

Service Quality of Quick Service Restaurants as Perceived by Millennials Using the SERVQUAL Model: The Mediating Effects of Corporate Image and Customer Trust

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ABSTRACT

The quick-service restaurant (QSR) industry has grown significantly over the last 10 years, accounting for nearly one-third of all restaurant revenues, making it a fiercely competitive sector. In order to remain competitive in the marketplace and subsequently expand, businesses need to recognize the importance of service quality and customer satisfaction. Using the SERVQUAL model as the base framework, this research aims to determine the factors that influence customer satisfaction. Using the quantitative descriptive correlational method, the study examined the data from 300 Millennial customers of QSR. A mediation analysis was conducted using Partial Least Square – Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to test the mediating effect of corporate image and customer trust. The results found that service quality, customer trust, and corporate image influence customer satisfaction. Moreover, corporate image and customer trust mediate the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, customer trust is a mediator between corporate image and customer satisfaction. The findings suggest that Millennial customers are no longer dependent on service quality but are also putting a premium on corporate image and trust. With these findings, QSR owners, business strategists, marketing practitioners, and store personnel must offer the highest level of quality service, must ensure that the image as seen by customers is not tarnished, and must exhibit authenticity, honesty, and transparency.

Keywords: Corporate image, customer trust, quick service restaurants, SERVQUAL model.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Years ago, quality was seen to be a competitive advantage in and of itself, but today it simply refers to a prerequisite for gaining market acceptability. In reality, a number of earlier studies have shown a correlation between quality, and more precisely, service quality, and customer satisfaction as well as a business image (Mendocilla et al., 2021).

In order to remain competitive in the marketplace and subsequently expand, businesses need to recognize the importance of service quality and customer satisfaction. This means that in order to have a sustained competitive advantage, service-based businesses like quick service restaurants (QSR) must offer their clients outstanding services. According to Harrington et al. (2011), to ensure that long-term customer satisfaction may be achieved or increased, restaurants need to better understand what constitutes a high-quality dining experience. As cited by (Cheng, 2013), providing excellent customer service is no longer just a "good to have"; rather, it is quickly evolving into the primary factor separating successful companies from unsuccessful ones. Businesses must be customer-centered, provide greater value to customers, foster connections, and engage in market engineering because consumers are growing more demanding and have higher expectations for quality.

However, the rigorous lockdown measures put in place in the Philippines to stop the transmission of the COVID-19 virus were very detrimental to the food service industry. In June 2020, restaurants in the nation's capital, Manila, were permitted to reopen with a 30% reduction in seating capacity and stricter social isolation requirements. In the latter part of 2021, the Philippine government issued guidelines that further relaxed and eased the opening of businesses on the condition that health and safety protocols are followed. These activities led to a sharp increase in the market (Mordor Intelligence, 2022).

While COVID-19 mitigation measures are still in place, food businesses are starting to operate normally again. Since customers might perceive a lowered risk of purchasing food from a restaurant with protocols in place, an effective COVID-19 mitigation protocol may facilitate a more successful rebound (Xu et al., 2022).

With the practices in place to embrace the new normal, service quality dimensions that contribute to customer satisfaction in the quick service restaurant may have changed. Thus, it is critical for quick service restaurants to evaluate the different factors or dimensions of service quality that affect customer satisfaction from the context of the new normal and from Millennials who are considered the primary customers of QSR since this segment of the population favors good foods that can be consumed conveniently and easily (Jourden, 2019). Businesses like QSRs will have a better understanding of your customers' demands and what they value in your company once you know how well your service quality meets their expectations. Finding gaps or pain points that will enhance customer experiences can be done with the use of service quality measurement (Klokkenga, 2020).

Therefore, this was conducted in order to provide new insights into the QSR using the 5 dimensions of the SERVQUAL model considering the changing dynamics in the quick service restaurant industry. The use of the SERVQUAL model aims to assess the applicability of the 5 dimensions namely: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy to measure service quality as perceived by millennials and how each dimension influences customer satisfaction. The model was expanded with the addition of corporate image and customer trust in response to the increasing importance of corporate image among younger generations who are considered the main market of QSR.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Dimensions of SERVQUAL

Customers in the foodservice industry evaluate restaurants not just on the basis of the food quality but also on the level of service they receive (Adriatico, 2022). They usually anticipate receiving the same level of service quality when they stop by a quick-service restaurant (QSR) to grab a coffee or a cheeseburger, anywhere in the world (Mendocilla et al., 2021). The fact that people consume the service almost simultaneously with its production is

another unique feature of the QSR industry, making the service encounter a crucial element of service management (Gummesson, 2014).

Parasuraman et al. (1988) introduced SERVQUAL which is a multi-item scale used to gauge customer expectations for service quality. These factors, which include responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibility, take into account the human component of service delivery. The effects of poor service depend on how it is perceived and expected to be received. The gap between expectations and actual perceptions of an organization's level of service quality is known as the level of service quality.

Service Quality and Corporate Image

Cheng et al. (2014) conducted a study to determine the interrelationships of service quality, customer satisfaction, corporate image, and customer loyalty in the Malaysian hotel industry. Based on the results of their study, tourists who receive high-quality service from a hotel are more likely to have high levels of customer satisfaction and a positive corporate image of the hotel. In the banking industry, there is a large beneficial impact that service quality has on company image according to Zameer et al. (2018).

The positive and significant influence of perceived service quality on the favorable evaluation of CI has been supported by several academics in diverse situations (Geraldine & David, 2013; Hapsari et al., 2017; Liat et al., 2014; Wu et al., 2015). In the KTV industry, service quality has a significant positive influence on corporate image (Khoo, 2022) while logistic services providers in China found that service quality has a major contribution to building the corporate (Yingfei et al., 2022).

Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

The link between service quality and customer satisfaction has been demonstrated in numerous studies. Businesses and organizations put a lot of effort into achieving high customer satisfaction, especially those that view a long-term connection with customers as an advantage (Banerjee et al., 2019).

As service quality is a process that is carried out by all personnel in the organization, understanding customer expectations is the most crucial pre-requisite for raising service quality (Wu & Cheng, 2013). On the other hand, customer satisfaction refers to the degree of fulfillment that a client expresses following the delivery of service and based on the five service quality factors, this evaluation of the service is subjective (Zygiaris et al., 2022). In order to satisfy the requirements and desires of consumers, customer satisfaction is a crucial component and is viewed as a significant differentiator in a cutthroat industry (Hapsari et al., 2016).

There is a vast literature that examines the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. In the service industry in general, which includes various businesses like hotels, tourism, banking, insurance, and the like, empirical evidence points to a strong relationship between the quality of service provided and customer satisfaction (Timothy et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2023; Shibuya, et al. 2023). In the case of banks, Khan and Fasih (2014) found that 225 respondents agreed that service quality dimensions have a significant and positive relationship with customer satisfaction. This finding was affirmed by Al-Azzam (2015) who established that the higher the service quality, the more satisfied bank customers are. In the case of the hotel industry, the research of Ahmad et al. (2019) revealed that 3 out of 5 dimensions of the SERVQUAL model namely tangibility, responsiveness, and assurance, have a significant positive impact on visitors' satisfaction with small and medium-sized hotels in the United Arab Emirates while reliability and empathy dimensions were found to be insignificant. Meanwhile, Nneoma and Uwabor (2021) showed a

substantial correlation between tangibility, reliability, and responsiveness dimensions in customer satisfaction among visitors of Nigerian resort hotels.

In the restaurant business, Du Plessis (2020) contended that customers are more likely to appreciate the restaurant's total offering and keep coming back if they are happy with the high quality of the food they receive, the perceived value they receive for their money, and the friendly, efficient service they have experienced. As argued by Bujisic et al. (2014) and Richardson et al. (2019), service quality has a positive influence on the overall satisfaction among QSR customers. The competition to offer superior service and value in the context of a restaurant business has become more crucial to tracking consumer opinions of service quality (Keith & Simmers, 2011 as cited by Abezei, 2019). Restaurant owners that are able to deliver outstanding service to their customers will have an advantage over their competitors in efforts to keep customers, achieve growth, and be sustainable, claims Mhlanga (2018).

By knowing the customer's perspective of the service received, service quality measurement will help the restaurant bring in and keep customers (Vijayvargy, 2014). It is critical to assess service quality so that management can make informed decisions about how to manage the operation and offer services (Uddin, 2015) since businesses nowadays must compete for clients in order to survive (Janita & Miranda, 2013).

Customer dining experiences are impacted by the quality of the service provided by restaurants since it shapes how customers perceive quality and makes a first impression (Lai, 2015). In the case of the service industry which includes restaurants, quality service must be provided to customers to have a good sustainable competitive advantage. As argued by Jalilvand et al. (2017), customer satisfaction depends on the level of service quality of restaurants. According to Yulisetiari (2014) and Murad and Ali (2015), there is a significant correlation between service quality (tangibles, assurance, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy) and customer satisfaction in the restaurant business. In addition, Mahato and Goet (2020) investigated the influence of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction among 490 restaurant customers in Nepal. The results indicate that there is a strong relationship between the service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. Similarly, Tuncer et al. (2021), found that a restaurant's service quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction according to the results of their study from 309 customers who received service from a particular restaurant.

A study in Turkey by Uslu (2020) among 385 restaurant customers who are local tourists revealed that the dimensions of SEVQUAL have positive effects on customer satisfaction. In Southern Taiwan, the expected and perceived service quality at "eat all you can" restaurants was examined by Spyridou (2017). The results of this study showed that parameters affecting service quality had a favorable effect on total customer satisfaction. For Arab restaurants in Malaysia, Monther and Mahadevan (2019) conducted a study and collected data from 135 respondents. The results of the correlation and regression analyses showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction.

Lau et al. (2019) adopted the SERVQUAL model and examined the influence of sommeliers' service quality (SQ) on customer satisfaction in upscale restaurants in Hongkong. Using PLS-SEM to analyze the data collected from 302 respondents, the results show that quality service results in satisfied customers. In Mongolia where quick service restaurants are new, Chun et al. (2020) investigated and assessed the factors influencing customer satisfaction. Using a structured questionnaire, data were collected from 151 respondents. The results revealed that service quality positively affects customer satisfaction. Yu (2021) has empirically investigated the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction among Starbucks customers in Malaysia. Using PLS-SEM, the

analyzed data from 60 respondents disclosed that only 4 dimensions which are tangibility, reliability, assurance, and empathy positively influence customer satisfaction. On the other hand, responsiveness was found to have an insignificant impact.

Meeting customer expectations, according to Lau et al. (2013), would not only result in customer satisfaction but will also foster customer loyalty, which will reduce the instances of customer attrition or increase the retention rate. An important consideration in determining customer satisfaction and the nature of the relationship that will be forged between the business and its clients is the service quality delivery (Amin & Isa, 2008 as cited by Fida et al., 2020). However, Sochenda (2021) in his study conducted in Cambodia with 480 fast-food restaurant customers implied that service quality has an insignificant impact on customer satisfaction.

Service Quality and Customer Trust

Customers establish a degree of confidence in businesses when they are satisfied, and SQ is the greatest indication for gauging this (Zubair et al., 2019). Customers usually develop a foundation of confidence in service providers when they receive quality and prompt service (Lanin & Hermanto, 2019). According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), as cited by Kaila et al. (2021), trust fosters a sense of security, certainty, and constancy toward the service provider. Moreover, customers' trust is increased when businesses provide high-quality services (Kaur & Soch, 2018).

Corporate Image and Customer Satisfaction

According to Tu and Hsiao-Chien (2014), corporate image has been identified as a significant predictor of customer satisfaction. Customers' satisfaction with the business is increased by a strong corporate image in addition to encouraging them to purchase their services (Faria & Mendes, 2013). Sallam (2016) looked into how a company's image affected customer satisfaction. Corporate image positively impacted customers' satisfaction and trust, according to the path analysis. Researchers Esmailpour & Barjoei collected data from 384 Morghab food industry (Yekoyek) customers in Bushehr (Iran) in 2016. The findings demonstrated that the company image positively and significantly affects consumer satisfaction.

Corporate Image and Customer Trust

Amin et al. (2013) found that corporate image has a significant relationship with trust in a study regarding drivers of customer satisfaction on image, trust, and loyalty of Muslim and non-Muslim customers in Malaysian banks. In Indonesia, 376 visitors of Electronics City in SCBD and in Pondok Indah Mall were the respondents of a survey conducted by Suhaily and Darmoyo in 2017 to determine the effect of product quality, perceived price, and brand image on the brand purchase decision. Using PLS-SEM, the results found that corporate image has a significant and positive effect on customer trust.

Customer Trust and Customer Satisfaction

The concepts of trust and customer satisfaction are much debated and frequently referenced in business-related literature (Zamry et al., 2020). In a study conducted by Surupati et al. in 2020 wherein 75 customers of PT Surya Rafi Bersaudara were surveyed to determine among others the effect of customer trust on customer satisfaction. Using SMART PLS, the results found that customer trust has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. A study among Gen Z students of State University in East Java in the 2019/2020 that focused on the quality of electronic services and consumer confidence in increasing customer loyalty through consumer satisfaction revealed that trust has a significant effect on satisfaction (Silviana et

al., 2022). In the banking sector, Darmawan, 2019 discovered that customer trust has a significant influence on customer satisfaction in Indonesia while Leninkumar (2017) found the same results among clients of commercial banks in Sri Lanka.

In a different context, research in the African retailing setting using the data set of 151 athletes in Gauteng Province of South Africa revealed that customer trust positively and significantly affects customer satisfaction (Chinomona & Sandada, 2013). In the tourism sector in Taiwan, Cheng et al. (2017) inferred that customer trust has a more crucial role in customer satisfaction demonstrating the importance of trust in strengthening relationships.

Mediating Variables to Customer Satisfaction

Corporate Image

Corporate image was explored as a mediator between service quality and customer satisfaction (Chien & Chi, 2019), suggesting its continued use as a mediator, leaving a marketing research gap in service quality delivery. This type of mediating role in the company's image makes it possible to provide the best services to customers. A study conducted by Alam and Noor (2020) has discovered that CI has a positive and significant mediating influence on service quality which accounts for 39% of the variation or R^2 value = 0.390. Similarly, upon conducting bootstrapping procedure, it was found that corporate image has a partial mediation to service quality (Hassan et al., 2019). A separate study confirmed said positive relationship with customer satisfaction; thereby, prompting customer loyalty (Dam & Dam 2021). Evidence also shows that when the corporation or organization builds upon the image of social responsibility and philanthropy, this prompts competitive advantage in which customers/stakeholders subconsciously subscribe to that image. Consequently, it poses a positive attitude toward its service (Ramesh et al., 2019). This relayed corporate role engenders trust in its customers leading to efforts to improve service quality to generate customer satisfaction and loyalty in turn (Islam et al., 2021).

Corporate image is also viewed as brand image which has been found to be a mediating variable of service quality and customer satisfaction among retail customers in Ghana (Narteh & Braimah, 2020). This was also evident in determining brand strategy in universities which unraveled that the positive brand image has a mediating value to student's satisfaction (Panda et al., 2019). The buffering role of airline images is linked with ticket repurchase (Chen et al., 2019). With these results, big enterprises highly value the image of their company's service offering along with improving their market strategies (Chien & Chi, 2019).

Customer Trust

Customer Trust, whether based on belief or intention, has been discovered to significantly mediate between perceived service quality and purchase (Lie et al., 2019; Qalati et al., 2021). Data was gathered from Jordanian food product makers using a quantitative research methodology. During the analysis phase, the PLS-SEM approach was chosen. The results showed that trust had a strong mediating impact on the integration of supply chain partners and organizational performance (Alshurideh et al., 2022). This is a similar finding about the purchase intention of Pakistan consumers which found that trust in the service provider has a significant and positive effect on online shopping behavior (Rehman et al., 2019).

This predictive influence of trust in terms of prompting purchase intention is explained by the sense of credibility that the service provider relay to its customers. This, thereby, triggers a causal thinking in which self-serving attribution will unfortunately necessitate a corresponding decline in consumer purchasing intention (Zasuwa, 2019). Performing another Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) among consumers of organic

foods, it has been found that buying behavior reflects the mediating influence of trust in the inherent processes and labelling of the product (Tandon et al., 2020).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilized the descriptive-correlational research design and used a highly modified questionnaire based on the 22-item instrument of Parasuraman et al. (1988) and the published questionnaire of Zygiaris et al., (2022) to fit the objectives of the study pertaining to the SERVQUAL dimensions. On the other hand, the validated questionnaire by Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) for the Corporate Image as the mediating variable. This tool has been widely used many research related to the topic (Hassan et al., 2019; Shin et al., 2021; Özkan et al., 2020; Şeşen & Gündoğdu, 2023). The tool of Sabatini and Rayahu (2021) was used for the mediating variable of Customer Trust. Data were collected from 300 qualified respondents deployed through the online platforms.

The relationship of the variables identified in this study was determined using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). This is an appropriate method to treat multivariate causal relationships which involve both direct and indirect effects (Ramli et al., 2019). Specifically, the Path Analysis type of SEM was employed to determine the direct effect of the SERVQUAL dimensions and the mediating effect of Corporate Image and Customer Trust on Customer Satisfaction as the Dependent Variable (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. The demographic characteristics of respondents (n = 300)

Demographic	Group	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	170	56.7
	Male	130	43.3
Age	26 - 30	30	10.0
	31 - 35	35	11.7
	36 - 40	41	13.7
	41 - 45	163	54.3
Civil Status	Married	102	34.0
	Separated	1	.3
	Single	197	65.7
Frequency of Buying	Occasionally	135	45.0
	Once a month	42	14.0
	Once a week	109	36.3
	Daily	14	4.7
Meal Purchase	Breakfast	74	24.7
	Snacks	181	60.3
	Lunch	215	71.7
	Dinner	182	60.7

Demographic Insights

First and foremost, the gender distribution among the respondents was notably skewed, with a majority being female. A significant 56.7% of the total sample identified as female, corresponding to 170 out of 300 individuals. This highlights the significant presence of female Gen Y customers within the quick-service restaurant customer base.

Moreover, when considering the age demographics, a striking pattern emerges. The age group of 41-45 emerged as the most prevalent among the respondents, accounting for a substantial 54.3% of the total sample, encompassing 163 individuals. This suggests that many Gen Y customers visiting quick-service restaurants fall within this age range.

Regarding marital status, the study found that a considerable portion of the respondents reported being single. A substantial 65.7% of the total sample, equivalent to 197 individuals, identified as single. This demographic insight underscores the diverse range of marital statuses within the Gen Y customer base of quick-service restaurants.

Behavioral Characteristics

Beyond demographics, the study delved into the behavioral characteristics of the respondents in relation to their dining habits. When it comes to meal preferences, a significant 71% of respondents indicated that they opt for quick-service restaurants for their lunch. Furthermore, 60.7% of respondents choose quick-service restaurants for their dinner, while 60.3% do so for snacks. These insights shed light on the diverse occasions and meal times at which Gen Y customers engage with quick-service restaurants, showcasing their versatility in catering to various dining needs.

Additionally, the study examined the frequency of dining at quick-service restaurants. Notably, 45% of respondents reported making occasional purchases at these establishments. In contrast, 36.3% of respondents, equivalent to 109 out of 300 individuals, indicated that they dine at quick-service restaurants once a week. These findings provide valuable information regarding the dining frequency and habits of Gen Y customers, offering insights into their level of engagement and loyalty to these dining establishments.

Table 2. Model Fit and Quality Indices of the Emerging Model

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
Average path coefficient (APC)	0.404, $p <$	$p < .05$	Significant
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.584, $p <$	$p < .05$	Significant
Average block VIF (AVIF)	2.169	≤ 3.3	Ideally
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	2.751	≤ 3.3	Ideally
Simpson's paradox ratio (SPR)	1.000	$= 1.00$	Ideally
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	1.000	$= 1.00$	Ideally
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	1.000	$= 1.00$	Ideally
Standardized threshold difference sum ratio	1.000	$= 1.00$	Ideally
Standardized mean absolute residual	0.049	≤ 0.10	Acceptable

Table 2 presents various model fit and quality indices used to assess the acceptability of the emerging structural model. These indices are crucial for ensuring the validity and reliability of the research findings.

One notable index is the Average path coefficient (APC), which holds a value of 0.331 and is statistically significant (p -value $< .05$). This indicates that the exogenous variables within the model have a substantial predictive and explanatory impact on the endogenous variable, supporting the model's validity (Kock, 2017).

Similarly, the Average R-squared (ARS) is 0.269, with a significant p-value. This metric signifies the model's ability to explain the variation in the endogenous variable, further bolstering the model's reliability (Kock, 2017).

The Average block VIF (AVIF) and Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF) demonstrate ideal values. AVIF is 1.001, while AFVIF is 1.785, indicating an absence of multicollinearity issues, which could arise from redundant or overlapping variables within the model (Kock, 2017).

Additionally, several other indices, including Simpson's Paradox Ratio (SPR), R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR), Statistical Suppression Ratio (SSR), Standardized threshold difference sum ratio (STDSR), and standardized mean absolute residual (SMAR), all meet acceptable criteria (Kock, 2017). These findings affirm the model's alignment with the data and the absence of implausible or reversed causality issues.

The evaluation of these indices reinforces the quality and suitability of the model. It affirms the validity of the research outcomes, indicating that the model effectively captures relationships among variables without encountering causality problems. This robust fit enhances the credibility of the research findings (Kock, 2017).

Emerging Model

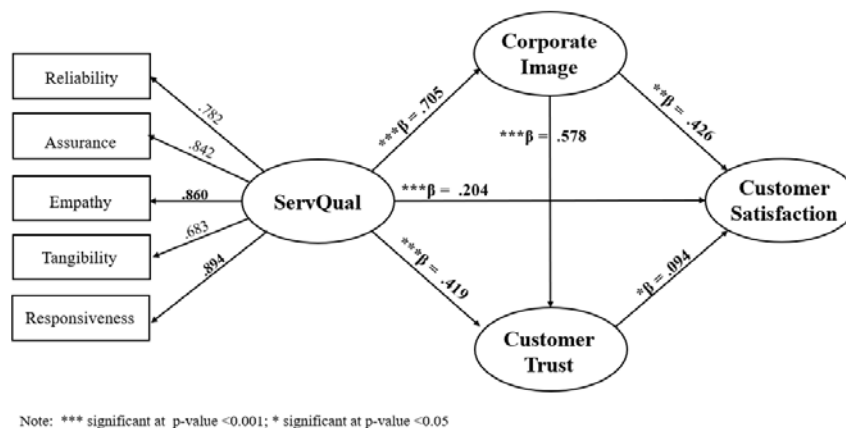


Figure 1. The emerging model.

The study was intended to test a hypothesized model that illustrates the influence of service quality on the corporate image, customer trust, and customer satisfaction of millennials in quick-service restaurants, as shown in Figure 1. Structural Equation analysis of the hypothesized model revealed that service quality positively affects corporate image, customer trust, and customer satisfaction of millennials in quick-service restaurants (See Table 3).

Table 3. Effect for the path with 1 segment.

Exogenous	Endogenous	Path Coefficients (β)	P-values	Effect Sizes (f ²)	Effect Size Interpretation (Cohen, 1988)**	Description	Decision
H1: Service Quality	→ Corporate Image	0.705	< .001	0.498	Large	Significant	H1 is supported
H2: Service Quality	→ Customer Satisfaction	0.204	< .001	0.137	Small	Significant	H2 is supported
H3: Service Quality	→ Customer Trust	0.419	< .001	0.297	Medium	Significant	H3 is supported
H4: Corporate Image	→ Customer Satisfaction	0.426	< .001	0.303	Medium	Significant	H4 is supported
H5: Corporate Image	→ Customer Trust	0.578	< .001	0.456	Large	Significant	H5 is supported
H6: Corporate Trust	→ Customer Satisfaction	0.094	0.049	0.061	Small	Significant	H6 is supported

Cohens Effect Size: **0.02 – small, 0.15 – medium, 0.35 – large

Table 4. Mediation Analysis

Path	Total Effect	p-value	Direct Effect	p-value	Indirect Effect	p-value	Description	Interpretation	Remark
H7: SQ → CI → CS	.705	<.001	.234	<.001	.441	<.001	Significant	Partial mediation	H7 is supported
H8: SQ → CT → CS	.688	<.001	.432	<.001	.256	<.001	Significant	Partial mediation	H8 is supported
H9: CI → CT → CS	.787	<.001	.672	<.001	.115	<.001	Significant	Partial mediation	H9 is supported

Note: Service Quality (SQ); Corporate Image (CI); Customer Trust (CT); Customer Satisfaction (CS)

Path Analysis and Hypotheses

Table 3 illustrates the path analysis with 1 segment. The researcher examined the path coefficients and their probability values to establish if **service quality influences corporate image, customer trust, and customer satisfaction**. The findings from the study demonstrate the substantial impact of service quality on various crucial factors within the corporate landscape. Firstly, service quality has been found to have a highly positive and statistically significant effect on the corporate image ($\beta = .705$, $f^2 = .498$, $p < 0.001$), customer satisfaction ($\beta = .204$, $f^2 = .137$, $p < 0.001$), and customer trust ($\beta = .419$, $f^2 = .297$, $p < 0.001$), as indicated by the favorable β coefficients and the significance of p-values below 0.05. In practical terms, this means that enhancing service quality can lead to improvements in corporate image, customer satisfaction, and customer trust.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that service quality substantially contributes to the corporate image, with an f^2 value exceeding 0.35 (Cohen, 1988). Additionally, it has a moderate impact on customer trust, as indicated by an f^2 value below 0.35 (Cohen, 1988). However, it's important to note that service quality exerts only a limited influence on customer satisfaction, as suggested by the f^2 value being less than .15 (Cohen, 1988). Nevertheless, these results strongly support hypotheses 1, 2, and 3.

Moreover, the findings highlight the significant impact of corporate image on customer satisfaction ($\beta = .426$, $f^2 = .303$, $p < 0.001$) and customer trust ($\beta = .578$, $f^2 = .456$, $p < 0.001$), as reflected in the positive β coefficients and p-values below 0.05. In practical terms, improving the corporate image can increase customer satisfaction and trust. The corporate image substantially affects customer trust, as indicated by an f^2 value exceeding 0.35 (Cohen, 1988). Conversely, it moderately affects customer satisfaction, as suggested by an f^2 value below 0.35 (Cohen, 1988). Thus, hypotheses H4 and H5 are supported by our findings.

Likewise, the analysis reveals that trust significantly influences customer satisfaction ($\beta = .094$, $f^2 = .061$, $p < 0.001$), with positive β coefficients and p-values below 0.05. This implies that improving trust can lead to enhanced customer satisfaction. However, it's important to note that trust's impact on customer satisfaction is relatively small, as indicated by the f^2 value below 0.15 (Cohen, 1988). These results offer strong support for hypothesis H7

Mediation analysis was conducted to explore the role of Corporate Image as a mediator in the connection between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction within quick-service restaurants.

As indicated in Table 4, the total effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction within quick-service restaurants was highly significant ($\beta = .705$, $p < 0.001$). Notably, even when we introduced Corporate Image into the model, the effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction remained significant ($\beta = .234$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the indirect effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction through the mediation of Corporate Image was also significant ($\beta = 0.441$, $p < 0.001$). This compelling finding suggests that Corporate Image acts as a mediating factor in the relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction within the quick-service restaurant industry. Consequently, Hypothesis 7 receives support, affirming that Corporate Image plays a pivotal mediating role in shaping the relationship between the quality of service and customer satisfaction within quick-service restaurants.

Likewise, as indicated in Table 4, the total effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction within quick-service restaurants was highly significant ($\beta = .705$, $p < 0.001$). Notably, even when we introduced Customer Trust into the model, the effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction remained significant ($\beta = .432$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the indirect effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction through the mediation of

Customer Trust was also significant ($\beta = 0.256 < 0.001$). This compelling finding suggests that Customer Trust indeed acts as a mediating factor in the relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction within the quick-service restaurant industry. Consequently, Hypothesis 8 receives support, affirming that Customer Trust plays a pivotal mediating role in shaping the relationship between the quality of service and customer satisfaction within quick-service restaurants.

In addition, results showed that the total effect of Corporate Image on Customer Satisfaction within quick-service restaurants was highly significant ($\beta = .787, p < .001$). Notably, even when we introduced Customer Trust into the model, the effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction remained significant ($\beta = .672, p < .001$). Furthermore, the indirect effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction through the mediation of Customer Trust was also significant ($\beta = 0.115 < .001$). This compelling finding suggests that Customer Trust is a mediating factor in the relationship between Corporate Image and Customer Satisfaction within the quick-service restaurant industry. Consequently, Hypothesis 9 receives support, affirming that Customer Trust plays a pivotal mediating role in shaping the relationship between corporate image and customer satisfaction within quick-service restaurants.

4. DISCUSSION

H1: The perceived corporate image of quick-service restaurants is significantly influenced by the service quality they provide.

Based on the results of the study, the corporate image of QSRs is significantly influenced by the quality of service they provide thus H1 is accepted. The result confirms the conclusion of Cheng et al. (2014) in the context of Malaysian hotel industry which found that tourists who receive high-quality service from a hotel are more likely to have a positive corporate image of the hotel. The validation of H1 also supports the findings of Zameer et al. (2018) which found that there is a large beneficial impact that service quality has on company image in the banking industry. Furthermore, the result agrees with the findings of Koo (2022) and Yingfei et al. (2022) who found that service quality has a significant positive influence on the corporate image in the KTV industry and logistic service providers, respectively.

H2. The quality of service influences customer satisfaction in quick-service restaurants.

The findings from the study demonstrate the substantial impact of service quality on customer satisfaction thus H2 is accepted. This substantiates the findings of several empirical studies across different industries. In the banking industry, service quality has been identified to have a significant and positive impact on customer satisfaction (Khan & Fasih, 2014; Al-Azzam, 2015). Whereas, in the hotel industry, Ahmad et al., (2019); Nneoma and Uwabor (2021) have found a substantial correlation between SQ and CS. In the case of restaurants, the findings of this study share the conclusions of Du Plessis (2020); Bujisic et al. (2014); Richardson et al. (2019); Lai, 2015; Jalilvand et al. (2017); Yulisetiari (2014); Murad and Ali (2015); Mahato and Goet (2020); Tuncer et al. (2021); Uslu (2020); Spyridou (2017); Monther and Mahadevan (2019); Lau et al. (2019); Chun et al. (2020); Yu (2021); Lau and Cheung (2013); Amin and Isa, 2008 as cited by Fida et al., (2020) found that a restaurant's service quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

This result however is in contrast with the conclusion of Sochenda (2021) in his study conducted in Cambodia with 480 fast-food restaurant customers which inferred that service quality has an insignificant impact on customer satisfaction.

H3. The quality of service influences the level of customer trust in quick-service restaurants.

The service quality of QSR has been found to have a highly positive and statistically significant effect on customer trust thus H3 is accepted. Lanin and Hermanto (2019) who conducted a study to determine the effect of service quality toward public satisfaction and public trust in local government in Indonesia found the same results that service quality influences trust. Similarly, Zubair et al. (2019); Kaila et al. (2021); Kaur and Soch (2018) inferred that the greatest indicator of service quality is when customers trust your brand or your business.

H4. The corporate image influences customer satisfaction in quick-service restaurants.

The analysis of data revealed that the construct of corporate image has exhibited a significant and positive impact on customer satisfaction thus H4 is accepted. This substantiates the study of Tu and Hsiao-Chien (2014); Faria and Mendes (2013); Sallam (2016); Esmailpour & Barjoei (2016) which found that the company image positively and significantly affects consumer satisfaction.

H5. The corporate image influences customer trust in quick-service restaurants.

According to the analyzed data, corporate image influences customer trust in quick-service restaurants thus H5 is accepted. This result confirms what was found in the study of Amin et al. (2013); Suhaily and Darmoyo (2017) that corporate image has a significant and positive effect on customer trust.

Due to COVID-19, consumers are more concerned with health and well-being than ever. They are concerned about what they ingest in their body and are curious about the ingredients in their diet. Maintaining a committed consumer base in the future will depend on meeting this need. As we transition to the new normal and eventually reach the pre-pandemic situation, consumers will remain cautious about what they eat and will observe the highest level of safety protocols (Cheng et al., 2022).

H6. Customer trust influences customer satisfaction in quick-service restaurants.

The findings of the study revealed that customer trust influences customer satisfaction thus H6 is accepted. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Surupati et al. (2020) which found that customer trust has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. The same was inferred by Silviana et al., 2022 in a study of Gen Z students regarding the quality of electronic services; Darmawan (2019) and Leninkumar (2017) among bank clients; Chinomona & Sandada, 2013 in the African retailing setting; Cheng et al. (2016) among tourists in Taiwan.

H7. Corporate image plays a mediating role in the relationship between the quality of service and customer satisfaction in quick-service restaurants.

H8. Customer trust plays a mediating role in the relationship between the quality of service and customer satisfaction in quick-service restaurants.

H9. Customer trust plays a mediating role in the relationship between the corporate image and customer satisfaction in quick-service restaurants.

The results of the mediation analysis found that corporate image and corporate trust mediate the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction while corporate trust mediates the relationship between corporate image and customer satisfaction thus H7, H8, and H9 are all accepted.

These results affirmed the findings of Chien and Chi (2019) which suggest that corporate image is a mediator between service quality and customer satisfaction. Similarly, the studies of lam and Noor (2020); Hassan et al. (2019); Dam and Dam (2021); Ramesh et al. (2019); Islam et al. (2021); Narteh & Braimah (2020); Panda et al. (2019); Chen et al. (2019) have inferred that discovered that CI has a positive and significant mediating influence on service quality.

On the other hand, the mediating role of customer trust as affirmed by the results of this research was a confirmation of the findings of the following researchers: Lie et al. (2021); Qalati et al. (2021); Alshurideh et al. (2022); Rehman et al. (2019); Zasuwa (2019); Tandon et al., 2020.

The mediating role of corporate image and customer trust as inferred by this research proves that these factors are indeed important in ensuring that customers are not only satisfied with the quality of service. Millennial customers pay attention to the image of the company. In an article written by Greiner (2018), he emphasized the importance of millennials in the economy, and their enormous purchasing power continues to grow so much so that companies that want to stay connected to this group will have to think differently or risk becoming irrelevant. To better serve millennials, it is necessary to understand how they behave as consumers.

5. CONCLUSION

The summary of results served as the basis of the following conclusions:

- It can be inferred that Millennials remain a huge market for quick-service restaurants. To better serve this customer group, QSR marketing experts need to be aware of the distinctive buying patterns of millennials. Because they are curious and open to trying new culinary experiences, Millennials present several potentials for QSRs. More than just fuel, they see eating as an experience, and 81% of Millennials say they use food to learn about other cultures. For QSRs to successfully appeal to Millennial customers, they must also be willing to provide variety, affordability, and technology.
- The female gender visits quick service restaurants to dine more than their male counterpart. In a 2020 article published by an online food magazine, Total Food Service, fast food is becoming a preference shared by more and more women consumers as well as men which suggests that the business world is truly undergoing a paradigm shift. Fast food is now preferred by women almost as much as it is by males, and if the trend continues, women may even prefer it more in the upcoming years.
- Filipino Millennial customers of quick-service restaurants are satisfied when the staff and the store in general show empathy towards them ensuring that the products and services are reliable, and the service is responsive. Moreover, the store must be clean, organized, and sanitized, and must have visible supplies like alcohol in the store. The

staff must be courteous, knowledgeable, properly and neatly groomed, and must have the initiative to ask customers if they need something without being called.

- Corporate image is important to Filipino Millennials. Today, many customers, particularly Millennials choose your product or service not just because it is the best alternative available, but also because of your company's values. Millennials want alignment, meaning their values must be aligned with the values of the brand. This concept even applies to employment.
- Millennials must trust your brand. Authenticity and transparency matter to Millennials. A QSR might have the best food, the lowest price, the highest-paid celebrity endorsers, and the noisiest marketing campaigns but if they do not trust your brand simply because the brand lacks authenticity, it will not connect well to the audience, the Millennials.

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