



## CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

**Mamadiyorov Farrukh**

*"Silk Road" International University of  
Tourism and Cultural Heritage,  
Tashkent State University of Economics  
ORCID: 0009-0007-4928-89802  
[farruxsh97@gmail.com](mailto:farruxsh97@gmail.com),  
[farrux.mamadiyorov@univ-silkroad.uz](mailto:farrux.mamadiyorov@univ-silkroad.uz)*

**Davronov Akmalbek**

*"Silk Road" International University of  
Tourism and Cultural Heritage  
ORCID: 0009-0005-4508-2868  
[davronov\\_akmal@mail.ru](mailto:davronov_akmal@mail.ru)*

**Annotation.** *This study examines customer service management regarding Uzbek gastronomy and the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction. Research was conducted through an online quantitative survey in Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara. Data was obtained from patrons who had recently visited local restaurants. Important service parameters such as order fulfillment, pricing, and customer care were evaluated. Analyzing response patterns, clients value gaining accurate orders at competitive prices. Improvement recommendations catered to clearer menus, faster service, and increased staff attention. Clients have a reasonably high appreciation of traditional hospitality. However, clients tend to value systematized and professional service as well. Applying universal service theories to a particularistic rich culture setting contributes to hospitality scholarship. Alongside, ethnic restaurants' managers aiming towards greater patron satisfaction while maintaining cultural integrity are provided with useful guidance.*

**Keywords:** *customer service management, service quality, customer satisfaction, uzbek gastronomic tourism, hospitality industry, restaurant service operations, consumer behavior, traditional hospitality, ethnic restaurant management, cultural authenticity.*

## MIJOZLARGA XIZMAT KO'RSATISHNI BOSHQARISH STRATEGIYALARI

**Mamadiyorov Farrux**

*"Ipak yo'li" turizm va madaniy meros xalqaro universiteti,  
Toshkent davlat iqtisodiyot universiteti*

**Davronov Akmalbek**

*"Ipak yo'li" turizm va madaniy meros xalqaro universiteti*

**Annotatsiya.** *Ushbu tadqiqot O'zbekiston gastronomiyasida mijozlarga xizmat ko'rsatishni boshqarish masalasini o'rganadi. Tadqiqot Toshkent, Samarqand va Buxoroda onlayn so'rovnoma asosida olib borildi. Respondentlarning fikrlari asosida xizmat sifati ayniqsa buyurtmaning aniqligi, narx va sifat muvozanati hamda xodimlarning muomalasi baholandi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatdiki, mijozlar uchun eng muhim jihatlar bu to'g'ri buyurtma va narxning asoslanganligi. Respondentlar xizmatni yaxshilash uchun menyularni tushunarli qilish, xizmat tezligini oshirish*

va xodimlarning e'tiborini kuchaytirishni taklif etdilar. An'anaviy mehmondo'stlik qadrlansa-da, mijozlar yanada tizimli va professional yondashuvni kutmoqda. Tadqiqot xizmat ko'rsatish nazariyalarini o'zbek sharoitida tatbiq etishga hissa qo'shadi va restoranlar uchun amaliy tavsiyalarni taklif etadi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** mijozlarga xizmat ko'rsatishni boshqarish, xizmat sifati, mijozlar ehtiyojini qondirish, O'zbekiston gastronomik turizmi, mehmondo'stlik sanoati, restoran xizmatlari operatsiyalari, iste'molchilarning xulq-atvori, an'anaviy mehmondo'stlik, etnik restoranlarni boshqarish, madaniy o'ziga xoslik.

## СТРАТЕГИИ УПРАВЛЕНИЯ ОБСЛУЖИВАНИЕМ КЛИЕНТОВ

**Мамадиёров Фаррух**

Международный университет туризма  
и культурного наследия «Шелковый путь»,  
Ташкентский государственный экономический университет

**Давронов Акмалбек**

Международный университет туризма  
и культурного наследия «Шелковый путь»

**Аннотация.** В данном исследовании рассматривается управление обслуживанием клиентов в сфере узбекской гастрономии и влияние качества обслуживания на удовлетворенность клиентов. Исследование проводилось с помощью количественного онлайн-опроса в Ташкенте, Самарканде и Бухаре. Данные были получены от посетителей, которые недавно посетили местные рестораны. Были оценены такие важные параметры обслуживания, как выполнение заказов, ценообразование и обслуживание клиентов. Анализируя характер откликов, клиенты ценят возможность получать точные заказы по конкурентоспособным ценам. Рекомендации по улучшению включают в себя более четкое меню, более быстрое обслуживание и повышенное внимание персонала. Клиенты достаточно высоко ценят традиционное гостеприимство. Однако клиенты, как правило, также ценят систематизированное и профессиональное обслуживание. Применение теории универсального обслуживания в условиях богатой культурной среды способствует развитию сферы гостеприимства. Кроме того, менеджеры этнических ресторанов, стремящиеся к повышению удовлетворенности посетителей при сохранении культурной целостности, получают полезные рекомендации.

**Ключевые слова:** управление обслуживанием клиентов, качество обслуживания, удовлетворенность клиентов, узбекский гастрономический туризм, индустрия гостеприимства, ресторанное обслуживание, поведение потребителей, традиционное гостеприимство, этнический ресторанный менеджмент, культурная аутентичность.

### Introduction.

Uzbekistan's gastronomy is one of the country's most colorful rich cultural heritages, embodying centuries of commerce, custom, and hospitality. Orbiting as a historic crossroad of the Silk Road, Uzbekistan has developed a rich culinary tradition focused on plov, manti, lagman, and shashlik - all capturing the essence of sustenance foods and celebratory dishes that are still common among the people today (Matlatipov et al., 2022). Everything is enhanced by a strong culture of food and tea that is treasured by residents and visitors, with chaikhonas, oshkhonas, and modern cafes serving people. With the growing openness of the country to global tourism and development, the hospitality sector has notably advanced. Yulchieva and Bashiru Jibril (2024) note that small and medium-sized food enterprises emerged as essential actors in urban economies, especially in Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara. Nevertheless,

while Uzbekistan has a rich culinary heritage, it is often accompanied by informal and erratic customer service rooted in traditional practices rather than systematic business approaches, leading to gaps in operational standards (Lee, Park & Lee, 2022). The warmth, hospitality, and generosity associated with traditional Uzbek culture continues to positively affect the experience of dining. However, in modern gastronomy, especially where local and foreign business competition exists, these positive attributes often do not translate to appropriate service delivery. The lack of quality service training, clear standards of service, and feedback loops from diners are some issues noted in cafes and restaurants across the nation (Matlatipov et al., 2022). Positive customer interactions and service have been widely acknowledged in international hospitality and customer services research as linked to a customer's satisfaction, intention to return, and even actively recommend the services to others (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2024; Maxham, 2001). In Uzbekistan, however, service excellence is poorly researched and developed. Many companies continue to use outdated and unstructured methods of interaction, with little understanding of trying to systematize customer service excellence (Nosratabadi, Mosavi, & Lakner, 2020). Additionally, technological aspects of customer service, which include online booking, digital menu boards, and customer review features, are still in their budding stage in Uzbekistan. Most modernized or large restaurants situated within the metropolitan areas seem to dabble in their use, but the vast majority of businesses operate without any form of these systems (Kansakar, Munir, & Shabani, 2017). This has created a service gap that stifles growth particularly while shift in customer expectations becomes a necessity. It is equally important to understand the status of customer service in Uzbek gastronomy. This research looks into the practices, analyzes the gaps, and provide solutions using the specific operational dynamics of Uzbek food service enterprises. In addressing the research problem, the study will answer these fundamental key questions:

- What current customer service practices are being employed in Uzbek restaurants and cafes?
- In what ways does providing uniform, consistent, and high-quality service represent the greatest challenge in the industry?
- What techniques are suitable for the improvement of customer service in Uzbek gastronomy without being culturally imposing?
- In exploring the objective of this study, the focus will be set on enhancing the management of customer service in the gastronomic industry of Uzbekistan. With this in mind, the key objectives are:
  - Assess the current customer service practices in modern and traditional Uzbek cuisine restaurants and eateries.
  - Determine the key difficulties encountered by the service staff and customer management in achieving customer satisfaction.
  - To recommend appropriate and effective strategies that will improve customer service quality.

### Literature review.

Customer service as an operational sub-discipline in service management has gained considerable attention in hospitality research because it dramatically affects customer loyalty, brand image, and organizational profitability. The major theories in the area suggest that service experiences comprise both material and non-material components which together form customer value perception (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2024). Material components encompass a range of timeliness, order accuracy, order courtesy, and cleanliness, and non-material components include behavior, empathy, voice, and atmosphere.

Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, and Gremler (2002) note that the successful service delivery is reliant on more than just efficiency; rather, an identification with the firm must also exist. Such bonds are important for retention and loyalty. In the same way, the service-profit chain theory

developed by Heskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger (1997) presents a simultaneous relationship between satisfied employers, quality service, and business growth over time. These concepts cover most of the literature on service excellence from other parts of the world.

Unlike other emerging markets, Uzbekistan has a diverse formal business sector that diverges from regional cultural norms. Thus, although these theories are relevant to the case gastronomy model of Uzbekistan, they need to be adapted due to differences in socio-ethnocultural frameworks and constraints unique to Uzbekistan.

#### *Uzbek Gastronomy as a Cultural Heritage of the World*

Throughout the country, treating friends and family to meals embodies a significant blend of cultural and social customs. Furthermore, the culinary practices such as serving green tea prior to the meal and offering the guest the most honorable portion, for example the best part on top of the plov, speak volumes about the culture. Very few cultures around the world emphasize these values and practices, making Uzbekistan stand out and enhancing its recognition on the global stage. Such customs also greatly impact the interiors and atmosphere of Uzbek national restaurants, chaikhonas, and oshkhonas that are unique upright conveying authentic culture (Matlatipov et al., 2022).

Although such practices are welcoming, they tend to be rather informal and unsystematic. In many organizations, service delivery is largely dependent on individual personality as opposed to training. Employees can be nice and generally courteous, but may not be able to consistently manage complaints, make recommendations, or adhere to basic hygiene standards. In more or highly advanced markets, Yulchieva and Bashiru Jibril (2024) explain that customer satisfaction gaps for the culturally rich markets with sophisticated demands is largely due to the imbalance intention versus practice."

In addition, with other competing services available and customer orientation on the rise, the notion that warmth of culture hospitality customer retention should be sufficient is deemed insufficient. Along with being warm, urban consumers, for example, expect that such hospitality is done in a prompt and proactive manner.

#### *Shift in Demand and Customer Expectations*

Access to the internet, international travel, and even exposure to different service standards are rising tremendously, which makes the customer market in Uzbekistan articulate new demands. Locally and internationally, customers expect high standards, for instance: effective service delivery, ease of communication, clean environment, and responsiveness to customer feedback whether at an oshkhona or at an upscale city cafe.

Lee, Park and Lee (2022) indicate that in the case of Uzbekistan, customer loyalty is more sensitive to service uniformity and professionalism. However, many of the food service enterprises in Uzbekistan seem to be ill-equipped to handle these expectations. Job functions are often not well specified, employees are usually not trained, and customer response systems are non-existent or poorly structured.

Meeting these expectations in service delivery can lead to a gap satisfaction and dissatisfaction despite the quality of food being offered. Food quality issues are being increasingly recognized as a problem in developing food economies, as noted by Nosratabadi, Mosavi and Lakner (2020). How well businesses will respond to this change is going to largely define their competitiveness in the long run.

Investigating Uzbekistan's gastronomy customer services requires cursoring analysis with Turkey, Iran and Azerbaijan due to their shared culture bounds. These countries have striking similarities in customs and traditions pertaining to hospitality influenced by Islam and Turkic cultures, which makes them ideal for studying how tradition and modernization coexist in the food service industry. In Turkey, service culture has changed quite a bit. Modern restaurants in Istanbul and Ankara have adopted many modern efficiencies, including formal staff training, professional serving protocols, and the use of technology (Kansakar, Munir, & Shabani, 2017). However, the Turkish hospitality—inextricably bound to generosity and

warmth—still remains strong. Even in traditional lokantas, the use of uniforms, basic service scripting, and customer feedback is now standard. In his work, Bitner (1990) pointed out that customer satisfaction is a lot better when the building and the people in the service pay attention to the customer's needs. This practice is common in the dining industry in Turkey these days. Another good comparison is Iran. It has rich culinary and hospitality traditions similar to Uzbekistan, however, most of their urban restaurants tend to serve them at a much faster rate under international standards.

Menu personalization and proactive complaint handling reveal that customer-centered practices are more developed within Iranian gastronomy (Nosratabadi, Mosavi & Lakner, 2020). Moreover, the tourism industry as well as diaspora returnees have, to some degree, forced Iranian businesses to improve service standards while still preserving cultural heritage. Azerbaijan represents a hybrid model. In Baku, sophisticated restaurants have incorporated modern hospitality features such as offering numerous languages to be spoken and allowing their customers to book tables digitally or through apps. Loyalty programs are also available, but in the countryside, service remains informal. This is another example of a developing region, like in the case of Uzbekistan, or Earlier Stage Transition. However, there is a growing recognition among the Azerbaijani managers of the application of customer feedback, which is lacking in many Uzbek establishments (Oshrat et al., 2022). In contrast, Uzbekistan's gastronomy domain continues to be characterized by informal service and personal hospitality rather than defined service protocols (Yulchieva & Bashiru Jibril, 2024; Matlatipov et al., 2022). Although it provides a sense of warmth and cultural touch, the absence of formal training, standardized processes, and systems for engaging customers tends to provide inconsistent experiences. According to Lee, Park, and Lee (2022), in developing economies such as Uzbekistan, enhancing customer satisfaction hinges not just on the quality of food but on the professionalism of the service staff as well. Such discrepancies show that where there are shared cultural underpinnings, countries have managed to transform their hospitality industry while modernizing, all the while preserving their heritage. With appropriate investments in staff training, elaboration of service protocols, and the gradual application of digital technologies, Uzbekistan can further strengthen its competitiveness while preserving its unique identity.

Based on literature review and comparative analysis, the following hypotheses are outlined in order to guide the empirical phase of this research. These hypotheses examine the impact of service delivery, employee's level of expertise, and cultural factors on customer satisfaction within the context of Uzbek gastronomy.

Hypothesis 1:

A positive association exists between customer satisfaction and service consistency in Uzbekistan's restaurant industry. As stated by Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2024), service consistency as reliable, repeatable service performance is one of the most telling indicators of customer retention. In Uzbekistan, where many businesses or service providers operate with informal service routines, inconsistency tends to erode trust and satisfaction (Lee et al., 2022). This hypothesis aims to determine whether low perceived quality as a result of inconsistency would be mitigated by adding even the most basic elements of consistency (e.g. greetings and timing of service).

Hypothesis 2:

Absence of formal service training for staff has a direct negative effect on customer perceived service quality. Maxham (2001), along with Hart, Heskett, and Sasser (1990) underscore that trained employees are better able to respond to service delivery complications, customize interaction, and improve overall customer satisfaction.

This hypothesis explores the relationship between training and customers perception in Uzbekistan where most service employees are recruited without formal hospitality training.

Hypothesis 3:

Cultural hospitality techniques are positively related to customer satisfaction in conjunction with modern service standards.

Matlatipov et al. (2022) report that customary Uzbeks' hospitality such as serving green tea or bread is of great importance for the dining experience. Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, and Gremler (2002), as well as Gremler and Gwinner (2000) suggest that satisfaction stems from an emotional bond and reliability of service. This hypothesis is interested to find out if the combination of modern efficiency and blended traditional hospitality creates a better impression than either one on its own.

These hypotheses will shed light on how the blend of culture, service professionalism, and customer expectations shape perceptions of service quality in the context of Uzbek gastronomy. Additionally, they provide a strategy for defining appropriate sectoral solutions that conservatively improve standards without abandoning tradition while enhancing quality and competitiveness.

The studies analyzed in this chapter underline the profound attention being paid to customer service management in hospitality and gastronomy disciplines all over the world and specifically within Uzbekistan's wider context. Foundational frameworks outline the importance of various service elements which include tangible aspects like speed and cleanliness as well as intangibles such as staff demeanor, emotional involvement, and cultural compassion (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2024; Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler, 2002). All these factors are seen as fundamental for achieving loyalty, positive customer experiences, and business growth.

In the case of Uzbek gastronomy, hospitality is embedded in a number of traditional virtues like *luchako*, guest honoring, revered generosity and combined social meals. These elements of the customer service culture build a strong foundation of sincerity and affection. The literature does show, however, a growing problem with the blend of traditional hospitality and modern service delivery. A majority of the Uzbek food service places, especially those located outside the urban areas, still depend on informal and unstructured service methods which make the experience unpredictable for clients (Matlatipov et al., 2022; Lee, Park, & Lee, 2022).

Comparative analysis reveals that countries like Turkey, Iran, and Azerbaijan have been capable of adapting to the contemporary customer's needs without losing their culture. These countries have gradually incorporated service training, operational procedures, and modern technology without losing the spirit of traditional hospitality. Uzbekistan is at a similar juncture where emerging customer needs—triggered by globalization, travel, and digital technologies—are compelling food businesses to change and professionalize their service models (Nosratabadi, Mosavi, & Lakner, 2020; Yulchieva & Bashiru Jibril, 2024).

Moreover, the review highlighted several gaps in research, especially the almost complete absence of empirical research examining the practice, perception, and management of customer service in Uzbekistan's restaurant industry. Very few studies analyze the views of service employees, and even fewer examine how traditional culture operates within commercial hospitality contexts.

This study intends to address these gaps by analyzing customer service strategies in Uzbek gastronomy, evaluating current practices, and determining how cultural assets can be blended with professional service orientation. The next chapter will present the rationale in combination with the methodology used to study these problems.

### **Methodology.**

The method for conducting this study is mixed-methods, with concentration on collecting quantitative data through a structured online survey. The broader aim is to assess systematically customer perceptions of service quality in Uzbek gastronomy in multiple locations and locations to provide measurable insights alongside practical relevance. Even if

the research is primarily quantitative, it considers contextual explanation using a carefully crafted survey that captures key service elements pertaining to both traditional and contemporary restaurant settings.

It was constructed through an online survey tool and sent out electronically to patrons who had eaten at restaurants in Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara recently. These three cities came to attention because of their prominence to Uzbekistan's gastronomic and tourist geopolitical landscape. Northern capital Tashkent represents modern urban dining style, while Samarkand and Bukhara are cultural heritage cities with a high concentration of traditional restaurants catering to locals and tourists.

The survey was composed solely of closed-ended questions tailored to assess customer satisfaction across multiple service dimensions. Customers indicated their satisfaction on a 5-point Likert scale from "very dissatisfied" (1) to "very satisfied"

The survey included core service aspects like:

- Staff behavior and attitude
- Speed of Service
- Cleanliness and hygiene
- Accuracy of orders
- Overall customer satisfaction

By utilizing a closed-ended, scaled response format, enhanced efficiency in data collection and analysis is obtained. During the survey period, 20 valid responses were collected. Though this is a small sample size, it serves as a starting point for capturing trends and shared perceptions among restaurant customers in the chosen cities. The analysis of the results will focus on basic descriptive statistics to determine average ratings and satisfaction levels as well as identify prevalent service gaps. This approach is justifiable, given the goals of the study, to answer questions related to the level of service provided, its evaluation, and necessary adjustments needed for other areas in the Uzbekistan gastronomy industry (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2024; Lee, Park, & Lee, 2022). The population of this study is restricted to patrons of Uzbek cafes and restaurants in Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara. These cities were selected for their cultural and economic significance, and because they provide different forms of dining styles from fast-casual urban franchises to traditional heritage dining venues. This geographic spread helps ensure that the sample captures varying customer interactions in Uzbekistan's growing food service industry. In view of the limited resources and time, the study used non-probability convenience sampling method. These respondents were contacted via social media, messaging applications, and email. It was voluntary and all participants were required to complete the survey only if they had dined at a restaurant in one of the three focus cities in the recent past. This approach ensured that the responses provided were pertinent to the actual experiences of the respondents. A total of 20 responses were collected. Despite the small sample size, the data remains valuable in expanding understanding of customer perception and in aiding preliminary assessment of primary service concerns. The data include a mix of customers from various demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds, with differing preferences on restaurant types, which helps to capture a broader picture on the multiple contexts of service quality. All participants were provided with an overview of the study and were guaranteed anonymity. No revealing or identifying information was collected as ethical considerations were upheld. While the limited sample size may restrict the generalizability of the findings, data collected from convenience sampling can still serve as a useful exploratory basis. The conclusions drawn from this study may assist in determining certain trends, formulating hypotheses for subsequent investigations, and effecting beneficial changes in service delivery in the Uzbek gastronomy industry (Maxham, 2001; Nosratabadi, Mosavi, & Lakner, 2020).

Regardless of the chosen methodology's strengths, particular shortcomings must be recognized. First, the sample estimate of 20 respondents is quite small when considered from

the statistical perspective which diminishes the value of the findings as well as generalizability to the wider population of restaurant patrons in Uzbekistan. Hence, the findings are best viewed as preliminary rather than conclusive (Flick, 2018). Second, convenience sampling comes with bias whereby participants were chosen from a non-randomized framework based purely on availability. A specific group of people who opted to take the survey may be divergent from the general population in their perception of customer relations or level of interaction with technology. Respondents are also biased because they covered their experiences which opens them up to recall bias or bias from social desirability (Maxham, 2001). The absence of qualitative components is considered a primary limitation. There is some merit in collecting and analyzing data this way, but it is difficult to explain why customers have particular sentiments towards their service encounters because of lack of qualitative data. Some cultural or emotional aspects may, without qualitative data, remain unscoped. Even with these restrictions in mind, the methodology has a number of strengths and opportunities. The survey was conducted online, which made it easier to access respondents in multiple cities, including Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara, which added to geographical diversity. Further, the collections of findings through the Likert scale technique enables all essential features of services to be measured, thus, the results can help inform other studies with bigger size samples or those focusing on specific target audiences. The work can also be a starting point for future studies that intensively interrogate other elements of services through interviews or focus group discussions. Plus, these findings can act as benchmarks for starting points in studies planned to determine the impact of service quality training or customer feedback mechanisms on the service provision in the sphere of Uzbek cuisine (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2024). This chapter explained the research methodology for studying customer service practices in Uzbek gastronomy. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used focusing primarily on quantitative approaches with an online survey as the data collection tool. The study targeted 20 participants from three major cities, Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara, to provide a snapshot of the customers' perceptions of satisfaction and service delivery problems at the restaurants. The adoption of pre-defined, closed-format survey questions offered a straightforward quantifiable analysis of primary operative areas like personnel interaction, service delivery time, and facility hygiene. Confidentiality and consent were maintained as ethical considerations, as participants' identities were kept private, and participation was not imposed. Despite the sampling and sample size constraints, this approach is useful for preliminary inquiries and guides comprehensive follow-up investigations. This chapter will analyze the results obtained from this methodology, focusing on diagnosing the indicators of customer satisfaction categorized by discernable patterns and trends. These findings will provide a basis for strategic interventions aimed at optimizing service provision in Uzbekistan's gastronomy industry.

### Results and analysis.

In this section, I discuss and analyze the outcomes of a survey conducted to assess customers' perceptions of service quality in Uzbek gastronomy. The primary dataset was gathered from an online questionnaire administered to 20 respondents who had recently visited restaurants in Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara. The aim of this chapter is to determine the most critical service dimensions affecting customer satisfaction and pinpoint how Uzbek restaurants can enhance their service delivery.

The analysis is designed to help answer the central research questions and validate the different hypotheses formulated in earlier chapters. The results are grouped into various categories using the customer's demographic profile, relevant surgery and their accompanying dining habits, expectations, and priorities in restaurant focus. The results of the research are described using descriptive statistics of quantitative data including frequency distributions and percentages. This chapter will start with an overview of the respondents' demographic

variables such as age and gender, then describe their dining frequency and importance ratings for certain service dimensions like order accuracy and value for money. The last part will provide an overview of customer comments on how services could be improved, shedding light on service gaps and expectations. These findings serve as the starting point of the discussion in the subsequent chapter, where they will be analyzed alongside the literature within contextual elements of Uzbek gastronomy.

**Table 1****Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age Range	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
18–24	17	85.0	85.0
25–34	2	10.0	95.0
35–44	1	5.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0

It can be seen from the age profile of respondents to the survey that there is a marked preponderance of younger respondents. According to the provided information, 85% of the participants (17 out of 20) were in the 18-24 age bracket, which constitutes the single largest cohort within the sample. A smaller proportion of respondents were in the 25-34 age group, making up 10% (2 participants), while the 35-44 age category had only 5% (1 respondent) from this pool.

This stark age distribution is likely to correspond to people who not only have the highest propensity to complete online surveys, but also those who routinely go out to eat in urban areas such as Tashkent and Samarkand. In addition, it implies that this research is likely more suitable to the views and preferences of Gen Z and younger Millennials, who generally have different expectations of services compared to older customers. Prior research has shown that younger customers focus more on the speed of service, friendliness of the staff, and the overall price paid (Lee, Park, & Lee, 2022; Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2024). A further concern for this study might also include how older customers aged 35 years and beyond are underrepresented which means that other younger customers might serve differently, suggesting that further study is required to address gaps in data throughout different ages. This dataset does capture some older customers, yet it is likely that they have a different set of expectations pertaining to the services offered; for instance, more tailored rest. Even with this decay, the age background information supplied makes sense within the context in which the survey was put across and its results obtained. Because most of the responses came from the younger clients, the younger clients—who consider other factors like being talked to in a polite way, time minimization, and getting value for money—are the likely respondents to all the questions posed. These answers will also be the most dominant ones.

**Table 2****Gender Distribution of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	13	65.0	65.0	65.0
Male	7	35.0	35.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

The sample is predominantly female, with 65% (13 out of 20) of the respondents being female and 35% (7 respondents) male. This means that Women made up almost two-thirds of those who responded to the survey.

This distribution may indicate an overarching trend within hospitality research indicating that female consumers tend to be greater participants of post-service surveys as well as evaluators of the overall dining experience (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler, 2002). It may also mean that women from the cities under study are more prone to visiting restaurants or more willing to provide feedback on their customer service interactions.

The greater proportion of female respondents needs to be taken note of in the context of evaluating the survey as a whole, particularly in cases where the respondent's gender is likely to impact his or her expectations or satisfaction responses. Prior research indicates that women are more likely to pay attention to the cleanliness of the premises, how polite the staff is, as well as their level of attention to the customers than men, who tend to focus more on the speed and functionality of the services offered (Gremler & Gwinner, 2000; Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2024). Therefore, the somewhat higher proportion of women represented in the responses is likely to determine the results depicted in the subsequent sections.

Regardless of these findings, it must be stated that the sample is limited in size, and that the sample's gender distribution, albeit unbalanced, still allows for some form of comparison. Other research is needed that broadens limitations to obtain more balanced anthropometric samples in order to determine if a difference in gender perceptions of service in Uzbek gastronomy exists.

This gender breakdown provides important understanding of the survey participants and helps put the feedback regarding customer service preferences in context.

Table 3

## Case Processing Summary

	N	Marginal Percentage
How often do you dine out at the Uzbek restaurants?		
2-3 times a month	5	25.0%
Less than once a month	7	35.0%
Once a month	4	20.0%
Once a week	4	20.0%
How important is the accuracy of orders to you?		
1	12	60.0%
2	2	10.0%
3	2	10.0%
4	1	5.0%
5	3	15.0%
How important is the value for money to you?		
1	7	35.0%
2	4	20.0%
3	6	30.0%
5	3	15.0%
What could Uzbek restaurants do to improve their customer service?		
Better menu explanations	10	50.0%
Faster service	5	25.0%
More attentive staff	3	15.0%
More efficient ordering process	2	10.0%

The case processing summary captures the specific survey questions administered to assess how customers perceive service quality at restaurants in Uzbekistan. The table summary

has four major components: dining frequency (how often one visits a restaurant), importance of order accuracy, importance of value for money, and recommendations for enhancement of service. With respect to dining frequency, the greatest percentage of respondents (35%) categorized themselves as dining at Uzbek restaurants less than once a month. This was followed by 25% who fall in the 2-3 times a month category, and 20% each who come once a month and once a week. This indicates that while a significant number of patrons are infrequent diners, a considerable proportion engage with the gastronomy industry stake ostensibly with his portion suggesting a strong engagement with the gastronomy sector. Consistent service delivery is important for both casual and frequent customers. With respect to order accuracy, 60% of respondents considered it their most important aspect (value 1) of service showing high prioritization. The minimal lower ratings included 5% at level 4 and 15% at level 5. These findings underscore operational precision in order handling. When assessing the significance of value for money, the responses were slightly more spread out, but still skewed towards a high level of importance. 35% indicated this was their primary concern, with 30% selecting level 3 and 20% selecting level 2. This suggests that customers do consider the balance between price and service quality offered. The last question, looking at how Uzbek restaurants can enhance their service, provided some constructive responses. The response with the highest vote, showing a need for more descriptive menus, was selected by 50% of respondents. This suggests that vague or insufficient information pertaining to the dishes is an issue. Followed by calls for faster service, more active staff attendance, and improved ordering procedures, these suggestions received 25%, 15%, and 10% respectively. These responses are in line with other data gathered during this research, emphasizing the need for better communication, speed, and staff participation. The case summary offers an elementary insight into the customer's expectations of the service, coupled with the level of dissatisfaction that they feel provides ample justification for the recommendation that is offered later within this thesis.

### **Dining Habits and Service Expectations**

#### **Dining Frequency**

The data reflects a relatively balanced distribution regarding the frequency with which respondents eat at Uzbek restaurants. The most prominent group—35%—indicated that they dine out less than once a month which suggests that infrequent visits are usually reserved for special occasions. In contrast, 25% are more regular and dine out 2–3 times a month. Two smaller groups comprise diners who eat once a month or once a week, each making up 20% of the total.

This pattern reveals that most customers are infrequent diners, which affects customer service expectations. Infrequent visitors may prioritize a well-rounded experience because they do not dine out as often. Therefore, service and food quality must be consistent to increase the chances of repeat visits, particularly when clients have fewer opportunities to form an impression.

#### **Importance of Order Accuracy**

Regarding the importance of order accuracy, 60% of respondents considered this to be the most important (1 = most important) and 15% rated it as moderately important (5), while only 5% rated it lower (4). In the case of Uzbek restaurants, these results suggest that getting the order right is highly pertinent to the dining experience receptiveness. This is backed with the rest of the hospitality industry that focuses on accuracy as one of the more important measures of satisfaction as noted by Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler in 2024. Mistakes on orders not only irritate clients, but also negatively impact the perceived quality of service which damages the restaurant's image.

#### **Importance of Value for Money**

The level of customer sensitivity to value for money remained strikingly high. As indicated, 35% of respondents perceived it as their topmost priority (1) while an additional 30% selected level 3, which denotes moderate importance. Only 15% selected this as the least

important option. These responses indicate that customers are likely to appreciate and accept the experience received, be it in terms of food, service, or the ambience, as long as it reasonably aligns with the costs incurred. This is especially important in an already competitive market such as Uzbek gastronomy, where traditional food is known to give a run for their value across restaurants, as managing the service experience in relation to the atmosphere in context to pricing is absolutely essential.

#### Recommendations for Improvement of Services

Respondents were asked how the Uzbek restaurants could improve customer servicing and were able to provide feedback. The most popular suggestion, chosen by half of respondents, was providing more detailed explanations regarding menu items. This could indicate lack explanations of some dishes, accompanied by limited staff knowledge in places frequented by tourists like Samarkand and Bukhara. As service delivery literature suggests, these findings illustrate that improvements can be made without dramatic changes. Simply enhancing operations, communication, and staff-customer interactions can lead to elevated satisfaction levels (Maxham, 2001; Gremler & Gwinner, 2000).

This survey highlights the perception and expectation of service quality in Uzbek gastronomy. As data indicates, the greater percentage of respondents were young adults in the age group of 18 to 24 and females, which is important because they represent a fully immersed restaurant and online culture. Order accuracy as well as value for money are the other two most important service factors for customers in the restaurant industry. Respondents strongly emphasized receiving the correct order and that the quality and service were commensurate with the price. Participants dined at different frequencies, although most considered themselves to be occasional diners, which implies that even minimal interactions with a service have the potential to greatly impact a customer's perception. Respondents made changes to offer better practical service suggestions such as improved menu description and speedier response—demonstrating a need for refined communication and better organization. These comments indicate certain service shortcomings that relatively inexpensive solutions can address. In general, the findings validate a number of the study's assumptions, including the one concerning service quality having a significant impact on customer satisfaction as well as the assumption that cultural hospitality by itself is unlikely to satisfy the expectations of contemporary diners. The findings of the analysis conducted above will be discussed and interpreted in chapter five, where they will be connected to the theory formulated earlier, and practical recommendations will be provided on how service delivery may be improved in the gastronomic industry of Uzbekistan.

#### Conclusion.

This study set out to explore the customer service management strategies in the context of Uzbekistan's gastronomy, specifically looking at the extent to which customers' satisfaction with service in restaurants in the capital city Tashkent, as well as in the other major cities of Samarkand and Bukhara, meets their expectations. It evaluated the current service provisioning and the contemporary customer service benchmarks of hospitality to find out where gaps exist in the alignment of traditional service and modern expectations. The data was obtained through a structured online questionnaire administered to twenty customers of a restaurant, which was filled out using quantitative methods. The questionnaire captured information about how often patrons dined at the restaurant, their satisfaction with the service, and the priority order of provided services considering accuracy and value for money. The participants were overwhelmingly aged 18 to 24, with most being female. The results indicated that the accuracy of order fulfillment is the primary trigger of customer satisfaction, followed by the customer's perception of value for their money. Respondents indicated that they wanted the menus to be better explained, as well as quicker service which indicates a difference between the cultural hospitality found in Uzbek restaurants and the fast, modern efficient

service structured within contemporary eateries. Although most participants enjoyed the dining experience, their feedback highlighted specific operational aspects that could be modified while maintaining cultural accuracy.

The conclusions of this study do prompt some practical activities steps which Uzbek restaurants need to undertake. Perhaps the most popular suggestion from respondents has been that more detailed explanations of menu items should be provided. Additionally, restaurants especially in the more touristic cities such as Samarkand and Bukhara need to make sure that menus are well translated and that ingredients along with the method of preparation is described in the menus. And also, employees must be trained to correctly and competently respond to questions concerning the dishes. Improving communication regarding the menu supports customers' trust, confidence, decreases displeased calling mistakes and ordering dissatisfaction. Service speed is another aspect that requires improvement. A good number of respondents pointed out that the waiting time is unacceptably long which means that the restaurant services have problems with taking orders and communicating them to the kitchen. The positioning of the order, communication with the kitchen, and improvement of internal processes without downtime amplify customer satisfaction. For some customers, especially for big or busy restaurants, application of simple waiting list control systems improves the workflow. Professionalism regarding staff attentiveness also surfaced alongside other service aspects, but significantly less often during employee feedback sessions. Even slight changes in how staff interact with customers on a daily level can dramatically increase overall satisfaction within the restaurant. Restaurant managers need to emphasize basic service training centered around polite speech, responsiveness, and professional conduct during the service. Such training allows employees to not only avert problems, but also work towards establishing a pleasant environment. Furthermore, this research showed how customers emphasize order accuracy, with 60% of participants listing it as their first concern. Orders need to be received and delivered as requested. This can be done by encouraging staff to repeat orders back to clients, using simple tracking systems, and fostering the culture of double-checking before serving. Attention to detail like this facilitates trust among customers. At last, value for money was also noted by consumers as an important factor. Diners expect that the food and service provided is commensurate with the price paid which is why restaurants must check if their pricing corresponds with the service given, portion sizes, quality of food and overall service. Lower priced menu options such as combo meals or fixed-price menus might help customers perceive greater value, particularly in casual dining areas. Also, capturing regular customer feedback regarding their perceptions of the price will assist businesses in remaining competitive. In summary, these recommendations strive to refine customer satisfaction without significant investments. Servicing common problems—together with the cultural warmth that defines Uzbek hospitality—can help restaurants strengthen customer relations and further increase their reputation in the competitive market. This study adds to the existing works of literature in hospitality and service management by exploring how customer service is executed in Uzbekistan, a country rich in culture but still developing in terms of service infrastructure. Most of the existing theoretical literature on service quality is based, either in accepted service economies or in the West. This study explains customer satisfaction in a synthesis of traditional hospitality and modern service expectations.

A major contribution of this study is the affirmation that order accuracy, value for money, staff attention, and other service quality dimensions retain their place in customer satisfaction, irrespective of culture. These results support the arguments by Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2024) regarding the reliance consumers develop toward providers when services are consistently and efficiently delivered. However, the results also indicate that in the case of Uzbekistan, hospitable and generous culturally-situated warm elements of customer care are insufficient alone. Customers, especially the younger ones, expect them to be provided through structured internationalized service.connection and cultural understanding — while useful —

need to be paired with operational expertise in order to capture growing consumer needs (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler, 2002). A purely tradition-based service approach blended with emotional appeal is no longer feasible for an increasing segment of the market that expects digital interfaces and swift service.

This research also underscores the need for blended training that combines formal service training and systematized approaches with actual local culture to develop authentic hospitality. It defends the notion that service models are transferably universal and serves as a reminder on the need to adapt theory to particular regional service cultures, more so in emerging economies. To conclude, this research adds value to the outline of service quality and relationship marketing theories by illustrating them in an Uzbek gastronomy context. It claims that cultural modification is critical and argues that future models need to address both operational and contextual factors in attempting to represent customer satisfaction within various cultural regions. This research has some implications for restaurant managers, service personnel, and other stakeholders in the hospitality and gastronomy industry in Uzbekistan. Considering that the culinary industry in Uzbekistan is maturing and gaining the attention of domestic and international clients, the capacity to provide sustained attentive and customer-focused service is fundamental for business growth. First, restaurant managers need to understand that for most customers, accuracy of order and price value perception are essential service non-negotiables. Customer satisfaction depends greatly on proper service delivery. Managers can resolve this through staff training on service protocols that promote order verification and offering simple inventory control systems for error reduction. Second, the results indicate that even casual and family-run places lack basic staff training in customer service. Long training sessions are not necessary. Basic hospitality in Uzbekistan is very warm and genial, but today people expect more than just a smile – they expect culture friendly respect combined with efficiency, competent communication, and professionalism. Training staff on basic etiquette, problem-solving, and even menu mastery–within reasonable bounds without requiring heavy organizational investments–could deliver remarkable results. Third, restaurants, particularly in tourist-dense areas like Samarkand and Bukhara, cannot ignore menu communication. Multilingual menus that are thoughtfully designed and easy to navigate can greatly help in curtailing misunderstandings, especially for those unacquainted with Uzbek dishes. Explaining and assisting customers with basic ordering encourages the active involvement of staff so that the actual work can be reputably done in a reasonable orderly manner. Additionally, as noted in the purchase report, the client’s always-active suggestion box needs to be monitored constantly. There is little attention dedicated to feedback in a lot of Uzbek establishments due to their informal approach to business. Even though these restaurants are not meticulous in their management processes, setting up ways to gather feedback through suggestion cards, social media, or online surveys can be very useful in determining the performance level of their services and identifying gaps. Finally, research conducted on customer experiences shows that outpacing fellow restaurants within a competitive environment is possible when cultural fusion meets operational professionalism. Such restaurants align with highly targeted branding and marketing and is solely built on cross-culture value propositions. These remain unexploited with no need to discard tradition cuisine standards of Uzbekistan service – but rather blending them into operational practice concerning a customer's valuing time, expectations, and preferences while waiting for service. To conclude, the operational ramifications of this study highlight that addressing the intricacies of service delivery in Uzbek gastronomy is both imperative and feasible. A minimal, deeper focus on training, communication, and operational workflows will enable restaurants to achieve higher customer satisfaction while maintaining the cherished hospitality of Uzbekistan’s culinary heritage.

**Reference:**

Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1991). *Marketing services: Competing through quality*. Free Press.

Bitner, M. J. (1990). *Evaluating service encounters: The effects of physical surroundings and employee responses*. *Journal of Marketing*, 54(2), 69–82.

Chase, R. B., & Apte, U. M. (2007). *A history of research in service operations: What's the big idea?* *Journal of Operations Management*, 25(2), 375–386.

Fitzsimmons, J. A., & Fitzsimmons, M. J. (2011). *Service management: Operations, strategy, information technology (7th ed.)*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Gremler, D. D., & Gwinner, K. P. (2000). *Customer-employee rapport in service relationships*. *Journal of Service Research*, 3(1), 82–104.

Grönroos, C. (1988). *Service quality: The six criteria of good perceived service quality*. *Review of Business*, 9(Winter), 10–13.

Hart, C. W. L., Heskett, J. L., & Sasser, W. E. Jr. (1990). *The profitable art of service recovery*. *Harvard Business Review*, 68(4), 148–156.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., & Gremler, D. D. (2002). *Understanding relationship marketing outcomes: An integration of relational benefits and relationship quality*. *Journal of Service Research*, 4(3), 230–247.

Heskett, J. L., Sasser, W. E. Jr., & Schlesinger, L. A. (1997). *The service profit chain: How leading companies link profit and growth to loyalty, satisfaction, and value*. Free Press.

Johnston, R., & Michel, S. (2008). *Overcoming recovery myopia: Three types of service recovery*. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 28(1), 79–99.

Kansakar, P., Munir, A., & Shabani, N. (2017). *Technology in hospitality industry: Prospects and challenges*. arXiv preprint arXiv:1709.00105.

Ladhari, R. (2009). *A review of twenty years of SERVQUAL research*. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, 1(2), 172–198.

Lee, V., Park, S., & Lee, D. (2022). *The effect of e-commerce service quality factors on customer satisfaction and purchase intention in Uzbekistan*. *Global Business & Finance Review*, 27(3), 56–74.

Matlatipov, S., Rahimboeva, H., Rajabov, J., & Kuriyozov, E. (2022). *Uzbek sentiment analysis based on local restaurant reviews*. arXiv preprint arXiv:2205.15930.

Maxham, J. G. III. (2001). *Service recovery's influence on consumer satisfaction, word-of-mouth, and purchase intentions*. *Journal of Business Research*, 54(1), 11–24.

Michel, S., Bowen, D. E., & Johnston, R. (2009). *Why service recovery fails: Tensions among customer, employee, and process perspectives*. *Journal of Service Management*, 20(3), 253–273.

Nosratabadi, S., Mosavi, A., & Lakner, Z. (2020). *Food supply chain and business model innovation*. arXiv preprint arXiv:2001.03982.

Oshrat, Y., Aumann, Y., Hollander, T., Maksimov, O., Ostroumov, A., & Shechtman, N. (2022). *Efficient customer service combining human operators and virtual agents*. arXiv preprint arXiv:2209.05226.

Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). *SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality*. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12–40.

Russell, R. S., & Taylor, B. W. (2011). *Operations management: Creating value along the supply chain (7th ed.)*. Wiley.

Shostack, L. G. (1987). *Service positioning through structural change*. *Journal of Marketing*, 51(1), 34–43.

Spreng, R. A., Harrell, G. D., & Mackoy, R. D. (1995). *Service recovery: Impact on satisfaction and intentions*. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 9(1), 15–23.

Tax, S. S., Brown, S. W., & Chandrashekar, M. (1998). *Customer evaluations of service complaint experiences: Implications for relationship marketing*. *Journal of Marketing*, 62(2), 60–76.

Yulchieva, K., & Bashiru Jibril, A. (2024). *A framework of marketing strategy for small and medium business growth in Uzbekistan*. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 28(S3), 1–35.

Zeithaml, V. A., Bitner, M. J., & Gremler, D. D. (2024). *Services marketing: Integrating customer focus across the firm (8th ed.)*. McGraw-Hill Education.