

Customer Satisfaction Level of Bangladesh *Parjatan* Corporation's Restaurants

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Abstract

The study aimed to assess Bangladesh *Parjatan* Corporation's restaurants' customer satisfaction to improve quality and services. It was found that the price of the food items was not extensive comparing to international standards, but expensive in the country context. It takes an extended time in-between ordering and delivery. The manner and etiquette of the waiters and other restaurant service people were not up to the mark. Customers enjoy a healthy environment during food consumption. The food quality is not appropriately controlled, and less quantity of food, notably inferior portion, was served, which was treated as cheating activities. The study found that the outside washroom and interior designs were not satisfactory. Hence, the restaurant needs to take the initiative to bring more mobility for ensuring prompt service where customers will not have to wait long for food. A training program is required to improve human resources' professionalism, including waiters/waitresses and kitchen staff. Special attention is warranted on food portioning so that the customers are not cheated.

Keywords: Bangladesh *Parjatan* Corporations, restaurant's customer service, food portioning, tourism, food price

1. Introduction

The delightful prettiness of Bangladesh fascinated the tourists of the world. The growth of the tourism industry plays a significant role in the economy of Bangladesh. As a destination, Bangladesh is well known as the largest delta. It contains two particular dimensions of tourism: the world's longest sea beach and another world's largest mangrove forest. The country is symptomatic, a riverine country located in South Asia (Datta 2018).

Tourism is a unique product as it is composite, an amalgam of the tangible and intangible that includes everything that tourist's experience. Tourism has become an integral component of lifestyle, and it has also become a significant component of the economic prosperity of almost all countries. The reality is that Bangladesh is the fewest foreign tourist recipients, in contrast to the neighboring countries and the domestic and overseas travel market size, which is very inconsequential. Hasan (2019) reported that Bangladesh, compared to neighboring countries of South Asia, becomes unsuccessful in getting progress its tourism and attracts many travelers to visit the country. However, it's gifted with diverse attractions. Since the beginning of the country is abortive to establish herself as an ideal destination for the tourist, the government has thrived as a country of natural calamities, poverty, and corruption with another undesirable image in the

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international arena. Nonetheless, the country has plentiful tourism-friendly attributes to be a fantastic destination in South Asia; moreover, Bangladesh's inhabitants have welcoming and hospitable attitudes, which are considered the most favorable characteristics of the hospitality and tourism industry.

Despite the gradual uprising number of local and domestic and foreign tourists arrival with generating revenues towards the country's economy, the study on determining customer satisfaction levels in the Bangladesh hospitality industry is still inadequate. The knowledge on determining customer satisfaction levels in the Bangladesh hospitality industry emphasized by many experts is one of the most significant and indispensable matters that is not supposed to be avoided. *Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation* (BPC) has provided tourist facilities with good numbers of hotels, motels, restaurants, picnic spots, duty-free shops, cottages, and some other activities since 1973. There is a specific customer segment, and they are very regular from the country and abroad. The organization was not that generous to receive their feedback regarding the level of satisfaction. Even there is no empirical database of customers' feedback. Inadequacy of transparent feedback is a grey area of a service organization that leads to a problem.

Customer satisfaction depends on overlapping elements such as the indicators and the *ex-ante* expectations, which expresses the multifaceted nature of customer satisfaction. One of the biggest challenges for managers in the hospitality industry is to provide and sustain customers' satisfaction. Customer requirements for quality service in the tourism industry have become increasingly evident to professionals (Fang *et al.*, 2020). Guest relationships are a strategic asset of the organization, and customer satisfaction is the starting point to define business objectives. Every year tourists from different countries visit Bangladesh; for this reason, satisfying tourists is essential. Since the beginning of appearance, BPC is giving service to tourists with hotels and motels, and it's all restaurants. BPC is eager to uphold service quality. The consumers always appreciate the quality of food and service. Nowadays, the evaluation of customers' satisfaction shows that there are questions regarding the restaurants' quality of services. So, it is essential to assess the customer's fulfillment of all BPC Restaurants to improve the quality and services in this context. This study will bridge the gap of knowledge for better management.

1.1. Overview of the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC)

Bangladesh *Parjatan* Corporation (BPC) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Civil Aviation & Tourism of Bangladesh, tasked to promote its tourism industry. It is the National Tourism Organization of the country. Recently Bangladesh Government has formed a Tourist Police unit to protect local and foreign tourists better and look after the nature and wildlife in the tourist spots. The Board of Bangladesh *Parjatan* Corporation, established in 1973, consists of a Chairman and three whole-time directors. According to the Bangladesh *Parjatan* Corporation Order 1972, the board's purposes are to promote and develop tourism, provide facilities, undertake measures and carry out all forms of activities connected with or ancillary to tourism, tourist undertakings, and control and regulate tourist installations and services. The corporation organizes reception and information facilities in or outside Bangladesh, creates tourism awareness among the people, and establishes institutes for training potential tourism personnel. In addition, it promotes and develops tourism infrastructures in Bangladesh

2. Methodology

The empirical data was collected from *Joy Restaurant*, located in the city at *Nabi Nagar, Savar*, and just opposite side of the National memorial, 30 kilometers away from the capital. The restaurant started its journey in 1986, with the cabinet ministry's approval and assigned BPC for operation. It is 120 capacity restaurants and 60 seated fast food corners, *Bar-B-Q* and *Chotpoti* (a local food) outlets outside, a well-furnished restroom for the VIPs, spacious car parking area. Indian, Chinese, Thai, English, and Local cuisine are the leading food of the restaurant. It is a qualitative study; the findings of the study to be assessed through qualitative methods. Qualitative research methods are designed to reveal a target audience's behavior and perception concerning a particular topic. A focus group discussion was held, incorporating 5-8 persons of the managerial team. A total number of 30 customers were personally interviewed with a semi-structured questionnaire. Content analysis was done by coding and categorizing the variables (Krippendorff 2004; Neuendorf 2002; Spencer et al. 2003).

3. Findings

It was found that diaphanously all the respondents supported food quality in terms of taste, decoration, presentation, proper color, and nutrition values. An ample number of them recommended upholding the same rate. In terms of time, respondents had a bitter experience on time in-between ordering and delivery. Considering five times visit joy restaurant, all respondents expressed the same opinion. It was reported that most of the time, it took more than half-hour to serve food after order. In their view, restaurants are supposed to serve food within twenty minutes at best. Assuming 33% time extra is a big demerit of a restaurant, which creates a negative image among the customers. 65% of the respondents were feared enough about costs, as per the rest's existing price is quite usual. The majority were willing to see reduce the current price. Compare to other international standard restaurants, BPC cuisines were not that much expensive. But compared to the moderate quality restaurants, Joy was more expensive.

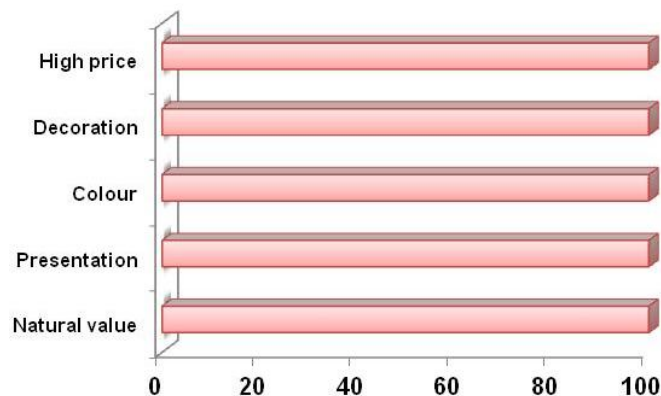


Figure 1: Respondents' opinion about the quality of food

The manner and etiquette of the waiters and other restaurant service people were not up to the mark. All respondents opined that BPC authority could develop awareness about manner and etiquette. Lacking professionalism was found during visiting. Dress code is a mandatory norm, uniform, including shoes wearing during duty times, but the waiters were very incautious about wearing shoes. Ties were absent in their dresses, and they had no welcoming attitude towards the guest.

While the respondents were asked regarding food values in terms of health-friendly or not, all interviewees positively answered that issue. Foods were health-friendly. In terms of the ingredients of the food, respondents did not find any questionable problem on that. On the other hand, all of them were strongly agreed with the quality of meats, fishes, vegetables, edible oil, along spices.

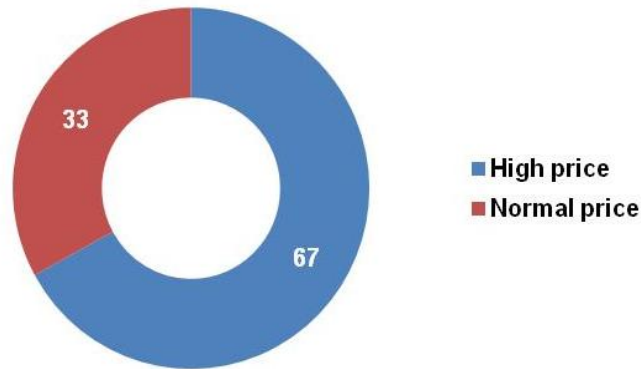


Figure 2: Respondent's perception of price

Respondents gave numerous opinions about Joy restaurant's menu selection; they all found every familiar menu offered since long before. A traditional Bengali cuisine was served mostly. In contrast, Thai, Chinese, Indian, English, and continentals were also available. Few respondents urged to introduce a few Mexican and Korean cuisines. Staple foods are not served, no record found during their food consumption. For the recent few years, no complain found from the customers even.

85% of the respondents confessed that food quality was not adequately controlled. Less quantity of food against the price was being served as per their opinion. Traditional Bengali cuisine, especially chicken, meat, and fish items, was expensive and served an inferior portion of food, prevalent at this restaurant. A similar number (85%) of respondents thought that the consumers' rights were violated. Receiving value-added tax was a good practice there, and the respondents were happy with that.

Regarding the restaurants' clean and tidiness, respondents gave their different opinions from their point of view. Half of them were moderately happy with inner cleanliness; the rest are not. The equipment like Chinese linen and keratin's quality was not up to the mark. All had a cynical observation of the outside washroom. Section of urinal and toilets of the lavatory was not that much suitable for the customers. The respondents requested to change the interior fittings to meet their satisfaction.

4. Recommendation

This chapter lay with a cluster of suggestions as per the recommendations from the interviewees. It is essential to uphold the state of quality food for the reputation of Bangladesh *Parjatan*

Corporation. The Authority of the restaurant needs to take the initiative to bring more mobility for ensuring prompt service where customers will not have to wait long for food. Conducting competency-based training on food preparation and service can solve this puzzle. To improve human resources' level of professionalism, including waiters/waitresses and kitchen staff, a training program is required. The curriculum should include skills, welcoming attitude, proper manner and etiquette, sales techniques, appearance, understanding customer's needs, complimentary grooming, etc. Special attention is warranted on food portioning, which is a significant threat to the organization. Serving fewer portions is a substitute way of cheating with the customers. It can damage the integrity of the restaurant. Portion control is necessary for bringing customers' trust back. Prices of cuisines should be revised by reducing the profit margin. Instead, the restaurant can enhance sales volume to reach the expected profit benchmark. Restaurant premises, including all inner and outer areas, need to be kept clean and tidy. Service equipment and linen should be changed to enhance good looks. The washroom can be renovated with modern tiles and fittings to confirm customers satisfactions.

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