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The effect of restaurant service quality dimensions on customer loyalty and repurchase intention: A case study of Antalya restaurants

Abstract: This research intends to investigate the influence of restaurant quality dimension on customer loyalty (CL), revisit intention (RI), and EWOM. For this study, data from 382 online surveys conducted with restaurant customers in Antalya were used. The conceptual framework was evaluated using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results indicate that all dimensions of restaurant service quality significantly and directly affect CL, RI and EWOM. Furthermore, the findings indicate that CL directly and significantly affect RI and EWOM. The outcomes of this research can offer valuable understanding of which dimensions of restaurant quality influence CL, RI and EWOM. This study can suggest ways to enhance RI, the management of restaurants and their strategies should focus more on which aspect of restaurant quality.

INTRODUCTION

Within the competitive hospitality and food and beverage sectors, organizations seek not just provide quality products and services but also a competitive advantage via higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty (Omidvar et al., 2025). Towards this aim, organizations apply various marketing approaches (Namin, 2017) which are geared towards providing excellent products leading to content customers (Shemwell et al.,1998). Customer satisfaction and service quality are core topics widely researched in marketing research. Customer satisfaction, more specifically, is "the evaluation that a product or service, or its attributes, delivers a pleasurable level of consumption satisfaction, which may include the degree of under or over satisfaction" (Oliver, 1997 p.28).

Customer loyalty within the restaurant industry is motivated by various factors including food quality (Fanelli & Di Nocera, 2018), hygiene level, physical environment and service quality and atmosphere within the restaurant (Yüksel & Yüksel, 2003). General dining experience is an extensive customer loyalty measure embracing food and service quality (Alhelalat, et al., 2017; Kaya, 2018). Between both, service quality is the leading factor to impact customer loyalty (Lőke et al., (2018) and revisit intention (Eid, 2019) . Three conditions essential for influencing customers' preference of restaurants, i.e., food quality, atmosphere, and service quality, were proposed by Mattila (2001). Effective and organized foodservice activities enhance customers'

attitudes towards service quality, which leads to increased satisfaction and optimizes future positive behavior, for instance, return visits (Choe & Kim, 2018; Ryu & Han, 2010).

Customer satisfaction is a key force behind the development of customer loyalty (Naderi et al., 2024; Omidvar & Palazzo, 2024). It is significantly shown in existing studies that customer satisfaction is highly positively linked with loyalty, and that heightened satisfaction breeds greater loyalty (Bolton & Lemon, 1999 ; Dick & Basu, 1994). Loyalty is traditionally viewed as a habitual behavior governed by thinking processes and decision, facilitated by positive customer experience (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973). Different approaches, including attitudinal and behavioral, are used to quantify loyalty. Attitudinally, loyalty is an intense craving for preserving a relationship with a service provider. But from the behavior perspective, customer loyalty is described by purchase frequency, and it signifies loyal customers frequently buy the same service or good repeatedly at a higher frequency than the rest of the customers within the same market (Neal, 1999).

Customer loyalty is one of the key predictors of consumer behavior, particularly in restaurants. This theory posits that food quality, service quality, and physical environment play a key role in influencing loyalty by triggering a positive experience while dining. This type of loyalty generates emotional commitment as well as behavioral intentions like the intention to return. Customers also engage in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), where customers post online regarding their experiences. By enhancing these qualities of service, restaurants can construct long-term commitment, generate constructive eWOM, and build competitive advantage. As loyalty of customers is studied quite thoroughly within the food and beverage industry (Back, & Parks , 2003), this study will be adding to this by focusing on restaurants in Antalya and offering actionable advice on customer retention improvement. Restaurant managers will gain benefit through optimization of service quality and customer loyalty, leading to long-term business success.

2. Conceptual framework and research hypotheses

The theoretical basis of the present study is based on the theoretical relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in the restaurant context. Multiple studies have shown that service quality is a requirement for customer satisfaction, which in turn, influences customer loyalty (Ryu & Han, 2010). In food services and hospitality, service quality consists of tangible and intangible qualities such as responsiveness, reliability, empathy, and assurance (Parasuraman et al., 1988). When rated with high service quality, it invokes favorable judgments of their dining experience, thus influencing overall satisfaction (Choe & Kim, 2018). This satisfaction, as Oliver (1997) has defined it, is the affective response to the performance of a product or service concerning expectations and plays an important role in shaping consumer behavior and attitude.

Based on this model, the proposed framework posits that customer satisfaction serves as a mediating construct in the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. Satisfied

customers are more inclined to develop strong emotional bonds with the brand (Omidvar & Deen, 2023), and engage in repeat purchase behaviour which confirms their loyalty both attitudinally and behaviourally (Dick & Basu, 1994; Neal, 1999). Loyal customers can also commonly create positive electronic word-of-mouth, which improves the brand's visibility and credibility (Omidvar et al., 2025). The constructs of food quality, service quality, and physical environment (Mattila, 2001; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2003) are essential predictors of loyalty through satisfaction. This framework will explore the comparison between the three constructs concerning restaurants in Antalya, which should highlight further missing pieces of knowledge and customer retention that could provide a long term competitive advantage.

Service quality has many dimensions and is important in developing customer perceptions, satisfaction, and ultimately loyalty. This literature review provided a review of studies examining the dimensions of restaurant service quality and customer loyalty concerning the restaurant industry. Based on studies in the literature, we have put together a description of how the food, service, and physical environment dimensions of restaurant service quality provide insight into customer satisfaction, as well as loyalty. Additionally, the studies provide comparisons to the aforementioned studies, which helped elucidate the dimensions related to customer satisfaction and loyalty in customer markets based on cultural and other geographic differences.

Table 1: literature review

Year	Key Focus	Findings	Author's Name
2017	Mediating role of corporate image between CSR and behavioral intentions	Corporate image mediates the relationship among the ethical, economic, and philanthropic dimensions of CSR and behavioural intentions.	Kim et al., (2025
2020	CSR's influence on customer retention through brand attitude, service quality, and satisfaction	CSR's economic, ethical, and philanthropic dimensions have a significant influence on brand attitude and service quality, thus leading to better customer retention.	Lee et al., 2022
2018	Role of food experience in customer satisfaction	Customers need more than quality food; the overall food experience must include the atmosphere and service quality since these variables affect customer satisfaction.	Fanelli & Di Nocera, 2018
2024	Dimensions of service quality in quick-casual restaurants	Food quality service quality and the food environment collectively affect customer satisfaction. Service quality mediated behavioural intention regarding both customer and the environment.	Safari et al., 2024

2022	Importance of customer retention in food and beverage industry	Retention can be a strong motivator for ongoing success; however, challenges exist when some customers fall into the repeatable but not fulfilled or repeated category because of service quality etc.	Attar et al., 2022
2022	Factors affecting repeat business in the food sector	Identifies low repeat purchase rates. As an information resource, it is also important to know when and why they do not return.	Riva et al., 2022
2024	Links between service quality, satisfaction, and repurchase intentions	Various attributes have been associated with service quality, price, hygiene, staff demeanor, reliability, ambience, and freshness of food, to name a few attributes. Discount and word of mouth go hand in hand with service quality or satisfaction and loyalty.	Riyadi et al., 2024

2.1 Food Quality

Food quality is a key member of the customer loyalty club, as it greatly affects customer satisfaction and repeat business. Food that is high-quality and is always consistent creates positive customer touchpoints that generate customer trust and brand preference. Tuncer et al., (2021) developed an overall integrated structural model that investigated the relationships among food quality, perceived value, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in restaurants. They found that all dimensions of food quality, except aesthetics, impacted customer satisfaction, and that facility comfort and timeliness influenced perceived value. They also found that customer satisfaction and perceived value had a positive influence on behavioral intentions. Solunoğlu (2020) found that perceived food quality was significantly related to satisfaction, and image, and recommendation intention: and that customer satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between food quality and recommendation. These studies demonstrate the extreme importance of these elements of food experience when it comes to customer loyalty. They collectively show the strategic importance of food quality, employee service and physical environment in the hospitality industry.

Whether visitors or local patrons, diners frequently judge their experience based on the quality of food. Sahranavard et al., (2024) examined that for visitors who look for quality and authenticity, excellent food is the piece that they always remember which informs loyalty. While their findings were based on cultural tourism research, they have strong implications for the restaurant sector—especially for stores located in high tourist traffic areas. Food quality, as part of a restaurant patron's dining experience, plays a significant role in a customer's perceptions and when those perceptions fulfil or exceed customers' expectations it can contribute to a customer returning.

More recent research by Yang et al.,'s (2024) further supports this view by identifying food quality as one of the core determinants of positive customer behavioral intentions. Alongside service and environmental quality, the food itself must meet high standards to build trust and encourage repeat patronage. Their findings underline that consistent, high-quality food offerings directly enhance customer satisfaction, which in turn fosters loyalty. This reinforces the importance for restaurant managers, especially in competitive and tourism-driven markets, to prioritize culinary excellence. Without strong food quality,

efforts in other service areas may not be sufficient to secure customer loyalty, highlighting food as the cornerstone of the restaurant value proposition.

H1: Food quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction restaurants.

2.2 Service Quality

Service quality defines the level to expectations employees' actions meet expectations. It includes aspects of reliability, responsiveness, and empathy (Omidvar et al., 2024). When employees perform high-quality service, there is trust and satisfaction, and the customer is inclined to return with long-term loyalty. In a service industry like restaurants, the performance and efficiency of employees are often as important as the quality of the food because customers frequently evaluate service based on how employees treat them. It has been demonstrated that both functional (i.e., reliability) and personal (i.e., hospitality, professionalism) aspects of service quality is significantly related to customer satisfaction (Alhelalat et al., 2017). Unless there is a complete experience that includes the quality of equipment and atmosphere, service quality will not be enough to assure customer satisfaction (Fanelli & Di Nocera 2018). Additionally, Safari et al.,'s (2024) state that service quality works to mediate customer satisfaction in quick-casual restaurants while influencing behavioral intentions and perceptions of the environment. All three aspects of an experience (reliability, service, and ambiance) represent a total experience for the customer.

Customer retention drives long-term success in food and beverage companies (Attar et al., 2022). Finding ways to improve service quality is challenging enough, and many companies are portraying a low continuum of repeat business (Riva et al., 2022). What is most important is determining when and why consumers do not return. Research has shown that service quality, pricing, hygiene, staff behavior, reliability, ambience, and freshness of food are all very closely related to satisfaction and loyalty. Good service quality and value for money will deliver satisfaction and repurchase intention (Riyadi et al., 2024). Poor service quality and pricing will lead to dissatisfaction and negative word of mouth.

H2: Service quality has a significant positive effect on customer loyalty in restaurants.

2.3 Phyical Environment

The physical environment involves sensory and material aspects of a restaurant that create the customer experience. They have an effect on how customers feel in the restaurant environment,

which contributes to their satisfaction and emotional attachment to the brand. Kayumov et al., (2024) conducted a study of halal Uzbek restaurants in South Korea during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their study found five dimensions of service quality— Physical environment, employee service, ambience, cleanliness, and food quality. Cleanliness and food quality among them were seen to affect customer satisfaction immensely, and customer satisfaction positively influenced loyalty. COVID-19 safety protocols surprisingly lowered overall satisfaction, which suggests customer fatigue or irritation at compulsory processes. Employee service and climate were not the big drivers of satisfaction, which may be an indication that tangibles and hygiene factors can trump experiential factors during a health crisis.

Idrus et al. (2023) established that ambiance and cleanliness, as physical environment, positively affect customer satisfaction, hence leading to loyalty. This upholds the Servicescapes theory of the physical environment leading to a behavioral outcome established that atmosphere in eateries, a component of the gastronomic experience, creates perceived value and satisfaction (Cankül et al., 2024). These lead to higher customer loyalty in the long term. Both papers highlight satisfaction as a crucial mediator. Therefore, physical environments are a key indirect factor in creating loyalty.

Recent research has demonstrated that physical and experience-based environments positively influence customer loyalty in many contexts. For example, Kim et al., (2025) reported that different luxury branded cafés promote customer loyalty through perceived quality and genuine experiences. Valmohammadi et al., (2025) showed that physical environment modifies pursuing e-brand loyalty, especially for branded influencer experiences, by brand love; influencing purchase intention and loyalty. Tremblay & Parent-Rocheleau (2025) shared that employee commitment will enhance loyalty toward the organization if customer orientation and service climate will align, or customer orientation articulated with "service" climate. These studies demonstrate that emotions and foreign service environmental cues shape shopping habits and increase behavioural intentions. Be it luxury experiences, digital interfaces, or service organizational climate, the customer 'experience' matters. It is clear that, in all realms, the experiential quality, whether below and disguise, both provide a strong basis for brand loyalty to develop.

H3: Physical environment has positive effects on customer loyalty.

2.4 Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is the commitment to a brand or business by a customer that shows itself by return visit and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. In restaurants, customer loyalty develops when customers are satisfied with their food, service and overall experience. Customer loyalty, as a theme explored by TaghiPourian & Bakhsh (2015) goes beyond mere repeat purchases. They propose a four-stage loyalty model, ranging from cognitive loyalty (based on belief and awareness) through to affective loyalty (based on love or affection), conative loyalty (based on the intention to do so), and ending in behavioural loyalty (based on repeated behaviour). This model gives a clearer image of loyalty than earlier, simpler models that could only deal with

repeat purchase. For restaurants, knowing these phases can allow managers to come up with strategies that foster not only repeat visits but also emotional connection with customers, thereby creating lasting loyalty.

Brida & Coletti (2012) consider tourist loyalty at cultural destinations and conclude that service quality satisfaction and special experiences have a great deal to do with the development of loyal customers. While their work is related to cultural tourism, its application to restaurants, a highly visited tourist city, is evident. Restaurants providing a high-standard dining experience—good food, service, and ambiance—are likely to gain tourist loyalty since tourists are usually more demanding and look for good service while traveling.

Customer loyalty has often been seen as the foremost motivator of eWOM, in the individual contexts of studies, especially with the heavy emphasis in many studies to date on the exploration of online and digital service relationships. Al-Zyoud (2021) has shown that, concerning consumer loyalty (which has been defined as the loyalty resulting from gamification) that eWOM behaviour as well as purchase intention was probably increased through seeing increased consumer loyalty. His study found loyal and acquired customers were more likely to communicate their experiences and propagate the brand than they were able to do previously. This loyalty effect was shown not only to influence repeat purchase behaviours, but also produced a more intangible 'trigger' for more informal brand advocacy in the digital space. Al-Adwan et al. (2020) investigated B2C e-commerce (Jordan) and found that customer loyalty was posited in online satisfaction and online trust, and trust influenced loyalty, and trust and loyalty predicted eWOM likelihood. Al-Zyoud (2021) provides the furthering advancement to the literature of consumer loyalty influencing the mediating relationship of gamification and eWOM; therefore, a more positive interpretation of the process is emerging. Ultimately, after considering the evidence from these studies and where they intersect, loyalty seems to act as a key facilitator of satisfaction-based, or gamified, experiences into a jump start of online promotional behaviours.

H4: Customer loyalty has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention in restaurants.

H5: Customer loyalty has a positive effect on electronic word-of-mouth behavior.

Comparing Studies: Insights for Restaurants

The reviewed studies in general highlight the multi-faceted nature of customer satisfaction and loyalty in the restaurant and hospitality sectors, but they highlight these findings in different contextual lenses. They found that technological innovation in the form of the adoption of green QR menus significantly enhanced service quality and satisfaction in Antalya, Türkiye, implying that digital technology has the potential to deliver good customer experience. They, though, investigated economic volatility and reported that exchange rate volatility and demography

influenced Egyptian hotel customers' repurchase intention, thereby stressing the influence of macroeconomic factors. It brought some cultural flavor by showing that restaurants' loyalty had determinants being food quality, and atmosphere—not service quality—but not in every case.

While these studies offer valuable insights into customer behavior, each strives to isolate one factor—technological, economic, or cultural—without offering an integrated analysis of how multiple service quality dimensions intersect in tourism-concentrated urban restaurant environments like Antalya. In addition, while they consider innovation and satisfaction, their study did not distinguish between the fundamental service quality factors (i.e., food, atmosphere, employee service) in generating customer loyalty. Additionally, there are limited studies that investigate the moderating effect of perceived technology tools on the formation of the service quality-loyalty relationship. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the impact of the three main dimensions of restaurant service quality—food quality, service quality, and physical environment—on customer loyalty and repurchase intention in Antalya, and how technological innovation can moderate these effects in a competitive, tourism-driven environment.

The model being suggested here argues that food quality, service quality, and physical environment are some of the significant variables that have a direct effect on customer loyalty among restaurants. Quality food, good and timely service, and a pleasant dining environment all come together to make a positive overall dining experience, which forms an ultimate emotional and behavioral attachment towards the restaurant. This loyalty, in turn, acts as a powerful mediator that influences customers' intention to revisit restaurant in the future d
(Omidvar et al., 2025). Moreover, electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) is more likely to happen with loyal customers in restaurant, where they post their good experiences online in the form of reviews, social networking, or recommendations. Therefore, improving these three dimensions of service quality not only creates loyalty but also indirectly encourages repeat patronage and good online word-of-mouth. Such integration highlights the strategic value of service excellence for ensuring long-term customer involvement and sustainable competitive edge in hospitality business.
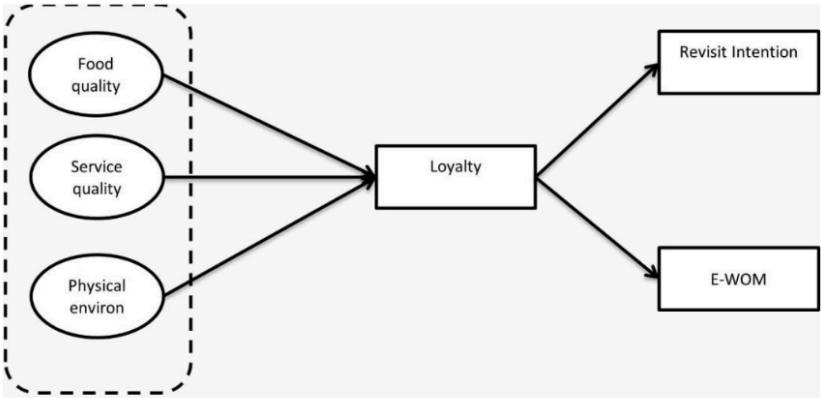
Sample

A particular group of Turkish people who had recently eaten at Antalya restaurants was the focus of the study. The eateries that were chosen were spread out around Antalya. The combination of local dynamics and tourism makes Antalya an excellent place to observe all facets of the restaurant industry. Antalya was selected as the site for data gathering because of this. The restaurants that were chosen were situated in Antalya's key districts. A particular group of Turkish people who had recently eaten at Antalya restaurants was the focus of the study. Specifically, individuals who had consumed meals at restaurants in Antalya were invited to complete the survey through online platforms and social media. In particular, the poll was distributed via social media and other platforms to people who had eaten at Antalya restaurants. The convenience sampling method was judged to be the best option because of the difficulties in gathering data. Convenience sampling was selected in order to effectively and practically contact the study's target demographic. There were 382 valid replies in all. The sociodemographic traits of the subjects were also evaluated. The information was gathered in November and December 2024.

Data collection tool

An online poll created especially for this study was used to collect data. A comprehensive assessment of pertinent literature served as a reference for the survey's preparation, ensuring that it was appropriate for use in the context of Antalya restaurant operations. There were two separate portions to the instrument. In the first section, the respondents' sociodemographic information was gathered, including their gender, age, marital status, level of education and citizen or tourist. The key research items, which comprised 18 questions evaluated on a five-point Likert scale, were included in the following section. People who have just eaten at Antalya restaurants were given this survey.

Variables and measurement

In the study, 3 statements from Zhong and Moon (2020) FQ. To measure SQ, 3 statements from Lee, Han, Radic and Tariq (2020) were used. To measure PEQ, 3 statements from Zhong and Moon (2020)were used. 1 statement from Marin, Ruiz and Rubio (2009) and 2 statements from Leninkumar (2017) were used to measure customer loyalty. Seo, Park and Choi (2020) were used to measure e-WOM. To measure revisit intention, 1 statement each from Hennig-Thurau (2004)

and Lee, Han, Radic and Tariq (2020) 1 statement from Kim, Song, Lee and Lee (2017) and another 1 statement from Hennig-Thurau (2004) were used. The scales were adapted from their original language, English, into Turkish.

The demographic characteristics outlined in Table 1 provide a detailed profile of the study participants. A total of 382 individuals participated, with 56.3% being male (n = 215) and 43.7% female (n = 167). In terms of age distribution, 28.5% of respondents were between 18 and 25 years old, 30.9% fell within the 26-35 age range, 27.5% were aged 36-45, and 13.1% were 46 years or older. Regarding educational background, the majority of participants (43.7%) held an undergraduate degree, while 25.4% had completed high school, 23.8% held a master's degree, and 7.1% possessed a doctorate. Marital status revealed that 55.2% of respondents were single, while 44.8% were married. Finally, the majority of the participants (59.9%) were citizens, with 40.1% being tourists. These findings offer comprehensive insights into the sample composition, ensuring a diverse representation across key demographic categories.

Table 1- Demographic characteristics.

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	215	56,3
	Female	167	43,7
Age	18-25	109	28,5
	26-35	118	30,9
	36-45	105	27,5
	46 +	50	13,1
Education	High School	97	25,4
	Undergraduate	167	43,7
	Master's Degree	91	23,8
	Doctorate	27	7,1
Marital Status	Single	211	55,2
	Married	171	44,8
Citizen or Tourist	Citizen	229	59,9
	Tourist	153	40,1
Total		382	100

Source: Research data

Data analysis and results

The data were analyzed using PLS-SEM. PLS-SEM is a non-parametric method that does not require normal distribution and performs multiple hierarchical regressions simultaneously (Hair et al. 2017). Furthermore, PLS-SEM can generate outcomes even with limited sample sizes and can operate effectively even when the factors in the model consist of a limited number of indicators (Hair et al. 2017). PLS was used in this research because it allows for the analysis of complex

relationships between multiple variables while accommodating small sample sizes and non-normal data distributions.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) analysis was conducted as an initial step in this study to evaluate the degree of multicollinearity among the predictor variables. Upon analysis of the structural relationships, the VIF values were observed to range from 1.258 to 3.833. These values are significantly lower than the recommended threshold of 5.0, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern in this model (Hair et al. 2017). One statement measuring food quality and one statement measuring service quality were excluded from the analysis due to factor loadings below 0.50.

The measurement model

The reliability and validity statistics for the measurement model are presented in Table 2. The results indicated that the factor loadings for all constructs were statistically significant, surpassing the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for each construct exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.50, while the Composite Reliability (CR) values surpassed the 0.70 threshold, thus confirming the achievement of adequate convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Specifically, the CR scores spanned from 0.842 to 0.922, the AVE scores spanned from 0.576 to 0.731, and the Cronbach's alpha scores spanned from 0.789 to 0.839, demonstrating that the scale exhibits strong reliability.

Table 2- Construct Reliability and Validity.

Constructs and Items	Loadings	CR	Cronbach's Alfa	Rho_A	AVE
Food Quality (FQ)		0.852	0.739	0.741	0.657
FQ1	0.801				
FQ2	0.810				
FQ3	0.820				
Service Quality (SQ)		0.857	0.750	0.756	0.667
SQ1	0.845				
SQ2	0.763				
SQ3	0.839				
Physical Enviroment Quality (PEQ)		0.904	0.841	0.847	0.759
PEQ1	0.850				
PEQ2	0.863				
PEQ3	0.899				
Customer Loyalty (CL)		0.882	0.800	0.800	0.714
CL1	0.830				
CL2	0.868				
CL3	0.836				
Revisit Intention (RI)		0.842	0.721	0.723	0.640
RI1	0.807				
RI2	0.794				
RI3	0.799				
e-WOM		0.880	0.795	0.807	0.711

e-WOM1	0.883
e-WOM2	0.768
e-WOM3	0.874

Note. FQ: Food Quality, SQ: Service Quality, PEQ: Physical Enviroment Quality, CL: Customer Loyalty. RI: Revisit Intention, e-WOM: Electronic Word of Mouth.

Source: Research data

Subsequently, to evaluate discriminant validity, the study utilized the Fornell-Larcker criterion alongside the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT), a multidimensional matrix-based method that has recently been acknowledged for its reliability in yielding more consistent results (Voorhees et al., 2016). Discriminant validity is deemed satisfactory when the HTMT values fall below the thresholds of 0.85 or 0.90. In line with this criterion, the results from this analysis clearly indicate that discriminant validity has been confirmed (Table 3). Additionally, according to Fornell and Larcker, (1981) the findings show that the square root of the AVE for every variable surpasses its correlation with the other factors, further reinforcing that discriminant validity has been confirmed (Table 4).

Table 3- Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

	CL	FQ	PEQ	RI	SQ	e-WOM
CL						
FQ	0.507					
PEQ	0.596	0.234				
RI	0.764	0.423	0.492			
SQ	0.549	0.224	0.189	0.398		
e-WOM	0.654	0.414	0.327	0.468	0.522	

Note. FQ: Food Quality, SQ: Service Quality, PEQ: Physical Enviroment Quality, CL: Customer Loyalty. RI: Revisit Intention, e-WOM: Electronic Word of Mouth.

Source: Research data

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

	CL	FQ	PEQ	RI	SQ	e-WOM
CL	0.845					
FQ	0.392	0.811				
PEQ	0.492	0.186	0.871			
RI	0.586	0.317	0.390	0.800		
SQ	0.431	0.169	0.155	0.296	0.816	
e-WOM	0.523	0.317	0.267	0.357	0.403	0.843

Note. FQ: Food Quality, SQ: Service Quality, PEQ: Physical Enviroment Quality, CL: Customer Loyalty. RI: Revisit Intention, e-WOM: Electronic Word of Mouth.
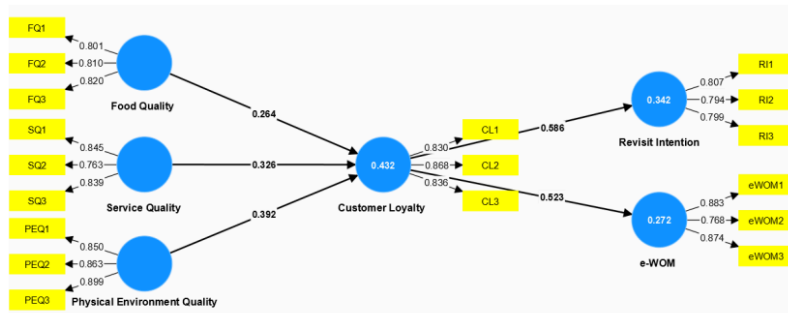
Source: Research data

The structural model

The examination of the structural model was performed through several steps. At first, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), with a suggested limit of <0.10, was evaluated to determine the model's fit. SRMR is one of the most common indices employed for assessing

the model fit, evaluating the disparity between the correlation matrix of the model and the observed correlation matrix (Ringle et al., 2020). In order for the structural model to show a good fit, the SRMR value must be below 0.08 (Hair et al., 2017). For this research, the SRMR score was 0.076, demonstrating an adequate model fit. Additionally, the normed fit index (NFI), which compares the observed fit with the expected fit, was also evaluated (Hu and Bentler, 1999). The NFI value was found to be above 0.70 (<0.721), indicating that the model is appropriate (Hair et al. 2017; Yeh et al. 2021). Subsequently, the R^2 and Q^2 scores were analyzed to determine the model's ability to predict. Upon examining the R^2 values, all were found to exceed the threshold of 0.10, as recommended Falk and Miller, (1992). Specifically, the R^2 values for CL (0.432), RI (0.342) and e-WOM (0.272) indicate a significant level of explained variance. Additionally, when considering the Q^2 values derived from Stone-Geisser's criterion for the internal constructs, CL (0.303), RI (0.214) and e-WOM (0.191) it is evident that the model demonstrates adequate predictive relevance for all constructs. These results further affirm the model's predictive validity, as put forward by Hair et al., 2017. The outcomes from the path analysis of the study are displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1- The Results of The Path Analysis.

Source: Research data

The structural model results presented in Table 5 reveal significant findings regarding the hypothesized relationships. Food quality (FQ) significantly influences customer loyalty (CL) with an effect size (f^2) of 0.117 and a path coefficient of 0.264 (t = 6.816, p < 0.001). Similarly, service quality (SQ) positively impacts customer loyalty with a path coefficient of 0.326, supported by an effect size of 0.180 and a t-value of 8.675 (p < 0.001). The physical environment quality (PEQ) also exhibits a strong positive effect on customer loyalty, with a path coefficient of 0.392, an effect size of 0.259, and a t-value of 9.714 (p < 0.001). Furthermore, customer loyalty significantly drives revisit intention (RI), as indicated by a path coefficient of 0.586, an effect size of 0.524, and a t-value of 14.959 (p < 0.001). Finally, customer loyalty strongly predicts electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) with a path coefficient of 0.523, an effect size of 0.377, and a t-value of 11.591 (p < 0.001). These results highlight the critical role of customer loyalty in fostering both behavioral intentions and communication outcomes in the context of the study.

Tablo 5. Structural Model Results.

Hypothesis	Path	Effect	t Value	f^2	P Values	Remarks
Hypothesis 1	FQ → CL	0.264	6.816	0.117	0.000	Supported
Hypothesis 2	SQ → CL	0.326	8.675	0.180	0.000	Supported
Hypothesis 3	PEQ → CL	0.392	9.714	0.259	0.000	Supported
Hypothesis 4	CL → RI	0.586	14.959	0.524	0.000	Supported
Hypothesis 5	CL → e-WOM	0.523	11.591	0.377	0.000	Supported

e. FQ: Food Quality, SQ: Service Quality, PEQ: Physical Enviroment Quality, CL: Customer Loyalty. RI: Revisit Intention, e-WOM: Electronic Word of Mouth.

Source: Research data

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study confirm that food quality exerts a positive and significant effect on

customer satisfaction in the context of Antalya restaurants. This result aligns with numerous previous studies that have emphasized food quality as a critical determinant of customer satisfaction in the restaurant industry (Namkung & Jang, 2007; Ryu et al., 2008) .High-quality food not only meets the basic expectations of customers but also enhances their dining experience, creating a sense of value and enjoyment that directly contributes to satisfaction. In this study, dimensions of food quality such as taste, freshness, presentation, and portion size were likely perceived as satisfactory by respondents, which strengthened their overall experience. These elements play a central role in forming positive emotional responses and cognitive evaluations, which are essential for achieving customer satisfaction (Ha & Jang, 2010). Particularly in a competitive and tourism-driven market like Antalya, the ability to consistently provide high-quality food helps differentiate restaurants and increases the likelihood of return visits. The positive link between food quality and satisfaction also supports the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980) that states the occurrence of satisfaction once expectations of customers have been met and/or exceeded. When food quality meets or surpasses customer expectations, a level of satisfaction is engendered, which in turn has important implications for loyalty and repurchase intention. In such a case, restaurant managers in Antalya and similar contexts should consider food quality of utmost importance for retaining high satisfaction levels while enhancing customer dining experiences.

The results of the study support H2, showing that the quality of service has a significant and positive effect on customer loyalty in the context of Antalya Restaurant. This is in line with a body of literature, emphasizing the important role of service quality in building and maintaining customer loyalty in the hospitality sector (Caruana, 2002; Zeithaml et al., 1996). When customers consider service to be responsible, reliable, sympathetic and humble, they are more likely to develop a permanent emotional and behavioral commitment to the restaurant. In Antalya's competitive restaurant scenario, both local and international visitors are characterized by high volumes, and excellent service quality acts as a differential that increases the perceived value and satisfaction, a significant precursor to loyalty. Previous studies have shown that the service in seva encounters greatly shapes the experience and affects the possibility of repeat protection and positive words-mouth (Ladhari et al., 2008; Ryu et al., 2012). Staff professionalism, speed of service, vigilance, and problem-solving abilities contributed to the positive perception of the quality of service among the respondents in this study. Practically, restaurant managers must

continuously train employees, monitor the performance of service, and encourage a customer-centric culture to increase the quality of service and expand through customer loyalty.

The findings of this study validate H3, indicating that the physical environment of a restaurant has a positive and significant impact on the customer loyalty. This result supports pre-research, suggesting that the physical settings in which services are distributed, which is usually referred to as services, play an important role in shaping customers' perceptions, emotional reactions and practical intentions (Bitner, 1992; Han & Ryu, 2009) .In the restaurant industry, physical environmental elements such as hygiene, interior design, lighting, music, seating facilities, and spatial layouts contribute significantly to overall food experience and can affect the desire to return. Especially in tourism-ivory cities such as Antalya, where customers often compare multiple food options, the beauty and functional appeal of a restaurant becomes a powerful competitive advantage. A well -designed and comfortable environment creates a positive impression and promotes emotional attachment, which strengthens loyalty over time. Research has shown that the physical environment not only affects satisfaction, but can also directly affect the loyalty beyond the quality of food and service (Ryu & Jang, 2008) .In addition, the Mehrabian & Russell (1974) Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R), environmental stimuli affects internal emotional states, which in turn lead to practical reactions such as loyalty. In this study, it is likely that restaurants with visually attractive and welcoming atmospheres trigger positive emotions and cognitive evaluations, eventually encouraging repeat patronage and loyalty. Therefore, restaurant managers should invest in maintaining an attractive, clean and consistent physical environment that aligns with customers' expectations and brand identity.

The results of the analysis confirm the H4, indicating that the customer loyalty has an important and positive effect on the intention of the restaurant in the context of the restaurant. It corresponds to the broad body of research that outlines loyalty as the major prophet of customers' will to return to the same service provider (Dick & Basu, 1994; Hellier et al., 2003). Loyal customers, who have developed a strong emotional and attuditinal attachment for a restaurant, are more likely to showcase repeat behaviors and avoid to avoid switching on competitors, even when the options are available. In the context of Antalya Restaurant, which meet local people and a large number of international tourists, it is especially important to maintain loyalty to long -term customer relations. Customers who receive value in terms of consistent quality food, vigilant service and a pleasant environment are more likely to return to restaurants and recommend others. This relationship

aligns with the principle of marketing, which suggests that strong customers increase the relationship reinforcement and reduce price sensitivity (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Furthermore, customer loyalty often creates a psychological commitment that goes beyond mere transactional satisfaction. As Oliver (1999) notes in his loyalty framework, loyal customers develop an enduring preference for a brand or service provider, which naturally extends to behavioral outcomes like repurchase intention. The practical implication of this finding is clear: restaurant managers must not only focus on initial satisfaction but also invest in long-term loyalty strategies—such as personalized service, loyalty programs, and emotional branding—to secure repeat patronage and ensure business sustainability.

Findings support H5, indicating that customer loyalty positively affects the electronic word-of-mouth behaviour in the restaurant industry. This result aligns with previous studies, who have shown a strong relationship between loyalty and customer will to share online positive experiences (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; W. G. Kim & Cha, 2002). Faithful customers, who feel emotionally attached to a restaurant brand, are more inclined to engage in EWOM by posting favorable reviews, recommendations, or admirers on digital platforms such as TripAdvisor, Google reviews or social media. In the case of Antalya Restaurant, where tourists often rely on online reviews while making food decisions, the EWom plays a particularly important role in affecting potential customers. The loyal guardians can become brand advocates, which can help increase the digital reputation of the restaurant and attract new visitors. It corresponds to the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 2017), which assumes that when customers get value from a relationship, they are publicly motivated and mutually motivated by sharing their positive experiences. In addition, EWOM is considered more reliable than traditional advertising as it comes from real users. Lawy customers are not only more likely to post reviews, but also more likely to defend the brand against negative comments, thus unpaid seller and brand ambassador (Chu & Kim, 2011). This increases the visibility and reliability of the restaurant in dynamic digital space. To take advantage of this behavior, restaurant managers must actively encourage response, facilitate online engagement, and reward digital advocacy to maximize the preacher power of loyal customers.

Theoretical Contributions

This study makes many important theoretical contributions in the areas of service quality, consumer behavior and hospitality management, especially in the context of emerging tourist destinations such as Antalya.

First, the study extends the applicability of established service quality models—such as SERVQUAL and the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework—to the restaurant industry by empirically validating the direct effects of key service quality dimensions (food quality, service quality, and physical environment) on customer satisfaction and loyalty. While previous research has examined these variables in isolation, this study provides a comprehensive model that highlights their collective and individual contributions to shaping customer behavior in a real-world restaurant setting. As a second point, the study contributes to the theoretical knowledge of customer loyalty as a central mediating construct. The results confirm that customer loyalty is a consequence of service quality perceptions, but it is also a strong antecedent of the repurchase intention, and eWOM intentions. The dual aspect of loyalty strengthens the conceptualization of loyalty as an outcome and predictor of post-purchase behavior, and enhances the behavioral loyalty literature. Third, this research advances the literature on eWOM engagement by examining customer loyalty as a significant antecedent of eWOM. Although the literature suggests that eWOM is explained by satisfaction or trust, this research has shown that emotionally committed customers are more likely to engage in a favorable way online. This contributes to theoretical models linking relational constructs with digital behavior in hospitality. Finally, by focusing on Antalya, a highly competitive and tourism-dependent market in an emerging country, the study adds contextual richness to the hospitality literature. Most prior studies have concentrated on Western or highly developed Asian markets; this research offers empirical evidence from a Mediterranean city with unique customer profiles (e.g., domestic and international tourists), thus providing a culturally and geographically distinctive contribution to global service quality and customer behavior frameworks.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Despite the valuable insight, this study provides, it is not without limitations. These limitations offer opportunities to build and expand existing findings for future research.

First, the study employed a cross-sectional research design, which collects data at the same point in time. This is the reason limiting the ability to assess relationships or inspect the changes of customers over time. Future research can adopt a longitudinal approach, how to check how service quality perceptions, loyalty, and practical intentions develop, especially common in cities such as mangoes in terms of seasonal tourism ups and downs.

Second, the data was collected from a feature sample of 382 restaurants customers in Antalya, which could restrict the generality of findings. While Antalya is a major tourist center, customer expectations and behavior may vary in other areas or in various demographic areas. Future studies can use possible samples methods or comparative analysis in many cities or countries to increase external validity.

Third, it focuses on three main dimensions of study service quality - food quality, service quality and physical environment. While these are well -established constructions, other relevant factors such as values fairness, menu diversity, waiting time, cultural authenticity and stability practices were not considered. Future research can integrate additional service-related and relevant variables to provide more wide understanding of food experience. Fourth, while the study discovered behavioral results such as the intentions of the recurrent and the electronic word-off-mouthed (EWOM), it was not responsible for the potential modeling or mediated variables as the customer personality, brand image, or satisfaction, which was as a medieval factor between the quality and loyalty of the service. Future studies should examine these mediators or tested potential mediators (eg, type of customer type -local vs. tourists) to deepen theoretical understanding. Finally, the study depended on self-reported data, which may be subject to the general method prejudice or social desirable effects. Future research can triangular conclusions to validate and enrich the results such as alternative data sources such as online reviews, behavior tracking, or qualitative interview.

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