

Selection attributes of Korean restaurant based on customer satisfaction and loyalty

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Abstract

The restaurant industry is one of the most important sectors in Malaysia and contribute significantly to the economic growth. The positive perceptions of Korean food among Malaysian have created opportunities for the Korean restaurant owners to expand their outlet in the Malaysian market. The study aimed to examine relationships between restaurant selections attributes for a Korean restaurant and customer loyalty as well as to examine customer satisfaction as a mediating factor. The questionnaires were distributed to customers in Kuala Lumpur using a convenient sampling approach via online method. Total of 399 feedback was gathered and analyse using SPSS version 26. The results show that there is strong positive relationship between restaurant selection attributes for a Korean restaurant, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. However, standard hygiene has a negative direct relationship with customer loyalty but contribute positively to the customer satisfaction. The results also reveal that, customer satisfaction mediate positively with restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty. This study has significant contribution to academicians and practitioners in the area of consumer behaviour.

Keywords:

Restaurant selection attribute, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, Korean restaurant

1 Introduction

Korean restaurants are growing more popular among Malaysian as a dining choice. Malaysians, especially the younger generation and expatriates, prefer to dine in Korean cuisine rather than other ethnic cuisines, owing to the high demand for Korean cuisine, which has resulted in increasing number of Korean restaurants in Malaysia (Rahayu et al., 2018). Local Malaysians were inspired by the diversify of the Korean cuisines taste and impressed with the Korean restaurant's ambiance and service delivery (Lee, 2019a). According to Akbarruddin (2020), Korean cuisine' popularity is undoubtedly expanded in Malaysia, where Kuala Lumpur is a famous tourist destination for both domestic and international, make it a suitable location for Korean restaurant owners to expand their business. Jun and Yazdanifard (2021) accentuated that the growth of South Korean population has attracted Malaysian to love Korean cuisine and heritage. Malaysian prefer spicy food, hence, the Korean restaurant industry are considering focusing upon fulfilling the customer's perception by offering variety range of spicy food (Mon and Pil, 2017; Jun & Yazdanifard, 2021).

Despite the Korean restaurant industry's efforts to penetrate the Malaysian market, it is critical to investigate the factors that may persuade Malaysians to choose a Korean restaurant over another ethnic restaurant. Thus, this study aims to investigate customer loyalty to dine in Korean Restaurant since this ethnic restaurant demand has doubled (Buang et al., 2018). The research will investigate into the hallmarks of restaurant selection attributes, as well as other elements that may promote customer loyalty in Korean restaurants. In terms of restaurant selection features, service quality, food and beverage quality, standard hygiene, and accessibility are the primary elements that determine customer loyalty. Shafiq et al. (2019) mentioned that service quality is a subjective matter as it involves more employee roles to support efforts in providing services to customers. Service providers should organize their marketing and operational strategies according to the current demands from customer's awareness and knowledge (Hussain et al., 2019; Raza et al., 2015; Shafiq et al., 2019).

Food and beverage quality can be an essential determinant that influences customers to choose the restaurant (CHO et al., 2020). Previous research identified the determinant of restaurant attributes such as food quality and dining room service, location, price, and environment, could impact customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Danthanarayana & Arachchi, 2020; Han & Hyun, 2009). Standard hygiene is a necessary condition and measure to ensure food safety from production to consumption as is an essential requirement of every food process that the food produced should be safe to eat (Kamboj et al., 2020). Improper food hygiene and safety management systems can lose healthy lives throughout the year, therefore, good food hygiene management offers unparalleled benefits to individual customers and the trading community, the entire country, and the global community (Iro et al., 2020). Accessibility is one of the facilities in the industry, which is a strategic plan to increase the strength of competition in the market (Gaturu et al., 2017).

Another element to consider is the customer satisfaction as mediating factor between restaurant selection characteristics and customer loyalty in Korean restaurants. Customer satisfaction is critical in every company organization, whether it offers a service or a product (Chun & Nyam-Ochir, 2020). Customer satisfaction, as described by Oliver (1981) is the consideration or evaluation of a product or service after it has been purchased. Customer satisfaction is a marketing metric that indicates a service provider's entire experience with customers (Othman et al., 2020). Satisfied customers repeated buying or revisiting dine in a restaurant but may spend more than other customers (Janahi & Al Mubarak, 2017).

The objectives of this study are to investigate the relationship of restaurant selection attributes and customer satisfaction as well as customers loyalty. The study also explores the relationship of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The final objectives are to confirm the customer satisfaction as mediating variables between restaurant selection attributes and customers loyalty.

2 Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Restaurant Selection Attributes for Korean Restaurant

In Kuala Lumpur, the attributes of Korean restaurants are divided into four categories: service quality, food and beverage quality, standard hygiene, and accessibility. To further strengthen these attributes influence customer decisions when eating at restaurants, restaurant attribute studies have been conducted by several researchers (Rozekhi et al., 2016). Customer behavior is a process that indicates a customer satisfaction with their purchase, and also their evaluation of the goods or service they obtained (Popovic et al., 2019). Monther and Mahadevan (2019) state the customers' response in restaurants remains essential because they interact closely with service providers or servers. Therefore, attributes are the factors that influence the restaurant of the options and make conclusions on the consequences of different options. It clearly shows that certain attributes need more attention to achieve higher customer satisfaction. Indirectly, the attribute of choosing a Korean restaurant is important to give customer satisfaction. Hence, it is essential to examine the relationship between restaurant selection attributes and customers satisfaction.

H1: There is a positive relationship between restaurant selection attributes and customer satisfaction.

2.1.1 Service Quality

Service quality is considered one of the essential principles relevant to customer behavior in service marketing. The five-dimensional service quality measurement scale (SERVQUAL) are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles was designed to measure customer's perceived service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1991). Customer satisfaction has been prioritized over service quality, resulting in customer retention (Ko & Chou, 2020). According to Almomani (2018), Service quality is a narrowly

defined assessment that represents the customer's view of a specific aspect of service. It is made up of dependability, responsiveness, certainty, empathy, and tangibles.

One of the most significant research results is that by evaluating customer perceptions of their interpretation of the actual service experience, the level of service quality can be measured (Zehir & Narçıkara, 2016). Khadka and Maharjan (2017) conclude that quality of service drives customer value. If the customer spends less money, time, and energy than the quality of service they receive, the customer will feel the value of the service is high. In other words, the better the quality of service, the higher the value handled by the customer (Khadka & Maharjan, 2017).

2.1.1.1 Reliability

Reliability is the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately, and it is an essential element in the perception of service quality by customers and their loyalty. According to Mmutle (2017), reliability always refers to an organization that strives to keep promises and pay attention to the results and has been classified as the first dimension of the SERVQUAL service quality model.

2.2.1.2 Assurance

Assurance is dependent on employees' capacity to develop trust and inspire confidence in consumers. Furthermore, assurance is defined as the knowledge, decency, and competence of industry personnel to give trust and confidence to their clients. This dimension focuses on job knowledge and abilities, correctness, etiquette, employee safety, and business safety assurance. The researcher's opinion on the level of assurance between the dimensions of service quality varied as Pakurár et al. (2019) state that assurance reflects employees' attitudes and their perspective, and the ability of staff to provide friendly, confidential, courteous, and competent services.

2.2.1.3 Responsiveness

The desire of employees or personnel to assist customers and offer quick service is referred to as responsiveness. This dimension focuses on client attitudes and accuracy when dealing with requests, inquiries, complaints, and difficulties. It also emphasises timeliness, attendance, and workers' or staff's professional dedication. According to Pakurár et al. (2019), willing employee response involves informing customers right when something is going to do, giving undivided attention to, promoting services, and responding to their requests. The reaction is rated as the third dimension in SERVQUAL 1994.

2.2.1.4 Empathy

Another dimension of service quality is the empathy dimension. Empathy is defined as attention given to the customer that focus on a variety of services that meets the needs of different customers. Customers need to feel that they received the priority by

the organization that provides the service. Prioritizing customers can ensure customer satisfaction with the services offered. According to (Pakurár et al., 2019), quantitative studies that have identified the dimensions of the service quality model have used security, credibility, and access to measure empathy.

2.2.1.5 Tangibles

The fifth dimension of service quality is the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, communication materials, and technology, namely as tangibles. Pakurár et al. (2019) in his study state that tangible has the same importance as empathy. Consequently, this study will examine the relationship of service quality and customers satisfaction. Hence, service quality has a positive related to the customers satisfaction in patronizing Korean restaurant.

H1c: There is a positive relationship between standard hygiene and customer satisfaction

2.2.2 Food and Beverage Quality

The quality of the food and beverages served in restaurants is the most important factor to consider (Shahzadi et al., 2018). The concept of food and beverage quality appears to be closely related to the perception of its being safe, especially in the customers' minds when they go to restaurants (Serhan & Serhan, 2019). Additionally, according to Serhan and Serhan (2019), food quality and beverage attributes determine customer behavior. Food quality attributes are critical, as this indicates that the restaurant has a high level of experience with food served to customers. Impressive food quality will lead to positive word-of-mouth. The important items look by customers for food and beverage qualities were freshness of food, followed by taste of food and presentation of food. (Min, 2016) also stated food factors instance of freshness and taste and presentation of food affect the decision of Korean restaurant.

2.2.2.1 Freshness

Freshness must be prioritized in the food industry in order to provide customers with accurate and required food quality standards. The sweetness, juiciness, and scent of food are all main factors that determine freshness. (Roque et al., 2018). According to Alamsyah et al. (2021), Fresh food seems to become a current phenomenon in terms of nutrition and quality awareness among customers. This view has also been agreed by Zhong and Moon (2020) that the mark of quality food is the freshness of food. The freshness of food lies in the food that is removed from the refrigerant without going through different processes. In addition, the preparation of fresh food by sending ready-made food on time. In terms of the ingredients used but on the food, delivered is also essential to the freshness of the food to customers to consider the restaurant's reason choices (Huang et al., 2017).

2.2.2.2 Presentation

Presentations linked to how food is prepared and presented to customers. According to Rozekhi et al. (2016), the critical food attribute that increases customer satisfaction are food delivery and food presentation. Food can raise the feeling and mood when the food is served well and directly attracts attention to eat. Spence (2018) also agrees that it has known that customer perceptions are usually dominated by what they see in their eyes to have a better dining experience.

Moreover, the perfect food presentation and perfect atmosphere allow visitors to enjoy the dining experience fully. However, the view from Hanaysha (2016) is that food presentation is actually about how customers feel the value of the product physically or internally. It means that the product can be seen with good quality when served. Implicitly, the ingredients in food preparation are linked to food quality as a presentation of food. Thus, the content and decoration of food can also affect the quality felt by customers.

2.2.2.3 Taste

Every human being has the ability to sample a wide range of meals from across the world. The flavor of a meal is determined by its culture and geographical region. Korean food has grown popular in Malaysia, particularly among youths. It is most likely owing to the culture that was imported into Malaysia. Korean cuisine could be seen as the identification of Korean (Min, 2016). According to Rozekhi et al. (2016), taste is a critical attribute in food that influences customer satisfaction in restaurants. However, Shapin (2016) accentuated that taste is a very subjective thing as individual has different preferences for a portion of food. Bawajeih et al. (2020) added that emphasizing the taste of food differs according to the class of work that is between males and women. Yet, it is still an essential attribute for the food in the restaurant as the taste is the most impressive major to customers. Hence, there are a positive relationship between food and beverage quality and customers satisfaction.

H1b: There is a positive relationship between food and beverage quality and customer satisfaction

2.2.3 Standard Hygiene

Dine-in a restaurant or taking food from a restaurant or eatery is a common phenomenon in the city or town, especially for people living in a modern lifestyle who have limited time to prepare their meals because they are busy with work or other activities. Restaurants serving traditional cuisine in urban areas have become a top choice for most customers even though customers come from various races and religions due to various driving factors such as curiosity. The majority of research discovered that the important aspects of restaurant selection's driving variables for consumers include food quality and safety, hygiene, type, flavour, restaurant cleanliness, staff conduct, location, reputation, and pricing. (Ali & Nath, 2013; Auty, 2006; Cullen, 2005; Duarte Alonso et al., 2013; Gregory & Kim, 2005; Ha et al., 2016;

Harrington et al., 2013; Heung, 2002; Kim & Geistfeld, 2003; Min, 2016; Narine & Badrie, 2007; Njite et al., 2008).

Korean cuisine restaurant is one example of a restaurant that serves different cuisine in Malaysia. According to Min (2016), the freshness of the cuisine is the most essential factor to consider when selecting a Korean restaurant, followed by flavour, friendliness, and cleanliness. Although standard hygiene is an essential aspect of cleanliness in selecting a place to eat, most customers are not interested in observing it in detail. Neglect of food hygiene will lead to food poisoning. According to World Health Organization (2020), millions of people suffer from a foodborne illness, one of the most prevalent public health issues in the modern world. Analysis of foodborne disease outbreaks globally has revealed that most outbreaks are the result of unsafe food preparation methods in small food enterprises, fast food restaurants, canteens, residential residences, and other sites where food was prepared for human consumption.

Previous research has revealed that food handlers are the major source of foodborne disease due to cross-contamination and the conduct of food handlers who do not practise good hygiene when preparing meals (da Cunha et al., 2015; Sabbithi et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2003). Food safety should be regarded as an essential issue since it serves a public health purpose. Meanwhile, contaminated food continues to be a global public health issue due to the high frequency of foodborne diseases both locally and globally.

H1c: There is a positive relationship between standard hygiene and customer satisfaction

2.2.4 Accessibility

Accessibility is one factor in the industry's market penetration strategy (Gaturu et al., 2017). The location of a restaurant is just as important as the quality of its cuisine and service. It will have an impact on many aspects of the restaurant, including the menu. According to Litman (2017), Authorization, opportunity, or right to access services are the aspects of accessibility. According to the research, accessibility comprises plenty of parking, simple entry, accessibility for disabled persons, access to restrooms, restaurant entrance, and accessible Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi). Customers will be enticed to pick the restaurant operator's restaurant to dine in and enjoy the variety of menu options available because of the restaurant's easy accessibility. (Yi et al., 2018)

2.2.4.1 Location

According to Hanaysha (2016), The location of a restaurant is an important aspect that might impact its success or failure. They go on to say that a place's prosperity is determined by its physical location as well as its demographic surroundings. In other words, a good location takes into account topographical, demographic, and psychographic characteristics, and changes in these factors may have a substantial impact on the degree of place attractiveness. Hanaysha (2016) suggest that in order to build a long-term competitive advantage and increase brand performance. A good

restaurant location, for example, that provides numerous services to consumers, such as enough parking, convenience of access, or proximity to the city, gives the brand a competitive advantage over rivals whose sites are unable to provide similar services.

The location of a company's operations is a critical indicator of future success. For example, a restaurant's strategic location and ability to differentiate itself from competition might help it secure long-term survival (Hanaysha, 2016). Lee (2019b), Mont Kiara, Kuala Lumpur, is a hotspot for Koreans to complete and convenient place to live and known as the K-Town of Kuala Lumpur when it comes to Korean food due to its strategic position and a plethora of complete amenities.

H1d: There is a positive relationship between accessibility and customer satisfaction

2.3 Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is an important component in the growth and performance of a restaurant. Because he frequently repurchases items or services from the same provider, the consumer will be a loyal customer. Oliver (1981) defines loyalty as "a strong future commitment to buy or re-protect a favoured product or service notwithstanding the impact of the situation and marketing activities that have the ability to modify behaviour." (quoted by Kotler, 2000). The customer's perception of the value of the product and service will impact his appraisal of his satisfaction or loyalty to the product or service. According to Makanyeza and Chikazhe (2017), the value of customer loyalty is inextricably linked to the organization's future success. The researcher, Ngobo (2017), states that customer loyalty is categorized in three ways: service loyalty, brand loyalty, and store loyalty. According to Altamore et al. (2018), customer experience is linked with functionality dimensions and other dimensions, such as sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational. Moreover, according to (Lam et al., 2016), customer intention to repurchase is influenced by product satisfaction. Suppose satisfaction the higher the level, customers' potential to keep using our services or products becomes greater. In other words, according to Khadka and Maharjan (2017), satisfaction will lead to loyalty, and customer loyalty is a derivative of customer satisfaction.

H2: There is a positive relationship between Restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty

2.4 Customer Satisfaction

Oliver (1981) defined customer satisfaction is defined as a psychological situation that happens when customers' emotions about their expectations collide with their sentiments about their purchasing experience. Customers assess service performance based on past encounters with the firm, according to the definitions of satisfaction given above. Although service quality and satisfaction are two different ideas, they are linked (Parasuraman et al., 1988). For example, a service organization's ability to provide high-quality service frequently results in a positive experience for its customers; hence,

service quality is a significant predictor of customer satisfaction (Ismail & Yunan, 2016). Service providers typically prioritize quality of service since it leads to client satisfaction. Dissatisfied customers, on the other hand, are more likely to switch to a competitor if the service quality is substandard and does not meet their expectations.. (Kotler et al., 2016).

Customer satisfaction stems from the feelings of people who have had their expectations met by the services supplied. Many academics and researchers stress the importance of consumer happiness. According to several experts, consumer happiness has a beneficial influence on business profitability. Many empirical studies have found a link between customer pleasure, loyalty, and retention. All sectors are now aware of the significance of service delivery and quality management in achieving client satisfaction. The quality of service provided can match or surpass client expectations, which are mostly affected by prior customer expectations. It is a choice that provides a satisfying level of consumption-related fulfilment for a product or service function or the product or service itself. In other words, the customer is completely satisfied with the service or product to this degree. According to Khadka and Maharjan (2017), customer satisfaction is defined as the total assessment of a product or service based on the purchasing and time-consuming experience.

H3: There is a positive relationship between Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

H4: Customer satisfaction has a positive mediating relationship between restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty.

2.5 Research Framework

Based on the literature review, a research framework was developed to investigate the relationship among the variables. Figure 1 shows the relationship between restaurant selection attributes and customers loyalty with customer satisfaction as the mediator.

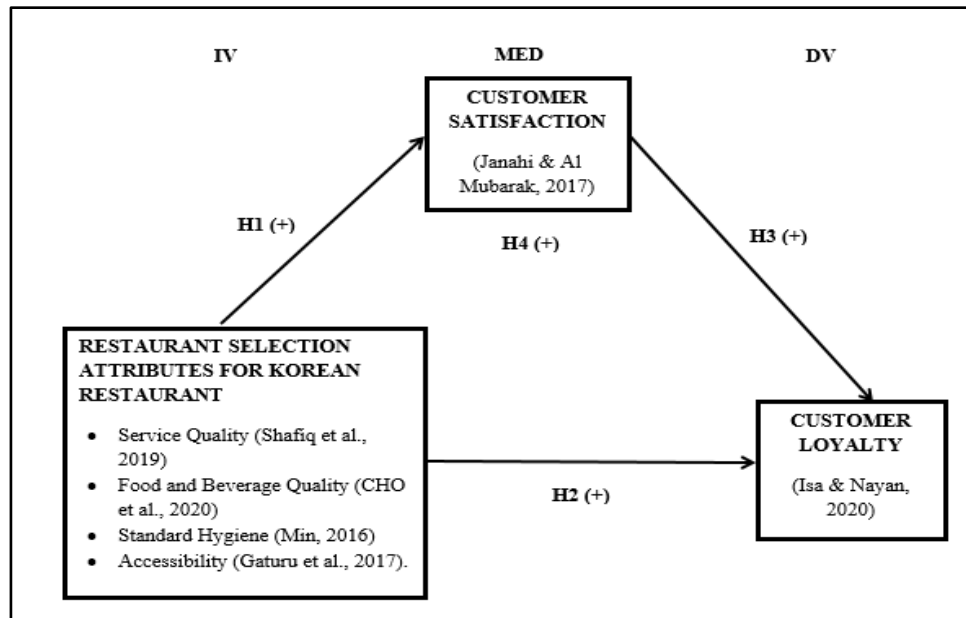


Figure 1: The research framework of the relationship between restaurant selection attributes, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Data Collection

A descriptive study was designed to investigate the relationship of restaurant selection attributes, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty using individuals as unit of analysis. The five Likert scale questionnaires was developed and distributed to the respondents using convenient sampling within a month. The social media platform was used as a medium of distribution due to pandemic and the restriction of movement control order gazette by Malaysian government. The survey form was divided into four main sections, which is demographic section, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction and restaurant selection attributes. All the items in variable sections are adapted from the previous research. The 399 respondents have responded to the survey form and the data was analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) software version 26. The reliability analysis was conducted to confirm the internal consistency of the items in the instrument. All the variables items show the Cronbach Alpha values of more

than .700 indicating that all the variable items have high consistency and stability to be ask to the respondents.

4 Findings

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Out of 399 respondents, 224 of them are female while the rest, 175 are male equivalent to 56.1 percent and 43.9 percent respectively. Most of the respondents aged 18 to 24 years old with frequency of 60.2 percent. The remaining respondents aged 36 to 50 years old, 25 to 35 years old, 12 – 17 years old and more than 50 years old with percentage of 17.8 percent, 15 percent, 4.5 percent and 2.5 percent respectively. Majority of the respondents are Malay (87.7 percent) followed by Chinese (7 percent), Indian (3.3 percent) and other races (2 percent) with the frequency of 350, 28, 13 and 8 respectively. For the occupation demographic, 216 of the respondents are students, 155 respondents are working, 24 respondents are unemployed and 4 of the respondents are self- employed.

4.2 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson's Correlation Analysis was performed to describe the strength and direction of all variables' linear connection. The results in the Summary Pearson Correlation Analysis table (refer to Table 1) there is a substantial positive link between restaurant selection characteristics, customer happiness, and customer loyalty, with r values more than .500 as suggested by Cohen (1988) . Among all independent variables (service quality, accessibility, food and beverage and standard hygiene), service quality is identify to have a strong positive relationship with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty with r value of .904 and .704 respectively. The results also reveal that all independent variables has strong positive correlation with customers satisfaction and customer loyalty (r value >.500, p< .05).

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Correlation Analysis for restaurant selection attributes, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty

		Correlations				
		CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	SERVICE QUALITY	ACCESSIBILITY	FOOD AND BEVERAGE	STANDARD HYGIENE CUSTOMER LOYALTY
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	Pearson Correlation	1
SERVICE QUALITY	Pearson Correlation	.904**	1	.	.	.
ACCESSABILITY	Pearson Correlation	.833**	.861**	1	.	.
FOOD AND BEVERAGE	Pearson Correlation	.842**	.865**	.860**	1	.
STANDARD HYGIENE	Pearson Correlation	.865**	.900**	.859**	.868**	1

CUSTOMER LOYALTY	Pearson Correlation	.762**	.705**	.687**	.700**	.667**	1
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** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine which predictor factors best described the dependent variable and to evaluate the study's hypothesis. The results of multiple regression can be utilized to define three research objectives.

4.3.1 The Relationship between Restaurant Selection Attributes and Customer Satisfaction

The Multiple Regression results in Table 2 shows adjusted R² for the model is .838, indicates that 83.8 percent of the dependent variable can be explain by the predictors (service quality, standard hygiene, food and beverage quality and accessibility). F value for the model is 514.045. Service quality is the main factors that contributes to the customer satisfaction with beta value of .557, which means that every increase of one standard deviation of service quality, the customer satisfaction will increase by .557. The results also show that standard hygiene, food and beverage quality and accessibility have strong positive relationship with customer satisfaction with beta value of .160, .137 and .098 respectively.

Table 2: Summary of Multiple Regression between Restaurant Selection Attributes and Customer Satisfaction.

	Dependent Variable
Independent Variables:	
Service Quality	.557*
Standard Hygiene	.160*
Food and Beverage Quality	.137*
Accessibility	.098*
F value	514.045
R²	.839
Adjusted R²	.838
*Note : p< 0.05	
** Note : p< 0.10	

4.3.2 The Relationship between Restaurant Selection Attributes and Customer Loyalty

Table 3 shows the summary of Multiple Regression analysis of restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty. Adjusted R² for the model is .532 explain that 53.2 percent of the customer loyalty can be explained by restaurant selection attributes dimension (F value of 514.045, p<0.05).

Table 3: Summary of Multiple Regression between Restaurant Selection Attributes and Customer Loyalty.

Independent Variables:	Dependent Variable
Service Quality	.335*
Standard Hygiene	-.053
Food and Beverage Quality	.286*
Accessibility	.198*
F value	114.170
R²	.537
Adjusted R²	.532
*Note : p < 0.05	

Service quality is the most contributing factors to customer loyalty with beta value of .335, indicate that every increase of one standard deviation of service quality, customer loyalty will increase by .335 standard deviation. The results reveal that all the variables in restaurant selection attributes have positive significant relationship with customer loyalty except standard hygiene.

4.3.3 The relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Table 4 shows that adjusted R² for the whole model is .579 indicates that 57.9 percent of customer loyalty can be explain by customer satisfaction. The results also reveal that customer satisfaction has a strong positive relationship with customer loyalty with beta value of .762, which means every increase of one standard deviation of customer satisfaction, the customer loyalty will increase by .762 standard deviation.

Table 4: Summary of Multiple Regression between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty.

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable
Customer Satisfaction	.762*
F value	548.380
R²	.580
Adjusted R²	.579
*Note : p < 0.05	

4.4 Process Analysis to confirm customer satisfaction as mediating variables for restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty

Process Analysis suggested by Hayes (2017) was used to confirm customer satisfaction as a mediating factor between restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty. Figure 2 show the direction of customer satisfaction as mediating variable between restaurant selections attributes and customer loyalty. The results reveals that customer loyalty can be increase by the present of customer satisfaction as mediating

factor ($c=0.6191$, $se=0.859$). Summary of direct, indirect and total effect of the variables shows that the indirect effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty is positive and significant ($b=.6502$, $s.e.=.0860$, $p=.0000$), indicating that customer satisfaction positively mediates between restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty. The indirect is tested using non-parametric bootstrapping. If the null of 0 falls between the lower and upper bound of the 95% confidence interval, then the inference is that the population indirect effects are 0. If 0 falls outside the confidence interval, then the indirect effects are inferred to be non-zero. In the case the indirect effect ($IE=.6191$) is statistically significant: 95% CI= (0.4533, 0.7902).

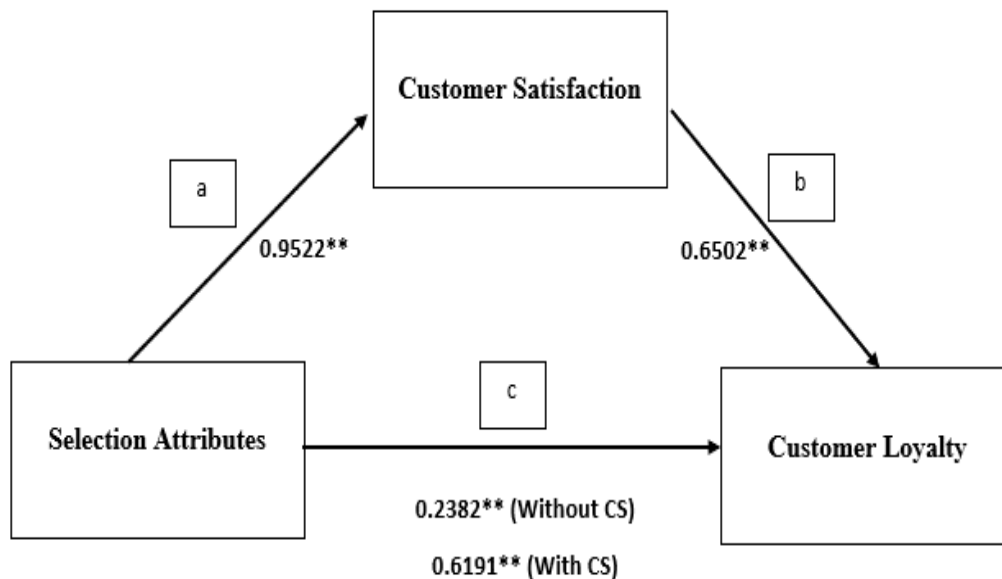


Figure 2: Process analysis of customer satisfaction as mediating variables.

Direct effect of X on Y							
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_ps	c'_cs
.2382	.0903	2.6381	.0087	.0607	.4157	.2386	.2018
Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:							
Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI				
CS	.6191	.0859	.4553	.7902			

Figure 3: Summary of the direct, indirect, and total effect of the variables

4.5 Hypothesis testing

Multiple Regression and Process Analysis discussed in the previous sub topic was used to summarize the hypotheses identified in this study. The results of the hypotheses are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of Hypotheses Statement

H No.	Hypothesis Statement	Results
<i>H₁</i>	Restaurant Selection attributes for a Korean restaurant positively influence customer satisfaction	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H_{1a}</i>	Service quality positively influences customer satisfaction	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H_{1b}</i>	Food and beverage quality positively influence customer satisfaction	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H_{1c}</i>	Standard hygiene positively influences customer satisfaction	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H_{1d}</i>	Accessibility positively influences customer satisfaction	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H₂</i>	Restaurant Selection Attributes for Korean Restaurant positively influences Customer Loyalty	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H_{2a}</i>	Service quality positively influences customer loyalty	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H_{2b}</i>	Food and beverage quality positively influence customer loyalty	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H_{2c}</i>	Standard hygiene negatively influences customer loyalty	<i>Negative Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H_{2d}</i>	Accessibility positively influences customer loyalty	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H₃</i>	Customer satisfaction positively influences customer loyalty.	<i>Positive Significant Relationship</i>
<i>H₄</i>	Customer satisfaction has a positive mediating Relationship between restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty.	<i>Positive mediating Relationship</i>

The table shows that all the hypotheses support the earliest statement identify in the hypothesis development, except for H2c , standard hygiene have negative significant relationship with customer loyalty. The results will be discussed further in discussion and conclusion.

5 Conclusion

This study aims to explore the dimensions that could contributes to customer loyalty in Korean restaurant. The independent variable, which is a restaurant selection attribute with four dimensions (service quality, food and beverage quality, standard hygiene, and accessibility), was identified as the key factor that could influence customer loyalty, and customer satisfaction was identified as the mediating factor to both the independent and dependent variables. Based on the results, all four dimensions of restaurant selection attributes has a positive significant relationship with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. These results align with previous studies

mentioned that these four dimensions reflects the customer decisions when eating in restaurants. Service quality is seen as the main factors of the customers satisfaction as it will reflects the customers perception to choose a restaurant as it consist of the elements of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles (Almomani, 2018; Ko & Chou, 2020). In addition, it is important to consider the quality of food and beverage, especially the freshness of the food, the presentation and taste to give unforgettable experience and increase the brand loyalty to the customers (Min, 2016; Shahzadi et al., 2018).

However, there are contradict results for the relationship between standard hygiene and customer loyalty. The results show the negative significant relationships between standard hygiene and customer loyalty, although it has a positive significant relation with customer satisfaction. Previous researchers argues that standard hygiene (i.e, restaurant cleanliness, food hygiene and food safety) dimensions is a critical factors in choosing a restaurant (Auty, 2006). Min (2016), however, mentioned that cleanliness is the less factors to be considered when choosing the restaurant compared to freshness of the food, taste and friendliness. Therefore, the results indicate that although standard hygiene has been debated as the critical factors that contributes to the customer satisfaction and loyalty, it has less effect as a direct relationship with customers loyalty.

This argument is supported by the results of customer satisfaction as a mediating factor between restaurant selection attributes and customers loyalty. The results reveal customer satisfaction mediate positively to the relationship between restaurant selection attributes and customer loyalty. This is align with the study by Lam et al. (2016), customer intention to repurchase is influenced by product satisfaction. Satisfaction will lead to loyalty, and customer loyalty is a derivative of customer satisfaction, which means, the higher the satisfaction level, more potential customers' will keep using the services or products (Khadka & Maharjan, 2017).

As a conclusion, this study will benefit both academicians and also industry player. For academician, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge in identifying the selection attributes and customers preference to dine in Korean Restaurant. For the practical contribution, this study will provide some guidelines to the restaurant owners to segment their markets.

This study has a few limitations. First, this study was conducted during movement control order (MCO) restrictions where the survey was distributed via online method (WhatsApp and Facebook). Thus, it is a limitation to the researcher to get the accurate sample population since dine in is not allowed during MCO.

For future research, it is recommended to the future researcher to conduct this study to other region in Malaysia to get the new perspectives. The future researcher may add other element of restaurant section attributes to make the study more interesting.

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