2) Freshness: Customers expressed strong satisfaction, indicating proper ingredient handling and hygiene.
- 3) Presentation: Visually appealing dishes contributed significantly to perceived quality, aligning with modern dining expectations.
- 4) Temperature: Most customers received food at the appropriate temperature, reinforcing kitchen efficiency.
- 5) Variety: Mixed responses suggest that while variety is acceptable, certain categories may require expansion.
- 6) Portion Size: Opinions varied some found portions large, others average.

Interpretation: Portion inconsistency could influence value perception.

4.3.3. Service Quality Evaluation

The majority of respondents rated staff professionalism and friendliness positively.

Key strengths:

- 1) Attentiveness
- 2) Politeness
- 3) Responsiveness

Service quality significantly influenced overall satisfaction, consistent with hospitality research findings.

4.3.4. Ambiance Evaluation

Respondents appreciated:

- 1) Interior decor
- 2) Cleanliness
- 3) Lighting
- 4) Seating arrangement

Areas for improvement included:

- 1) Noise levels
- 2) Seating comfort for larger groups

4.3.5. Price and Value for Money

While some respondents believed the pricing justified the quality, others felt the pricing was slightly high.

Interpretation: Price sensitivity is strong among youth-dominated customer segments.

4.3.6. Likelihood to Recommend

A majority expressed willingness to recommend Trisara to friends and colleagues, demonstrating positive customer advocacy an important predictor of loyalty.

4.4. Summary of findings

The data indicate that:

- 1) Young adults (18–24) represent Trisara's core customer base.
- 2) Food quality especially taste, freshness, and presentation is the strongest contributor to satisfaction.
- 3) Ambiance and service quality also play important roles.
- 4) Price perception varies, suggesting a need for pricing strategies.
- 5) Customer satisfaction levels are generally high, with opportunities for improvements in portion consistency and ambiance enhancements.

5. Discussion

This section interprets the findings of the study in relation to existing literature and the broader context of dining trends and customer satisfaction in the hospitality sector. The results are examined through the lens of established theories and empirical evidence, highlighting the implications for restaurant management and the Nepalese dining industry.

5.1. Dining Trends and Consumer Behavior

The results indicate that dining-out frequency is high among young adults aged 18–24, a pattern consistent with global trends reported by [14]. Young Nepalese diners reflect similar motivations to their international counterparts seeking social engagement, convenience, and novelty in their dining experiences. The high proportion of student respondents (63%) aligns with the literature suggesting that urban youth increasingly prefer restaurants as spaces for social gathering and leisure.

Moreover, customers demonstrated a strong willingness to try new restaurants while maintaining loyalty to preferred establishments. This combination of exploratory and habitual behavior mirrors findings from [9], who observed that variety-seeking is a significant driver of dining-out trends among younger demographics.

Health consciousness also emerged as a notable factor, with many respondents considering healthy options while dining out. This supports evidence indicating increasing preference for nutritional transparency and healthier menu offerings across global markets [12].

5.2. Food Quality as a Key Determinant of Satisfaction

Consistent with hospitality literature, food quality was found to be the strongest predictor of customer satisfaction at Trisara. Respondents expressed high satisfaction with taste, freshness, presentation, temperature, and variety, aligning with findings from [3, 5]. These studies assert that sensory attributes of food significantly influence customer perceptions and revisit intention.

Key Findings Compared to Literature:

- 1) *Taste and Freshness:* The study confirms that these attributes strongly influence satisfaction, supporting prior research emphasizing sensory quality as central to dining experiences [10].
- 2) *Presentation:* Respondents' appreciation for food presentation aligns with modern dining trends where visual appeal often influenced by social media plays a crucial role [11].
- 3) *Temperature:* High satisfaction with food temperature reflects operational efficiency in the kitchen, indicating that freshness and temperature contribute significantly to retention [6].
- 4) *Portion Size:* Mixed responses indicate inconsistency in portion perception, which affects perceived value and corresponds with findings that portion control directly influences customer judgement of fairness and satisfaction [13].

5.3. Ambiance and Experiential Dining

Ambiance encompassing décor, cleanliness, seating comfort, and lighting was highly rated by respondents. This ob-

servation aligns with previous research emphasizing ambiance as a strong influence on emotional appeal and revisit intention [3]. Trisara's modern interior design, social atmosphere, and urban setting contribute to its popularity among young adults.

However, comments regarding noise levels and seating comfort resonate with findings that ambiance shortcomings can detract from overall dining satisfaction [8]. Enhancing the physical environment could therefore elevate customer experience further.

5.4. Service Quality and Staff Professionalism

Respondents rated staff friendliness, responsiveness, and professionalism positively. This confirms the importance of service quality with research concluding that service dimensions including empathy and reliability significantly predict satisfaction and loyalty [7].

In a competitive urban environment like Kathmandu, where multiple restaurants offer similar cuisine, service quality can serve as a differentiator. Positive staff interaction enhances the emotional connection between customer and restaurant, strengthening revisit intentions.

5.5. Price Perception and Value Assessment

Price received mixed responses. While some customers perceived prices as fair relative to the quality offered, others found them slightly high. This variation reflects the price sensitivity among young adults particularly students, who represent the majority of Trisara's customers.

Price fairness is closely tied to perceived value; discrepancies can reduce satisfaction even when food quality is high [5]. This finding suggests that Trisara may benefit from refining portion sizes, pricing strategy, or bundling offers to better align with customer expectations.

5.6. Demographic Factors Influencing Satisfaction

The demographic analysis revealed notable trends:

- 1) *Age:* Younger diners report higher dining-out frequency and greater satisfaction with experiential elements such as ambiance and presentation.
- 2) *Gender:* High female participation may indicate preference for visually appealing dishes and comfortable ambiance, consistent with previous research findings [12].
- 3) *Occupation:* Student dominance in the sample underscores the need for affordability and trendy dining options.
- 4) *Marital Status:* Unmarried individuals displayed higher frequency of dining out, aligning with global literature describing youth as primary restaurant consumers.

These patterns indicate that Trisara's customer base is primarily lifestyle-driven, socially active, and experi-

ence-oriented.

5.7. Comparison with Theoretical Frameworks

The findings align with the Service Quality Model (SERVQUAL Model), which highlights five dimensions of service tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Trisara performed well in tangibles (ambiance, decor) and responsiveness (staff behavior), which supports high satisfaction scores.

The study also supports the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, where satisfaction occurs when performance meets or exceeds customer expectations. Trisara exceeded expectations in food quality and ambiance but showed partial disconfirmation in pricing and portion size.

5.8. Overall Interpretation

The study reveals that:

- 1) Food quality remains the cornerstone of customer satisfaction.
- 2) Ambiance and service quality reinforce dining experiences.
- 3) Price fairness plays a significant moderating role, particularly among young customers.
- 4) Dining trends in Kathmandu mirror global youth-centered dining patterns.
- 5) Despite high satisfaction levels, targeted improvements can strengthen Trisara's competitive advantage.

These insights underscore the multidimensional nature of dining satisfaction and highlight opportunities for strategic improvements.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of dining trends and food quality on customer satisfaction at Trisara Restaurant in Lazimpat, Kathmandu. Based on data collected from 100 customers, the analysis highlighted several significant insights into demographic characteristics, dining behaviors, and satisfaction determinants.

The findings reveal that young adults aged 18–24 constitute the primary customer segment, reflecting a growing culture of social dining among youth in Kathmandu. Customers demonstrated both loyalty to familiar restaurants and enthusiasm for exploring new dining options. Health consciousness also emerged as a notable trend, signaling a shift toward more mindful eating habits.

Food quality was identified as the most influential factor affecting customer satisfaction. Respondents expressed high satisfaction with taste, freshness, presentation, temperature, and overall sensory experience. These outcomes reinforce established hospitality literature, which positions food quality

as the cornerstone of dining satisfaction.

Ambiance and service quality also played critical roles. Trisara's interior décor, cleanliness, and staff professionalism contributed positively to overall satisfaction. However, certain aspects such as noise levels and seating comfort were noted as areas for improvement.

Price perception displayed mixed responses. While many customers viewed the pricing as reasonable for the quality offered, others particularly students felt that certain items were slightly expensive. Portion size inconsistencies also influenced perceived value.

Overall, the study concludes that Trisara Restaurant enjoys strong customer satisfaction driven by food quality and ambiance, but can further enhance its competitive position through targeted improvements in pricing strategy, portion management, and physical environment.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis, the following recommendations are proposed for Trisara Restaurant:

6.2.1. Enhance Portion Size Consistency

- 1) Standardize portion sizes to ensure fairness and consistency across menu items.
- 2) Provide clear menu descriptions indicating portion sizes to manage customer expectations.

6.2.2. Adjust Pricing Strategies

- 1) Introduce value meals, combo offers, or student discounts to address youth price sensitivity.
- 2) Conduct periodic pricing reviews to align with customer expectations and market trends.

6.2.3. Strengthen Menu Variety and Healthy Options

- 1) Expand menu options catering to vegetarian, vegan, and health-conscious customers.
- 2) Highlight nutritional information to appeal to customers seeking healthier choices.

6.2.4. Improve Ambiance and Seating Comfort

- 1) Reduce noise levels during peak hours through better layout design or acoustic enhancements.
- 2) Upgrade seating arrangements to improve comfort for groups and families.

6.2.5. Enhance Customer Engagement

- 1) Implement customer feedback mechanisms, such as digital surveys or QR-based comment systems.
- 2) Develop loyalty programs or membership offers to encourage repeat visits.

6.2.6. Maintain High Service Quality

- 1) Continue staff training focused on attentiveness, professionalism, and guest interaction.
- 2) Encourage staff to anticipate customer needs and personalize services.

6.2.7. Strengthen Online Presence

- 1) Regularly update social media platforms with high-quality visuals of food, ambiance, and events.
- 2) Encourage customers to share reviews and photos, enhancing visibility and appeal.

6.2.8. Conduct Regular Quality Assessments

- 1) Implement internal quality checks to ensure food freshness, presentation, and temperature remain consistent.
- 2) Periodically review hygiene practices in line with industry standards and customer expectations.

6.3. Implications for Future Research

While this study offers valuable insights into dining behaviors and satisfaction at Trisara, further research could explore:

- 1) Comparative studies across multiple restaurants in Kathmandu.
- 2) Qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups for deeper understanding.
- 3) Seasonal and time-based variations in customer satisfaction.
- 4) The impact of digital marketing and online reviews on restaurant choice.

Such studies would enrich the understanding of Nepal's hospitality landscape and contribute to strategic advancements in the restaurant industry.

Abbreviations

NPR	Nepalese Rupee
SERVQUAL	Service Quality Model
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019

Author Contributions

Alastair Babu Prasai is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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