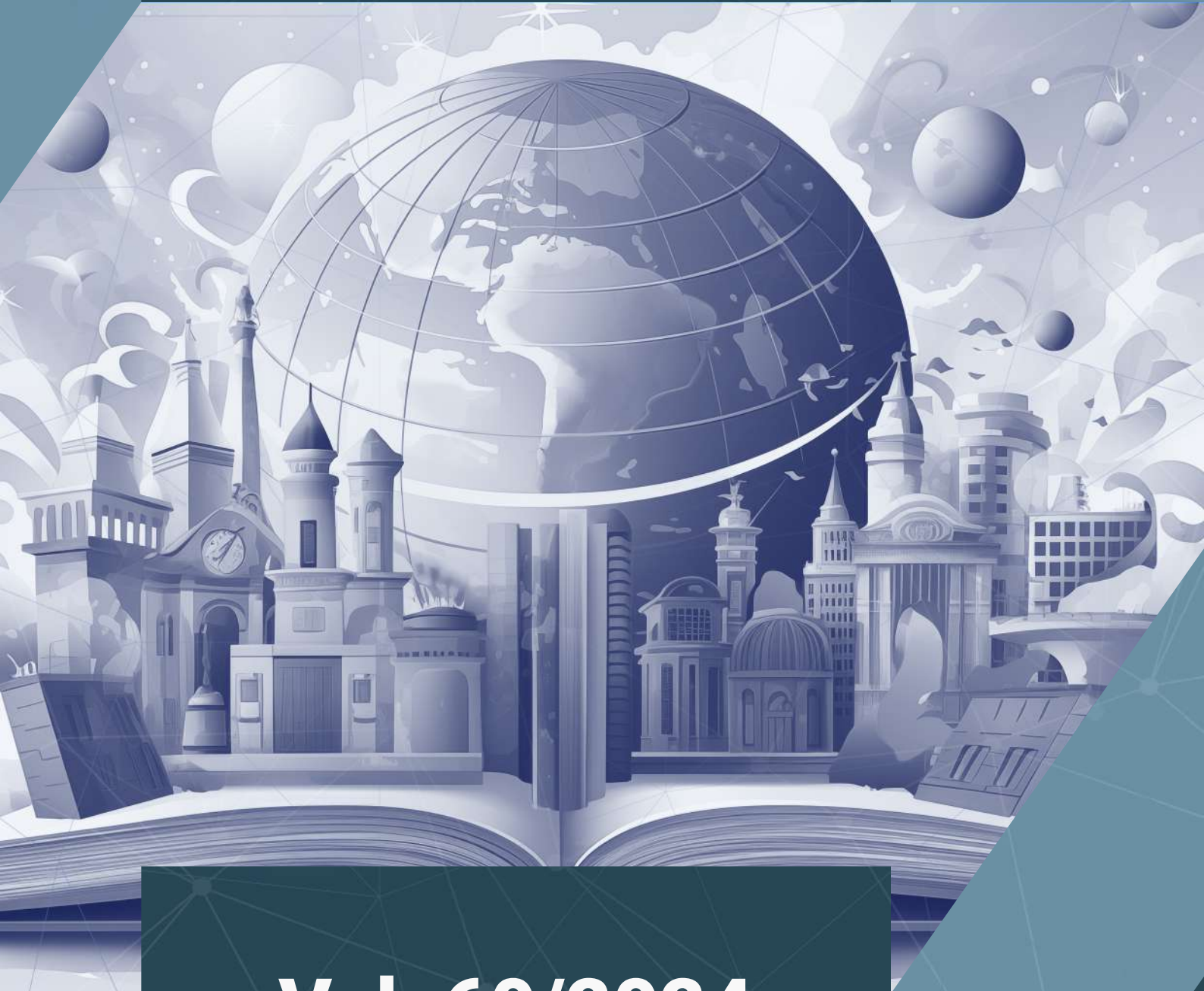




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## Service Quality and Customer Repurchase Intention of a Local Restaurant in the Central Philippines

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**Abstract.** Service quality and customers' repurchase intention are essential in the restaurants' successful operation. Thus, this measured the service quality of a local restaurant in a highly urbanized city in Central Philippines in responsive/assurance, empathy/equity, reliability, and tangibility relative to the types of services. Likewise, it determined their repurchase intention in customer satisfaction, customer trust, commitment, and perceived value. Using the descriptive design, this was responded by conveniently sampled 157 customers aged 18 years old and above who had actual dining experience in the restaurant from August to October 2023. It employed the adopted service quality instrument and validated and reliability-tested repurchase intention questionnaire. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Also, this adhered to the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB) guidelines. Generally, most were dine-in customers. They rated the quality of service higher than buffet and catering customers. Moreover, empathy, reliability, and tangibility were very high across customer types. Meanwhile, high customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions were evident among dine-in customers. With this, their exceptional dine-in experience highlights the importance of maintaining high standards in the restaurant's service quality. Hence, consistent service quality and customer-centric approaches are crucially recommended in enhancing customer satisfaction, loyalty, and repurchase intentions across all service types.

**Keywords.** Restaurant, type of services, repurchase intention, quality service, descriptive, Philippines

### 1.0 Introduction

The global restaurant industry is forecast to reach a value of \$2.1 trillion in the previous years, driven by increasing preference for eating out and waxing demand for takeout food among modern, time-crunched consumers [1]. To survive today's chaotic business environment, small companies must find and use creative techniques to source a competitive edge since the rules of the competitive business game have changed significantly.

With the rapid growth of restaurant types and franchised restaurants, restaurants have adopted new strategies to improve service value and maintain customer's repurchase intentions [2]. Service quality is essential for organizational success due to its close connection with

satisfaction and loyalty, especially in the service industry [3]. Repurchase intention has contributed to the growth of restaurant brands, as it indicates the customer's tendency to re-try/re-buy the same services multiple times with the same service providers [4]. Repurchase intention increases service providers' revenues and enhances their reputation. Repurchase intention occurs when most restaurants have started to improve service value machinery to manage customers' services [5].

Restaurants in the Philippines are among the most successful and thriving businesses [6]. In addition, changes in the business environment have followed the same pattern as technological developments. Many fast-food chains aim to provide their clients with services and goods of various price ranges. Zalatar [7] studied the service quality of food establishments in the Philippines. These identified three principal service quality dimensions that customers use in evaluating the food restaurants in the Philippines: tangibles, reliability/responsiveness, and assurance/empathy. Moreover, service quality was the most significant factor in determining the customer's repurchase intention in a food restaurant [8]. According to Alqueza et al. [9], customers' retention and repurchase intentions are critical in defensive marketing tactics and corporate success to counteract market competition and the increasing costs of obtaining new customers in the Philippines.

According to Alavi [10], there is a significant relationship between the performance of restaurants in Iloilo City and customers' loyalty to restaurants where they dine. Customers' loyalty in restaurants where they dine does not vary in terms of marital status, gender, age, and educational attainment, for as restaurant customers, they are more likely to have the same degree of loyalty. With the food business continuously flourishing in the city, competition has grown stiffer among establishments. One of the reasons believed to be behind a restaurant's success depends on the quality of the foods it produces. The quality is based on the establishment's practices in maintaining the freshness of its food supplies from purchasing, receiving, storing, inventory, and safety of preparation [11].

From the researchers mentioned above, many authors [10,9,7] noted the need to conduct further research in determining the service quality and repurchase intention of customers in a localized restaurant to verify and have a replication of the results. Furthermore, a multi-dimensional scale for service value is used to assess the impact of different service value attributes on consumer's repurchase intentions at fast-food restaurants [5]. Thus, the literature needs to provide sufficient findings and do more research specifically on service quality and repurchase intention.

The study determined the extent of service quality of a local restaurant in a highly urbanized city in Central Philippines as assessed by customers in terms of responsiveness/assurance, empathy/equity, reliability, and tangibility when they were taken as a whole and grouped according to the type of services. Likewise, it determined the extent to which customers of a local restaurant intend to repurchase in terms of customer satisfaction, customer trust, commitment, and perceived value relative to the type of services. The findings were the basis for creating a service quality plan that will make the restaurant data-driven, help it better understand and serve its clientele, and lead to improved service delivery and customer loyalty. Ultimately, implementing this service quality plan will contribute to the long-term success and sustainability of the restaurant in a highly competitive market environment.

## **2.0 Framework of the Study**

This study was anchored on Oliver's expectation confirmation theory (ECT) [12], which argues that customer's repurchase intentions are attained when satisfied with the

restaurant's services. The Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT) posits that the interplay of prior expectations and perception of service quality determines satisfaction. It has four primary constructs: expectation, performance, (dis)confirmation, and satisfaction [12]. Expectations reflect anticipation [13]. They predict product attributes in the future [14]. Meanwhile, performance is an evaluation by the individual after the event, such as service quality. Post-purchase satisfaction will result if a product meets or outperforms expectations (confirmation). If a product falls short of expectations (disconfirmation), the consumer will likely be dissatisfied [14]. When consumers are satisfied with the service quality, they revisit the restaurant.

In this study, which focuses on service quality and repurchase intention of a local restaurant in a highly urbanized city in the Philippines, the Expectation Confirmation Theory is relevant in evaluating service, customer satisfaction, and loyalty to the product. Customers already have expectations about the service quality of a restaurant. If the service quality meets or exceeds these expectations, customers are more likely to be satisfied and have a positive repurchase intention. By understanding and managing customer expectations regarding service quality, the restaurant can influence customers' perceptions and increase their likelihood of returning.

### 3.0 Methods

This study utilized a descriptive research design to determine the extent of service quality and repurchase intentions. The respondents were the customers of a local restaurant in the Central Philippines aged 18 years old and above who have actual dining experience in this restaurant. Since the population is unknown, the researcher gathered the average number of customers in the second quarter from August to October 2023. The average number taken was the basis of the calculation of respondents. This study utilized convenience sampling because the population was unknown, and it would be impossible to determine the characteristics of the respondents.

**Table 1.** *Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

<b>Services</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Buffet	35	22.3
Dine-in	88	56.1
Catering	34	21.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study utilized two adopted research instruments on Service Quality by Mensah and Mensah [15] and a researcher-made instrument on Repurchase Intention. Service quality instrument comprises 4 areas: responsiveness/assurance (10 items), empathy/equity (7 items), reliability (4 items), and tangibility (6 items). Meanwhile, the instrument for repurchase intention consisted of 18 items indicators composed of 4 areas: customer satisfaction, customer trust, commitment, and perceived value. Since the research used the adopted instrument, these constructs underwent validity and reliability tests. The survey items were tested for content validity and yielded a validity index of 0.90. It was pilot tested and yielded a reliable score of 0.989. For service quality and repurchase intention, these were responded using very low to very great extent ratings. In terms of data analysis, this study employed mean and standard deviation. Finally, the researcher adhered to the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB) ethical guidelines and addressed the general principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice to ensure the ethical soundness of the study.

#### **4.0 Results and Discussion**

##### ***Extent of service quality of a local restaurant***

Table 2 presents the extent of service quality of a local restaurant in a highly urbanized city in Central Philippines as assessed by customers. The extent of service quality ( $M=3.35$ ,  $SD=0.51$ ) is very great. Buffet ( $M=3.25$ ,  $SD=0.49$ ) and catering ( $M=3.16$ ,  $SD=0.57$ ) customers rated great extent, while dine-in ( $M=3.46$ ,  $SD=0.46$ ) customers rated very great extent. All customer segments rated the service quality as great to very great. Interestingly, dine-in customers rated the service quality at a higher level than buffet and catering customers, indicating that the dine-in experience might be particularly exceptional in terms of service quality.

The extent of service quality in responsiveness/assurance ( $M=3.35$ ,  $SD=0.53$ ) was very great. Buffet ( $M=3.28$ ,  $SD=0.52$ ) and dine-in ( $M=3.46$ ,  $SD=0.50$ ) customers rated a very great extent while catering ( $M=3.16$ ,  $SD=0.59$ ) customers rated a great extent. On average, all customer segments rated the responsiveness and assurance aspect of service quality as great to very great. Dine-in customers rated this aspect higher than buffet and catering customers, indicating that they perceive a higher level of responsiveness and assurance in the service provided during their dine-in experience. The same result was revealed in the studies of Kuo et al. [16] and Murthy and Sai [17]. Dine-in customers rated this aspect higher than buffet and catering services. With this, there is room for improvement in all aspects to further increase customer satisfaction [18].

The extent of service quality in terms of empathy/equity ( $M=3.42$ ,  $SD=0.52$ ) was very great. Buffet ( $M=3.32$ ,  $SD=0.52$ ), catering ( $M=3.29$ ,  $SD=0.58$ ), and dine-in ( $M=3.51$ ,  $SD=0.48$ ) customers all rated to a very great extent. This data indicates that, on average, customers across all segments perceive the empathy and equity aspect of service quality very positively, with all types of services rating it to a very great extent. These high ratings revealed that the restaurant had accomplished its goal of demonstrating empathy and equity in its services. It indicated a solid customer-centric approach where customers feel understood, valued, and fairly treated across all service interactions. According to Sheth et al. [19], empathetic and user-centric design can elevate the customer service function as significant to the overall customer experience, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth. Moreover, Jin and Merkebu [20] stated that employees who expressed positive emotions triggered customer trust and appreciation.

The extent of service quality regarding overall reliability ( $M=3.32$ ,  $SD=0.62$ ) was great. Buffet ( $M=3.23$ ,  $SD=0.61$ ) and catering ( $M=3.08$ ,  $SD=0.72$ ) customers rated great extent while dine-in ( $M=3.44$ ,  $SD=0.55$ ) customers rated very great extent. It meant that, on average, customers across all segments rated the reliability aspect of service quality positively. Dine-in customers rated reliability higher than buffet and catering customers, indicating that they perceive a very high level of reliability in the service provided during their dine-in experience. The high rating indicates that customers perceive the restaurant as consistently delivering reliable service. This reliability can contribute to customer satisfaction and trust in the restaurant's ability to meet their expectations consistently. When customers experience reliable service, they are more likely to have confidence in the restaurant and are inclined to return for future visits. Consistency in reliability can foster customer loyalty and encourage repeat business.

Jin and Merkebu [21] got the same results as this study's revelation, where, according to them, customers who experience reliable service are more likely to have confidence in the restaurant and are inclined to return for future visits. Another study by Abdullaeva [22]

mentioned that customers who were satisfied with service quality and overall dining experience showed a response rate for intention to revisit the restaurant and recommend it to others.

The extent of service quality in terms of tangibility ( $M=3.27$ ,  $SD=0.54$ ) was very great. Buffet ( $M=3.15$ ,  $SD=0.52$ ) and catering ( $M=3.03$ ,  $SD=0.57$ ) customers rated great extent. On the other hand, dine-in ( $M=3.40$ ,  $SD=0.51$ ) customers rated very great extent. It suggests that, on average, customers across all segments rated the tangibility aspect of service quality positively. Dine-in customers rated tangibility higher than buffet and catering customers, indicating that they perceive a very high level of tangibility in the service provided during their dine-in experience. Customers perceiving a high level of tangibility in service quality tend to have a more enriched sensory experience. It can include aspects such as the physical environment, food presentation, cleanliness, and overall ambiance, all of which contribute to a positive dining experience.

The same result appeared in Lee et al. [23]: Customers perceiving a high level of tangibility in service quality tend to have a more enriched sensory experience. Empirical studies have confirmed the effect of ambient conditions, facility aesthetics, and cleanliness on customer perceptions of service quality [24].

Since dine-in customers rated the service quality higher than buffet and catering customers, the restaurant should focus on maintaining and further improving the dine-in experience. It could involve training staff to provide exceptional service, ensuring a welcoming ambiance, and consistently delivering high-quality food. Recognizing the varying perceptions of service quality among different customer segments, the restaurant could consider implementing tailored service strategies. For example, they could enhance buffet and catering services to align more closely with the expectations of those customer groups. The positive ratings indicate good service quality; however, there is always room for improvement. The restaurant should use these results as a benchmark for continuous improvement efforts to consistently meet and exceed customer expectations. In relation to this study's implications, the lack of management knowledge about customer expectations causes customer dissatisfaction [25]. Overall, positive ratings indicate a good level of service quality. Thus, restaurants can formulate effective marketing strategies to cope with competition and boost profit margins [26].

The positive ratings indicated high responsiveness and assurance in service quality. However, the restaurant must maintain consistency across all types of services. Maintaining consistent standards in buffet, dine-in, and catering services is essential to establish a strong reputation and earn customers' trust. Catering customers have rated the responsiveness and assurance aspect lower than dine-in customers, so the restaurant may need to concentrate on improving training for staff involved in catering services. Enhancing communication and responsiveness and assuring catering customers could increase their satisfaction levels. All service quality aspects positively impact customer satisfaction, and most customers are satisfied with the service quality and are willing to be loyal and recommend the restaurants [27].

High ratings in empathy and equity in its services indicated that there was evident and consistent practice of this aspect. It implied a robust customer-centric approach where customers feel understood, valued, and fairly treated across all service interactions. Demonstrating empathy and equity can help build trust with customers as they feel their needs and concerns are being understood and addressed. It can increase customer loyalty, repeat business, and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Consistently delivering high levels of empathy and equity in service quality contributes to a positive brand image for the restaurant. Customers will likely view the restaurant favorably and perceive it as a caring and fair establishment, which can attract new customers and enhance its reputation. High levels of

empathy and equity in the service contribute to a positive brand image for the restaurant [28], suggesting that the insights provide restaurant operators on attracting and retaining customers by improving ambiance, food quality, and service quality.

The high rating indicates that customers perceive the restaurant as consistently delivering reliable service. This reliability can contribute to customer satisfaction and trust in the restaurant's ability to meet their expectations consistently. High reliability in service delivery often indicates solid operational processes and systems in place. It can result in smoother operations, fewer errors, and better overall efficiency within the restaurant, contributing to a positive customer experience. While the ratings reflect a high-reliability level, the restaurant must continue monitoring and maintaining this aspect of service quality. Regular quality assurance checks, feedback mechanisms, and staff training can uphold and improve reliability standards over time.

Boasiako and Asante [27] stated that having regular quality assurance checks, feedback mechanisms, and staff training can help uphold and improve reliability standards over time among restaurants. Service excellence requires creating and developing a competitive strategy to maintain service quality [29].

Customers perceiving a high level of tangibility in service quality tend to have a more enriched sensory experience. It can include aspects such as the physical environment, food presentation, cleanliness, and overall ambiance, all of which contribute to a positive dining experience. By excelling in tangibility, the restaurant can differentiate itself from competitors. A visually appealing and well-maintained physical space with attention to detail in the presentation can attract customers seeking a high-quality dining experience and give the restaurant a competitive edge. A visual and tangible dining experience can create opportunities for upselling or cross-selling. Customers impressed by the presentation and quality of offerings may be more inclined to explore additional menu items or upgrades, thereby increasing revenue potential for the restaurant.

By analyzing the ratings across multiple service quality aspects, the restaurant can identify specific strengths and areas that may require improvement in each customer segment. This insight allows for targeted strategies to maintain high performance in strengths and effectively address deficiencies. Tailoring service strategies based on segment-specific ratings can enhance the overall customer experience. For instance, focusing on tangibility for dine-in customers, empathy/equity for buffet customers, and reliability for catering customers can help meet each segment's unique needs and expectations. While there are variations in ratings across segments, maintaining consistent service standards in all aspects of service quality is crucial. Consistency builds customer trust, establishes the restaurant's reputation, and ensures a unified brand experience regardless of the customer segment. Consistently delivering high-quality service across all aspects can foster customer loyalty and retention. Satisfied customers who perceive value in the service provided are more likely to become repeat patrons and advocates for the restaurant.

Jin and Merkebu [21] got the same results as this study's revelation, where, according to them, customers who experience reliable service are more likely to have confidence in the restaurant and are inclined to return for future visits. Another study by Abdullaeva [22] mentioned that customers who were satisfied with service quality and overall dining experience showed a high response rate for intention to revisit the restaurant and recommend it to others.

**Table 2.** *Extent of Service Quality of a Local Restaurant in a Highly Urbanized City*

Variable	Responsiveness/ Assurance			Empathy/ Equity			Reliability			Tangibility			Service Quality		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Buffet	3.28	0.52	VGE	3.32	0.52	VGE	3.23	0.61	VGE	3.15	0.52	GE	3.25	0.49	GE
Dine-in	3.46	0.50	VGE	3.51	0.48	VGE	3.44	0.55	VGE	3.40	0.51	VGE	3.46	0.46	VGE
Catering	3.16	0.59	GE	3.29	0.58	VGE	3.08	0.72	GE	3.03	0.57	GE	3.16	0.57	GE
<b>Whole</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>VGE</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>VGE</b>	<b>3.32</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>VGE</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>VGE</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>VGE</b>

Note: Very Low Extent (VLE), Low Extent (LE), Great Extent (GE), Very Great Extent (VGE)

### ***Extent of Repurchase Intention of a Local Restaurant in a Highly Urbanized City***

Table 3 presents the extent of the repurchase intention of customers of a local restaurant. The extent of repurchase intention (M=3.47, SD=0.49) was very great. Buffet (M=3.38, SD=0.50), catering (M=3.31, SD=0.58), and dine-in (M=3.57, SD=0.43) customers rated it to a very great extent as well. Given the lowest mean and higher variability in repurchase intention for catering customers, it would be beneficial to investigate specific pain points and areas for improvement. It could indicate inconsistent service quality or unmet expectations in the catering experience. Addressing these inconsistencies and meeting customer expectations could boost repurchase intentions. Product and service quality positively affect repurchase interest with partial mediation of customer satisfaction [30]. Furthermore, service quality dimensions should meet customers' expectations and elicit repurchase intentions to remain competitive in the food industry [31].

The extent of repurchase intention regarding customer satisfaction (M=3.45, SD=0.53) was very great. Buffet (M=3.36, SD=0.50) and dine-in (M=3.57, SD=0.48) customers rated a very great extent while catering (M=3.24, SD=0.62) customers rated a great extent. The result indicated that dine-in customers are delighted with their experience, contributing to a solid intention to return. Leveraging this success by promoting dine-in services and using it as a model for other formats could benefit the overall business. The lowest mean and higher variability in repurchase intention among catering customers suggest areas for improvement. Addressing specific issues and ensuring consistent service quality could enhance satisfaction and repurchase intention. Mensah and Mensah [15] believed that service quality significantly affects repurchase intention. Addressing specific issues and ensuring consistent service quality could enhance satisfaction and repurchase intention among catering customers [32].

The extent of repurchase intention regarding customer trust (M=3.45, SD=0.52) was very great. Buffet (M=3.31, SD=0.56), catering (M=3.28, SD=0.56), and dine-in (M=3.56, SD=0.47) customers rated a very great extent in terms of customer trust. The results indicated that, in general, customers have a very high level of trust in the restaurant, which translates into a firm intention to repurchase. The very great extent of customer trust in repurchase intentions indicates a strong sense of loyalty among customers. High trust often leads to repeat business, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term customer relationships. Regularly gathering feedback and monitoring customer trust levels can help pinpoint potential areas for improvement. Tailoring strategies to address specific trust-related concerns can further enhance customer loyalty and repurchase intentions. Wang et al. [33] mentioned that provider recommendations and customer reviews are complementary to customers' trust. Trust mediates the relationship between information, system, service quality, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intentions [34].

The extent of repurchase intention in terms of commitment (M=3.48, SD=0.53) was very great. Regardless of the type of services, buffet (M=3.41, SD=0.54), catering (M=3.34,

SD=0.59), and dine-in (M=3.56, SD=0.48) customers rated the very great extent of repurchase intention in terms of commitment. The very great importance of customer commitment and repurchase intention indicated a strong sense of loyalty among customers. High commitment often leads to repeat business and long-term customer relationships. Regardless of the type of service (buffet, catering, or dine-in), customers exhibit a very high level of commitment. This consistency implied that the establishment has fostered loyalty across different service formats. The type of service environment significantly alters the process of creating genuine consumer commitment [35]. The restaurants' quality of service positively influences customer satisfaction and loyalty positively and significantly [36].

The extent of repurchase intention in terms of perceived value (M=3.48, SD=0.53) was very great. Buffet (M=3.45, SD=0.51), dine-in (M=3.57, SD=0.45), and catering (M=3.38, SD=0.60) customers have a very great extent of repurchase intention in terms of perceived value. It indicates that the customer perceived the restaurant's services as highly valued. Customers who perceive high value are likelier to return to the establishment, leading to higher customer retention. Customers who perceive high value are often less sensitive to price increases, allowing the business to maintain profitability even with higher pricing. High perceived value provides opportunities to introduce customers to additional products or services, thereby increasing the average transaction value, which could contribute to long-term revenue growth.

High perceived value provides opportunities to introduce customers to additional products or services necessary to achieve high-value perceptions and appropriations [37]. Customer value is a dual concept: Firms need to create perceived value for customers, and customers provide value through engagement and lifetime value [38], suggesting that marketers measure and manage both aspects of customer value.

In support of the results obtained, Dasiy et al. [39] mentioned that customer satisfaction significantly influences repurchase intention. Valencia et al. [40] have the same results regarding the extent of repurchase intention in terms of the type of services offered by a particular restaurant, which mention that dine-in greatly influences repurchase intention. Buffets and catering have a moderate extent influence on repurchase intention. Thus, customer experience and promotion significantly influence repurchase intentions. Customer experience and sales promotion simultaneously and positively related to customer's repurchase intention [41]. To increase repurchase intention, firms should focus on enhancing customer loyalty and satisfaction [42].

**Table 3.** *Extent of Repurchase Intention of a Local Restaurant in a Highly Urbanized City*

Variable	Customer Satisfaction			Customer Trust			Commitment			Perceived Value			Repurchase Intention		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
<b>Buffet</b>	3.36	0.50	VGE	3.31	0.56	VGE	3.41	0.54	VGE	3.45	0.51	VGE	3.38	0.50	VGE
<b>Dine-in</b>	3.57	0.48	VGE	3.56	0.47	VGE	3.56	0.48	VGE	3.57	0.45	VGE	3.57	0.43	VGE
<b>Catering</b>	3.24	0.62	GE	3.28	0.56	VGE	3.34	0.59	VGE	3.38	0.60	VGE	3.31	0.58	VGE
<b>Whole</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>VGE</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>VGE</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>VGE</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>VGE</b>	<b>3.47</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>VGE</b>

Note: Very Low Extent (VLE), Low Extent (LE), Great Extent (GE), Very Great Extent (VGE)

Overall analysis, the results conformed to the Expectation-Confirmation Theory applied to a restaurant setting. It aligns with the concept that customers come to a restaurant with certain expectations for the quality of service. It includes responsiveness and assurance, empathy and equity, reliability, and tangibility. They anticipate high efficiency, responsiveness, and professionalism from the staff, as well as high-quality food and a pleasant ambiance, all of

which are perceived to be worth the cost. The customers then evaluated their expectations and decided to confirm them, influencing their satisfaction, loyalty, trust, commitment, perceived value, and repurchase intention to the restaurant. Restaurant managers can enhance service quality and boost customer satisfaction by understanding and managing expectations, perceived performance, and disconfirmation. It, in turn, will increase the likelihood of customers returning, thus improving repurchase intentions.

### **5.0. Conclusion**

This study concluded that the extent of service quality of a local restaurant presents an opportunity for the restaurant to identify areas of improvement in the two types of services they offer, such as buffet and catering. It enhances the overall service delivery to increase customers' satisfaction and success in the industry. Furthermore, it leads to increased customer loyalty and potential word-of-mouth recommendations. It can boost overall sales and a positive reputation for the restaurant in the long run. By aligning customer expectations with service delivery across all areas of the restaurant, management can further enhance overall customer satisfaction and loyalty.

### **6.0. Limitations of the Findings**

Several factors limit the findings of this study. First, the research primarily focused on dine-in customers, which may not provide a comprehensive view of the experiences of buffet and catering customers. The sample size and demographic diversity of respondents may also affect the generalizability of the results, as it is still being determined whether the findings would hold across different customer segments or geographical locations. Additionally, the subjective nature of customer perceptions regarding service quality may introduce bias, as individual experiences can vary widely. Lastly, the study does not account for external factors, such as seasonal variations or economic conditions, which may influence customer satisfaction and service quality ratings.

### **7.0. Practical Value of the Paper**

This study provides practical insights for restaurant management by highlighting the importance of service quality in enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. The findings emphasize that maintaining high standards in service delivery, particularly for dine-in customers, can lead to increased repurchase intentions and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. By identifying areas for improvement in buffet and catering services, the restaurant can enhance overall service delivery, ultimately contributing to greater customer satisfaction and success in the competitive food service industry. The study serves as a valuable resource for restaurant owners and managers seeking to align their service offerings with customer expectations.

### **8.0. Directions for Future Research**

Future research could expand on this study by exploring the experiences of buffet and catering customers in greater depth, allowing for a more holistic understanding of service quality across all service types. Investigating the impact of external factors, such as location, competition, and economic trends, on customer satisfaction could also provide valuable insights. Additionally, longitudinal studies could be conducted to assess changes in customer perceptions over time, particularly as service delivery practices evolve. Furthermore, qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus groups, could be employed to gain deeper insights

into customer motivations and preferences, ultimately enriching the understanding of service quality in the restaurant sector.

### 9.0. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

### 10.0 Acknowledgement

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