CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

New insights are developed from the findings of previous experiments and investigations. A literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by eminent scholars and researchers and provides an interpretation, summary, and critical evaluation of these works in context to the research problem being scrutinized, thereby instituting the need for the research (Wiersma, 1995). It also examines, analyses, compares and contrasts, and associates various pertinent sources that are directly related to the current research (O’Leary, 2004).

A review of literature tracks the intellectual progression of a thought, critically analyses, justifies and serves to situate the current study within the body of the relevant literature. It also helps to avoid replication or repetition, reveal gaps in the existing literature, identify new means to illustrate previous research and directs the ways to fulfilling a need for additional research. In a nutshell, it provides a ‘mental road map’ of the past, present and future of research in a particular field.

Therefore, in order to decipher the dynamic milieu of service quality or its dominant logic, one must see into, through and beyond the extant literature. A dominant logic is never clearly expressed but more or less seeps into the individual and collective mental frame of researchers in a discipline. Therefore, it requires prospecting the world at a highly abstract level.

The present review therefore revolves around the major issues that involve the consumer perception of Service Quality. The review has been broadly categorized into following four major sections.

2.1 Service Quality and Service Sector

2.1.1 Service Quality and Tourism & Hospitality
2.1.2 Service Quality and Food & Beverage services
2.1.2.1 Service Quality and Fast Food
2.1 SERVICE QUALITY AND SERVICE SECTOR

Service quality being an integral part of service sector has emerged as a predictor of customer satisfaction and loyalty since it is found to increase profitability and long term economic competitiveness of an organization. Further, it also serves as an intermediate to supremacy. Therefore, it has gained considerable concern in an array of fields such as banking, telecommunication, retailing, etc. and has consequently become an area of interest for both academics and practitioners. A study by Abby Ghobadian (1994) examined the concepts and models of service quality of several authors and deduced the existence of high degree of correlation between the determinants of the quality of public and private services as well as between the determinants of the quality of services and goods. Further, on the analysis of various models focusing on different elements, each model was recognized as suitable in the corresponding context. It was also conceptualized that an ideal quality model should be able to determine the sources and problems of quality along with their underlying reasons and the corresponding solutions. However, no model as discussed in the study fulfills the above mentioned parameters but each of them addressed either one or two of them. Moreover, the gap analysis model being a strong analytical and design instrument was exhibited to have more practical applicability than the other models discussed. Nor Afizah Abdullah (2009) conducted a research to study the responses on satisfaction of customers towards service quality and company image provided by Firefly to identify the key factors as necessary for the improvement of customer satisfaction and to determine the relationship of company image and services quality toward customer satisfaction. The results revealed that the highest response was noted for factor caring, responsiveness and reliability whereas quality of services influenced the satisfaction of customers towards Firefly management. Further, a significant relationship was found between customer satisfaction, company image and service quality of Firefly. Furthermore, six factors namely customer satisfaction, company image, reliability, caring, tangibility and responsiveness contributed to the high performance of the Firefly management. In the context of public services Prabha Ramseook-Munhurrun et. al (2010) conducted a study with a purpose to appraise the degree to which service quality is delivered within the Mauritian public service and the extent to which expectations of service and front line personnel are met. The study
revealed that the Mauritian public service failed extensively in fulfilling the expectations of customers. However, front line employees appeared to be perceptive of the actual expectations of the customers. Further, Noor Azlinna Azizan and Bahari Mohamed (2013) researched on a public hospital in the state of Pahang, Malaysia to study the impact of perceived service quality on the satisfaction of patients. The research found that the infrastructure (appearance, food and physical facilities available in the ward) and interaction constructs (the relationship between care providers (doctors and nurses) with patients during their hospitalization) were not very significant in determining the perceived service quality from the respondent’s perspective whereas administrative, medical care and nursing care were the most influential factors and had a very strongly relationship with perceived service quality. According to the exploratory research conducted by Fazle Rabbi et. al. (2013) to identify the root causes of demand variation and its impact on sales volume of the processed food industry in Bangladesh. It was revealed from the study that the company might lose the goodwill due to failure to meet the demand. Further, the causes of demand and their impact on sales volume of the products were identified (eleven causes and twelve consequences) namely special occasion, price, duration of shelf life, wrong forecasting, period of the month and quality whereas the consequences of demand variation are stock shortage, loss of sale, problems related to sacking & hiring of labour, damage, out-sourcing and the shortage of raw material. Moreover, Satyendra Sharma and Jayant Negi (2013) conducted a study to prioritize the voice of customers’ (VOC) for an Automobile service centre using Kano questionnaire and data envelopment analysis. The results reveal that the first and foremost critical VOC to be considered is Reliability followed by Empathy and Responsiveness. Borkar Suneeta and Sameer Koranne (2014) studied the correspondence between service quality and customer satisfaction and conceptualized that service quality has interdependence and direct association with customer satisfaction whilst the earlier literature confines that the terms of satisfaction and quality are used very frequently collocated to each other stating that both of these are similar. Further, some of the earlier studies advocate satisfaction as a very specific and generally short term evaluation whereas the others propose quality being the broader and a long term evaluation. Additionally, some describes quality as specific
opinion and constituent of satisfaction, satisfaction being the broader assessment. So, it is instituted that these two terms are studied separately as well in unification. Additionally, in an empirical research conducted by Thien Phuc Nguyen (2014) to explicate customers’ perceptions and satisfaction towards mobile telecommunication services in varied stretches of France reveals that customers perceive mobile network quality, responsiveness and reliability as the three most substantial attributes. Whilst amongst all the six dimensions measured only three of them namely mobile network quality, tangibles and assurance received adequate satisfaction and the rest received dissatisfaction. However, a positive correlation between mobile services of Bouygues telecom and customer satisfaction was conceded by the SERVQUAL model. Similarly, a positive disposition was capitulated by Nordic model in the context of functional quality and technical quality, especially in mobile network quality. A study was conducted to identify the factors affecting the customer satisfaction in Pay Television industry in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam by Mai Ngoc Khuong and Trinh Hoang Hiep (2014) which revealed that assurance, bundle of services, responsiveness and tangibles were the significant factors contributing to customer satisfaction, and the factors empathy, switching costs, reliability and prices indirectly influenced customer satisfaction. Mohammad Ehsani et. al. (2014) conducted an empirical research to compare the service quality of public and private clubs in Lorestan province in Iran using SRERVQAL model. The results indicated a substantial disparity between public and private clubs in all dimensions of service quality (appearance, objective factors, validity, responsibility and trust). Although, comparatively, the quality of service quality provided by private clubs was identified as better. To evaluate the customer service and the effects of competence on Namibia’s logistical sector Jeske Helen et. al. (2015) researched some courier companies and concluded that service is perceived as multifarious by customers. Though, these may not always be in conformity with the results of the service provider. Moreover, enhancement of loyalty and repeat patronage is possible through a positive relationship between service providers and customers. Farida Khan and Shalini Sharma (2016) researched to identify the role of various attributes responsible for the selection of organized and unorganized retail outlets in case of grocery purchase as well as the changing role of marketing scenario in attracting and retaining
the customers. It is found that customers are interested to buy the bundles of benefit in terms of product. Further, the major attributes namely product, price, promotion, location, public relation, physical environment; process and service offered by retailers play a key role in the buying decision of the customers. Moreover, a significant difference was noted between organized and unorganized retail outlets in case of wide range of product availability, distance to retail outlets, customer care service (Public relations), Physical environment of displays and management, fast payment and fast packaging and service offered like home delivery and payment options as well as the growth of organized retail sector especially in the metro cities indicates the fast adoption pattern of the consumer behavior. Sivakumar (2016) reviewed the problems and strategies in International marketing of services and concluded that characteristics namely intangibility, perishability, heterogeneity, inseparability and nature of services influence the marketing of services. Whereas factors like socio-cultural, macroeconomic and inter-boundary barriers correspond with the marketing of services globally. Jenet Manyi Agbor (2011) proposed a study to investigate the affiliation between customer satisfaction and service quality in the three service sectors. The study revealed that a substantial correlation existed between service quality and customer satisfaction in the context of ICA and Forex while no relationship was noted amidst service quality and customer satisfaction of Umea University. Further, the dimensions namely responsiveness, empathy and reliability were directly related to service quality whereas reliability and empathy primarily contributed to customer satisfaction. Furthermore, service quality was closely associated with customer satisfaction.

Akhilesh and Vinay (2015) conducted a survey in Warangal city, Andhra Pradesh, India for a comparative evaluation of the extent of satisfaction provided YES Bank and UCO Bank with respect to services. The analysis of the survey concluded that most of the customers were inclined towards private sector as they are focused upon strengthening relationship with the customers and facilitate modern infrastructure in comparison to public sector banks. In line with this, Rajeev Kumar and Anil Mittal (2015) researched to analyze the provision of service quality by government owned banks on the basis of perception of the customers in respect to technology based banking services (TBBS) revealed that all the chosen public sector banks are on a par
with each other with regard to facilitating superior TBBS. Further it was evaluated that customers of Canara Bank were most satisfied with TBBS followed by Union Bank of India amongst the various public sector banks of India namely State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Union Bank of India, Canara Bank, and Bank of Baroda. Further, Vinayagamoorthy and Sheela Magdaline (2015) explored the attitude of customers towards service quality of private sector banks in Krishnagiri district, Tamil Nadu and found that reliability and responsiveness to be the apt dimensions for the assessment of the perception of customers towards the facilitation of service quality. Naeem Akhtar et. al. (2016) empirically examined National Bank of Pakistan to evaluate the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction. From the findings it was inferred that services provided by the bank are good and customers are satisfied with the services provided by the bank. In addition, there is significant positive correlation among service features, service quality and customers complaints. An exploratory survey by Sadaf Firdous (2017) was conducted to investigate the impact of internet banking service quality on customer satisfaction in New Delhi. The result implicated that the internet banking service quality dimensions have a significant impact on the customer satisfaction of internet banking customers. Each of the dimensions namely efficiency, system availability, fulfillment, privacy, contact, responsiveness and contact individually contribute to the overall customer satisfaction in internet banking. Further, the study revealed that efficiency, privacy and website design are the major integral contributing elements of internet banking services quality and a direct association between internet banking service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction was also noted in the banking industry. Yusof Aminuddin et. al. (2017) examined customers’ expectation, perception and satisfaction with service quality of a fitness centre as well as investigated differences in satisfaction with service quality based on gender and ethnicity amongst the customers of fitness centre in Malaysia. The results of the study indicated that demographic variables were found to be unimportant in evaluating service quality. Further, empathy and assurance were found to be the two key dimensions for customer’s satisfaction with fitness centres in Malaysia. However, all dimensions of service quality were analyzed to have negative means indicating customers are dissatisfied with all aspects of service quality at the fitness centre. Mohammad Anisur Rahman et. al. (2017) conducted a research
on Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited’s (DESCO) online bill payment system based on the modified SERVQUAL model labeled as SERVQUAL-Butterfly Model which incorporates the expectations, perceptions, satisfaction and loyalty of customers for the evaluation of the service quality. The findings show that expectation of service quality does not influence customer satisfaction at all but impacts the formation of perceptions about the quality of service. Moreover, perceptions of service quality modulate customer satisfaction which further stimulates the loyalty from the customers. With respect to DESCO, empathy served as a strong powerful indicator of both expectation and actual service quality whereas perception of actual service was inferred as the only most significant factor for customer satisfaction. Larissa Maria Falcao (2017) researched to evaluate the quality of the administrative services in a large mall, located in Brazil from the perspective of current service providers. The obtained outcomes revealed that the perception of the administration did not match with its customer’s expectations implying a lack of positive viewpoint amongst them. Also, the quality of service is not satisfactory when compared with users’ expectations and perceptions implying a low level of customer satisfaction. Further, a model is proposed which considers expectation to be a very important parameter to be used as a guide for the evaluation of the service quality of the mall in order to reduce the gaps refining the quality of service which is crucial for the development the mall. Hence, from the above discussions it becomes evident that the service/tertiary sector plays a dominant role in the growth and development of an economy. Further, amongst others tourism & hospitality is also one of the main components in the service sector. Moreover, as tourism and hospitality broadly caters to the travel and accommodation needs of tourists/customers, the quality of service serves to be a principal indicator of customer satisfaction. In line with this, this aroused the interest of various scholars and researchers to conduct research on various tourism and hospitality products and services which are discussed further.

2.1.1 SERVICE QUALITY AND TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

The tourism and hospitality industry is one of the largest and fastest-growing industries in the world making a significant contribution to the economies of the different nations of the world in varied ways. It is the one of the major employment generator across the world. As the terms tourism and hospitality are co-related,
therefore are generally grouped together as a single industry. However, both hospitality and tourism industries are viewed as two individual sectors.

Service quality in the tourism & hospitality industry is one of the most important factors for gaining a sustainable competitive advantage in the highly competitive marketplace as it boosts competitive differentiation for organizations. Thus, it is considered as a significant core concept and a critical success factor in the tourism & hospitality industry. Therefore, academicians and researchers have been keen on extensively researching this arena to gain dynamic insights.

In a study conducted by Qu Hailin and Holly Hyun-Jung Im (2002) to evaluate the service quality perceived by Southeast Asia tourists, the outcome of the analysis showed that Southeast Asia tourists of with varied demographic profile had discrete perceptions toward the attributes labeled as ‘quality and value’, ‘location and choice’, ‘accessibility and transportation’, ‘value and quality of foodservice’, ‘attractions and environment’, ‘clean and safe environment’, ‘hotel product and service’, ‘entertainment and nightlife’, and ‘local residents’ attitudes’. Amongst the nine underlying dimensions five determinants namely ‘location and choice,’ ‘value and quality of foodservice,’ ‘attractions and environment,’ ‘clean and safe environment,’ and ‘local residents’ attitudes’ were identified as indicative of the travelers’ prospect to revisit the bay area of San Francisco. Further, the service quality in various areas such as hotels, restaurants, shopping, transportation, etc. located in the bay area failed to fulfill the expectations of tourists. According to Srinivasa Rao (2014) a long term action comprising a set of strategies, which is in compliance with the forthcoming needs of the consumers is required by the destinations pursuing to maintain and strengthen their positions in hospitality and tourism industry. Further, technology has taken over every aspect of hospitality and tourism services while natural disasters significantly influence our perceptions of holiday and leisure. Additionally, issues like market segmentation and overlapping brands, labor shortages, interactive reservation systems, and globalization proves to be obstacles to the growth of hospitality and tourism industry.

However, in hospitality industry Janet Sim et. al. (2006) conducted a study to assess the antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction and retention in the hotel
industry. Results of the study indicated that the customer retention was significantly related to customer satisfaction. Further, added value was found to have positive effects on customer satisfaction and customer retention. A study was conducted on customer satisfaction of a large hotel named as the Sporting Club Hotel in Cefalu by Gandolfo Dominici and Rosa Guzzo in 2010. The analysis revealed that the extent of satisfaction of customer is high with regard to both the overall as well as the individual services. Further, the restaurant, the entertainment program and the organization were identified as the key strengths and the beach and the rooms as the weakness. Moreover, human resource management was identified as especially effective in entertainment and restaurant service. Afshan Naseem et. al. (2011) undertook a study to examine the way the varied components of hotel industry influences the satisfaction of customers. The finding show that courteous nature of attendants, comfortable guestrooms, cleanliness and environment of hotel positively effects the satisfaction among customers and a direct association is observed between organizational success and customer satisfaction. Further, the impression of hotel greatly influences the customer satisfaction and likelihood to revisit. Atefeh Maghzi et. al. (2011) conducted a study to comprehend the manner in which service quality and customer satisfaction influences brand trust for hotel services in Dubai. The results illustrated that a strong correlation existed between service quality, customer satisfaction and brand trust. Furthermore, the research revealed a very strong and positive correlation between service quality and customer satisfaction. In addition, brand trust was found to have a strong and positive correlation with service quality whereas with customer satisfaction a positive but weak correlation existed. Further, no significant difference regarding the level of brand trust existed amongst the demographic variables. According to the study undertaken by Usha Ramanathan and Ramakrishnan Ramanathan (2011) on the hotels of UK to explore the perception of guests regarding factors which influence the loyalty of customers “Value for money” is a crucial attribute while the other elements namely customer service and quality of the room and food may not enhance loyalty in customers but a poor performance may probably prove to be adverse to the probability of guests to visit again. Moreover, cleanliness is considered as a satisfying element in chain hotels which directs that good cleanliness enhances the image of the entire club of hotels in the chain and also
aid in increasing the chances of revisiting. In fact, ‘Value for money’ is not the main attribute of the hotels which are part of a chain but may discourage guests from returning to the property over and again. Shameem and Preetha (2012) empirically evaluated the service quality of the hotels of Chennai and concluded that all SERVQUAL dimensions (i.e. Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy) are highly correlated with the satisfaction of both guests as well as the managers, whereas the outcomes of the gap analysis indicated dissatisfaction amongst customers on many attributes of SERVQUAL. Moreover, the dimensions ‘Reliability and Empathy’ are overvalued by the management and ‘Assurance’ as underrated.

Further, in an empirical study conducted by Meenakshi Parida and Sujit Kumar Sahu (2013) to examine the service quality in hotel industry at Bengaluru and role of demographic variables in measuring service quality. The outcome implied that there exists a positive correlation between components of customer satisfaction and service quality like physical appearance, reliability and assurance while a negative relationship with empathy and responsiveness. Further, the findings suggested internal consistency among the individual items of service quality dimensions. Also, demographic variables are good indicators of customer’s perception as well as expectations for service quality dimensions. Niveen Saghier (2015) researched to identify the effects of various elements of hotel industry which affects customer satisfaction and to evaluate service quality in Alexandrian hotels in Egypt. The study revealed that amongst all the variables only ‘Reliability, Responsiveness and Tangibility’ variables show a significant impact on customer satisfaction in hotels respectively, while the impact of both ‘Empathy and Assurance’ was insignificant. Moreover, favorable perceptions on hotel responsiveness projected relatively stronger satisfaction than did reliability and empathy perceptions. Torres Edwin and Kline Sheryl (2013) conducted a research to propose the framework by which guests could be delighted by the usage of the Torres and Kline model as well as an addition to the model. The research proposes the following delight types namely fulfillment delight (catering to the needs of high esteem and importance), charismatic delight (courteous and friendly employees), professional delight (knowledgeable and skillful staff), comparative delight (comparative assessment of the service received at different hotels and realization of receiving superior service), problem resolution delight.
Mirjeta Beqiri et al. (2014) empirically studied the impact of factors of service quality on tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty. The research explored that the service quality dimensions (such as destination, hotels, and entertainment) have a significant impact on tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty. Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty whereas age does not have a significant relationship with tourist satisfaction and loyalty. Lastly, female tourists are more loyal than male tourists while Albanian residents are more loyal than Western European residents. Ibrahim Giritlioglu et al. (2014) empirically measured the food and beverage service quality in spa hotels in Balikesir, Turkey and developed a new scale which is an amalgamation of the attributes of SERVQUAL, DINESERV and other elements as considered explicit to spa hotels in order to meet the needs of the spa hotels. Additionally, six dimensions namely ‘assurance and employee knowledge’; ‘healthy and attractive food’; ‘empathy’; ‘tangibles’; ‘responsiveness and service delivery’; and ‘reliability’ were identified to evaluate food and beverage service quality in spa hotels. Amongst all the dimensions ‘assurance and employee knowledge’ were the most significant followed by healthy and attractive food’. Moreover, spa hotels did not meet the expectation of customers on any of the key dimensions. However, the widest gap between the expectations and perceptions of the guests was recorded for the provision for healthy and attractive food. Further, demographic profile of the customers did not influence the expectation and perception of the food & beverage service quality. However, the expectations of the consumers were positively correlated their educational status. Mai Ngoc Khuong and Nguyen Phuong Quyen (2016) researched to measure major underlying factors influencing the perception of service quality of international tourists’ and their intention to revisit Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The empirical results of this study revealed that most powerful indicator of tourists’ intension to revisit was recreation and entertainment while other factors such as culture, history and art, safety and security, natural environment, and destination image also positively influenced the international tourists’ return intention. An empirical examination of service quality and customer satisfaction in the hotel sector was conducted by Elvira Tabaku and Shpetim Cerri (2016) in Albania. The findings confirmed that perceived service quality positively impacts the customer satisfaction.
of the hotel guests. Harish Bapat (2015) conducted a research to compare quality of product offerings of the selected Hotels in the Indore region on SERVQUAL dimensions. The research indicated that the service quality of RB and SJ Hotels in terms of ‘tangibility, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, accessibility and cost of services’ are different. Moreover, SJ Hotel leads RB hotel on tangibility, responsiveness & empathy while RB Hotel leads SJ hotel on reliability, assurance, cost & accessibility. Drazen Maric et. al. (2016) empirically investigated the significance of tangible and intangible components of service quality in hospitality industry. The results indicated that intangible attributes are more significant to guests as they perceive it important to be confident in the hotel staff with no aspect of the provided service landing to a mistake or misunderstanding. Precision, accuracy, security, speed of service, staff’s courtesy and personal attention are service quality elements important to hotel guests. Further, clean and comfortable rooms are important to guest whereas some additional elements, such as sports facilities, lawns, swimming pools or sauna do not significantly influence the decision of choosing a certain hotel. As per the study conducted by Anil Kumar Kalotra and Nitya Sharma (2017) to assess the quality of services in hospitality industry of Delhi, the service experiences generated unsatisfactory perceptions among the hospitality consumers i.e. a negative gap score of all the service quality dimensions. Thus, it is inferred that the tourism and hospitality being a massive industry comprises of numerous subsectors under its umbrella; the dominant ones amongst the others are namely transportation, accommodation and food & beverage. The Food & beverage is of utmost concern for a tourist or consumers as it fulfills the basic physiological need of a human being. Additionally, it also plays an influential role in enhancing the experience of a tourist/consumer of a destination. Further, as service quality serves to be an apt measuring yardstick for the evaluation of customer satisfaction in any arena, it stimulated the interest of the researchers to conduct studies on food and beverage sector to gain meaningful insights in the context of service quality which is presented below.

2.1.2 SERVICE QUALITY FOOD & BEVERAGE SERVICES

Food and beverage service is one of the major revenue producing section of tourism and hospitality industry. However, the intense competitive milieu existing in the
restaurant sector makes it vivacious for firms to gain customer satisfaction for the long term survival and growth of the business. However, to ensure success in the food and beverage sector, service quality has proved to play a pivotal role for evaluating the extent of satisfaction and revisit intention of the customers. Further, the provision of quality service has become critical for success of the food & beverage service business as discussed further in the research studies. Suzana Markovic et. al. (2011) conducted a study is to assess the service quality and to find the key attributes of perceived and expected service quality of restaurants in Croatian. The findings reveal that for majority of the attributes reflecting the customers’ expectations are higher in comparison to their perceptions and five main dimensions of expected service quality were extracted namely “assurance and empathy”, “cleanliness and reliability”, “appearance of facilities and staff”, “satisfaction and loyalty” and “staff quality” while the main dimensions of perceived service quality in city restaurant settings are “satisfaction and loyalty”, “appearance of staff and restaurant interior”, “individual attention”, “confidence”, “appearance of dining area and rest rooms”, “reliable service”, “prompt service” and “staff quality and attractive exteriors”. Arifur Rahman et. al. (2012) empirically examined restaurant services in Khulna region in Bangladesh to identify key attributes which influences the customer satisfaction towards restaurant services. The analysis implicated that customers of restaurant negatively perceived majority of the attributes outlined in the study clearly reflecting dissatisfaction with the restaurants. Donkoh et. al. (2012) undertook a study on customer satisfaction and the general perception about food services of two restaurants in Ghana and the corresponding challenges the restaurants face in procuring and storing agricultural produce. The study revealed that the consumers of Restaurant B were more satisfied as compared to restaurant A. Further, the consumers’ frequency of visit to Restaurant A were influenced with cleanliness at the restaurant, appearance of personnel and the atmosphere whereas for restaurant B competence of service, friendly nature of employees and appeal of food were the chief factors. Furthermore, seasonal food storage, poor packaging and improper handling of produce by farmers were identified as the major challenges faced by the restaurants industry. Mohammad Haghighi et. al. (2012) researched to investigate the factors which impact in achieving the loyalty of customers in Tehran, Iran. The findings of
the analysis show that food and service quality along with ambience of the restaurant and economical prices are positively associated with the customer satisfaction and customer trust. Moreover, the quality of the food was the key factor which influenced the satisfaction as well as trust of the patrons in Boof Chain Restaurants. In addition, customer satisfaction was affirmed to be positively related to customer loyalty, while customer trust was not found to have any impact on the loyalty of customers. Abadh Jibi Ghimire (2012) empirically researched to analyze the satisfaction of customers in the Nepalese restaurant Sagarmatha in Helsinki, Finland as well as the services offered by the restaurant. The findings demonstrated satisfied customers and good service quality in Restaurant Sagarmatha, Helsinki. Shahab Alam Malik et. al. (2013) researched to examine the various attributes of service quality and to rank the services of successful restaurants in Pakistan. The study revealed that the association of the ‘restaurant personnel, tangibles and quality of food’ was found to achieve the overall satisfaction amongst customers whereas the ‘tips and convenience’ did not contribute significantly. Further, the expectation of the tips by the personnel attributed to adverse impression on customers. Furthermore, services which were appraised as substandard were the ones which were provided without offering tips along with congestion, inadequate space for parking and lack of any facility for disabled etc. Marta Barros and Andre Freitas (2013) assessed the quality of the services rendered by restaurants as per the perception of consumers. The study inferred that amongst the 14 dimensions 13 were assessed as reliable. Though, on the removal of one of the items, the reliability of the stated dimension becomes high. Further, the referred model is believed to be applicable for the assessment of the quality of service in varied restaurant settings. Suzana Markovic et. al. (2013) empirically investigated the provision of service quality in restaurants of Zagreb city and concluded that significant discrepancies existed between expectations and perceptions of customers for most of the restaurant attributes. Further, the most important expected and perceived dimension of service quality deduced was ‘reliability’. Diah Yulisetiarini (2014) conducted a study to analyze the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction as well as service quality and customer loyalty in restaurant business in East Java. The findings revealed that service quality is correlated to satisfaction. Moreover, customers are satisfied with the quality of services of the
restaurants. Further, it is inferred that the variances in demographic profile of the consumers leads to discrepancy in the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. Daniel Petzer and Nedia Mackay (2014) conducted a study to determine the extent to which food and service quality as well as dining atmospherics predicts customer satisfaction at sit-down restaurants. The results indicated that ambience along with food and service quality is significant indicator of customer satisfaction, although to varying extents. However, to be specific customers assessed food quality followed by service quality and dining atmospherics as the most significant predictor to customer satisfaction. Lai Wang et. al. (2014) conducted a study to analyze key factors to improve service quality of local specialty restaurants in southern Vietnam. The results of the study stated that the price of dishes in specialty restaurants is not affordable by the local diners. Further, to improve the satisfaction of customers the management should guide the waiting staff about the serving etiquettes. Although, fast food was not considered as healthy by the customers but the style of service in fast food restaurant was admired. Instead, traditional dishes were considered as healthy and economical but customers were dissatisfied with their style of management. Ahmad Al-Tit (2015) conducted a study to evaluate the relationships between service quality, food quality, customer satisfaction and customer retention in restricted service restaurants in Jordan. The findings revealed that service quality and food quality have a positive effect on customer satisfaction which in turn positively influences customer retention. Further, the analysis confirmed that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and customer retention. According to a study by Ana Stranjancevic and Iva Bulatovic (2015), satisfaction of the guest significantly depends on kind and professional restaurant staff, speed of service, ambience, comfort, food quality and price while most on kind staff and least on comfort of the restaurant. Also, no relationship existed between the satisfaction and the demographic variables with the exception of education which moderately influences the customer satisfaction. Though, satisfaction is positively correlated with the loyalty of the guest. Khuong Ngoc and Tran Uyen (2015) conducted a study on luxury restaurants in Vietnam to examine the effect of the various dimensions of SERVQUAL model together with other factors of price, authenticity, and meal pace on guest satisfaction through the mediation of factors of service quality and product quality. The findings
of the study provided extensive insights regarding assessment of food and service quality by the customers of luxury restaurants. Perceived service and product quality was postulated as being positively correlated to guest satisfaction. On the other hand, tangibles did not influence directly but posited substantial impacts on guest satisfaction indirectly. A research conducted by Nahal Ghazali and Soha Saremi Inanlou (2015) assessed the key elements influencing the service quality perceived by the customers. The results listed four dimensions as most significant ones namely timely service, accountability, decoration, and staff interaction while face validity was assessed as the least significant. Also, there was not any significant difference between Haani and Boof restaurants’ customer satisfaction but in terms of loyalty, customer of Boof significantly trusted the persons who introduced it more than those of Haani. Further, it is inferred that the consumers of both the restaurants were satisfied. Parichard Benrit and Numtip Trakulmaykee (2016) researched to investigate the relationships among food quality, service quality, physical environment and customer satisfaction in Thai dining restaurant in Malaysia. The study found that food quality, service quality and physical environment had a significant role in influencing customer satisfaction which involved customers’ willingness to revisit and recommend restaurant to others. Furthermore, the food quality is the key factor which impacts the customer’s satisfaction followed by physical environment and service quality respectively. Kota Neel Mani Kanta and Srivalli (2014) empirically assessed the relationship between service quality, satisfaction, and the frequency of patronage in restaurant operations in India. It was found that service quality had significant whereas satisfaction had no significant relationship with repeat patronage. Further, demographic variables had no significant association with the perception of service quality, but respondents with higher educational grades were observed to have high expectation in context to service quality. Furthermore, the results suggested that interaction and physical environment quality are more important than the outcome quality for customers of the restaurant. Gaurav Tripathi and Kartik Dave (2015) examined the differences in service quality dimensions and their consequences based on the characteristics of restaurant patrons. The results stated that there is significant difference between WOM intentions and customer satisfaction however, no significant difference between the two genders was found for loyalty and the
perception of service quality. Age groups did not reveal any significant difference for any of the SQ factors, customer satisfaction, loyalty and WOM intentions. Although, based on the occupation of the respondents there wasn’t any evidence of significant difference among the groups for any of the factors. However, empathy produced a significant difference among the groups as the respondents from the business class gave more importance to the empathy followed by private professionals, government employees, students and homemakers. The dimensions reliability and responsiveness had significant difference among the income groups. The results implied that higher income consumers exhibit higher satisfaction levels as well as expect higher level of reliability and responsiveness from the restaurant due to their capability to choose the best of the restaurant services to match their expectations. The above reviews indicate that owing to the favorable demographics the eating patterns of consumers have considerably evolved over the time. Further, the sophisticated and experimenting attitude of the millennial has also served to be a catalyst in the emergence of a new sub segment of food & beverage i.e. fast food. Seeing the immense potential of the industry an array of brands flourished in the economy making the competition intensive. To cater to the ever evolving needs of the consumers service quality serves to be an effective tool to gain competitive advantage. As service quality serves to be the key differentiator it becomes imperative for businesses to measure the quality of service of their products and services. Moreover, service quality being an established area of research, several authors have also reported works on different aspects of service quality in fast food domain which are discussed below.

2.1.2.1 SERVICE QUALITY AND FAST FOOD

The food and beverage sector has considerably evolved over the years, giving rise to new and innovative service elements. Owing to changing demographics and economy fast food has become indispensable in the lives of people across cultures. Moreover, fast food industry provides undifferentiated products where service quality serves to be an effective tool of differentiation. Further, research interest in perceived service quality in fast food operations is abounding. Therefore, a few popular researches are mentioned further. Tajulurrus Mohammad (2003) conducted a study on the multicultural students of the university to identify the attributes which influences the perceptions and preferences of the students in single market location. The study
investigated that there are significant differences in perceptions of these multicultural students toward the fast food restaurants in term of restaurants’ service and food products. However, the influence of the various attributes on the consumer preference of fast food outlets varied across different national background of the students. According to the analysis of Huam Hon Tat et. al. (2011) on ‘purchase intension of customers in fast food restaurants in Malaysia’, Assurance was found to have the strongest positive influence on customer satisfaction amongst the dimensions of SERVQUAL. Further, empathy dimension was the chief contributor to the enhancement of perception of service quality. The study also implied a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and customer purchase intentions. Hossein Nezakati et. al. (2011) conducted a study in Malaysia to isolate the factors which affects the loyalty of customers towards fast food restaurants. It was inferred that the quality of the product, customer satisfaction and brand trust plays the principal role in directing the customer’s loyalty towards fast food restaurants. Whilst, the nine independent variables namely quality, attribute, promotion and brand name of the product, the environment of the store, quality of service, and customer satisfaction were positively correlated with customer loyalty. A study conducted by Ahasanul Haque et. al. (2011) to assess the impact of advertisement on Malay consumers in context of fast food restaurants in Malaysia revealed that amongst the three variables, internet advertising influenced consumers’ mind followed by commercial advertising and print advertisement respectively.

Henrik Antonsson et. al. (2011) empirically assessed the fast food restaurants chains to examine how local management affects the innovation process. The research revealed that the innovation process is positively associated with the amount of power distribution in the local management. However, franchisees enjoy the highest amount of power within medium-sized innovations and managers in company-owned outlets within minor innovations. Though, the overall communication was professed as adequate and efficient but there exists large room for improvements. However, competence within the communication between local management and top level management differed but a close connection of company-owned outlets towards the top level management, than the franchisees existed. Besides, franchisees operated independently, but apprehend each other as their opponents leading to needless
communication with top level management resulting in lack of focus on the more important issues. Naila Aaijaz and Mohamed Dahlan Ibrahim (2011) investigated the relationship between consumers’ loyalty towards fast food outlets in Kota Bharu, Malaysia. The research revealed that the quality of food, facility layout and service efficiency quality greatly influenced the loyalty of the consumers towards fast food brands. Stephen Jones et. al. (2011) researched on perception of customers in service quality in fast food industry and found that healthy eating consumers perceived fast food as enjoyable as compared to less healthy eaters. Further, consumers perceived small, locally-owned restaurants at par in professionalism and quality-oriented with chain restaurants. Hung-Che Wu (2013) investigated the impact of service quality, perceived value, corporate image, and customer satisfaction on consumer’s behavioral intents. The findings reveal that interaction quality, physical environment quality and outcome quality are the three crucial dimensions of service quality in the quick service restaurant industry. Furthermore, service quality is directly related with value and image of the organization, thus, with customer satisfaction as well. Shahzad Khan et. al. (2013) researched in Pakistan to find out the key elements of success for fast food industry. The study finds out all the factors namely promotion, service quality, customer expectations, brand, physical environment, price, and taste of the product are positively associated with customer satisfaction but service quality and brand are the key elements of success for fast food industry. Kashif Mudassar et. al. (2013) conducted a study on fast food restaurants located in Lahore, Pakistan to assess the association between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction with the role of word-of-mouth. The results implicated that service quality is positively correlated with customer satisfaction while word-of-mouth was not found to have any impact on the association between service quality and customer satisfaction. Noor Baizura Binti Muhammad (2013) researched with the objectives to assess the discrepancy between customer expectation and perception of the personnel towards the service quality in fast food restaurants in Melaka, Malaysia. The results revealed service quality and perceived value as the most significant elements which influenced the customer satisfaction in comparison to relational service quality (the delivery) which was found to be less significant. Further, a clear association was noted between customer satisfaction and future intentions to visit the establishments. Furthermore, the
attributes of both perceived value and service quality should be integrated into models for customer satisfaction to deliver a complete image of the elements influencing customer satisfaction. Madeline Melkis et. al. (2014) examined the effect of marital status and age on the perception of consumers visiting fast food restaurants in Malaysia. The findings concluded that the perception of single and married people differed significantly. Sik Sumaedi and Medi Yarmen (2015) measured perceived service quality of fast food restaurant in an Islamic country to conceptualize a service quality model for the Islamic countries. The proposed fast food restaurant service quality model is an amalgamation of eight dimensions and more specifically comprised of three outcome quality dimensions, two elements signifying environment quality and three dimension illustrating interaction quality. A qualitative study conducted by Subramani et. al (2015) explored the satisfaction of customers as well the relationship between demographic variables and factors of customer satisfaction towards Chinese food restaurants. The study determined the satisfaction of customers towards appetizers and varieties of soup whilst no association between the gender and overall satisfaction level towards Chinese food varieties. Agnes Kanyana et. al. (2015) conducted a study to assess the causes and problems encountered by the selected restaurant i.e. Kuching in Malaysia and to provide suggestions on ways to improve customer service based on the numerous domains of operations management. The study implicated slow customer service as the major issue whose underlying causes were identified and segregated into four categories namely people, environment, equipment/materials and method/procedure. The alternatives provided were (1) Quality Function Development which assisted in determining how to satisfy the customers and where to invest in efforts, (2) Total Quality Management (TQM), (3) Process Focus which involves service blueprint to strengthen the interaction between customers and the restaurant, (4) layout, (5) human resource management, (6) practice of good supply chain management, and (7) maintenance to get the most benefits and trouble-free services in context of equipment’s of the restaurant. Further, the study also offered ways to improve its operational performance and overcome the problem of poor service operations. Intan Maizura Rashid et. al. (2016) examined the impact of service and food quality on customer satisfaction amongst the young consumers for the fast food restaurant in Malaysia. The findings revealed that age and
education has no relation on the behavior of customers, the time of visit, number of members visiting the restaurant and amount of money spending to buy fast food. Backgrounds of the customers influenced the time of visit, amount of money spending on fast food and number of members in a group to visit the restaurant. Further, an association between food and service quality, and customer satisfaction was inferred in choosing to purchase fast food as it is quick and delicious. Moreover, customers were satisfied with the correct & complete food order and service of hot & fresh food. Jalal Hanaysha (2016) researched to evaluate the impact of the quality of food, fairness in prices and physical environment on customer satisfaction in fast food restaurant industry in Malaysia. The findings of the study implicated that the quality of food is positively correlated with customer satisfaction. Moreover, the price fairness and physical environment were also reported to have significant positive effects on customer satisfaction. Aytan Mammadli (2016) analyzed the perception of the fast food industry in Sweden and found that quality and taste of food are the major contributing attributes in the choice of a restaurant as well as cleanliness, hygienic food production and dining areas amidst the consumers. Furthermore, quality of service and variety in the menu also influenced the choice of consumers. Besides, majority of customers expressed satisfaction with their dining experience at fast food premises and it was found that consumer visit fast food outlets not only for food but also for social activities such as meeting friends, convenience, fun and change. The majority of consumer wishes more choices of healthier menu options, as well as improved seating space, indication of the nutritional value of items, increased menu variety and vegetarian meal options. Junaid Aftab et al. (2016) carried a research to examine the importance of service quality in customer satisfaction in fast food restaurants of Punjab, Pakistan. The findings obtained revealed that service quality positively influenced the customer satisfaction in fast food restaurants of Punjab, Pakistan. Also, tangibility has highest level of correlation with customer satisfaction followed by all the other variables like reliability, empathy, assurance and responsiveness. Further, customer satisfaction is highly influenced by the sitting environment, seating and parking availability and well-dressed staff. Hong Qin and Victor Prybutok (2016) conducted a study aimed to probe the prospective facets of service quality, and analyze the association between quality of service, food,
satisfaction and behavioral intentions of consumers in fast food restaurants. The results of the study implied that elements found were tangibility, reliability/responsiveness, recovery, assurance, and empathy while quality of service and food were found to be highly indicative of customer satisfaction. Patabandige and Yapa (2017) researched to evaluate consumer satisfaction and service quality of multinational fast food outlets and other influencing factors in the Western province of Sri Lanka. The findings of the study revealed that customers are not fully satisfied with the service quality and other factors considered in terms of Sri Lankan context and the expected level of satisfaction is higher than the current level of satisfaction.

However, a few studies have also been conducted in India regarding perceived service quality of fast food restaurants. Anita Goyal and Singh (2007) explored that the eating patterns of youth are influenced by varied factors such as environment at home and the surroundings, availability and accessibility of fast food. In addition, nutritional information, fun, ambience for socializing and hygienic conditions affect the patronage of a restaurant. Moreover, friends and relatives greatly influence the likelihood to choose a specific fast food restaurant. However, in contrast, the young consumer favor home cooked food as to fast food for it being nutritious, delicious, tasty, fresh, clean and healthy for body and fast food as expensive and unhealthy whereas regards taste and quality to be of utmost importance. A significant difference was also noted regarding the perception of consumers towards the different outlets and television was considered as the most appropriate choice for the purpose of advertisement as compared to others. In a study research conducted by Rajul Bhardwaj (2011) on the perception about the attributes of the various fast food retailers and their influence on the sales and the satisfaction of consumers, it was found that customer service and total satisfaction are positively correlated whereas there is no significant relationship of value of the product with consumer satisfaction. In addition, store attributes have a significant impact on consumer satisfaction and customer satisfaction and sales were found to be positively correlated. Kinnarry Thakkar and Mrunmayee R.Thatte (2014) attempted to study the perception of consumers towards McDonalds and KFC and explored that in terms of variety, speed, ingredients, packaging, attitude of staff and additional information, consumers of both McDonalds and KFC were equally satisfied whereas for accuracy in service, price,
taste, location, customer service and opening hour’s consumers of McDonalds have better level of satisfaction. In addition while patronizing a restaurant all factors are not equally important. Thus, consumers viewed taste and quality of ingredients of the food items as the most important factors whereas additional information as the least important. Mondurailingam et. al. (2015) compared the satisfaction of customers towards KFC and McDonalds in Chennai and derived that 22% of KFC customers and 18% of McDonald’s customers are indifferent to the quality of food whereas in terms of the price 18% of KFC customers and 12% of McDonald’s customers are not satisfied. 24% of customers of KFC and 18% of customers of McDonald’s are satisfied with the taste of the food. Furthermore, both the food titans have given each other stern competition in terms of customer satisfaction, service quality and promotional strategies. Shivani Verma (2015) measured service quality in international fast food chains in Ludhiana, Punjab namely McDonald’s, Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), Domino’s Pizza, Pizza Hut and Subway and explored that on most aspects service quality did not meet the expectation of customers. The parameter empathy had the highest gap and poor internal consistency while the parameter reliability had the lowest and good gap internal consistency. Amongst the five dimensions, the reliability dimension was the most significant and tangibles dimension was the least significant. Amongst the five international fast food chains, the average scores for Pizza Hut were the highest on the three dimensions, namely, tangibles, reliability and empathy. Manjunath and Shireen Reginald (2016) analyzed the restaurants of Mysore to find out the essential factors or determinants of customers’ satisfaction. The findings revealed that a substantial positive association between the service quality, product quality, physical design, price, physical environment, taste, and promotion lead to customer satisfaction. Saranya Priyadarshini (2016) studied the preference of consumers regarding fast food outlets in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The findings concluded convenience pricing as the dominant aspect in the choice of fast food restaurants. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents spends more than 15% of their monthly income on fast food as well as prefers visiting KFC. The study also coincide a significant association between the income and the selection of fast food buying outlet. Abirami (2016) conducted a study to assess customer perception of service quality towards fast food restaurants namely
KFC, MC Donalds, Subway, Pizza Hut and Dominos in Coimbatore City and found that there exist a considerable gap between the customer expectation and customer perception of service quality delivered at fast food restaurants in Coimbatore city. Further, Dominos was found to be popular amongst consumers. From the above it is clear that fast food is one of the rapidly growing sub sectors of food and beverage in India. Delhi (NCR) is considered to be one of the largest unorganized hubs of North India. In addition, it is also one of the most developed and economically sound regions of the country. Due to this, it has attracted a number of fast food outlets to invest in this region. So, it became purposive to conduct the present study in Delhi (NCR) to explore the consumer’s perception towards service quality in fast food restaurants.
REFERENCES

Books


Research Papers/Dissertations/Conference Proceedings


