

SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN TRADITIONAL FOOD COURTS (HELA BOJUN RESTAURANTS) IN SRI LANKA

D.D.P. Sanjeewa¹

Hela bojun restaurant is a traditional food court concept initiated by the Department of agriculture in the aim of empowering the rural women by generating agriculture based entrepreneurship, employment and private enterprise opportunities while encouraging young people to become aware of and interested in local, wholesome, and nutritious traditional cuisine and reducing the effects of the unhealthy Western fast-food culture. However, the level of service quality of Hela bojun restaurants and customer satisfaction has not been measured for years since its initiation. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in Traditional food courts in Sri Lanka. Quantitative research approach was followed for the study and a structured questionnaire was developed and distributed among 150 customers who visited the food courts in Southern Province applying the convenient sampling method. This study identified service quality dimensions as independent variables and customer satisfaction as dependent variable based on SERVQUAL model. Gathered data was analyzed through univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis using SPSS version 26. According to the results of the analysis, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy have a positive significant impact on customer satisfaction whereas a negative insignificant impact of empathy on customer satisfaction. According to the findings, the service quality act as an important factor of higher customer satisfaction in traditional Sri Lankan food courts. The study was conducted during the post-pandemic period limiting to Southern Province which identified as limitations of the study. To achieve a high level of customer satisfaction, supervisors and operators would concentrate on Reliability, Responsiveness, and Assurance while focusing on Empathy, which will lead to customer retention and increased socio-economic benefits.

Keywords: Service quality, Customer satisfaction, Hela bojun restaurant, Traditional food courts

¹ Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. ddpsanjeewa@gmail.com