



CUSTOMER PREFERENCES AND SATISFACTION IN THE RESTAURANTS WITH REFERENCE TO PALAKKAD DISTRICT

Dr. V. Sridevi* & Sruthi V**

* Research Supervisor and Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Sri Krishna Adithya College of Arts and Science, Kovaipudur, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

** Ph.D Scholar, Department of Commerce, Sri Krishna Adithya College of Arts and Science, Kovaipudur, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

Cite This Article: Dr. V. Sridevi & Sruthi V, "Customer Preferences and Satisfaction in the Restaurants With Reference to Palakkad District", *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Humanities*, Volume 10, Issue 1, January - June, Page Number 25-33, 2025.

Copy Right: © DV Publication, 2025 (All Rights Reserved). This is an Open Access Article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium provided the original work is properly cited.

Abstract:

The customer preference and satisfaction survey of the restaurants in Palakkad district will be undertaken in this study. The scope is to identify importance of the factors affecting restaurant choice, and the perception of the value-added features of online ordering systems, and the overall satisfaction with restaurant service attributes. Therefore, the research method used for this study is quantitative research and a structured questionnaire is used administered on 107 participants. To conduct analysis distinct techniques are used known as the Friedman Test to determine the restaurant selection factors with their rankings, and One-Way ANOVA to compare the preference and satisfaction level according to the demographic variables. Analysis shows that "Dining Options" and "Customer Service" of the restaurant strongly affect the choice of consumers whereas "Safety and Hygiene Measures" and "Online Booking Experience" have relatively less impact on the decision. It is evident that education level affects internet booking benefits while customer gratification with other aspects such as room quality and the location's convenience depend on the customer's occupation. Some has includes involve the sample of population used in the study hence being limited to one region and the biased response of the participants. Future study could increase its geographical coverage and could encompass future qualitative findings as well. The present research extends knowledge of consumer behavior in restaurant markets and offers practical recommendations for modifications to restaurant portfolios and configurations for online booking tools.

Key Words: Customer Preferences, Restaurant, Online Booking, Satisfaction, Palakkad District

Introduction:

Restaurant business occupies a remarkable place in the hospitality area and has enormous influence on consumer behaviors and local economy (Park et al. , 2020). Thus, the importance of assessing customer awareness, perception and satisfaction when customers are transacting in a dynamic and competitive environment if a business is to survive and sustain customer patronage. This study targets the restaurant industry with reference to the Palakkad district a location that has a distinct cultural and eating out culture. The main interest is to investigate the determinants that may affect current buyer choices and perceptions, which would be helpful for practice-oriented audience - owners and managers of restaurants and related institutions as well as policy-makers.

Palakkad is a district in the southern part of the state of Kerala, India that boasts of various cultural influences and thereby colorful culinary practices. The eating out sector of this region supports this observation by providing various dining facilities in a bid to satisfy the palate of as many people as possible. Nonetheless, with the changes in the modern eat-out market and the growing significance of social media in people's lives, the choice criteria are shifting. This research aims to find out these changes and ascertain the factors that lead to change in customers' preferences in this particular geographical region (Lo et al. 2024).

Another important consideration to this study is assessing the importance of factors that determine restaurant choice (Baker and Hashimoto, 2024). The customers today are better informed and choosy than even before and hence, it becomes all the more important for the organisations to know what their customers really want. That is why, they have their unique preferences depending on the variety of food offered by the restaurant, and the quality of services offered including the public image of the restaurant, the location of the restaurant and the dining experience (Gruss et al. , 2024). These factors will be measured in detail in this study to afford a clear picture of what makes customers prefer one restaurant to another in the Palakkad district. Such gains are recognized with the overall goal of the research as providing practical suggestions to restaurant operators on potential avenues for improvement in their menus so as to better meet customer expectations (Xu et al. : pp. 204).

In addition to traditional factors, the study will also focus on the growing importance of online interactions in the restaurant industry. With the advent of digital technology, online booking and ordering systems have become integral to the dining experience. Customers now expect seamless and user-friendly online interfaces that facilitate their dining decisions (Jia et al., 2024). This research will evaluate customer preferences for online restaurant booking features, identifying key areas where online booking experiences can be improved. By examining aspects such as ease of navigation, clarity of information, and the availability of special offers, the study aims to provide recommendations for enhancing online booking systems to better meet customer expectations.

Furthermore, the study will explore customer satisfaction with various hotel attributes, extending the analysis beyond restaurants to include broader aspects of the hospitality industry. Factors such as room quality, pricing, amenities, and cleanliness will be assessed to determine their impact on overall satisfaction. By investigating these attributes, the research will identify specific elements that significantly influence customer experiences and satisfaction with hotels. This comprehensive approach will provide a holistic view of customer preferences and satisfaction, offering valuable insights for both the restaurant and hotel sectors.

The significance of this study extends beyond its immediate findings. For restaurant owners and managers, the insights gained from this research will be instrumental in refining their strategies and enhancing their offerings. Understanding customer preferences and satisfaction levels will enable businesses to tailor their services to better meet customer expectations, thereby improving customer retention and loyalty. Additionally, the focus on online booking features will help businesses optimize their digital presence and streamline their booking processes, addressing the growing importance of online interactions in the dining industry.

The result of this study will be useful for the policymakers and the industry regulators as it would be able to provide information about the current trends and customer expectation. This knowledge can be applied to issues of standards as well as the recommended policies that would suit the changing consumption trends. Also, the research will be of significant value in enriching the pool of knowledge on customer satisfaction/ preference within a particular geographic region. The findings are useful to be used in the following studies and can be used as reference for research in similar environment.

The purpose of this research is to try to explore the customer profile, preferences, and satisfaction in restaurant industry limited to Palakkad district of Kerala. Thus, the research aims to provide significant findings for stakeholders in the restaurant and hospitality industries by identifying factors to judge their importance, by comparing the customers' preferences for the online booking options, and by exploring the satisfaction with hotel characteristics. The investigation results will fill the current gaps in the existing knowledge base; support business activities; as well as advance the customer experience's comprehension this kind of regional environment.

Scope of the Study:

The field of investigation of this study is related to the examination of customer factors including preferences and satisfaction level in restaurant industry in Palakkad district. This study seeks to assess factors that make outlets popular by conducting survey among patrons where the criteria used to select a restaurant includes; variety of meals offered, quality of services and hygiene, geographical location, and general atmosphere of the restaurant. As such, it would be interesting to take a look at the above factors in an effort to identify their relevance as them perceived by the customers this specific geographical area. Further, the study will consider the features of online restaurant booking and how different customer preferences influence their satisfaction, and where disparities concerning the different demographic segments exist. The research also continues with assessing customers' satisfaction level toward aspects of hotel including rooms, rate, facilities, and tidiness. Such an approach, therefore, seeks to offer directions on how these attributes determine the total satisfaction of customers and consequently, reveal specific components that are influential in defining customer experiences. This study will adopt both a primary and secondary research approach and employ both the qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis tools like questionnaires and statistics in order to produce a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the customers' needs and satisfaction in the Palakkad district.

Significance of the Study:

Many people involved in the Palakkad district's hospitality and restaurant businesses can benefit greatly from this study. When it comes to picking a restaurant, what matters most to customers? This research will shed light on that question for restaurant owners and managers. Businesses can improve their offerings and even increase consumer loyalty and patronage by identifying these elements and tailoring them to better suit customer expectations. Now more than ever, companies would do well to pay attention to online booking features; by learning their customers' online interaction preferences, they can enhance their digital presence and make bookings easier. In order to help policymakers and industry regulators make decisions about industry standards and rules, the study will provide a fuller understanding of current trends and customer expectations. Academically, the study will add to what is already known about consumer preferences and satisfaction in a particular regional context, which will serve as a standard for future research in the same or comparable fields.

Objectives of the Study:

- To evaluate the significance of various factors influencing restaurant selection in the Palakkad district and determine their relative importance based on customer preferences
- To assess customer preferences for online restaurant booking features and identify key areas of variation in user satisfaction
- To investigate the customer satisfaction with various hotel attributes and identify specific attributes that significantly influence overall satisfaction.

Statement of the Problem:

The Palakkad district's restaurant scene is lively and competitive, hence businesses have to be aware of the subtleties of consumer preferences and satisfaction. Although customer-centric strategies are becoming more and more important, there is clearly a gap in thorough studies on how different elements affect restaurant choice in this area. This study fills in this need by methodically assessing the importance of several elements that influence consumer decisions including food variety, customer service, and general dining experience. Furthermore, knowing consumer preferences for online booking tools has become essential given the development of digital platforms. The study seeks to pinpoint main areas where experiences with online booking should be enhanced to raise customer satisfaction. The study will also look at customer satisfaction with hotel features, a vital topic sometimes disregarded in regional studies. The study aims to identify which hotel features, such room quality and facilities, consumers value most by looking at how they affect general satisfaction. This all-encompassing strategy will give restaurant and hotel operators practical insights that will help them to meet the particular requirements and expectations of their guests. In the end, this study will close the current information gap and provide doable suggestions for raising customer satisfaction in the Palakkad district's hotels and restaurants.

Literature Review:

The restaurant industry is a highly volatile industry and technology as well as customer satisfaction has much influence on the restaurant business (Choo et al. , 2024). Such aspects it is crucial for restaurant operators to fully understand in order to sustain their competitiveness and their client base's expectations. The literature review has identified a number of decision criteria

that people use when choosing a restaurant namely: food quality, service quality, price, and atmosphere. Of all these factors, food quality is found to be a most prominent factor that affect consumers decisions. The beautification of food, the taste and the freshness of the food products are the most important factors that influence choice of venue as pointed out by Lin et al. , (2024). Another factor that people use to choose the restaurant to visit is the quality of services available in the restaurant. Research confirmed that employees' friendly approach, respect, and professionalism can increase customer satisfaction and that will lead to customers' loyalty. Customers, therefore, have high expectations of the services they are going to receive especially when eating out and any failure to deliver these services tends to affect the overall perception of the outlet and ultimately the uptake of services (Cankül et al. , 2024). Consumers' perceptions of food, services, and prices maintained that the later was an important determinant of their preferences. Some consumers are even ready to pay more to have a nice dining experience while others look for whenever they spent in terms of money against the whole experience they got (Zanetta et al. , 2024).

Atmospherics, which are the physical environment characteristics like interior design, Intensity of lighting, and amount of noise play a part in consumers' choice of restaurant. Esteem invention can make the dining experience better this is due to the satisfaction that comes with being in a good mood. Also, the issues like cleanliness and hygiene are growing into highly relevant factors. Consumers are endowed with extra health consciousness, and it is critical to achieve consumers' trust through maintaining and providing a clean environment (Li et al. , 2024). In the present generation, the online booking has become very popular within the restaurant business. The ability to make reservations online accompanied by the features like availability of the table in real-time and easy-to-navigate interfaces differentiate customers' experience with the dining establishments (Christy, 2024). Some other studies reveal that people need convenient web interfaces for making bookings; they are sensitive to the accuracy of the information presented online. In addition, special offers/off-sale promotions which are available in social media can greatly affect the customers' perceived decision to choose the restaurant.

Customer reviews and recommendations, facilitated by digital platforms, also play a significant role in shaping perceptions and influencing choices. Positive reviews can attract new customers, while negative feedback can deter potential patrons. Thus, maintaining a favorable online reputation is essential for restaurants aiming to enhance their visibility and appeal (Singh et al., 2024). In addition to these factors, the growing importance of sustainability and ethical practices in the restaurant industry cannot be overlooked. Consumers are increasingly concerned about the environmental impact of their dining choices, including issues related to food sourcing, waste management, and energy consumption. Restaurants that adopt sustainable practices and communicate their efforts effectively can gain a competitive edge and appeal to the environmentally conscious consumer (Xu et al., 2024). The literature also highlights the impact of demographic variables on restaurant preferences. Factors such as age, income level, and education can influence dining choices and satisfaction levels. For instance, younger consumers may prioritize trendy dining experiences and innovative cuisines, while older patrons might place more value on traditional food options and comfortable environments. Similarly, individuals with higher incomes may be more inclined to spend on premium dining experiences, whereas budget-conscious consumers might focus on cost-effective options (Shahhosseini and Khalili Nasr, 2024).

This is a recap of some of areas of interest on customer satisfaction with regard to restaurant attributes. Concepts like room quality, price to value ratio, location, and quality of service tend to be analyzed so as to determined the degree of satisfaction that they elicit (Gao, 2024). All the physical facilities characteristics such as noise levels, comfortable seating arrangements also affect the customers' perceptions. Further, satisfaction with certain specific services like availability of parking space, cleanliness of rest rooms can have an impact on the satisfaction level of the customers (AlSalman & Nafea, 2024, p 34). Identifying customer preferences and satisfaction in restaurant industry is even more challenging due to variation in the type of dining experiences. Although different categories of restaurants range from the fast food chain to the high-quality restaurants, each type of market has unique features as well as client demands. There are studies showing the varied ways in which restaurants meet the various consumers' needs and how they can create niches in the marketplace (Aba et al., 2024).

Besides, growth of technology in the restaurant business gave a new perspective to customers' satisfaction. New technologies, for instance, use of mobile applications in ordering and payment have made eating easier and faster. These studies have focused on the role that these innovating technological improvements play in the scenario by influencing the customer's perception, as well as, their bows to return back to the restaurant (Liu et al. , 2024). There is evidence from the literature that customer preferences and satisfaction in restaurant business are complicated. This shows that the customers' decision process greatly depends on food quality, service, price, atmosphere, restaurant's tidiness, and opportunities to make a table online (Xia et al. , 2024). Besides, demographic characteristics and technology have more contributions towards the dining experience / satisfaction. Knowledge of these factors is important for the restaurant operators to improve on their service provision, respond well to customers' needs in order to sustain consumers satisfaction and to thrive in the food service industry (Azizi et al. , 2024). Despite the extensive body of research on customer preferences and satisfaction in the restaurant industry, several gaps remain that warrant further investigation. One notable gap is the limited focus on the relative importance of various factors influencing restaurant selection across different geographic regions, particularly in smaller or less-studied areas such as the Palakkad district. Much of the existing literature tends to concentrate on urban centers or larger cities, leaving a significant gap in understanding how customer preferences and satisfaction may vary in more localized or rural settings. Additionally, while previous studies have addressed factors like food quality, service, and price, there is a need for more nuanced research that explores the interplay between these factors and emerging trends such as sustainability and ethical dining. As consumer awareness and expectations around environmental impact and ethical practices increase, understanding how these considerations influence dining choices and satisfaction is crucial for restaurants aiming to align with contemporary consumer values.

Another under-researched area is direct customer's interactions with an organization through online booking systems. Although prior research has investigated the factors which influence convenience, some aspects of online booking systems including navigation, information quality, and other dimensions of the user experience require further investigation. This gap is relevant because of the increasing changes that come with the formulation of new technologies that are evident in the dining sector. Moreover, past research fail to consider the demographic factors that may affect the choice of restaurants as well as

patrons' satisfaction levels. While authors have established general profiles of dining with age, income, and education, few works have investigated how other factors interact with these demographic variables, including culture and lifestyle preferences. This however is a broad classification of these interactions and further research might be useful in analyzing the responses by segments thus establishing how the same segments ascribe to attributes of different restaurants.

Consequently, more longitudinal research is required to examine the dynamics of customers' preferences and satisfaction. While most studies present a cross-sectional perspective of the existing trends, there is a need to examine how people's preferences change over time in favor of the emerging market conditions, enabler technologies, and shifting consumer attitudes toward food consumption in restaurants. Future research using longitudinal approach would further reveal these developments and assist restaurants in preparing for the future expectations of their customers. Attempting to fill these gaps can help towards the development of further knowledge of the customers and the tangible improvements of satisfaction within the restaurant industry, especially in certain regions or age groups. It might also provide practical information to restaurant operators interested in improving the value they provide consumers and the latter's expectations.

Methodology:

Research Design:

The research method of the current study is quantitative research design with a specific focus on the customer preferences and satisfaction in the restaurant industry of the Palakkad district. The study employs a self-completed questionnaire to collect information on factors that affect choice of restaurant, customers' preferences for online booking options, and perceived satisfaction with restaurant characteristics. Cross sectional survey design is used to obtain data at a single moment in time and this is appropriate in the sense that the key variables under analysis would be clearly revealed.

Population:

The target customers include the customers who have dined in the restaurants or have made a reservation to dine in the restaurants located in Palakkad district, within the past six months. This population group cuts across residents, working and business persons, travelers, among others and therefore they can have different experiences when it comes to dining in the district. In so doing the study seeks to achieve a representative sample of the targeted population which represents the overall clients of restaurants in the given region.

Sampling Method:

A structured random sampling technique is applied so as to make the chosen sample a microcosm of the heterogenous customer populace of Palakkad district. The population is initially grouped into subgroups of age, sex, employments status, and the frequency of dining out. Representative sampling is then carried out in the different obtained strata in order to choose participants for the study. It is beneficial in that it captures a wide range of clients' views and guarantees sufficient coverage of all slices within the population.

Data Collection:

Data is collected via a structured questionnaire that seeks to address the research objectives formulated for the study. The questionnaire includes sections on:

- **Factors Influencing Restaurant Selection:** Concerns that would include questions about the availability of meals, the level of care extended to guests, the condition / state of the rooms, the rates charged, location, cleanliness, and measures taken to enhance security / reduce the risk of vice versa.
- **Customer Preferences for Online Restaurant Booking:** Questions that relate to the aspects such as, navigability, readability of descriptions, authenticity of the reviews shared, simplicity of the check-in/check-out process, availability of other special offers, and the overall level of satisfaction with the online booking process.
- **Customer Satisfaction with Restaurant Attributes:** Questions ranging from satisfaction with room quality price quality location service quality available amenities, cleanliness, food options, safety feature, and overall atmosphere.

A set of questions is offered both online and in paper-pencil format to ensure that all participants, those who are comfortable with self-completion and those who are more comfortable filling questionnaires in the presence of an interviewer are covered. Likert scales are the tools employed to find out how much respondents agree or disagree about their experiences as well as their preferences because Likert scales offer a complete set of selections ranging from the strongly disagree to the strongly agree levels of satisfaction.

Data Analysis:

Data analysis is performed using two primary statistical methods: these are the Friedman Test and the One-Way Analysis of Variance test.

- **Friedman Test:** The Friedman Test is used to compare the ranks of the factors that affect consumer's choice of a restaurant. This is a non-parametric test that determines whether there existed any significant difference in the mean ranks of the various factors. The t-test results point out whether the assigned attribute values for the factors in question significantly differ from one group of respondents to another. Large leads to the null hypothesis and that is an indication that some factors are considered to be more important than others in restaurant selection.
- **One-Way ANOVA:** Since it is an analysis of variance that only goes in one direction, One-Way ANOVA is used on customer preference as well as satisfaction levels and how this relates to the education level and occupational category of customers. In this test mean scores of different groups are compared with the view of knowing whether or not there is a significant difference in their responses. For instance, ANOVA helps in the evaluation of the preferences of the respondents for the features of online booking depending on their educational level, as well as the perception of the restaurant attributes in accordance with their occupational status. The results of ANOVA tests indicate that the notion is supported and the key demographic variables make a difference in customers' perceptions and attitudes.

Sample Size:

The sample size for this study is 107 respondents, which is deemed sufficient to achieve reliable and valid results. This

sample size allows for a robust analysis of the factors influencing restaurant selection, online booking preferences, and customer satisfaction, while providing enough statistical power to detect significant differences in the data.

Ethical Considerations:

This is in compliance with the ethical considerations so as to prevent any prejudices in the research. Key ethical considerations include:

- **Informed Consent:** Each person is given information on the study, process and the likely risks involved and all are willing to participate in the study. All the respondents sign an informed consent form, to make sure that they participate and contribute to the research willingly.
- **Confidentiality:** The data shall be collected, and responses from the participants anonymized in order to maintain privacy and the information shall be secured. To make sure that the data reached only the researchers and data analysts, personal identifiers such as name and address are obscured.
- **Voluntary Participation:** To encourage the respondent to provide their honest opinion, the study is conducted based on the respondents' voluntary consent whereby they can refuse to participate in the study or opt out at any time without any repercussions. This is due to the fact that participation in the research is voluntary so as to ensure that the respondents are willing to contribute to the research.
- **Data Integrity:** That is why the study ensures that data is collected and analyzed using high research standards. Research results are always presented as they are with no attempts being made to twist the facts in order to get a specific outcome.

Analysis:

Hypotheses of Factors that Determine Consumers' Preference of Restaurants

Hypothesis:

- H0: The median response does not differ significantly on the variables with regard the factors affecting restaurant choice
- H1: The median response on the variables respect of factors affecting the restaurant choice is significantly different.

Table 1: Ranks on Ranking of Factors Influencing Restaurant Selection

Factors	Mean Rank
Room Quality	6.00
Price	5.81
Location	5.81
Customer Service	5.86
Amenities and Facilities	5.57
Cleanliness	5.67
Dining Options	5.90
Safety and Hygiene Measures	4.83
Reviews and Recommendations	4.78
Online Booking Experience	4.78

The mean ranks given to different elements affecting restaurant choice are reflected in Table 1. The variables are ranked according to their mean rank scores; "Dining Options" has the highest mean rank of 5.90, therefore suggesting its major influence on the choice of restaurant. With typical scores of 5.86 and 6.00 respectively, "Customer Service" and "Room Quality" come next closely. On the other hand, "Safety and Hygiene Measures" and "Online Booking Experience" scored the lowest mean ratings- 4.83 and 4.78 respectively. By means of a Chi-Square value of 153.748 and a significance level of .000, the Friedman Test findings displayed in Table 2 reveal a noteworthy variation in the rankings of these variables, therefore rejecting the null hypothesis (H0). This implies that among respondents, the relevance of elements affecting restaurant choice differs greatly.

Table 2: Test Statistics on Ranking of Factors Influencing Restaurant Selection

N	107
Chi-Square	153.748
Df	9
Asymp. Sig.	.000
a. Friedman Test	

Table 2 shows the test statistic for the Friedman Test that is used in determining the median response differences across the factors. An example of the Statistical test that was calculated and interpreted is the Chi-Square statistic with a chi-square value of 153.748 with 9 degrees of freedom and an asymptotic significance value of .000. H00 indicate existence of higher degree of rejection against null hypothesis which stated that the median response of the two groups are equal. The first hypothesis H0 is thus rejected based on the fact that the p-value is less than 0.05 thus showing that there is a significant LAI in the perceived importance of the different factors of restaurant selection. That is why this analysis highlights that restaurant offerings as various dining options and customer service are perceived as customers value them in different ways.

IFS Customers' Preferences on Restaurant Delivery:

Hypothesis:

- H0: There is no difference in the mean score in the variables regarding to the customer preferences on online restaurant by education of the respondent.
- H1: The mean score on the variables respect to the customer preferences for a online restaurant is significantly different according to the education of the respondents.

Table 3: ANOVA on Customer Preferences for Online Restaurant

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Ease of Navigating the Online Booking System	Between Groups	112.348	4	28.087	62.018	.000
	Within Groups	46.194	102	.453		
	Total	158.542	106			
Clarity of Room Descriptions	Between Groups	115.957	4	28.989	63.169	.000
	Within Groups	46.809	102	.459		
	Total	162.766	106			
Accuracy of Online Reviews	Between Groups	120.106	4	30.027	65.429	.000
	Within Groups	46.809	102	.459		
	Total	166.916	106			
Convenience of Online Check-In/Check-Out	Between Groups	113.406	4	28.352	59.695	.000
	Within Groups	48.444	102	.475		
	Total	161.850	106			
Availability of Special Offers	Between Groups	121.335	4	30.334	70.874	.000
	Within Groups	43.656	102	.428		
	Total	164.991	106			
User-Friendliness of the Hotel Website	Between Groups	130.027	4	32.507	73.742	.000
	Within Groups	44.963	102	.441		
	Total	174.991	106			
Relevance of Online Photos and Videos	Between Groups	130.027	4	32.507	73.742	.000
	Within Groups	44.963	102	.441		
	Total	174.991	106			
Speed of Response to Online Inquiries	Between Groups	108.604	4	27.151	56.450	.000
	Within Groups	49.059	102	.481		
	Total	157.664	106			
Availability of Secure Payment Options	Between Groups	113.406	4	28.352	59.695	.000
	Within Groups	48.444	102	.475		
	Total	161.850	106			
Overall Satisfaction with Online Booking Experience	Between Groups	108.604	4	27.151	56.450	.000
	Within Groups	49.059	102	.481		
	Total	157.664	106			

This table 3 also shows the ANOVA findings with different variables in relation to customer preferences on online restaurant booking. As shown in the following table, the F-values are relatively high equal to or greater than 56.450 to 73.742, the p-value of .000. This suggests that there are some differences in the arithmetic average of the variables according to the respondents education level. For example the variable “Ease of Navigating the Online Booking System” has an F value of 62.018 indicating high robusticity The analysis showed significance at $p < 0.05$ level for all the variables hence making the study to be highly robust. Statistical values of ‘p’ smaller than 0.05 support the elimination of the null hypothesis (H0), thereby implying that education level customer affects choice of features when choosing an online restaurant. This means that the educational status influences that usability of the online booking aspects such as, site navigation and the specials offers.

Its one type of Customer Satisfaction Index to measure the satisfaction level of customers in regards to specific attributes of a hotel.

- H0: There is no significant difference in the Mean score on the variables respect to the customer satisfaction with restaurant attributes based on occupation of the respondents
- H1; This research established that there is a significant difference in the mean score on the variables regarding the customer satisfaction with restaurant attributes with regard to the occupation of the respondents.

Table 4: ANOVA on Customer Satisfaction with Hotel Attributes

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Room Quality	Between Groups	164.316	4	41.079	309.588	.000
	Within Groups	13.534	102	.133		
	Total	177.850	106			
Price Value for Money	Between Groups	166.305	4	41.576	336.269	.000
	Within Groups	12.611	102	.124		
	Total	178.916	106			
Location Convenience	Between Groups	163.822	4	40.955	424.451	.000
	Within Groups	9.842	102	.096		
	Total	173.664	106			
Customer Service	Between Groups	170.305	4	42.576	176.455	.000
	Within Groups	24.611	102	.241		
	Total	194.916	106			
Amenities and Facilities	Between Groups	160.624	4	40.156	192.961	.000
	Within Groups	21.227	102	.208		

	Total	181.850	106			
Cleanliness	Between Groups	121.074	4	30.268	67.348	.000
	Within Groups	45.842	102	.449		
	Total	166.916	106			
Dining Options Availability	Between Groups	90.562	4	22.641	48.019	.000
	Within Groups	48.092	102	.471		
	Total	138.654	106			
Safety and Hygiene Measures	Between Groups	151.563	4	37.891	146.398	.000
	Within Groups	26.400	102	.259		
	Total	177.963	106			
Overall Ambience	Between Groups	105.310	4	26.327	55.839	.000
	Within Groups	48.092	102	.471		
	Total	153.402	106			
Ease of Booking Process	Between Groups	109.572	4	27.393	58.099	.000
	Within Groups	48.092	102	.471		
	Total	157.664	106			

The ANOVA of the different hotel attributes and customer satisfaction is presented in table 4 below. The F-value ranging from 48 and above indicated that there were significant differences of the various parameter of water quality. 019 to 424. 451, and the considerable p values < .000 across all attributes, and where significant, occupied differences in mean satisfaction scores and their label marks. For example the variable “Location Convenience” has the highest F-value of about 424 F. 451, proving that it has a rather high effect on levels of satisfaction. These results therefore say that customer satisfaction with hotel attributes like room quality, price value and location convenience differ significantly by occupation thus rejecting the null hypothesis (H₀). This implies that guests from various professions may have dissimilar perception and expectations of the variety of services and facilities in a hotel hence their satisfaction level.

Findings:

The study of the factors affecting the choice of restaurants in Palakkad district, it has been identified that “Dining Options” have the highest mean rank among all the factors. This goes a long way in underlining the significance of the customer in relation to the range and quality of eating places as firms make their selections. “Customer Service” and “Room Quality” come next and these also commonly affect customers’ decisions. These are some of the factors that are important in attaining a good quality of dining experience and good customer relations. On the other hand, ‘service factors’ having the lowest mean ranks are ‘safety and hygiene measures’ ‘on line booking experience’ to mean that these, while very important are not as important as the type of dining options and quality of service. The Friedman Test results proved that several factors are more important while some other are less perceived by customers according to the restaurant offerings. This variation proves that a restaurant has to be extra considerate of different facets of its service delivery to suit its customers’ needs.

The obtained results of the ANOVA on the customers’ preferences towards specific characteristics of the online booking services for restaurants show that the educational level has the most considerable influence on customers in terms of how they perceive specific attributes of the online booking services. Low F-test values of the “Total Time Taken to Complete the Booking Process” and “Overall Satisfaction levels” are mirrored by High F-values in the “Ease of Navigating the Online Booking System” and the “Availability of Special Offers” these results suggest strongly significant differences based on education. For instance, while comparing their perception of the indexes, ease, clarity of room descriptions, and the accuracy of reviews, the participants’ results showed a difference depending on their educational level. This would indicate that customers who prefer to obtain their degrees online might be more particular when it regards particular attributes connected with the online booking features. These findings suggest that it is crucial that restaurants should make sure that the methods that they use when creating their online booking systems are appropriate for the customers according to their education level since the null hypothesis can be rejected based on the observed p-values for all variables depicted above.

The customer satisfaction with regard to various attributes of hotel has been analyzed by the authors using ANOVA technique and the results explored suggest that there exist significant differences and variations across the category of respondents based on their occupation type. Specifically, high F-values of the attributes such as “Location Convenience” and “Price Value for Money” suggest that various occupations, respond and have different level of satisfaction towards these attributes. For instance, we find the F-value for the factor labeled “Location Convenience” is unusually high, a sign of extreme influence on flow satisfaction. These differences imply that characteristics of markets including location, price, and service quality are considered in relative terms to do customers’ professions. The low p-values reveal that occupation affects the customers’ satisfaction with the aspects of room quality, amenities, and cleanliness. As such, these findings indicate the need to consider the various customers’ expectations depending on their occupation status toward improving customer satisfaction and meeting their needs.

Suggestions:

- **Enhance Dining Options and Customer Service:** Since “Dining Options” and “Customer Service” are most effective factors in customer selection of restaurants, it will be advisable for restaurants to diversify their menu and increase their quality provision of services. Offering a variety of meals and focusing on customers’ satisfaction can become the key strategies for increasing customer base and its loyalty in a given market. Some of the measures that should be applied in order to manage these areas include development and implementation of schedules for staff training and constant creativity in menu development.
- **Optimize Online Booking Systems:** These two findings indicate that the educational background of a person influences preferences for some of the features of online booking and restaurants should ensure that they incorporate easily accessible and user-friendly online booking systems. This includes boosting navigation, description of rooms as well as

guaranteeing the reliability of the reviews. Customization of features that meet the customer's needs in the online bookings for instance coupled discounts for different services and enhanced security in payment processes all go a long way in enhancing the total booking experience.

- **Tailor Offerings Based on Customer Occupation:** The results on the customers' satisfaction with the hotel attributes show that the customers from distinct occupational categories have more or less divergent expectations. Restaurants and hotels should adapt to the policy in a way that can segregate its services according to the lobbying occupations. For example, products/services with differentiated pricing strategies, targeted services and product amenities, and services that are offered based on geographical areas would increase the level of satisfaction for most customers. Customer needs and especially the approach that should be employed when serving them depending on their occupational status can help organizations enhance the level of satisfaction and hence increase customers' loyalty.

Conclusion:

This research work titled "Customer Preferences and Satisfaction in the Restaurant Industry with Reference to Palakkad District" has offered exploitable information with regard to the factors influencing choice of restaurants, customer expectations and perceptions on on-line booking amenities and their level of satisfaction with restaurant attributes. That's why the research points out that such aspects as availability of dining options, quality of customer service, and the ambiance of the restaurant play an important role in choices of customers. The dining options were established as the most influential aspect that underlined the need to develop and maintain the variety and quality of meals to accommodate the prospects of consumer traffic. From this research, restaurant ought to emphasize on providing numerous appealing and healthy foods to consumers. Another important factor that emerged was customer service whereby respondents were very sensitive to the kind of treatment by restaurant staffs. This accentuates the need for restaurants to embrace staff training and development so as to come up with very good service delivery. Besides, the study also noted that the safety and hygiene measures are not as vital since the dining options and the kind of customer service offered. Still, due to the constant focus on the topic of health and safety around the world, it is critical to keep these standards high to gain the customers' trust and satisfy them.

While studying the customers' preferences regarding online restaurant booking, it was revealed that the last option, education level, plays a critical role in how the booking features are valued. The results also showed that the importance of simplicity of site navigation, reliability of information and offers that include specials also rose with increasing education level. This research points out the necessity of the restaurants' adaptation of their online reservation services to the customer preferences and desires. Others include easy to use interfaces, accurate information presented, and secure payment methods to improve on the online booking experience. The results generated for customers' overall satisfaction for attributes of restaurants differed according to the occupation of the respondents. The study revealed that aspects for example location convenience, price value, and room quality had a substantial impact on overall satisfaction. This variation suggests that restaurants and hotels should consider segmenting their offerings based on different customer profiles to better address specific needs and preferences. By understanding and catering to the unique requirements of customers from various occupational backgrounds, businesses can improve satisfaction and foster greater customer loyalty.

The study provides actionable recommendations for restaurants and hotels to enhance their offerings and align them with customer preferences. By focusing on key factors such as dining options, customer service, and online booking features, and by addressing the diverse needs of different customer segments, businesses can improve their competitive edge and achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction.

Limitations of the Study:

However, there are some factors that should have been taken into consideration and they are the following; The limits of the study. First, the study is restricted to the Palakkad district of Kerala in southern India and so the results may not be valid when tested on other district or countries. It may be that customers in certain region have different cultural, economic or social characteristics which affect their perception and satisfaction in a certain way. Therefore, cross-sectional generalisations with respect to these findings should be taken cautiously especially when the study's geographical span is considered.

Second, analysis is based on the survey data that may have various forms of biases including social desirability bias and recall bias. The participants may give the answers that they expect are wanted from them or did not remember well how the experience was, which may distort the information received. The future research should use more structured data in addition to the self-report data, for instance, using observance or actual data.

Third, the research is mainly concerned with a number of factors that affect restaurant choice and online reservation decision. Variables that may be related to attitudes, like seasonal factors, or state of economy or state of the art technologies, were not considered in greater detail. Possible addition of more factors of analysis could be beneficial when making a determination of the customers' preferences and satisfaction levels.

Finally, the study is cross-sectional in nature which means that it only provides us with a single picture of the customer preferences and satisfaction at a certain period of time. This may affect given findings due to changes in customers' behavior, market changes or emerging technologies within a given period. There could be more longitudinal research about trends concerning preferences and satisfaction and, thereby, a more dynamic portrayal of the restaurant business.

Future Research Scope:

This study could be further developed in the future by pointing to its shortcomings and considering other aspects of customers' preferences and satisfaction. For instance, research studies could add more than one area or country to the analysis in order to gain more elaborate vision of regional differences of customer behavior. It would be easier to learn more generalized data in such research that would help in development of strategies for business operating in various markets. The use of more structured data and particularly those based on firm-specific data, like sales, customers' feedback, performance, etc. , could also complement the existing research. use of both quantitative data and qualitative data gathered from interviews or focus group discussions might give a better perception of customers requirements and their level of satisfaction. By extending the research, focusing on other aspects that affect people's choice of restaurants and platforms to book a table online, such as technology,

environmentalism, or culture, the understanding of the market might be enriched. Studying could focus on how trends that are yet to take effect for instance the implementation of artificial intelligence in customer service or even how sustainability projects influence the customers' satisfaction and their decision making capacity.

References:

1. Park, E., Chae, B., Kwon, J., & Kim, W. H. (2020). The effects of green restaurant attributes on customer satisfaction using the structural topic model on online customer reviews. *Sustainability*, 12(7), 2843.
2. Lo, S. K. J., Tavitiyaman, P., & Tsang, W. S. L. (2024). Impact of customers' needs on online information search of upscale restaurant attributes and customer satisfaction. *British Food Journal*, 126(3), 941-964.
3. Baker, M. J., & Hashimoto, B. (2024). Expression of customer (Dis) satisfaction in online restaurant reviews: The relationship between adversative connective constructions and star ratings. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 61(1), 148-180.
4. Gruss, R., Quesenberry, J., Kim, E., Abrahams, A., & Ractham, P. (2024). How Customer Satisfaction Drivers in Online Reviews of Food Trucks and Quick Service Restaurants Differ: Proposing the Concept of Anticipation. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 48(7), 1238-1252.
5. Xu, Y., Liu, X., Mao, Z., & Zhou, J. (2024). Mobile Food Ordering Apps, Restaurant Performance, and Customer Satisfaction. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 19389655231223376.
6. Jia, M., Kim, H. S., & Tao, S. (2024). B&B Customer Experience and Satisfaction: Evidence from Online Customer Reviews. *Service Science*, 16(1), 42-54.
7. Choo, E., Yamin, F. M., & Ishak, W. H. W. (2024). Customer Satisfaction Towards Onsite Restaurant Interactive Self-Service Technology (ORISST). *Data Science Insights*, 2(1).
8. Lin, P. M., Au, W. C. W., & Baum, T. (2024). Service quality of online food delivery mobile application: an examination of the spillover effects of mobile app satisfaction. *International journal of contemporary hospitality management*, 36(3), 906-926.
9. Zanetta, L. D. A., Xavier, M. C., Hakim, M. P., Stedefeldt, E., Zanin, L. M., Medeiros, C. O., & da Cunha, D. T. (2024). How does the consumer choose a restaurant? An overview of the determinants of consumer satisfaction. *Food Research International*, 114369.
10. Cankül, D., Kaya, S., & Kızıldağ, M. Ç. (2024). The effect of gastronomic experience on restaurant image, customer perceived value, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 36, 100908.
11. Li, J., Dong, W., & Ren, J. (2024). The effects of user-and marketer-generated content on customer satisfaction: A textual analysis approach. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 65, 101407.
12. Christy, M. (2024). The influence of service quality, food quality, and pricing perception towards customers satisfaction at Royal Thamrin Restaurant Medan (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Pelita Harapan).
13. Zhang, Y., & Ha, H. Y. (2024). The evolution of consumer restaurant selection: Changes in restaurant and food delivery application attributes over time. *Journal of Business Research*, 170, 114323.