

**EXPLORING AN EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING PHENOMENON:
THE DINING EXPERIENCE**

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Abstract

This research focuses on dining experience as an example of experience marketing. In this study, the qualitative research method has been used to derive particular concepts involved in the dining experience from the bodies of reviews. Similarly, quantitative content analysis method has been used to provide rich and valuable information about the concepts explored from the qualitative data. Inferential statistics has been used in the study to test hypotheses about the relationships between elements in the dining experience context. The results indicate that food quality is the most important predictor of the dining satisfaction while service quality may not be an effective factor to create satisfaction. Moreover, social needs in dining experience are more evident in dinners than in lunches. The results of the study reveal the effectiveness and applicability of the online review analysis in bringing new insights from dining experience to contribute to the field of experience economy.

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Introduction and Problem Statement

Holbrook (2000) maintains that we are now entering a new era called “experience economy”. Within this type of economy, growth occurs and the nature of the interaction between customers and producers changes incrementally. This interaction changes businesses. “Experience marketing” has a particular role in which many businesses try to offer memorable hedonic consumption in an effort to appeal to their target customers. Holbrook (2000) has stated that experience involves an intangible phenomenon that has rarely been considered before the 1990s. So, it seems that nowadays hedonic and fantasy consumption is more important for consumers.

Dining events are primary examples of an experience economy in general, and of experience marketing in particular. One notion is that, dining becomes a fantasy event; nowadays, high quality and moderate level restaurants create novel values for food consumers, by offering more than merely tangible elements. Another notion is that, the combination of products and services (e.g., food and serving) along with the human interactions involved in dining events inspire a topic for human experience investigation. Wood (1994) has asserted that dining out is an important element of consumer experience. As an experience, dining can be both hedonic and memorable event that has both utilitarian and aesthetic elements.

Another notion is that dining out has become more and more common. Food expenses (or, as it can be called, dining events) accounted for 25% or more of the total expenses of tourists on specific tours in the United States (Quan & Wang, 2004). According to a National Restaurant Association (2010) report, the total market volume of the dining industry is approximately \$580 billion in the United States. Moreover, Smith

(1983) argued that people are not only spending more on dining out, but also are dining out more frequently.

Despite the fact that dining is one of the largest expenditures of daily life (National Restaurant Association, 2010) researchers have paid little attention to the experience aspects of dining. By contrast, utilitarian aspects have been widely investigated using certain mechanistic scales, such as SERVQUAL or DINESERV, focusing on merely service quality. Recently, researchers have begun paying more attention to hedonic dining. Such studies have focused on topics, such as: high satisfaction (Jang & Namkung, 2008), ultra-fine dining (Basil & Basil, 2009), fine cuisine and good company (Anderson & Moseberg, 2004), nutrition and weight control in dining (Basil, Glanz, Goldberg, & Maibach & Snyder, 1998), and word of mouth (Babin, Griffin, Kim & Lee, 2005). In total, these studies seek to clarify a particular aspect of the dining experience, which contributes to the literature in the field.

Table 1. Hedonic Dining Studies in Recent Years

Authors and date	Topic	Relation to the current study
Basil and Basil, 2009	Ultra-fine dining	Luxury dining experience, the importance of hedonic consumption
Jang and Namkung, 2008	High satisfaction	Creating extraordinary dining experience
Babin et al., 2005	Satisfaction and word of mouth	Hedonic value and positive reactions – word of mouth
Anderson and Moseberg, 2004	Fine cuisine and good company	The role of social satisfaction in dining experience
Basil et al., 1998	Nutrition and weight control	Attention to taste, cost and healthy dining

Note. The above table shows that several studies have emphasized the role of hedonic consumption in the dining experience market place.

In today's competitive market place, consumer experience is one of the most interesting topics for marketers (Gilmore & Pine, 1998). As one of the most related elements of the consumer experience, diverse studies are conducted in the restaurant

context. Restaurant businesses offer a combination of service and products. People gather in restaurants and often socialize there. Thus, restaurant operations and dining elements, in particular, are exposed to the experiences of people. These individuals are willing to pay for a good experience; on one hand, if they are highly satisfied with the experience, they may even pay a premium for it. On the other hand, this value judgement element of dining can create dissatisfaction. Thus, principal questions remain, such as: what experiences will ensure consumers are satisfied and how can restaurants managers promote desirable consumption while eliminating negative cues?

The research thus far suffers from the lack of a comprehensive model to explain consumer's behaviour in the restaurant context. For example, the over-pricing issue is largely ignored in many studies, though it can create a significant dissatisfaction effect. In this regard, one can see that the complexity of the concept may be one of the reasons for this shortage. Such complexity exists due to individual consumer differences, hedonic-related elements that are difficult to define and measure while there is a complicated interaction between these different elements. To contribute to the knowledge in this area, it may be a good idea to offer some examples in an effort to identify elements of the model in specialised contexts. For example, if several studies develop similar models within the dining, entertainment and shopping context, another integrative research can suggest a holistic model for experience marketing. Based on these factors, efforts to configure a theory or model of the dining experience are necessary.

Following the literature review, the primary questions for this research are put forward and an appropriate research method has been proposed. Then, the analyses and the results for qualitative and quantitative parts have been shown; subsequent graphs and

tables are presented. Finally, a summary of the main findings, the recommendations for future research, the implications for managers and the conclusion of the study are presented.

Literature Review

Experience Economy

For a holistic discussion of the dining experience, it is necessary to examine the original meaning of the term “experience economy” along with the literature involving the experience economy. An experience economy involves more than satisfaction, it changes an event or usage into a memorable and pleasant phenomenon (Gilmore & Pine, 1998). Yet it is clear that the elements that define this phenomenon comprise more than just a combination of products and services. Rather, it involves a different type of consumption, entitled hedonic consumption.

Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) argue that consumers do not use products simply for their functionality, but instead seek to benefit from the sensational aspect of their consumption(s). Accordingly, memorable consumption must create differentiated feelings inscribed in the customers’ minds. Memorable consumption must also shape a good attitude toward the experience process. If this is so, does the experience economy constitute a new era? One can answer this question if he or she recognises that today; customer needs are greatly different than in the past.

Gilmore and Pine (1998) claim that the days of the service economy are greatly diminished today, just as what happened in the industrial era. Their basic idea is that while the global economy has moved from an agrarian economy to an industrial economy and then to a service economy, it now must change to a new era, which is the experience economy. The authors even believed that, at the time of writing their article, the economy is quickly becoming a more-complicated experience economy. To support this supposition, Gilmore and Pine (1998) identify several clear differences between

particular service characteristics offerings and those that create experience memories. They also claim that the relationship between customers and providers is now that of a stager–guest relationship. Two dimensions of the experience economy are identified. The first is the active-passive dimension, the second the absorption-immersion aspect. The article concludes that four different contexts can be suggested for consumption, which includes; educational, entertainment, aesthetic and escapist (Gilmore & Pine, 1998).

The dining consumption literature has significantly benefitted from the experience economy perspective. The dining experience offers intangible aspects of food consumption, as well as utilitarian benefits. As customer needs change, restaurants strive to meet these new demands. Dining out experiences provide for not only nutritional needs, but also social and leisure fulfillment (Andersson & Mossberg, 2004). In this regard, while food is part of the dining experience, other elements of the dining event can create a holistic, hedonic, emotional and memorable consumption experience. Thus, identifying the roles of these elements in consumer satisfaction is beneficial to restaurant managers who seek to make the most appropriate decisions about how to best offer services to their target customers.

Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory

It is important to identify how customers become satisfied from their experiences. They do not become satisfied simply based on the performance of the product or service; even with similar performance perceptions, consumers maintain different expectations prior to consumption. Thus, consumer expectation is another element of the satisfaction process and behavioural intentions.

Numerous studies attempt to directly relate predictor elements to outcome results; however, expectation/disconfirmation theory stresses that confirmation or disconfirmation mediates results. In the other words, customer's expectations, such as satisfaction and behavioural intentions, play an important role in predicting consumer satisfaction outcomes. Thus, another element (confirmation / disconfirmation) may explain how the process of customer satisfaction works, particularly in the experience context.

The terms "confirmation" and "disconfirmation" are by-products of two components: customer's expectations and their perceptions of the consumption performance (Lewin, 1938). Confirmation occurs when the customer's expectation is exactly equal to the perceived performance outcome; theoretically, this process results in a neutral status. Positive disconfirmation occurs when the perceived performance is greater than the consumer's expectation. On the other hand, negative disconfirmation will occur when perceived performance is less than expected. Thus, satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a product of positive disconfirmation or negative disconfirmation, respectively (Lewin, 1938). Finally, it is noteworthy that the perceived performance can directly contribute to the satisfaction of customers, without the mediation effect of disconfirmation (Jang & Namkung, 2007).

Kivela and Robert (1999) conducted a comprehensive study of fine dining in restaurants. They tested a model based on the expectation/disconfirmation theory; their model is generally supported by the results of the study. However, several counterarguments remain. For example, what are the effects of the study's pre-test on its post-test? Additionally, the nature of expectations remains vague and difficult to

measure. Here, the point is that expectation is an entirely complicated and vague concept; in some cases, even customers do not know what they should expect from an event and may need preliminary information that can shape their expectations. By doing this, managers can create expectations and finally refine consumer satisfaction.

Emotion

Another process that can affect the satisfaction process to a great extent is the shifting of emotional status. In this sense, changing the consumer's emotion to a positive or negative status will create satisfaction or dissatisfaction, respectively. Numerous studies find emotion to be a mediating factor between predictors and final results in the consumption context (Brun, Ladhari, & Morales, 2008; Gross & Pullman, 2004; Richins, 1997). The basic theory for this line of research is based on Mehrabian and Russell's work (1974) on environmental psychology, whose theory explains that there is a direct relationship between environmental stimuli, organism and response (S-O-R). So, an environmental stimulus can create emotional status for a consumer, who may then respond by being satisfied or dissatisfied.

More recently Barrena and Sánchez (2009) suggest that emotional arousal can be applied in saturated markets as an efficient strategy to increase sales. In the dining context, Jang and Namkung (2009) support most of Barrena and Sánchez's (2009) hypotheses using an extended model based on Mehrabian and Russell's theory (1997). Thus, it is clear that the mediating role of emotion is supported in several studies, which suggests that consumers unconsciously make use of shifting emotional statuses in order to determine whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied.

Dining Literature

Rough categorization can divide dining events into the following two groups: fast dining and fine dining. In the present research, the focus is on fine dining, as it is more of an experiential phenomenon than its counterpart. As Deery, Roberts and Hede (2010) state, good food, good drinks, going out for many people, are all important elements of fine -dining. On the other hand, comparing this sort of dining with utilitarian dining may be beneficial as well. Differences may offer a clear explanation as to why individuals seek memorable experiences over pure utilitarian ones. Likewise, similarities can prevent us to jump to mistaken conclusions about the characteristics of dining experiences. Researchers typically focus on fast-food type restaurants; whereas experiential aspects of restaurants receive less attention in the literature (Babin et al., 2005). In this research, more emphasis has been placed on fine-dining research to fill this gap in the dining experience literature.

There are particular aspects of consumption that most researchers suggest as predictors for intentional behaviour at dining events. Customer perceptions of food quality, service quality and atmosphere quality are three main elements of this cause and effect model (Berry & Wall, 2007; Brun et al., 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2008; Jang & Namkung 2009). This line of research shows that of the elements involved in the dining experience, food (or taste) is the most important to predict behaviour (Basil et al., 1998; Jang & Namkung, 2007).

One of the ultimate marketing goals is to create customer loyalty and ensure repeat patronage (Berry et al., 2003). Restaurant managers are eager that customers return to their restaurants. This fact depends, to a large extent, on the customers' prior

experiences and if it was desirable and/or memorable. Thus, providing customers with better services likely increases customer satisfaction, which leads to what is termed “return behaviour” (also known as customer patronage).

In general, satisfaction results in intentional behaviour (Dube, Miller & Renaghan, 1994). Several studies indicate that satisfaction plays a mediating role between predictor elements and intentional behaviour in the dining context (Babin et al., 2005; Brun et al., 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2007; Kimes, Matilla, Noone & Wirtz, 2009). This line of research supports the notion that consumption elements create satisfaction. However, other studies do not include discussion of the role of social factors in the experience of dining out.

Andersson and Mossberg (2004) measure customer satisfaction using a six-factor scale, the qualities of: food, fine cuisine, service, restaurant interior, good company and other guests. A major advantage of their study is that it also includes social factors. For instance, the element “good company” represents the monetary value of sharing the dinner experience with a friend rather than experiencing it on one’s own. In contrast, the “other guest concept” which affects the entire dining experience, represents the presence of other people in the restaurant. It is important to recognise that this is one aspect of the dining experience that is beyond the restaurant manager’s control. The other guest concept is measured by the financial value the customer can expect if their attendance in the restaurant involves with full of customers other than empty. Andersson and Mossberg (2004) find that the “good company” element is the most important predictor of the dining experience (in the city of Gotenberg in Sweden). Their finding points to the

importance of the social element to the scales designed to measure customer dining experiences.

In their research, Andersson and Mossberg (2004) use the financial value element in their model, which contributes to the framework of the present research. To this, one may also add the cost as another predictor of the patronage decision (Of course, this prediction is usually mediated by customer satisfaction.) In so many words, as the cost of the meal increases, so does the customer expectation rise. This is particularly true in the case of very expensive meals, in which customer expectations are extremely high and minor mistakes can rapidly result in customer dissatisfaction. For instance, if a customer finds a hair in his or her bowl of soup, which cost less than \$10, he or she might leave the restaurant without argument. However, if this same happens with a bowl of soup cost \$45; one should expect a very different outcome. Thus, cost can be considered an influential factor that affects customer patronage with regard to the dining experience.

June and Lorraine (2006) define two general aspects of dining, one is aesthetic, the other social. In the context of nursing care, these researchers conduct an intervention-survey study to determine the effects of better dining experiences on quality of life. The authors take into account for other not-well-known factors such as meal positioning, social grouping and facilitating adequate time for meals. Their work suggests that still there exist other little-considered factors in the dining experience.

Adopting the Herzberg's (1965) theory in motivation, Crompton (2003) suggests that in event management, a reasonable threshold of performance must be provided in order to avoid dissatisfaction. Certain hygiene factors play a role in terms of minimum acceptable standards for consumers in the particular context of event management. He

suggests that satisfaction is only created when visitors (consumers) interact with motivator elements. Applying this theory to the dining context, it can be proposed that restaurant managers maintain a minimum standard for their customers in every respect, while also trying to connect their customer with satisfactory elements of the dining experience. Similar dichotomous conditions for customers can be seen in other works, such as Andersson and Mossberg (2004), who define satisfied versus delighted consumers in the dining context.

In sum, the literature suggests that customer satisfaction is affected by the quality of food, physical environment (atmosphere) and service (Berry & Wall 2007; Brun et al., 2008; Jang & Namkung 2008; Jang & Namkung 2009). According to Andersson and Mossberg (2004), “good company” is the most important element in creating “social desirability” for the dining experience. Moreover, cost of the event will also affect the customer perception (Basil et al., 1998). However, it is the combination of these elements and their interactions that impact the customer’s perceived rate of return.

Against this background, the general research question addressed in this thesis is: How do the elements of the dining experience; the quality of food, the quality of service, the quality of atmosphere, social desirability and price, affect customer intention to return to a particular restaurant?

Extended Theory

This study first defines several predictor factors and several outcome results. Considering expectation confirmation/disconfirmation theory, it is suggested that the main predictor of the dining experience outcome to be disconfirmation. In terms of effect on disconfirmation, expectation has a negative effect, while perceived performance has a

positive effect. Perceived performance also directly effects intentional behaviour; this is a direct effect without disconfirmation. As discussed in previous sections, disconfirmation affects consumer emotional statuses, level of satisfaction and intentional behaviours. Thus, the outcome effects include emotional statuses, satisfaction and intentional behaviours. Another notion is that, satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) can generate subsequent expectations for consumers about future experiences.

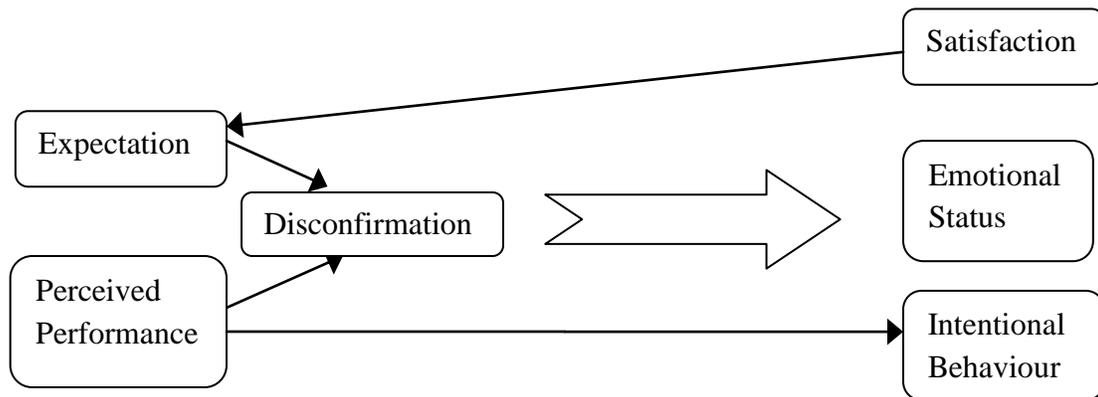


Figure 1. Extended General Model of Experience Marketing

Note. Predictors and outcomes of an experience are shown in this graph. This general model can be used for dining experience as well.

The concept of “perceived consumption performance” includes several factors, such as the perceived food quality as well as service, atmosphere or social elements. Social performance is the desirability of socializing with others during the dinner event. One of the best representations of social performance is having good company during the event. Satisfaction results in intentional behaviours, such as intention to return, expressing positive/negative opinions about the location, recommendations given to others, etc. Again, it is important to mention that, in this model, each construct may include several well-known or new concepts that could be investigated carefully.

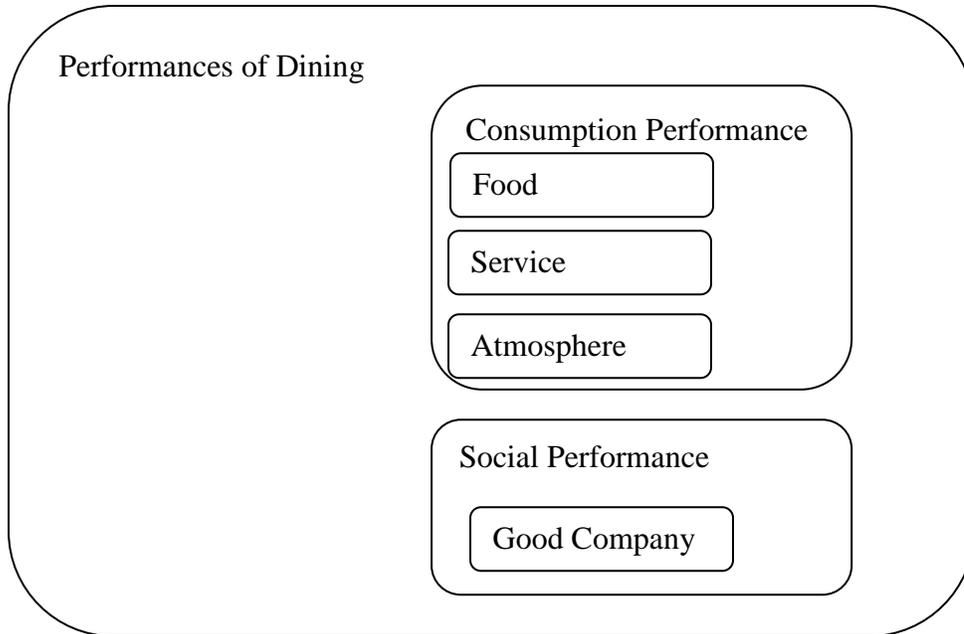


Figure 2. Dining Experience Performances

Note. Elements of dining experience performance. Two major elements are consumption performance and social performance. It can be assumed that performance against other expectation variable such as costs will shape confirmation/disconfirmation for consumers.

For the purpose of this study, a dining experience model is suggested for the available secondary data. In this model, predictors are the available dining performances variables and cost factor. The dining performances variables include the consumption variables (qualities of food, service and atmosphere), but, the social desirability cannot be involved directly because of the shortage of information in the available data. For the cost, the price range of the meal is used. The outcome of the dining experience in this model is the intention to return.

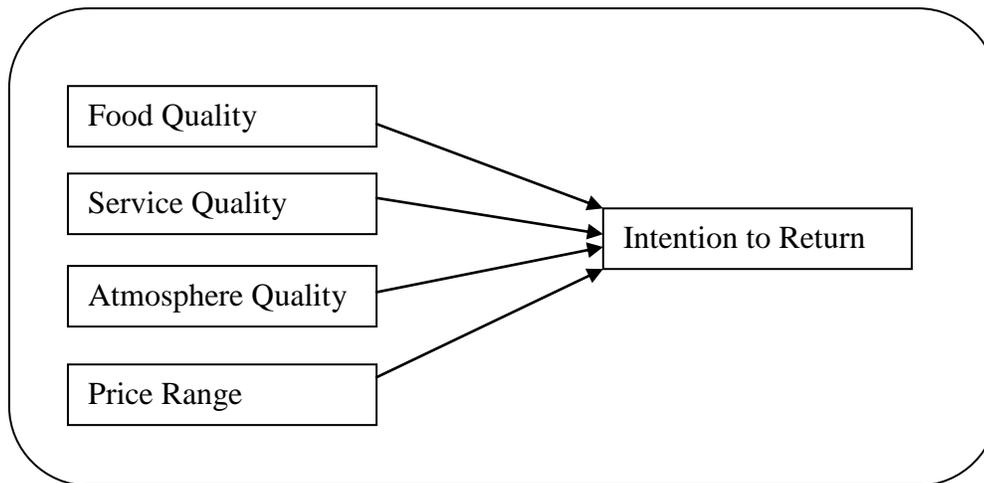


Figure 3 . The Proposed Model of Dining Experience for This Study

Note. This is the model that has been tested data via the logistic regression technique with the available secondary. Further analyses for other variables have been done after qualitative analysis and coding, via correlation techniques (not involved in this model).

General Research Questions

In general, this study addresses the following research question: What are the elements of dining experiences and how do they interact with each other? Previous researches in the dining experience context have major shortcomings in their research structure. In particular, some ignore issues such as event price, as important elements in shaping expectations and outcomes. Others use only one approach, or used pre-defined service scales to measure in this new context. Further, comprehensive qualitative investigation is largely ignored as well as mixed methods. Contradictory results obtained even by the same authors (Jang & Namkung, 2007; Jang & Namkung, 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009) are one of the consequences of these procedural shortcomings. Unlike prior examinations, the present study eliminates this contradiction, evaluating dining experience from a comprehensive view point to define and justify some unclear dining experience factors and the relationship among them.

There are general research questions for this study that require several detailed research questions for each research method. Therefore, for the qualitative content analysis, quantitative content analysis and quantitative research methods, this study has developed several detailed research questions.

Thus, the current study seeks to answer the following general research questions in the dining context:

1. What factors contribute to shape expectations?
2. What are the dimensions of dining experiences?

3. How do an expectations element (such as price) and perceived performance quality (quality of food, atmosphere and service) shape the consumers' evaluation?
4. What is the most important predictor of intention to return?
5. What are the differences between the interactions of the dimensions of dining experiences in infrequent writers' reviews and frequent writers' reviews?

Research Methods and Data

This study uses secondary data of online reviews. Several research methods are applied in order to fully explore the research questions under investigation. This study consists of three phases. First, comprehensive “qualitative content analysis” is conducted on the reviews. Second, a “quantitative content analysis” method is utilised to determine the features of each review that are related to prior qualitative work. For example, if individuals state a desire to alter the amount of tip they leave due to the perception of good or bad performance, they would be coded as tipping-related reviews. Third, several relationships in the proposed model are tested using quantitative or coded quantitative content analysis results. Before utilising each method, it is valuable to know what the data would be for this study and where the data comes from.

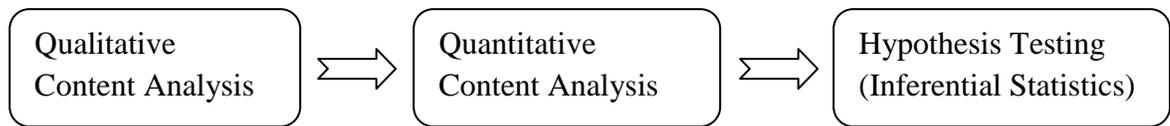


Figure 4. Several Research Methods in Order

Note. This research uses three research methods, as shown in Figure 3, to obtain enhanced results. First, qualitative content analysis helps to identify particular elements of the restaurants reviews. In this method, themes and concepts about the intended subjects emerge through careful reading of the text. Second, quantitative content analysis demonstrates how much strength those explored elements have in the reviews, while the provided insights help us to shape hypotheses. It is assumed that the frequency of the repetition of each concept shows the importance of that concept. Finally, with the aid of inferential statistics tools (t-test and logistic regression modeling), this study has tested those hypotheses derived from previous section, which offer validated results.

Review Writings as a Source of Data in Dining Context

Extant studies identify online customer reviews as a data source that can reflect consumer perceptions and feedback (Chaterjee 2001; Crotts, MacLaurin & Pan, 2007;

Hu, Liu & Zhang, 2008; Seegers & Vermeulen, 2009). Indeed, Basil and Basil (2009) use online restaurant reviews to explore certain aspects of the dining experience. Reviews provide personal consumer perceptions from those who experience an event. It is also noteworthy that review writers are volunteer participants who offer valuable insights about the subject of the study; they are less biased toward a research purpose. These writers also feel free to provide details about their experiences due to the anonymity or lack of identifying disclosure and also because they are not pressured to offer a review. For example, in online review writing, individuals may make comments using their personal computers in their homes, where there is no source of distraction or research interference. The use of the Internet is growing and is likely to soon become a primary source of information.

Another feature of review writing is that it offers no monetary reward, so there is less possibility that this source of information utilised is biased toward aggressive ratings. This is similar to open software packages which people contribute to them without seeking monetary incentives. However, one sees that even in surveys, there may be bi-modal ratings in other studies. For example, in a survey, subjects rated dining experience satisfaction considerably high; out of a possible 7 rating, more than half of the data samples rated their satisfaction levels 6 or higher (Jang & Namkung, 2008). Another notion here is that most extant studies in the dining experience field suffer from repetitive and over-used student samples; while restaurant reviewers are better examples of typical dining consumers. Using actual reviews is better than conducting interviews because interviewing may interrupt the experience or perhaps being interviewed is unpleasant

right after a dinner experience. Using online reviews other than interviewing is also more cost effective with anonymously written answers that may be more truthful.

Data Collection

In the first data collection, this study has made use of 421 reviews, which are negative or positive, or even “so-so” wherein the review writer expresses whether he or she will likely return to the restaurant. As the data’s variables are not typical, Logistic Regression (LR) can be easily used, which needs a dichotomous dependent variable and does not have any normality assumption problem. In some cases, one can treat such variables as dichotomous variables that are not continuous and thus, having too many of them will not generate powerful results.

In order to decrease the non-normality and have a richer dataset, this study gathers and uses new data from “frequent review writers.” It is noteworthy in the literature to use frequent or expert reviewers. For example, Hemmington, Morgan, and Watson (2008) use a blog of a frequent restaurant reviewer for their post-modern research. These “foodies” provide an enriched data source because they are knowledgeable about different restaurants and how to write reviews for others. Do-Hyung, Jumin, and Ingoo (2007) state that high quality reviews have positive effects on the intentional behaviours of other customers. Customers who read the online reviews before purchasing also consider the review writer’s reputation (Hu et al., 2008). Of course, these data sources have their strengths and weaknesses as it will be briefly discussed later.

Seegers and Vermeulen (2009) argue that although hotel review writing directly affects consumer decision making, expert review writings have a weak positive influence, in this regard. Thus, at present, it is only a scientific guess as to whether or not frequent

review writers provide a better dataset in terms of statistical reliability and information verifiability. One of the objectives of this study is to examine this issue to see if there is any significant difference between the general review data and the expert review data. Anyway, 16 cases have been deleted from the first data because they could be considered frequent reviews (these cases have not been added to the other dataset, because of the sampling for the frequent reviewers had been finished). So, this study uses two different review data from one source: one is “non-frequent review writers’ reviews” and the other is “frequent review writers’ reviews”. For simplicity, this study calls them infrequent reviewers data and frequent reviewers data, respectfully.

Secondary Data Source

The source. Data for the study has been gathered all from one highly reputed online source, the “Restaurantica” website (www.restaurantica.com), which has information on a number of cities in Alberta, British Colombia and Ontario, Canada. These provinces and cities are chosen due to their large populations; they comprise four of the most populated provinces of Canada. Unfortunately, Quebec does not have many reviews (likely because the website is written only in English). Further, these provinces has been chosen specifically in order to make the possibility to compare the differences of the experiences between the “west” and the “east and central” of regions of Canada, for future studies.

Sampling. The two data that have been used in this study are only hundreds of samples out of thousands of reviews in one website. Sampling from the website is based on several principles for the infrequent reviewers data. First, the researcher of this study has found the restaurants one by one and based on the latest reviews on the selected cities

in the website to make it relatively random and fresh (the website is relatively new with the age of less than 3 years at the time of data gathering). Second, the restaurant should have at least five reviews; this could enhance the chance of getting more enriched results and show a minimum level of credibility for the restaurant. Third, restaurant or the outlet should be located in the sampling area.

For the frequent reviewers data, however, sampling has been strait forward because the website, Restaurantica.com, has provided the information for people who have made multiple reviews for each city. The selection is from the top of the list of frequent review writers in each city. Only the first 40 reviews (in case of more than 40 reviews per person) are selected in order to avoid from being biased toward a particular review writer (The actual average number of reviews per person is 22.47).

Data characteristic. People voluntarily make their comments and rankings in the website. Each case of the restaurant reviews has provided several data. There is a quiet short rating and writing section for each restaurant experience review that contains both quantitative rating part and an open ended review writing box which is filled with qualitative data. The first type of information is the rating of several variables regarding the dining experience which is usually filled out. These variables are the quality of food, atmosphere and service, the average price range of each meal, the party size of the experience and finally, the intention to return desire. The second type of information is a review text which has been typed by each person. Third type of input is the other information such as the city of the event, the restaurant name, type of cuisine and so on. Each reviewer has its own identification name and password. It is hard to register a new identification name as it needs a true email address and the subsequent verification. This

is particularly important when considering the reliability of the sources in the infrequent reviewers data.

In the infrequent reviewers data, 405 reviews have been used for the data of non-frequent review writers and in the frequent reviewers data, 388 reviews have been analysed for the data of frequent review writers. The infrequent reviewers data is the same of that had been collected randomly for the first data collection; however, 16 cases (around 4%) have been deleted to make it totally “infrequent reviews” data. In total, 793 cases were analysed.

Advantages and disadvantages. There are several advantages to using this kind of review website as a data source. First, participant real identities are not revealed, so there is less hesitation on the part of the consumers to provide feedback. Also, most of the participants review their experiences several hours after the dining experience, which affords them a holistic evaluation of their experience and thus, the evaluations may be richer and more accurate. In addition, participants must choose to write about their experiences, which allows for more reflection than simple ratings and is another contributor to the accuracy of the reviews.

Despite the above, this data gathering method has unique limitations as well. First, the sample may not be a precise representation of the entire population of diners as only participants with internet access and who are willing to share their opinions virtually offer their comments using this venue. Additionally, since sociable people tend to write reviews, the data most likely only reflect such a group and may not be reflective of less-social individuals. Second, data accuracy may be influenced by the lengthy time period between the experience and the review. Third, the data source may not provide valid

sources of information because some subjects may offer fictional comments or a restaurant owner may use the website as a means to lash out competition. Although one can follow some of such fake cases and see other reviews, but this cannot always be the case. Thus, any result of this study is subject to these limitations.

It is noteworthy to mention that most of the consumption variables of this dataset are assumed to behave like interval variables. In these variables, a five-point Likert scale has been used to identify the perception of the quality of consumption elements by the reviewers. It is assumed that the distances between each consecutive two options are the same. The range changes from “the worst ever” to “the best ever.” The middle points are “below average,” “adequate” and “great overall”. Unlike the other consumption variables, the price range has five categories, which are between two values. These categories are divided by these numbers: 0-10, 11-25, 26-60, 61-100 and +100 and the price variable should be treated as an ordinal variable.

Data Analysis

Two different types of analyses have been employed in this study: qualitative and quantitative. Using mixed methods type of research, the body of the content of the comments has been used to explore several desired concepts for further investigation. In the next step of this research project, a quantitative content analysis method has been applied in effort to determine meaningful results by measuring the frequencies of the repetition of each concept. Thus, there is a complete content analysis in both frequent and infrequent reviews. Based on the suggested model and the results of the qualitative and quantitative content analysis, several hypotheses have been proposed and a final quantitative analysis has been applied on the data.

This study has been conducted in three phases; first, this study employs qualitative content analysis on the positive and negative reviews. Themes and concepts found as a result of negative data analysis have been compared with those found in the positive data analysis. Similarities and differences generate new results. Second, quantitative content analysis has been conducted to determine how many times and in which ways the themes and concepts have been used in the reviews. Third, combined with the literature review, these analyses provide insight into the structure and relationships among dining experience components proposed in this study. Several hypotheses have been proposed and then tested, using inferential statistics techniques.

Qualitative Research Method

In the first phase of this study, qualitative analysis was used. The primary research question for this method is: What are the sources of customer expectations? Another question is: What elements predict the outcomes of consumer viewpoints? These questions from the concepts behind the dining experience model of this study. The difference between the data of infrequent restaurant reviews and that derived from frequent writers has also been examined.

Phase 1: Qualitative content analysis. In order to extract the categories of dining experience expectations and predictors from the review texts, a qualitative method named content analysis seemed to be the most appropriate one. Goulding (2005) has suggested that categorizing and making inference from text data are usually performed through labeling similar concepts; a method which is called content analysis in qualitative perspective. Goulding (2005) has also named a set of fragmented but related categories as a “thematic” heading. In consumer research, content analysis studies are also applied for

categorizing related concepts and finding frequencies or proportions of desired variables (Kassarjian, 1977). Crottset al. (2007) have used content analysis on several online travel blogs to manifest different aspects of traveling experiences and find major strengths and weaknesses of a travel experience, suggesting which elements have lead to satisfaction and which elements have caused dissatisfaction. Thus, it seems that qualitative content analysis is appropriate for the purpose of the first part of this study and the nature of the available secondary text data.

As previously mentioned, to date, there are few studies investigating dining experience using qualitative research methods. The content of both negative and positive reviews contains valuable information from consumer viewpoints. Evaluating each review, analyzing it in detail, the analyses section determines each review's characteristics. The saturation level is reached when the researcher reaches a level in which they have nothing more to add to the cumulative characters of all analyzed reviews (Eisenhardt, 1989). Then, the researcher begins to summarize by writing down their own comments about the points for every review and offering an analytical overview of each review. With an aggregate approach to all review summaries, concepts are regrouped as themes and sub-themes (Goulding, 2005).

Quantitative Research Method

Phase 2: Quantitative content analysis. As it is argued earlier, the present study applies quantitative methods as well. Combination of qualitative content analysis and quantitative content analysis has been widely suggested as a strong tool in consumer research (Kassarjian, 1977). In the quantitative content analysis, it is determined how many times each concept (variable) is used in each review (case), in the two data. This is

an advised step for analysing the texts in consumer research studies (Kassarjian ,1977). For example, Basil and Basil (2009) and Crottset al. (2007) have used same approach for finding the importance of different concepts in online text data. Thus, quantitative content analysis is congruent with the purpose and the context of restaurant experience studies with online data.

Phase 3: Hypothesis testing (inferential statistics). After the quantitative content analyses section, with the aid of the literature and the insight from the results of the other sections, several enriched hypotheses are suggested. In the hypotheses testing section, there are several questions to be answered, such as: Which elements predict the consequent behaviour and which one of those elements is the most important predictor? Another question is: What elements shape customer expectations? For this section, several inferential statistical tools such as logistic regression and non-parametric correlation tests are applied. The logistic regression technique has been used widely in consumers' returning or repurchasing behaviour (Jang & Namkung, 2008; Kivela & Robert, 2000; Susskind, 2005). It seems that logistic regression is a proper tool for the aim of this research because of the suggested model with dichotomous dependent variable (return patronage: intention to return or not to return) and the nature of data that requires almost no assumption about the variables of the data. Multiple regression method, however, is very hard to apply to this sort of data because the assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity cannot be applied without several transformations.

Validation

Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods can enhance the validity of this research, by comparing similar or different interpretation of the results.

Synergizing of the results is another benefit of the kind of research methods used. The comparison processes (between qualitative and quantitative results) can allow researchers to obtain better understanding of what is really happening in the related model. A large data set affords researchers more powerful, generalisable results. Also, data-hungry techniques can be performed to test emergent and sophisticated hypotheses. For these reasons, this study is going to use a relatively large sample of data.

There are other factors that can improve the validity of this research. One is to use frequent reviewer writings; these individuals appear to offer reviews that are more reliable, as several studies that use frequent review writers as a source of reliable information indicated (Do-Hyung et al., 2007; Hemmington et al., 2008; Hu et al., 2008). Moreover, using another data (frequent reviewer) source creates a comparison opportunity that can offer more validity for the results. Another issue is that, in the data gathering, the researcher has collected the reviews of restaurants that have high numbers of reviews, which may indicate that consumers have more concerns about the particular restaurants under study. Using a second researcher to re-review the coding results is another tool that enhances the validity of the measured results. For this purpose, another graduate student reviews the coding results without knowing the first primary results; then a comparison between the two coding results is applied.

Limitations of this study will restrict the application and the generalisability of the results specifically due to the nature of the secondary source of data. However, the ease of data availability, wide variety of subjects and richness of the data is uniquely valuable. Secondary online data has increasingly become an important source of consumers' opinions for research (Crottset al., 2007); using this type of data (consumers' opinion on

web pages) is easy and appropriate for the purpose of this research. Additionally, few studies yet use such a comprehensive perspective that can account for as many factors as it is proposed by this study. In inferential statistics, reliability analysis can also be used to determine whether or not a particular factor may be reliably constructed from several variables. Finally, the results are discussed about the level of validity as if they are meaningful and can be justified (conclusion validity).

Qualitative Results, Coding and Descriptive Graphs

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the customers' expectations and the consumption aspects of the restaurant reviews. Restaurant review writers were free to write about their experiences and not restricted in a particular framework. Thus, various aspects of the dining experience that people chose to write about have been found by the qualitative part of this study. The qualitative results would be the base for quantitative section in which the frequencies of each variable was examined to find out the importance of a concept and furthermore to test the relationships between different variables. Descriptive graphs of quantitative variables have been shown to give a better understanding of the consumers' opinions.

Qualitative Analyses and Results

This study applies qualitative content (thematic) analyses in the first phase of the study. This method is very useful for making inference and categorizing qualitative texts (Goulding, 2005). The aim of the qualitative section is to find appropriate answers for two main questions: What factors can contribute to shape expectations? What are the dimensions of dining experiences? As discussed in the research method chapter, analyses have been conducted for reviews one by one, until reaching a saturation level, without using any previous framework from the literature of dining experience.

A theoretical saturation is a condition that newer cases only have minimal contribution to the total findings (Eisenhardt, 1989). The analysis of this study has ended when newer reviews (5 reviews) only repeat the previous concepts that have already been found. There are 61 reviews for infrequent reviewers and 38 reviews for frequent reviewers that have been documented in the qualitative part. It means that after 56

reviews, no new concepts has been found in the infrequent data and after review number 33, no new concepts has emerged in frequent reviews. In total, around 100 reviews have been analysed in detail.

The positive and negative datasets have been analysed for both data (frequent review writers and non-frequent review writers) regarding the qualitative questions. In the first question, the researcher was seeking to find an answer for the question regarding concepts related to expectations. In the second question, the researcher was looking for the elements that predict the outcome in dining experience. Themes have emerged when the review writers were documenting particular aspects of their expectations, satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In addition to these activities, the researcher was searching to find what would be the outcome of a dining experience other than the intention to return. In qualitative analyses report, the themes and dimensions of restaurant reviews are presented. These categories and sub-categories have been analyzed and they are incorporated with the most relevant sample phrases of the reviews.

The analyses of qualitative part revealed that there are certain reviews that have clear hedonic and emotional aspects in dining experience. People show their excitement and emotion through their reviews. In one review, as an example, the reviewer mentioned: “Wow! What a wonderful Friday night, comfy place to enjoy an outstanding meal.”

Sometimes, people showed their negative emotion (such as anger or regret) by the way they typed their reviews i.e., typing a word in a capital format. In one review, the writer wrote: “If the owner had an ounce of intelligence, he would clean the place up (a

fresh coat of paint, new carpet and chairs could do WONDERS for this place) and re-launch it as a family eatery.”

There is definitely experiential element in the reviews as one can find expressions such as “a near death experience” or “very pleasant experience”. In short, experiential aspects such as emotional and hedonic expression can be found through a considerable number of reviews. The numerical analyses can be found in the quantitative analysis part.

Themes and Dimensions of Restaurant Reviews

In the analyses process, the main purpose is the identification of phrases explaining before (consumer expectations) or during (consumer satisfaction) the dining experience. After finding the main theme, the concentration has been on analysing phrases based on the theme and trying to categorize the elements such as finding the element “advertising” as an emergent category later named “reason of visit” for the first question or identifying the “taste” of the meal as an element in the category of the “food quality perception” for the second question. In spite of this systematic process, several non-categorized phrases have also been found.

The next stage is to revise the categories’ name and repeat the same process to group similar concepts in one sub-theme and finally reduce the number of non-categorized concepts. In an effort to make the sub-themes (concepts) more practical for measurement and interpretation, some of the subthemes have been combined together with explained rationale (Qualitative Analysis Report). Exploring new features that lead to find several concepts which are not according to the previous research is one the main results of this section.

There are major sub-themes that can be easily identifiable in the reviews and they are according to the basic models in dining experience literature. These sub-themes are explicit expectations expressions, explanations about the consumption variables (such as food qualities) and comments about intentional behaviour. There are also some concepts that are not obvious; however, they implicitly contribute to the themes that this study is searching for. These include indirect expectations, social aspects of dining and unintentional outcomes such as emotions. These sub-themes are a bit harder to be recognized or they emerge slowly. One reason for this phenomenon may be because there has been almost no priming for these variables in the original rating webpage, thus, review writers did not mention these sub-themes clearly. To summarize, the basic or general categories in the analyses are expectations and dining experience elements, followed by several sub-categories of explicit and implicit concepts.

Within general categories, of course, there are several sub-categories. For the dining experience satisfiers, for example, food, atmosphere and service quality perceptions are three major concepts. Another sub-category that has been found here is the social aspect of dining experience. This is in congruence with the dining experience literature and the model that this study has suggested. There are several other issues that cannot be categorized due to the nature of them that have been rarely mentioned, or the holistic experience view that cannot be easily measured. The first group variables have been called “minor issues” and the second group variables fall into “general evaluation” or “overall judgments” category. This general evaluation usually reflects the quality/price relationship.

The analyses of the review texts have identified several concepts for each sub-category. A summary of the analyses with related phrases from the review writers is reflected in the researcher's note for the qualitative analyses report (Qualitative Analysis Report). These concepts can change into variables by the measuring the frequencies of the repetition of these concepts in the bodies of restaurant reviews. In the following table, the summary of the categories, sub-categories and concepts are shown for the qualitative questions.

Table 2. Themes and Sub-Themes of Dining Experience Reviews

Theme	Sub-theme	Concepts - Variables
Expectations	Reason of Visit	Word of Mouth
		Advertisement / Web Pages
	Type of meal	Dinner
		Breakfast, Brunch & Lunch
	Type of Expectation	Direct Expectations
Indirect Expectations		
Dining Experience Predictors	Food Quality Perception	Taste
		Presentation/Appearance/Aroma
		Portion size
		Freshness
		Temperature
		Veggie/Healthy
		Variety/Selection
		Consistency/Wine/Pairing
	Atmosphere Quality Perception	Cleanliness
		Music/Noise
		Lighting
		Size/Crowding
		Temperature/Comfort
		View/Décor
	Service Quality Perception	Speed
		Treatment
		Completeness
		Mistake/Correction
	Social Aspects	Family Members / Friends
		Other Social Events
	Other Aspects	General Evaluations (Overall Judgments)
		Minor Issues

Qualitative Analyses Report

The Origination of Expectations

During the analysis of reviews, I found many people clearly wrote that other people had recommended or said positive things about their restaurant experience. This word of mouth or people's action is the first theme for consumers' expectations. In both positive and negative experiences, and usually when the reviewers wanted to have their first visit of a restaurant, they relied on other people's suggestion such as "I have heard great things about [x]", "I'm really sad because we expected it to be great because of the reviews" or "I've never been to [x] and have heard nothing but good things, I'm afraid I was surely disappointed". Even seeing other people, friends or co-workers, go somewhere, it may bring up some sort of expectation for people; I can see such phenomenon in this sentence: "All of my friends go here all of the time, so I figured it was worth a try". All together, one of the dimensions of expectation is what a customer can understand from other people's recommendations, reviews and actions.

The second major theme which has been found in both negative and positive reviews is the comparison theme. People tended to compare their current experience with previous experience in other outlets or similar-same place. See these expressions: "The food was very well presented and better quality and taste that at the old location", "I've had far better Italian dishes" or "Lethbridge [x] disappoints and may well wipe out years of patronage at [the same x] across Ontario". All of these show that people have some sort of expectations of their upcoming dining event because they have had similar dining experiences. And when they want to have a judgment about their experience, they tend to compare with those previous experiences.

The third expectation source is external information. People can be influenced by advertisements, awards and website of restaurants or by articles and magazines. Usually the advertising and website (pushier format of external expectations) of a restaurant associated with expressed expectations in negative reviews such as “The fact that you aren't mentioned in the Vancouver food awards has nothing to do with advertising. I haven't seen [y] or [z] advertise and they rate a mention”, “with all the advertising, you'd think that'd be a no-brainer... but as long as the supervisor knows, that's enough, it seems” or “the website pictures totally mislead you”. Interesting point is that it seems usually articles and magazine associates with positive reviews such as “Went here after reading an article in the paper about the social conscience of the owner”. One interpretation for this difference can be that people who just bombarded by the advertisement or seeing pushing pictures in a website, they are programmed to visit a fine place. Though, they have a high fabricated expectation whereas people who become informative with an article or a specialized magazine have more realistic expectations.

The fourth theme, price of the event, is another important element that set the expectations of people. Generally, high priced events increase the expectations and fair price just create basic satisfaction; as demonstrated in these examples: “For the price of the food, it was only okay nothing special” or “over priced for the quantity” and “If you are not prepared to spend the money for a luxury meal, of course you wont enjoy the experience at this restaurant or any others in this calibre”. The over-pricing issue has been just seen in negative reviews. However and sometimes, fair prices can have opposite outcome such as: “was expecting a monster but was very impressed on how reasonable the bill was”.

The fifth theme that may create high expectation is that people use dining to celebrate an occasion or to experience a unique event. There are many examples that show people expect very good times during their dining for a special occasion such as “My husband and I had dinner at your restaurant earlier this evening around 6:30pm to celebrate our wedding anniversary” or when one wrote that “... ruined my friend’s birthday”. Experiencing a unique event usually associate with positive reviews such as “My girlfriend and I visited [x] to celebrate our love affair and my official freedom. After researching all of the restaurants for our special dinner, we decided upon the [x]”.

If a restaurant is just opened, it can reduce the level of customers’ expectations and mediocre their judgment. There is a case in my analysis that newly opened restaurants were judged moderately for their minor mistakes because the reviewers expected some sort of problems. These expressions are such as “I understand that when a restaurant opens things are busy, and staffing is challenging in our current market...” Though, newly opened status for a restaurant is the sixth theme for shaping expectations.

The first impression and beautiful settings can attract more customers in on hand; however, on the other hand, it would increase the expectations. This so-called first impression phenomenon, as the seventh theme, is another dimension in expectation creation. One can see this in the following sentences: “... were excited to try [x] as the menu looked very good and the setting was very nice” or “We had to wait 35 minutes for a table (not the 15 we were told at the door)”. In the last, one for example, the customer expected 15 minutes for waiting before seating, but, the restaurant couldn’t meet the expectation.

The eighth theme which has been emerged in the analysis of reviews is the expectation for time. The first sub-theme is the cooking time. Of course, dining in a table serviced restaurant is different with that in a fast food restaurant. People, who seek fine dining, expect a reasonable time, but staying more than that reasonable time would increase the expectations in terms of the temperature and the quality of the cooking, for example one reviewer wrote: “the food took inordinately long to prepare, but once it arrived it was cold” or “When the food arrived, and in a timely manner... the fries were cold. The chicken was tasteless and very red towards the bone. The Ribs were already cold” or “long waits for the food, very cold food, sauce, etc, rock hard bones”. The second sub-theme is the service time regarding the crowdedness level of the restaurant. The argument here is that if a restaurant is not crowded, people expect to receive services and foods relatively fast. I can see this expectation here: “Given that there were few others in the restaurant when we were there, the food took inordinately long to prepare”.

Due to limited time for further analysis, I have decided to select the most repeated and most important expectation elements, and apply coding solely on them. First of all, this study seeks whether the review-writers state about their direct or indirect expectations or not. This statement can indicate that the writers have some sort of expectation before their visit. Second, the coding quantitative part of this study searches if the writers state if they visited the exact place or similar places before. The underlying assumption here is that previous experience would shape some sort of expectations or comparison for similar/same place. The third factor for coding is the reason for visit or the external information. Based on the presented argument for the third expectation factor in qualitative analysis, two variables are defined, the first one is if the writers said

something about word of mouth or any kind of article or magazine that they read and the second variable is if the writers said something about advertising or online websites of the restaurants they visited. The special event as a source of expectation has not been coded separately; however, it is coded under the title “other social aspect” of the dining experience. The type of meal, whether it is dinner or not has been coded, because during the qualitative analyses, there was a question if people with dinner experience have higher expectation than people with other type of meal experience. The time of waiting has been coded as a service factor and not as an expectation element.

The Predictors of Dining Experience Outcome

After analyzing and categorizing the predictors or the reasons why people are willing to come back to the place, six general themes have been identified. The first three themes are those general restaurant quality categories which have been mentioned in the literature widely. Moreover, the website has been created in a way that some questions about the experience are asked prior to write the review. These questions may prime the review writer how to judge about his or her review. So, these three categories have been used many times and clearly distinct among each other as well as from other categories. The quality of food, atmosphere and service are these three categories.

The customers (review writers) also mentioned other satisfiers from their experience, in which other three general categories have been identified. One is the sidelong events, means any shows, live music or special events that comes along the dining experience at or near the restaurant. The other one is the socializing factors which can create satisfaction. And the last category named as other reasons, discussing other

issues such as the pricing (over or fair), parking, reservation, chef etc which can not be categorized in other themes.

Each category has its own sub-themes which have been discussed here. In this manner, there are some differences between the judgment of negative review writers and positive reviewers. These differences can be analyzed later by hygiene – motivation factors. Of course, distinctions between different expectations in these two types of reviews would have a great effect in identifying how predictors would lead to outcomes.

Food Quality

The first and the most mentioned category is the quality of food. One can find many review writers that just talked about their food! In this category, however, there are several different predictors in this category. Taste of the food is the first, and probably the most important theme that people mentioned. There are a lot of examples of how people judged their experience by the taste of the food for example: “The food tasted just right, and the desserts were amazing!” The other way around can be true and a bad taste would result in high dissatisfaction, like this review: “The chicken was tasteless and very red towards the bone.” Other than taste, the special food or food from different nations or regions can contribute to customers’ satisfaction; these foods bring different experience for a consumer: “This restaurant was excellent! I finally found a restaurant with real authentic Spanish food” or “when it came to my love for sushi... until I found this place!” In these reviews, Spanish food and sushi are those different experiences that contributed to the food experience of the place.

Another sub-category in food quality perception is using fresh or old ingredients. In positive reviews, people mention fresh materials as one of their satisfiers. As an

example, in one review the person wrote: “A fantastic sushi restaurant. Freshest fish in the city” Sometimes even customers directly relate the freshness to the quality: “The food is always fresh and consistently of high quality.” In negative reviews, people tend to complained about the old foods such as “The fries and chips were wet and I think old”.

The portion of the food has also dual effect, if it is small it can create dissatisfaction while if it is huge, it can create satisfaction. One can find this theme in these sentences: “The portions are huge! It is the place to go if you are hungry”, “The portions are rather large, so you never leave hungry” or “The size of chicken was questionable; if the pineapple slice is bigger than the chicken, why call it the teriyaki chicken burger?” and “The seafood seemed limited in portion”. This sub-theme may come from a value judgment process in which people judge the size of their food based on the price they would pay.

The next sub-theme which has been identified for food quality is the presentation or the appearance of the food. Again this feature can be either satisfier or dissatisfier. There are several reviews that have mentioned this theme in our analyses: “I ordered the strip, and it was beautifully thick and perfectly medium rare” or “more a fine food presentation, very equal to what we have had in Paris” and for negative reviews: “No decoration, no presentation, no aroma” or “food lacked personality and presentation”. The other dual effect theme is the temperature of the food. One can find this theme in many sentences of positive and negative reviews such as “The unique experience is that it is so hot when it comes to your table that it keeps a nice temperature for almost as long as it takes to eat” or “...it was runny and cold.”

Another theme in food quality category is the variation of menu items and taste for positive reviews and not having the menu items for negative reviews. One can see such themes in these sentences: “The variation of taste and mixture of aromas were perfect” or “Lots on menu to choose from” and “They didn't have the wine we wanted and brought us a 'substitute' at the same price”. One argument here might be that the variety of items and taste can be the satisfier while having the items in the restaurant menu is a standard expectation that every person has, hence, a disability to provide that standard expectation will lead to dissatisfaction.

Aroma of food is another theme that people talked about. Having or not having aroma has either satisfaction or dissatisfaction result. One can find this sub-theme in such sentences: “mixtures of aromas were perfect” or “no aroma”.

There are also other contributors to positive experiences. This positive contributor creating two sub-themes in my analysis review, the first is a good wine and the second is a good veggie food. These themes can be seen in sentences such as: “great wine...” or “the wine selections are top notch” and “Sometimes you will not even believe that it's "just" veggies, since the taste is incredible and your taste buds might believe you are actually eating meat”. However, there is no strong sign that healthy options can contribute to create a positive experiences.

All in all, I have decided to choose the following categories as binary variables (whether they have been said positively or negatively) for coding: taste of the food or authentic food taste, presentation/aroma/appearance, portion size, freshness, temperature of the food, veggie/healthy food or options, variety/selection, consistency/wine/pairing. In a few cases that the review writers mentioned both positive and negative about a

particular variable, this study decides to leave the variable blank, which is not exactly what the purpose of this coding is, but it is the best way to enhance inferential statistics results, because SPSS application package would remove the cases in question automatically.

Atmosphere Quality

The second category for dining experience predictors is ambiance or atmosphere. In this category, similarly, there is one important theme that many have mentioned and it is the cleanliness/dirtiness. In this sub-theme, people like or dislike the level of cleanness of a restaurant. You can see this part in these selected sentences: “The Washrooms are spotless!”, “the bathrooms were FILTHY... probably the staff should have spent more time cleaning than...” or “You won't be impressed by the dirty atmosphere”.

Another factor in this category is the music. Based on these reviews, music can create satisfaction, if desirable; however, it can create dissatisfaction if it is loud. One can find this argument in such sentences: “The music was nice and the atmosphere pleasant” or “the dancers are so loud, you cant even hear the person next to you”. The other dual-effect theme is having good materials and homey atmosphere in positive reviews where as perceiving a superficial or small environment would be found in negative reviews. The following positive examples may reveal these sub-themes better: “wonderful atmosphere felt rite at home very homey feel” or “Very relaxing atmosphere” and “I also think the coffee krafts [pots] are a great touch!” however negative examples are: “The restaurant is stuffy, and trying to look too 'old money' without the resources to back it up” and “The

stage is so small...” or “The place was packed, which I guess is a testament to its quality and presentation.”

In negative reviews, people sometimes complaint about darkness or lack of enough lighting such as “Also, because the lighting is so dim and its so dark to see in there I could not tell what was mixed in with the mushrooms.” However, in positive reviews the lighting is usually reflected a beauty feature and not the amount of lights such as: “The restaurant is gorgeous and the lighting is perfect. I love that 95% of the restaurant is booths.” It seems that the shortage of enough lighting would create dissatisfaction whereas for creating experiencers’ satisfaction, a restaurant manager should think more than just enough lights and try to make the lighting fantasy and beautiful.

There are some other dimensions that people had mentioned in both positive and negative reviews. The view of a restaurant is one example of these themes. One can find this kind of effect in the following sentence: “and the view was delightful as the Tulip Festival flotilla floated by.” The last thing is that I see some complaints about inside temperature such as: “It was a hot day and it felt like the a/c was not on”.

For summarizing this predictor factor, I have decided to use these binary variables: cleanliness, music/noise, lighting, size/crowding, temperature of the room/comfort and view/decoration. It is noteworthy to mention that ease of parking or good location is considered a kind of comfort theme and scenery is measure as a kind of view property.

The third theme which is a part of the explicit quality of a dining is the quality of service. The most important and common service aspect which has been widely discussed

in both positive and negative reviews is the employee behaviour. In positive reviews, people talked about respectful, friendly, pleasant, helpful and even “welcoming to kids” behaviour. One can find this kind of humanic relationship in these reviews: “I am in love with this restaurant not only because of the food but because the servers are classy, smart and respectful.” Or “The staff was friendly and helpful.” On the other side, negative reviews usually discussed about impolite, not helpful, careless and inconsiderate behaviour. There are lots of examples of such complaints such as: “They are rude, arrogant and the food is average” or “The server corrected my mom with the pronunciation (We are Spanish) and made her pronounce it with an English accent.” Or “when they brought out the food they would just place it anywhere”.

Another theme in service is the time of service. Usually customers expect a reasonable time for the food preparation, however, they expect that the service is effective and fast. This is a source for either satisfying or dissatisfying a customer and there are lots of examples for this theme such as: “No waiting or line ups here. Just fast, friendly, good service” or “Well timed and helpful service”, however, “We had to wait 35 minutes for a table (not the 15 we were told at the door) and were then seated outside” or “Try to put yourself in this: you waited in front of the counter for a while just want to pay and leave but servers just walk by and not even bother looking at you.” The other issue is that being too fast may cause negative perception: “I think it is restaurant policy to feed you quickly to get in more seatings.” While a moderate behaviour may have better results such as: “the service was top notch it wasn’t too fast nor too slow...”

Seating job of wait staff is also an important theme for positive reviews. There are some examples in this regard such as: “The hostesses [and host] did their best to seat

everyone as efficiently as possible.” Or “On one occasion we were seated immediately, and on the other we were asked to wait for approximately five minutes.” It seems that seating is important to make high satisfaction, but because I did not find any sign in negative reviews, I can think that this sub-dimension cannot create negative intentional behaviour. You go to a restaurant and choose a table you want without being helped by a waitress; it is not very pleasant, but it is also not annoying.

Informative staff can create satisfaction whereas not giving necessary information to customers can create dissatisfaction. There are some examples for the “information providing” sub-theme such as: “recommendation from our very professional and well informed waiter” or “service was friendly and knowledgeable but overall it felt very expensive for what you got.” And “Apparently on Saturday there is a minimum of \$30 per person even though my guest and I missed the performance. This should have been mentioned upon first ordering as instead of paying \$17 for nothing, actual food could have been ordered in its place.”

How the manager or staff handle a complaint can affect satisfaction level of experiencers. If a complaint handling is effective or combined with apologizing, it can create satisfaction while if a complaint handling is not effective or blames customer for the mistake, it can result in high dissatisfaction. See these examples: “once we got there we were asked to wait 10 to 15 mins, quickly they realized their mistake and we were seated then.” And “this is deliberate, they overcharged us. I called them on it and they didn't apologize.” Or “I wrote the owner about this and instead of apologizing he informed me that we only have ourselves to blame and basically called us stupid, cheap and personally attacked us.”

There are two sub-themes that just were found in negative reviews. First, review writers complaints about the fairness of the staff such as: “was a big party of people that came after and when they did they forgot we existed.” Or “he (the staff) was not willing to accommodate us in appropriate seating, especially when the whole place was empty. The clown thinks that Indians may not tip etc.” The second sub-theme is the missing orders. As a part of service, order taking or bringing the right order is one of basic but important jobs and doing this wrong will result in high dissatisfaction such as: “We ordered 6 tapas and 2 were forgotten. We had to ask about one of them and our waiter asked near the end if we had received all 6 and we hadn't.” or “I am a vegetarian and was not satisfied with the food I ordered. Although I ordered a vegetarian mushroom dish, I received a meat mushroom dish.”

There are other sub-themes that just contribute to the satisfaction in my analyses. Seeing good looking staff and/or hard working staff would contribute to customers' satisfaction as one can find in these sentences: “Very cute servers. The hostess was hot too” or “The staff are great, especially a male host who is very tall, he seemed to work very hard, he was great, and in a very cheerful mood when I was there.” The other sub-theme for generating satisfaction with good service is having a proper sequence for delivering or providing food and services. One can find such timing and well-operating theme in the following examples: “He (the chef) took care of choosing our food and the sequence it came in. Nine courses came in delightful succession...” or “Well timed and helpful service...”

All in all, I have decided to code these four binary variables for service quality: speed which includes waiting time and response time, professionalism which includes a

variety job-context related factor such as politeness, friendliness, good looking appearance, seating job, being informative and so on, completeness of order such as attentiveness or order taking and finally mistake or complain management/correction.

The fourth theme which greatly ignored in many studies, has been found repeatedly in my analysis as “socializing”. For this theme, usually a social factor contributes to satisfaction or results in dissatisfaction. Generally speaking, socializing is a human need and it could contribute to the satisfaction, however, in lack of the existence of this element or wanting it in different way can create dissatisfaction.

The first sub-theme for socializing is about good company. In these sub-theme, one can find several factors such as trying other’s food, special occasions (partying, dating etc.) being away from kids (couple dining) or dining with other family members/friends. The examples for these factors could be such as: “As for the meal I must say I did enjoy everyone’s meal as I tasted everything.” while “After we sampled each others dishes it was determined that mine was the best- pretty worrying. The worst was my friends seafood choice...” or “Great place for dates...”, “My wife and had an incredible evening away from the kids”, “We dine their at least once a month and we have taken many friends and family members to eat there.” For the first factor, we can name the sub-theme as *peer experience effect*. This phenomenon may be one of the reasons that some people rate their experience too extreme and make review data not-normalized. (This has been tested in statistical analyses. Please see the part on the statistical analysis.)

The second sub-theme for socializing is just to be with or among other people. On one hand, some people like to go among other people, only to be out of homes seeing

people in line ups, dining while other people are dining at the same time, talking and socializing with new people, and seeing empty dishes of other tables. Let's see some example of this kind of socializing: "The restaurant is so popular that you should bring some time when going there, since you will encounter a line up." Or "Saw dishes coming out to other tables very big portions but plates always came back clean." And for negative reviews: "Not many people were there".

On the other hand, some people do not like to be with other people and they prefer not-crowded places. One can find these statements in the reviews such as: "would not recommend coming here if your party is large and more than 8 people" or "a big party of people that came after and when they did they forgot we existed?"

The third sub-theme for socializing is to know and talk with restaurant owners or employees. Look at the examples: "the [x] family so friendly and efficient..." or "the owner and his other brother cooks up delicious pastas."

The fourth theme for dining experience predictors is the side long event. By the "side long event", I mean those events that are not directly related to dining. There are three sub-themes for this theme which are special occasions, live shows or music and shopping nearby. Special occasions are events such as birthday party, wedding anniversary and so on if a restaurant provides specific feature for that such as: "...for a birthday party. The waitress brought out a flan with a candle on it and song happy birthday." or "...to celebrate our wedding anniversary. We enjoy [x] restaurants and were excited to try Embruo Flamenco..." The other predictors are live shows and music performances such as: "The show sucked!" or "the dancers are so loud, you cant even hear the person next to you." Or "... shouldn't forget the lovely and entertaining flamenco

show”. The final contributor in sidelong events theme is shopping facilities. One can find such contribution in this sample: “What's more, there is even a wonderful accessories and clothing shop just upstairs”.

For simplicity, I have selected just two binary variables for coding, the first one is good company (being with family or friends) as a social factor and the other one is other social events separated than friends or family gathering.

The fifth theme for dining experience predictors is “other aspects” which is related to either minor issues such as restaurant location, kitchen staff/chef, learning how to cook, caring about the world (I can assume this sub-them as a kind of social responsibility of restaurant management), bad behaviour among restaurant staff, not-taking reservation and ease of parking or general evaluations or overall judgments such as pricing, unique or different feeling, continues quality, specialized and professional perception. The other general perception that would result in satisfaction is a specialized or professional job or continuous quality. Many customers expect professionalism during dining out and they do not want to be surprised by different levels of quality in different times. One can find this such-them in the following sentences: “was very professional” or “We have been coming here for about 5 years now and it never disappoints same owners/Chef since day one...Great service and food...Keep up the great work!” For the purpose of this study, I discuss only the general evaluation as the result of experience and it is coded in a yes/no way. However, because the “other factors” are rare in our data, there is no value for them to be categorized or coded.

The pricing is important as many people tend to evaluate their experience based on the value they would gain from that event. Value can be defined as the outcome

divided by the price. Overpricing, though, can generate little value and cause dissatisfaction, whereas fair prices can create satisfaction if the outcome is high enough. Another issue is that if a restaurant charges the customer more than the price list, it would create dissatisfaction. One can see this sub-theme in these samples: “are overpriced for the quantity” or “... was very impressed on how reasonable the bill” or “Unbelievable but then they managed to charge us more than the menu had stated and apologized by saying they will charge us what the menu says even though their prices have gone up and menu is wrong!”.

Contrary to the above logic, price may not be really important if a consumer seek a great hedonic experience and special feeling. One can see this theme in the following sentences: “This restaurant is for those who are not watching their wallets, but ready to experience whatever the menu has, without looking at the prices”, “It's the best dining atmosphere in the city”, “This was without question the best steak I've ever had.” Or “We felt like we were back in Spain for at least the two hours we spend here.” Fortunately, review writers have provided the price information, by answering a question about the price range before writing the review, so, no extra coding is required. The price variable is measured as an ordinal variable; however, because people themselves chose the price, the variable also reflects a kind of price “perception” which is a better representative for a consumption measuring factor. For example, if a customer perceived that the price of a food is “fair”, they may not include the tax and tips in the price so they rate the price of their dining experience in a cheaper category. It can be true for the other way around. So, what I see for this variable, is not the exact price of the food, but the

price perception, and for the purpose of this study, it is a better measure, as this study is seeking to find consumers' opinions and experiences.

Hedonic Experience in Restaurant Reviews

For enhancing the qualitative analysis and relate it to the subject of this thesis, an analysis of hedonic dining experience has been done to figure out what elements make a dining experience memorable or special. As a sign of differentiated experience, this part of the study has looked at the most related words to a ultra fine dining experience such as “wow” or “amazing” to bring out more insight about the hedonic dining experience.

There were some good examples of reviews that will be brought in the next paragraphs.

In the first glance of the analysis of the restaurant reviews, it came out sometimes passing customers' expectations or not meeting the minimum level of customers' expectation can cause the “wows”. This can happen for each of the consumption performances. Here is a good example for a wow service: “Our server was very attentive, and even wowed us by bringing us fresh cutlery after our salads!!! Hard to find that kind of wow service in this city.”

Another aspect of the “wows” is when everything is desirable and finally the restaurant creates a good holistic experience. “Wow! This place is awesome! ... But we returned, a group of 4, for the buffet. It was fantastic. Every selection was good. I can't comment on its authenticity but it was good. My favorite thing on the buffet was this mixture of vegetables in a dark sauce that is separate from the rest. It lies on this circular wide wok-like warmer with a light over it. I think it's meant as a general topping for the rice or naan. I think the buffet cost us 25\$ but you get a lot for 25\$. Be careful, we came out over full. It's easy to eat too much because the place has a lot of stuff. They have a

chocolate fountain with a selection of fruits for dessert along with cakes and pies. It *is* as good as it looks!” As you can see, when everything is right, with creating more fantasy such as lighting and group dining and finally setting the prices fairly, customers can become highly satisfied. However, the pricing issue can create negative “wow” as well: “We then had the parfait and WOW, I didn't know you could charge so much for some beans out of a can and a bit of ice. Really didn't spark for us. I wouldn't recommend.”

On another point of view, people sometimes stated that they need at least one premium performance to be “wowed”. Look at this example: “There was nothing bad about it. However, there was also no WOW factor at all. It was all OK.” It probably shows that when everything is just OK for customers, the memorable experience cannot be made. In this situation, restaurant managers need to create at least one above the average performance of an element. See this example as an evidence for the previous argument: “average quality and taste. Service was quick, our food was served < 5 minutes after order, wow!” So, making average performance combined with adding one extraordinary feature can change a simple regular dining event to a memorable experience.

The surprise can also be made when several features of a restaurant, together, make customers happy. Look at this example: “Wow! What a wonderful Friday night, comfy place to enjoy an outstanding meal. Well timed and helpful service. ... We love steak, but I felt like a cheese omelets. We all had a taste of each other's meals. I loved Uncle Billy's medium steak! ... Like coming home! ... Lots of very interesting history in this restaurant. A great place to take friends.” As you can see, a series of desirable evidences can create the wow phenomenon.

For some people, social dining is the most important element to put hedonic aspects to their experience. See this example: "...we had a soprano experience with the checkered table cloths, the family speaking Italian the four guys are entertainers all of them came to the table and laughed with us real movie experience without the movie tab. AMAZING". For some other reviewers, authentic dinner could make the dining experience amazing: "Amazing dinner, enjoyed the ambiance, the music was great, the feel in the room was great. Enjoyed the meal a true Italian experience."

Of course, a combination of social desirability and performance can create a *romantic atmosphere* and an "amazing" experience: "Amazing place for two people. Very relaxing atmosphere. Service was very nice, from start to finish. Did not have to wait long at all for the table to be available. The food tasted just right, and the desserts were amazing!" One particular reason for making people say "amazing" is the ambiance of the restaurant: Here are good examples of such reviews: "...First of all, the decor inside was amazing; there is a lot of flare; from moose heads to hunting gear. It's quite dark in there. I don't think there are any windows. But the lighting makes the experience that much better." Or "Amazing atmosphere for a relaxing outing."

Feeling friendly, homey, or comfy is another feature that can bring hedonic aspects to a dining experience. Look at this example: "Delicious food, friendly and knowledgeable staff, family owned wonderful atmosphere felt right at home, very homey feel." The *wonderful* atmosphere is created by a family owned business, creating homey and friendly environment. A sense of *wonderful* restaurant can be created through frequent visiting of a place for long time; that is, the person feels comfortable with the place and the social environment. Here is an example of such reviewers: "My wife ... and

I have enjoyed this wonderfully warm (authentic paintings and rockin' booth seats candlelight) restaurant for at least 10 years now. We tend to frequent many restaurants in Ottawa and surroundings, but this one has the lot. Its been consistently exceptional; from friendly and knowledgeable service to the beautifully steamed homemade pastas. We love it.” And still fair pricing or great promotions can make an event (usually lunch) wonderful: “Wonderful, strolled in for lunch on the advice of a friend. You can order either 3 items for \$5.95 or 4 items for \$6.95 between the hours of 11:30am and 3:00pm.”

Special gatherings or sidelong social events are another aspect of a wonderful experience. Look at this example: “We were there for our office Christmas party and we all had a wonderful time. Our server was very attentive and helpful in suggesting menu items to us. The food was exceptional and the Flamenco show only added to the value of our evening. We all agreed that we would be back!” Finally, holistic experience can create wonderful memory: “The [x] restaurant is authentic, quaint, and romantic. Our hostess was sexy, was not only very personable, but an exquisite hottie! It turns out that she not only attends school in Van, but also is classy. The dinner was reasonably priced, and parking was easy. All in all, it was a wonderful evening, and we couldn't have made a better choice.” In this particular example, it seems that the server could create a differentiated experience for the reviewer.

Quantitative Coding Results, Content Analyses and Descriptive Graphs

According to the research method explained in chapter 2, this study has coded the results of the review analyses. The 809 cases have been analysed in detail. The results in this section are from 793 cases, 405 of them belong to the infrequent reviewers data and the rest, 388 of the cases, belong to the frequent reviewers data. Differences between the two data sets generate insightful results regarding the importance of dining experience elements of frequent reviewers and non-frequent reviewers.

Analyses and Results

Analyses and coding. In the coding process, 29 new variables have been coded (Appendix I); these variables are used in hypothesis shaping/testing or discussion session. Most of these variables have three coded numbers such that during the coding process a value of 1 is assigned to the positive term, a value of -1 is assigned to the negative term and if there is no response present then, a value of zero is assigned. These variables are usually consumption variables that positive and negative comments are common among the reviews such as taste of the food or the cleanliness of the atmosphere. Another group of variables that are coded like the above process are outcome variables, as they can be negative or positive such as recommendations or emotional status.

Some variables, however, are code as binary variables as they are considered only for their presence. This is due to the nature of the concepts of these variables that only the existence is important. For example, whether a review writer visited the restaurant because of an advertisement or not can be coded as 1 or 0, respectively. If the concept is present in the review they are coded as 1, otherwise they are left blank. There are two exception variables: the first one is expectation; if there is a direct expectation

such as using word “expected” or “assumed”, the variable is assigned to 1 and if there is indirect expectations in the review, the variable is assigned to 2; otherwise, the variable is left blank or zero. The second exception is the type of meal; if there is a statement of the type of the meal other than dinner (breakfast, lunch, brunch), the variable is assigned to 1 and if there is a statement of the type of the meal as dinner, the variable is assigned to 2; otherwise, the variable is left blank or zero.

The process of coding is that each review text is read completely and then each variable is coded if it is mentioned in the review, according to the above instruction. So, for each case, there would be several variables that are left blank because there was no phrase in the review that mention those concepts. For example, if a reviewer talked about the delicious taste of the food, the shortage of the variety of the menu, the beautiful décor of the restaurant, the long waiting time for the service speed and they recommended the restaurant positively to other people for a dinner (similar to what they had), the coding would be only for the variables that are mentioned; taste, décor and recommendation variables would be assigned to number 1 and the variety of the menu, service speed and type of the meal would be assigned to number 2. Other variables (in this case there would be 23 variables) would be left blank or zero.

Validity

In order to enhance the validity of the coding results, another reviewer, a master of science in management student, coded 25 cases separately. Prior to this coding, the purpose and the definitions of the variables had been explained to the second reviewer. The comparison between two different coding results showed there was not much difference between results; the only major difference was for the variable “expectation”

(two cases) in which direct expectations and indirect expectations coded differently. This is not considered to be a serious problem since in inferential statistics; this study just uses the existence of expectation variable as both direct and indirect expectations. From 725 coded numbers (many of them were blank or zero) just 23 cases are not the same. That is a rate of 3 percent and shows the high validity of the coding results.

Results

The average words used in a review is the first difference that one can see between the two data. The first data have an average of 77.9 words in each review while the frequent reviewers data have an average of 110.6 words in each review. Clearly, the frequent review writers have used 41% more words in their reviews. This fact has been reflected even in the quality of the writings, as in the qualitative analysis, it has been found that the frequent reviewers data has been saturated with fewer reviews than the infrequent reviewers data.

Another aspect of review writing is hedonic consumption experience. In the analysis of words used by review writers, it has been found that reviewers used considerable percentage words about their excitements and emotions. The word “*wow*” has been used in 7 reviews of infrequent review writers data and in 10 reviews of frequent review writers data. The word “*amazing*” has been used in 35 (8.6%) reviews of infrequent reviewers data and in 23 (5.9%) reviews of frequent reviewers data. The word “*experience*” has been mentioned in 51 (12.6%) reviews of infrequent reviewers data and in 53 (13.7%) cases of frequent reviewers data. It seems that review writers paid considerable attention to the hedonic and experiential aspects of their dining consumption.

There are also measured consumption variable information in the datasets. The basic shapes of the consumption variable (the quantitative variables that used 5-point Likert scale) in the graphs of two data are also interesting. First, most people rated the variables with positive attitudes toward their hedonic experience. Also, more than two thirds of the cases in infrequent reviewers data said that they will revisit the place. The rate is even higher for the frequent reviewers data, as it is around seventy percent. The fact that people rated their experiences optimistically has been also reflected in the coding numbers as they had positive reactions to most of the aspects of their dining experience. In other words, for most of the coded variables, more positive comments have been made than negative ones.

The second interesting point is that for the consumption variables, there is a clear difference between two data: being normalized or not. As you can see for the variable “food quality perception” (mean value is 3.78), the distribution of the variables of the infrequent reviewers data is not normal while that of the frequent reviewers data (mean value is 3.73) is more normally distributed, although skewed toward the positive side (see Figure 5). These figures are very similar for the other consumption variable; “atmosphere quality perception” (mean value is 3.87 for the infrequent reviewers data and 3.59 for the frequent reviewers data) and “service quality perception” (mean value is 3.77 for the infrequent reviewers data and 3.65 for the frequent reviewers data).

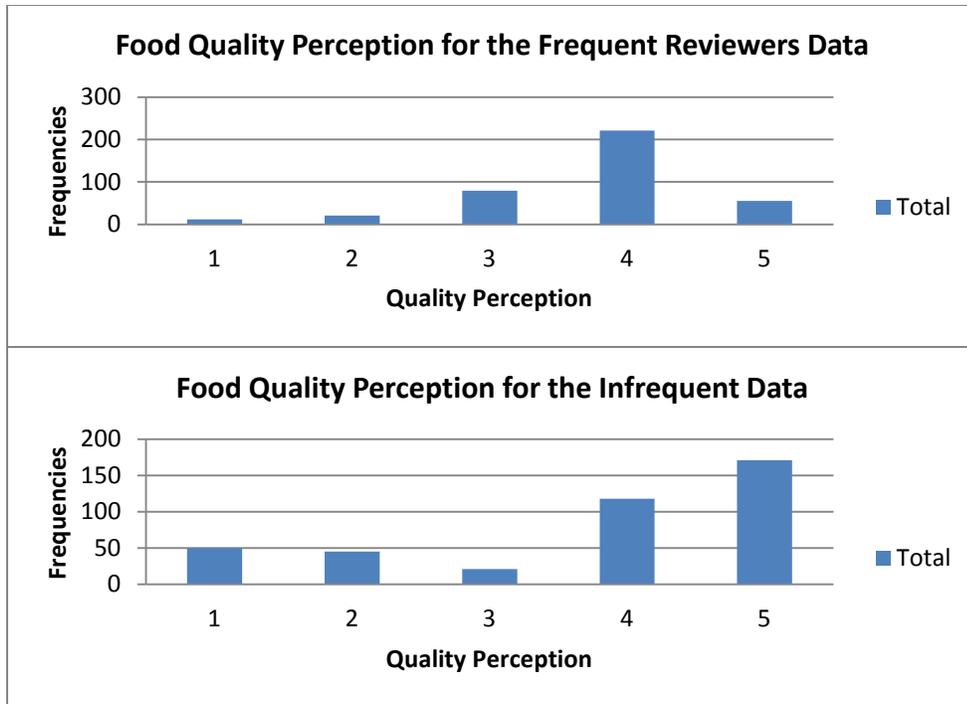


Figure 5. The Distribution of the Food Quality Perception Variable in the Two Data

Note. These graphs show the difference and similarity between the distributions of rating for the consumption variables of the two data. Both are skewed to the positive side and have similar mean values; however, the shape of the frequent reviewers data seems to be more normalized than that of the first one. It is noteworthy that the frequent reviewers data has 388 cases and the infrequent reviewers data has 405 cases.

This is a major difference that people in non-frequent reviews data have rarely mentioned the third category (average) for rating. That is a kind of polar (positive versus negative) rating or what this study has called aggressive rating¹. Frequent reviewers' rating graph, however, has better normalized distribution shapes. This fact can be confirmed in another result that indicates 16% of the cases in frequent reviews data have

¹ In this study, “aggressive rating” term means that some people rated their experience in a very positive or a too negative way in which consumption variables of these cases are rated at almost all maximum or minimum values. One possible interpretation for this phenomenon is that the overall experience evaluation of these review writers outweighs the detailed perception of each element and lead to extremism for rating of all elements. The operational definition of this variable will explain in the hypothesis and inferential statistics section.

stated they may come back to visit the restaurant whereas just a little bit more than 5% of the people in the infrequent reviewers data expressed their intentional behaviour as “maybe”.

The results of the general variable indicate that many people have evaluated their overall dining experience. As it has been explained, many people have evaluated their dining experience in general. They have various comments about their experience without mentioning the details; this general judgment or evaluation has been coded. In the infrequent reviewers data, 246 of cases (more than 63%) have some sort of overall judgment other than the defined sub-categories very similar to what is seen in the frequent reviewers data in which 255 of cases (more than 60%) have a kind of overall judgment. So, in terms of general evaluation, both data have considerable proportion of their cases, judging their dining experience holistically. It shows that people rate their experience not only based on functional rating (such as taste if the food), but also they evaluate their experience by general factors (such as quality/price).

In terms of expectations expressions, 70 cases have been coded as they had either direct or indirect expectations in the infrequent reviewers data while in the frequent reviewers data, this number is 141. This shows that frequent reviewers have stated their expectations in their reviews more than two times than non-frequent reviewers have.

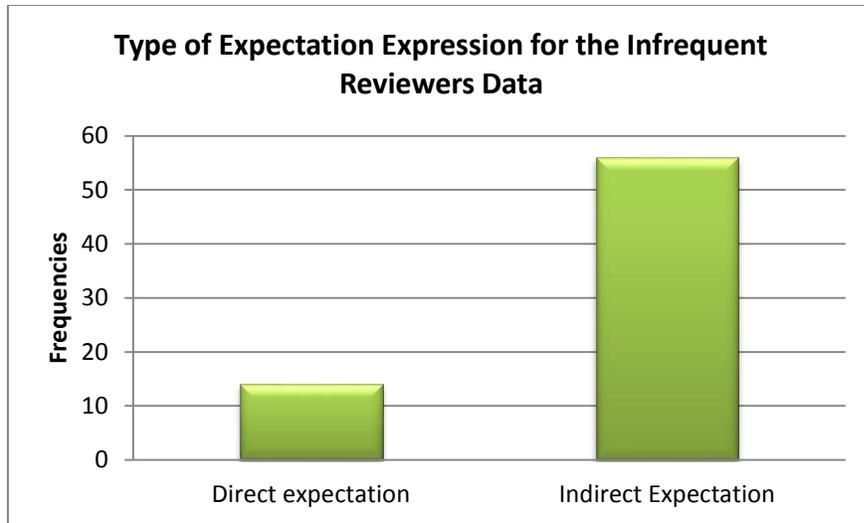


Figure 6. Expectation Frequencies for the Infrequent Reviewers data

The comparison between direct and indirect expectations is also interesting. As it is evident, infrequent reviewers data has only 20% of its expectation related cases as direct expectation while frequent reviewers data has 33% of those as direct expectations. So, in regards with the methods of explaining the expectations, frequent review writers have talked more explicitly about their expectations than non-frequent review writers have.

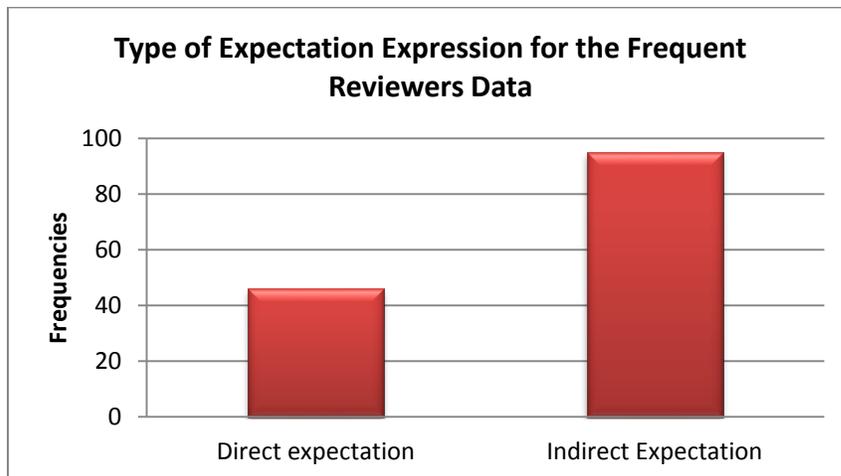


Figure 7. Expectation Frequencies for the Frequent Reviewers Data

More in-depth insight can be generated as three variables have been coded if the consumers talk about them in their reviews. If they had similar experience or they visited the place before their recent experience, they might have some sort of expectation prior to their visit. That is true in other situations if the review writers were recommended by other people and were exposed to advertisement or viewed something online about the place which they were going to visit. In the following graphs, you can see the frequencies of the cases talk about these expectation elements:

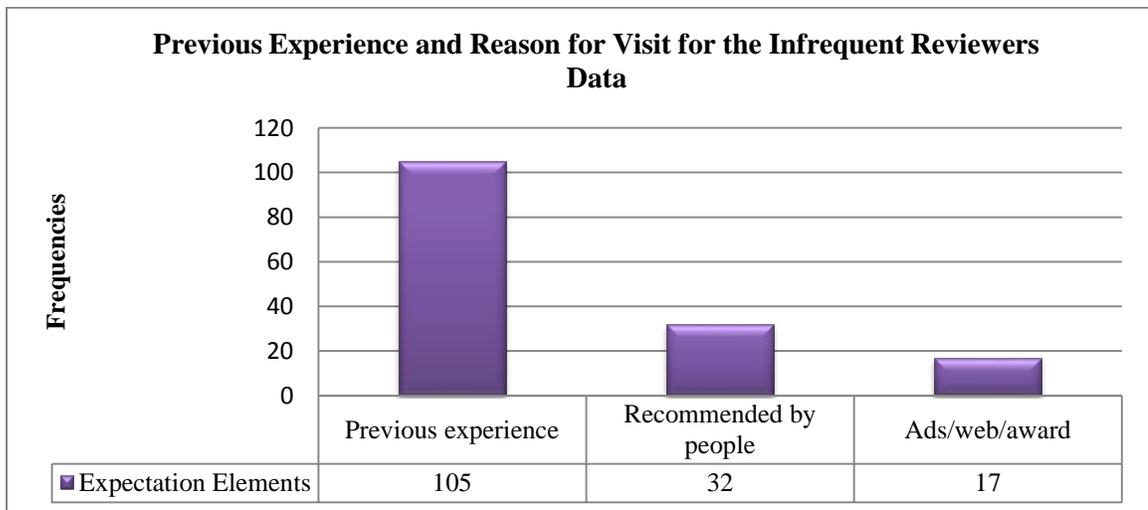


Figure 8. Expectation Element - Previous Experience and Reason for Visit for the Infrequent Reviewers Data

As it is evident, a considerable number of reviewers in the infrequent reviewers data have some phrases regarding their previous similar experience or visit the same/similar place before. Over one fourth of the reviewers clearly stated they had some sort of prior experience before their recent visit. 32 of 405 cases state that they were recommended by others; approximately two and a half times of the number of people who say they were influenced by advertisements, online web pages or awards.



Figure 9. Expectation Element - Previous Experience and Reason for Visit for the Frequent Reviewers Data

In the second review data, more than 30% of the reviewers state that they had prior similar experience. The percentage of the frequent reviewers who talk they were recommended is 8% very similar to non-frequent reviewers; however, the percentage of the people who write they were affected by advertisement or online web pages or awards is relatively low.

One of the most clear differences between two data is about the type of the meal that the reviewers expressed they had in their eating experiences. This type of meal may create some sort of expectations as the breakfast and lunch appeared to have lower expectations than dinner in terms of social dining elements. Taking a look at the two graphs may elaborate the differences better:

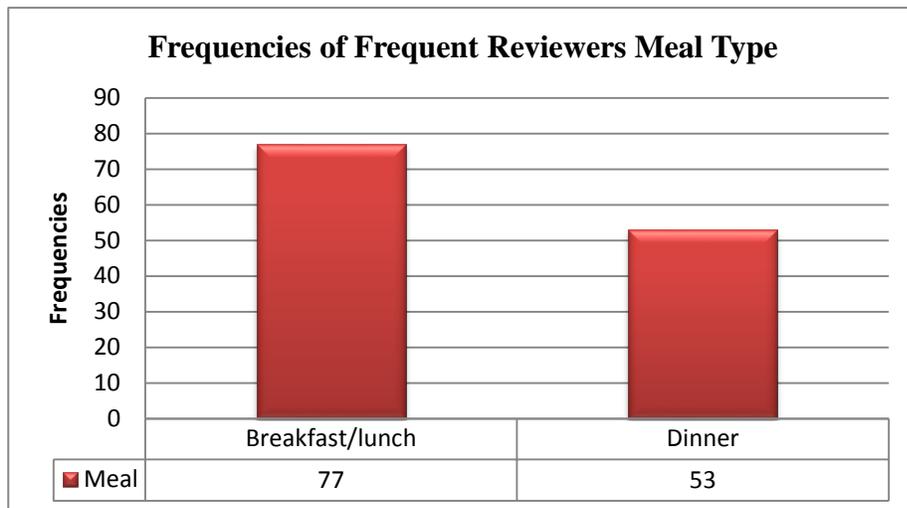
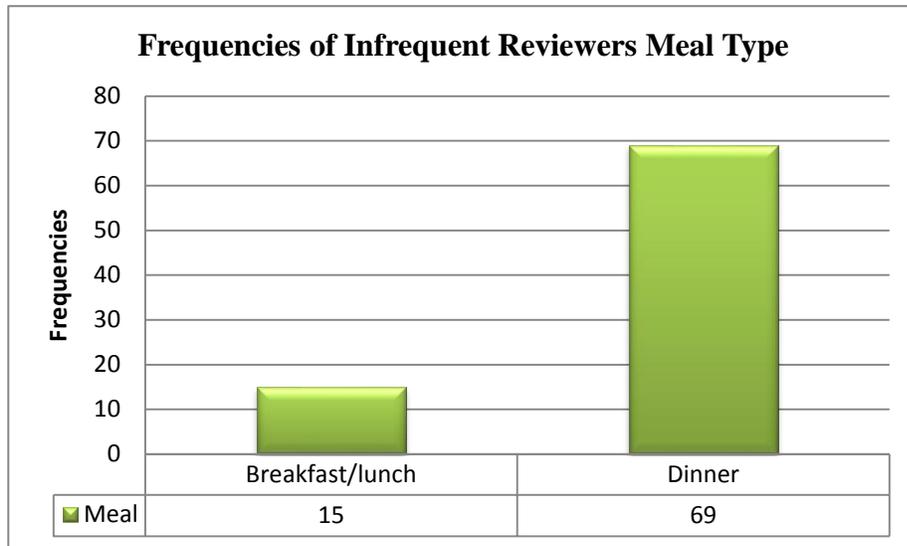


Figure 10. Type of Meal for the Two Data

As it can be easily identified, the shapes of the graph for the two data are somewhat opposite each other. While 69 times people in the infrequent reviewers data state they have dinner, people in the frequent reviewers data talk about 53 dinners. In a more differentiated way, breakfast and lunch expressions is very rare among non-frequent reviewers while frequent review data has 77 cases talking about breakfast/brunch or lunch.

The coding for the consumption elements also has interesting results. Sub-categories of food, service and atmosphere perception have been coded and graphed. For the first variable, food, there is no considerable difference in terms of the whole shape of the graphs; however, the frequency percentage of the frequent reviewers data is much higher than the infrequent reviewers data. Moreover, temperature is the only sub-category that has been mentioned less in the frequent reviewers data than mentioned in the infrequent reviewers data. Take a look at the frequencies for food sub-categories:

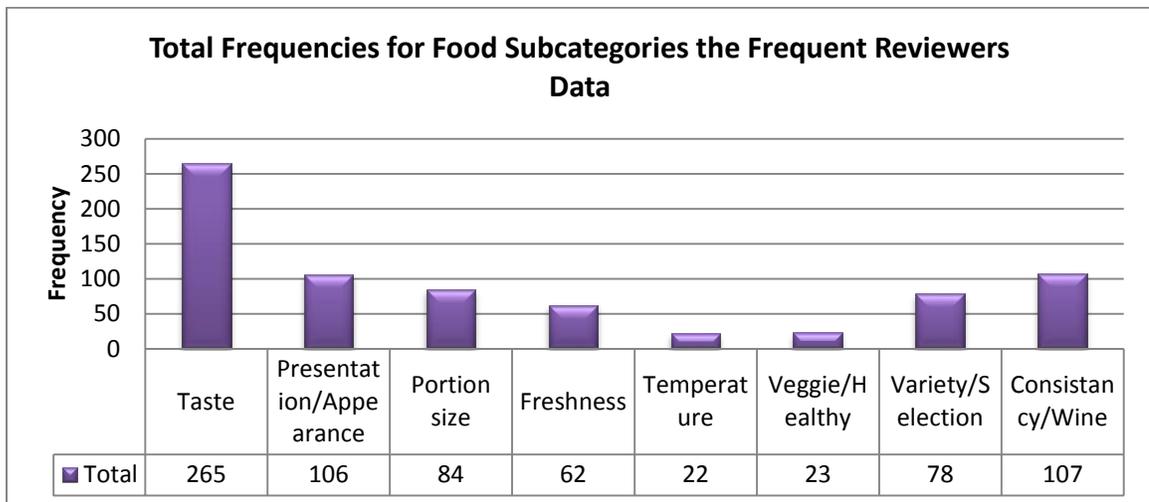
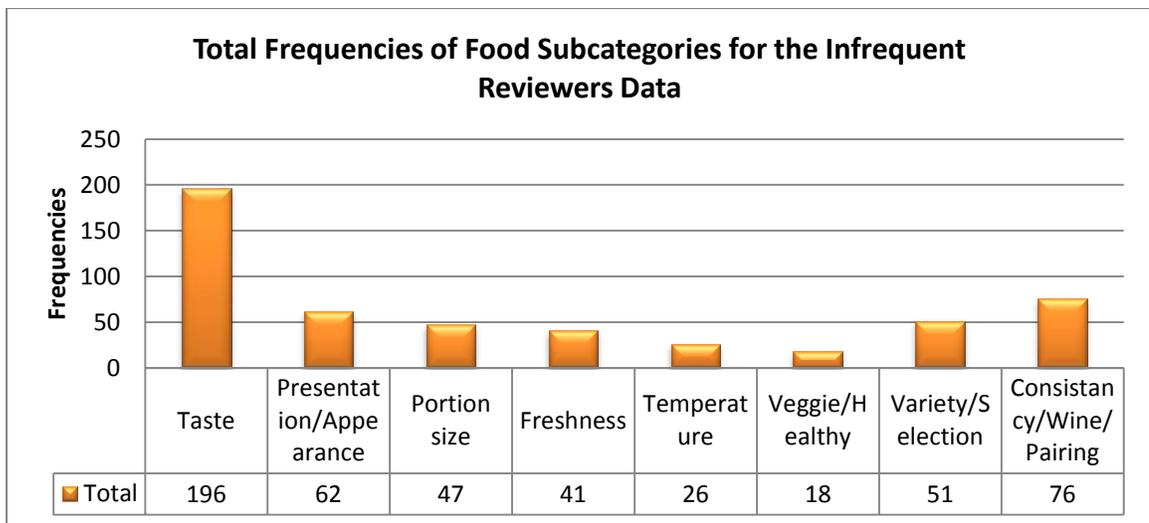


Figure 11. Frequencies of Food Subcategories for the Two Data

As it has been demonstrated (Figure 11), very few individuals mentioned temperature or veggie/healthy options. Contrary to the previous elements, taste has lots of citations in the body of reviews and after that; consistency/wine pairing is the most important element. Presentation/appearance/aroma is the third important element for food consumption. All numbers are from 405 and 388 cases, respectively. For the second consumption variable, the following graphs show the frequencies for different atmosphere categories.

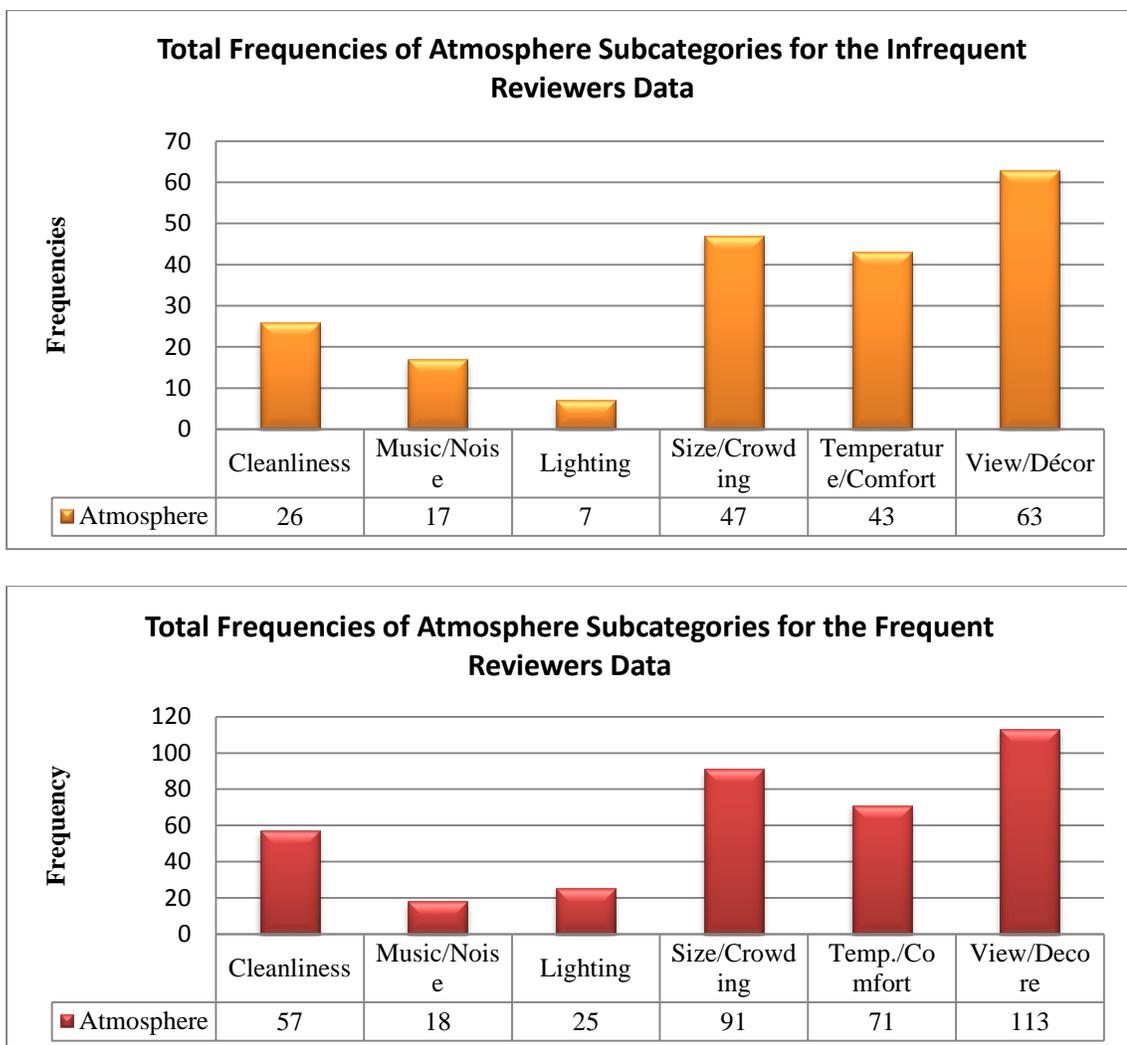


Figure 12. Frequencies of Atmosphere Subcategories for the Two Data

Here again, the number of cases in each category for the frequent reviewers data is higher than the infrequent reviewers data. Also, in the frequent reviewers data, lights and cleanliness have been mentioned more than those mentioned in the infrequent reviewers data. The element music and noise is the only category that has similar frequencies for both data. The following graph consists of the frequencies for the service subcategories.

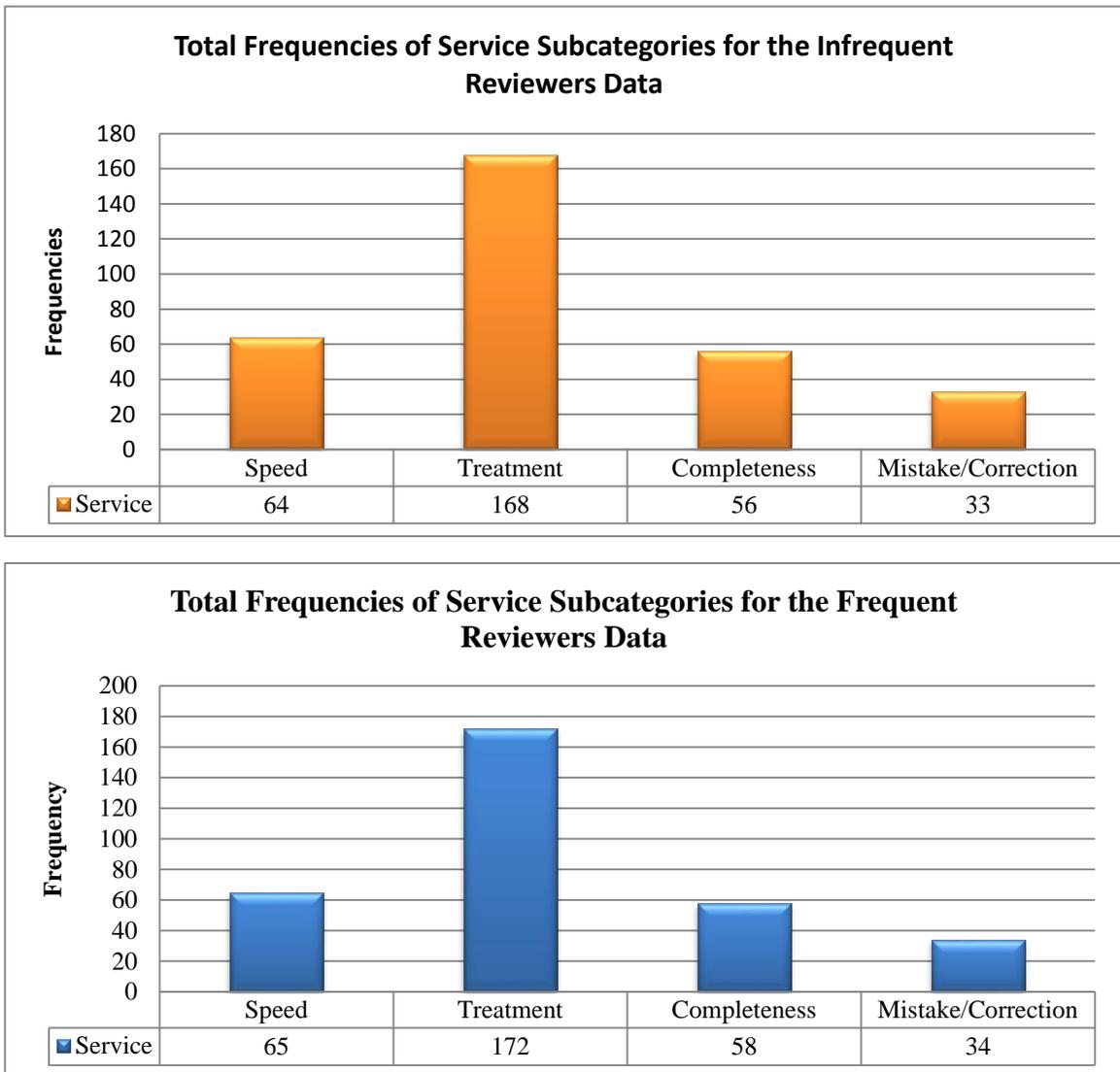


Figure 13. Frequencies of Service Subcategories for the Two Data

Although again the percentage of frequencies of the frequent reviewers data is more than the infrequent reviewers data, the difference is not considerable. Interestingly, despite the little difference for the amount of frequencies, the shape of the two graphs is really similar. It seems that in terms of service subcategories, non-frequent review writers and frequent review writers have similar concerns.

The differences between positive and negative frequencies are particularly interesting because the general perception about dining experience have been very positive in both data. As you can see for the food sub-categories, in the first and frequent reviewers data, some elements have not followed the general pattern:

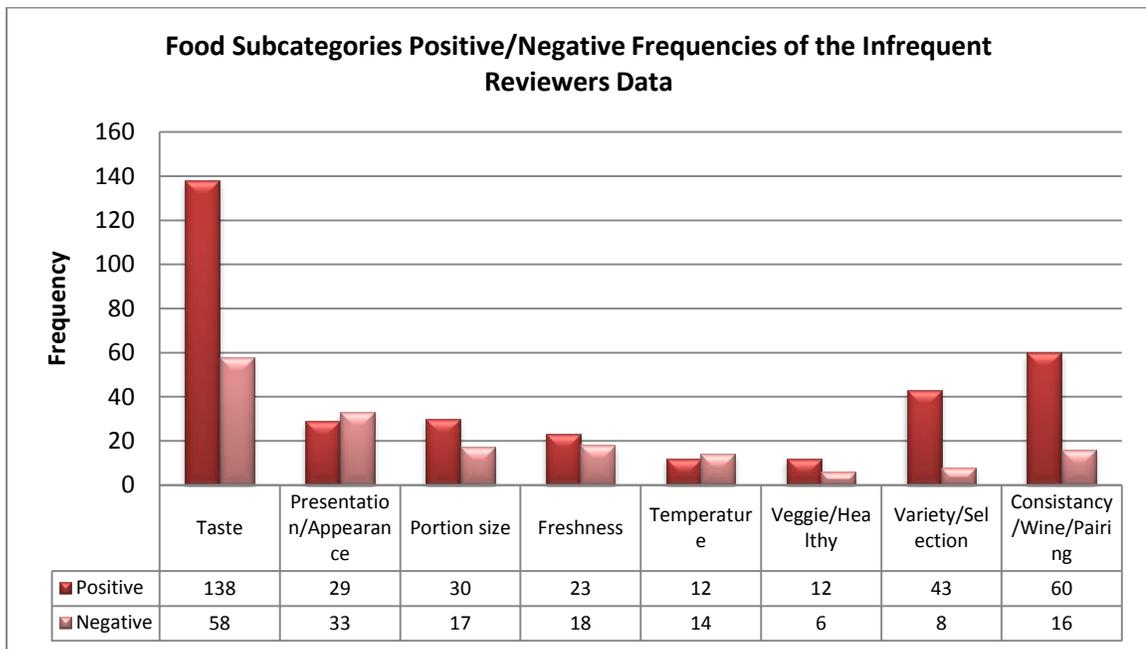


Figure 14. Food Subcategories Frequencies of the Infrequent reviewers data - Positive vs. Negative Comments

Several elements such as presentation/appearance/aroma or temperature have been mentioned more in a negative way. Major negative concerns are raised about the freshness of the food. In contrary, the variety/selection subcategory has lots of positive

comments and the proportion of its positive comments to the negative ones is more than that of general pattern.

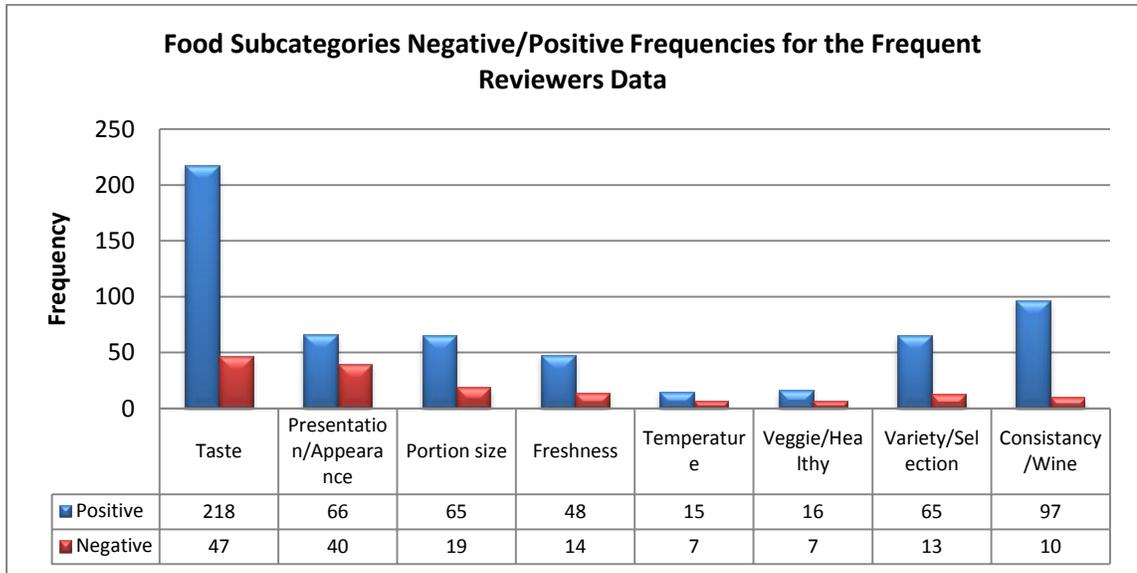


Figure 15. Food Subcategories Frequencies of the Frequent Reviewers Data - Positive vs. Negative Comments

In a different way in the frequent reviewers data, there is no element in food consumption experience that has negative comments more than positive ones. In particular, taste and consistency/wine/pairing of the frequent reviewers data have much more positive comments than that of infrequent reviewers data. Although the proportion of general pattern is not very true for three elements taste, variety/selection and consistency/wine/pairing, generally, the frequencies of food categories for the frequent reviewers data have followed the general pattern better than that for the infrequent reviewers data have.

For the subcategories of atmosphere quality, size and crowding element is not a good representative of the general pattern. Neither do the contents and purposes of the comments for this sub-category have larger positive coding number than negative one nor are they really negative. It seems that this sub-category cannot predict the outcome of the

experience. Take a look at the negative versus positive frequencies in both data for the atmosphere subcategories:

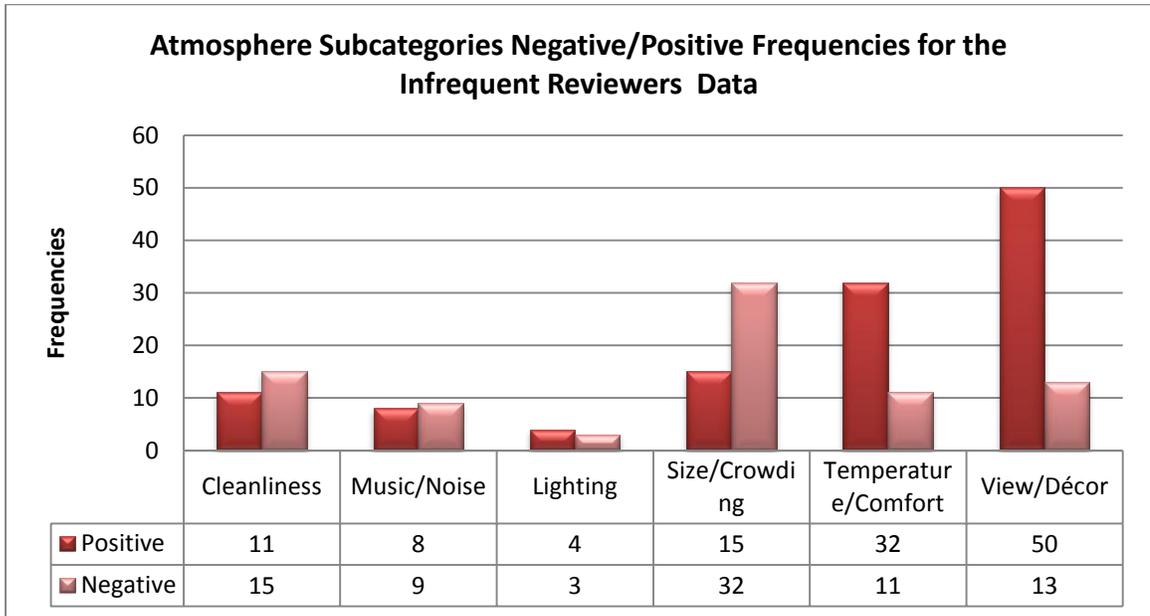


Figure 16. Atmosphere Subcategories negative/positive Frequencies for the Infrequent Reviewers Data

Other than size/crowding element, cleanliness and Music/Noise do not follow the general pattern in the infrequent reviewers data. View/décor has much more positive/negative comments ratio than general pattern. In cleanliness, one can see that it is a basic standard for a dining experience; so, any problem regarding this issue can lead to a complaint.

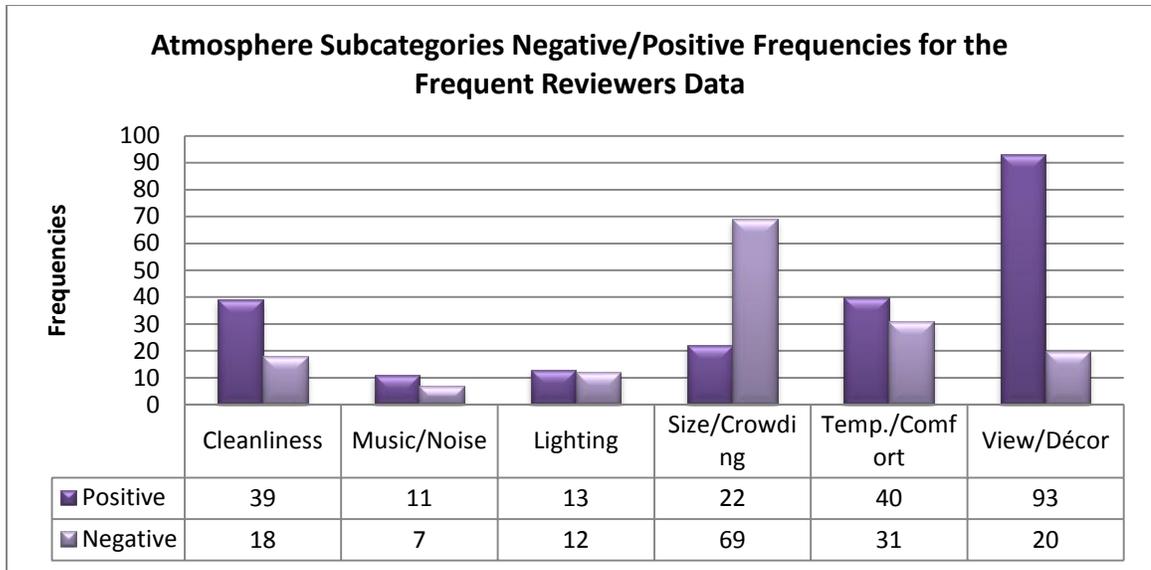


Figure 17. Atmosphere Subcategories negative/positive Frequencies for the Frequent Reviewers Data

As it has been shown (figure 17), the frequent reviewers data has better followed the general patterns than the infrequent reviewers data. Other than crowding, all elements of atmosphere quality have more positive comments than negative comments in the frequent reviewers data. Another point is that cleanliness, size/crowding and view/décor sub-categories in the frequent reviewers data have been mentioned much more than those in the infrequent reviewers data.

As it is shown previously, the numbers of general comments about service quality for both data are somewhat similar. The following graphs are shown that in details and in terms of negative/ positive comments ratio, there is still not much difference between two data:

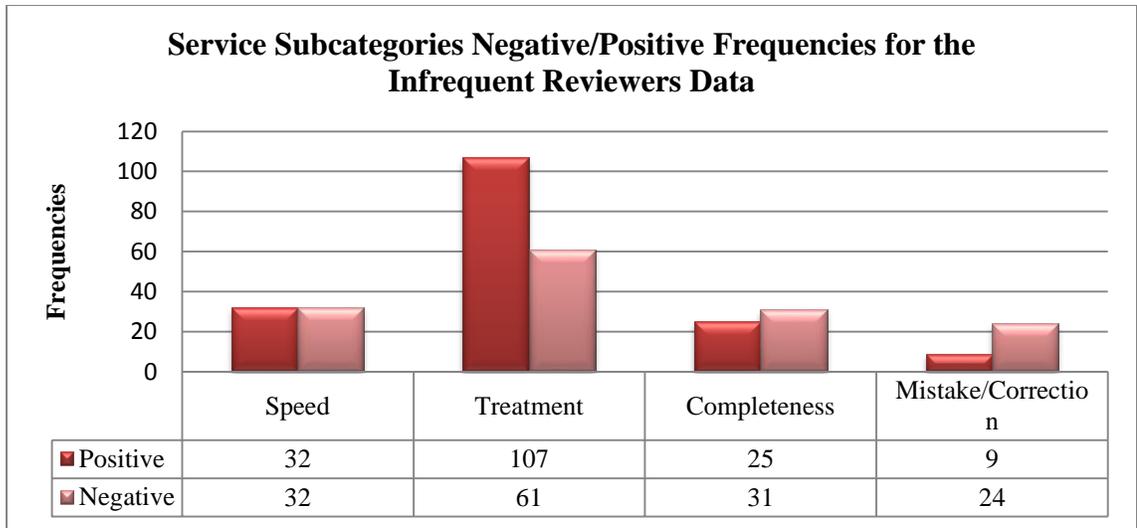


Figure 18. Service Subcategories Negative/Positive Frequencies for the Infrequent Reviewers data

Except from treatment/professionalism, other service elements do not follow the general pattern. Another fact is that the total positive comments about the three elements – speed, completeness of order and mistake/correction – are less than the positive comments just about treatment/professionalism.

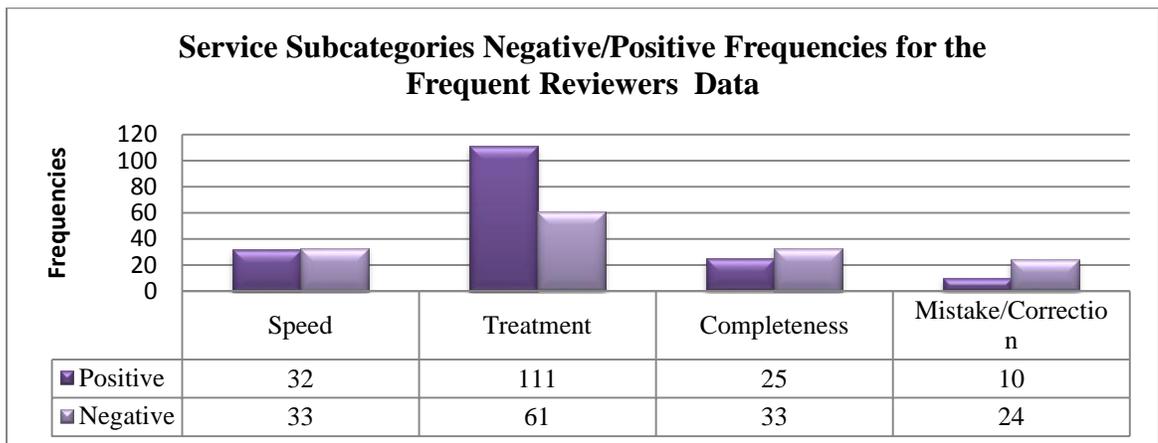


Figure 19. Service Subcategories Negative/Positive Frequencies for the Frequent Reviewers Data

The frequencies for the elements of service quality in the frequent reviewers data are very similar to what is shown for the infrequent reviewers data. Like what has been seen in the infrequent reviewers data, three out of four service elements do not

follow the general pattern and the element treatment plays the most important role in term the number of frequencies in the frequent reviewers data.

Another coded dining experience category is the social aspects. As it is explained in the previous section, two variables have been used for coding: Family/Friends as social company and other social factors. These variables have been coded just to show whether these elements exist in each review text or not; so they are coded if existed. The following graphs show the result for both data:

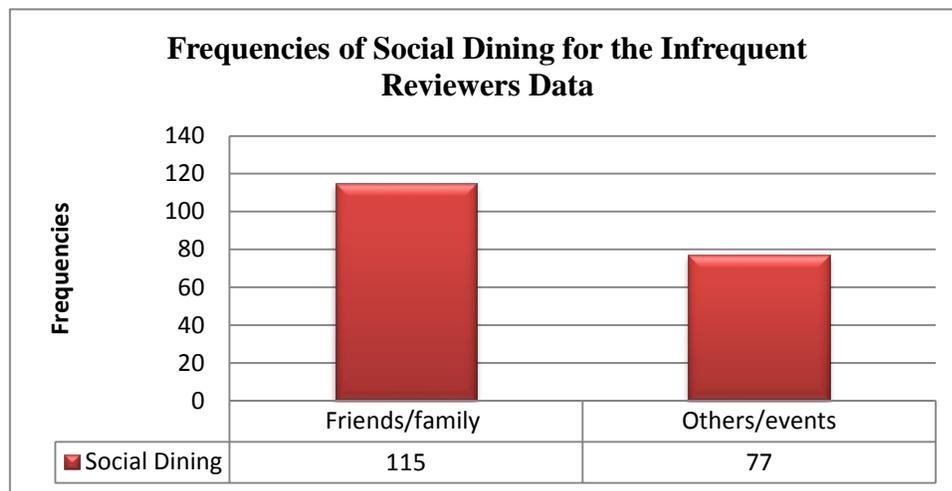


Figure 20. Frequencies of Social Dining elements for the Infrequent Reviewers Data

As it has been shown (Figure 20), 115 cases or 28.4% of the reviewers have stated some phrase about their friends or/and family members during their dining experience in the infrequent reviewers data. Moreover, 77 cases or 19% of reviewers have talked about other social elements or social events during their visit.

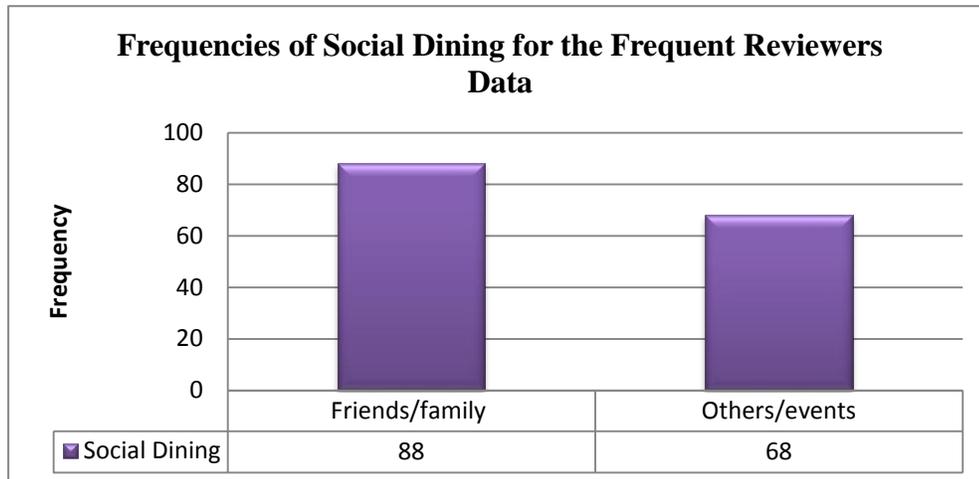


Figure 21. Frequencies of Social Dining elements for the Frequent Reviewers Data

In the frequent reviewers data, the percentage of the cases talking about family members and friends drops to 22.7% and the percentages of the cases stating phrases about other social aspects or social events changes to 17.5%. The major difference between the two data is that although both percentages of the variable “family members and friends” are still considerable, the proportion of the cases talking about this variable in the infrequent reviewers data is much more than what can be seen in the frequent reviewers data.

The coding variables also include outcome concepts. Recommending and expressing feeling or emotion are very common among reviews; however, talking about tipping is not really important for the writers. The results also show that unlike writing positively about recommendations or feeling expressions, people tend to talk negatively about their tipping behaviour. A comparison between the two data suggests a difference in terms of the frequencies of these variables. The following graphs elaborate the details about the outcome variables (See Figure 22-25).

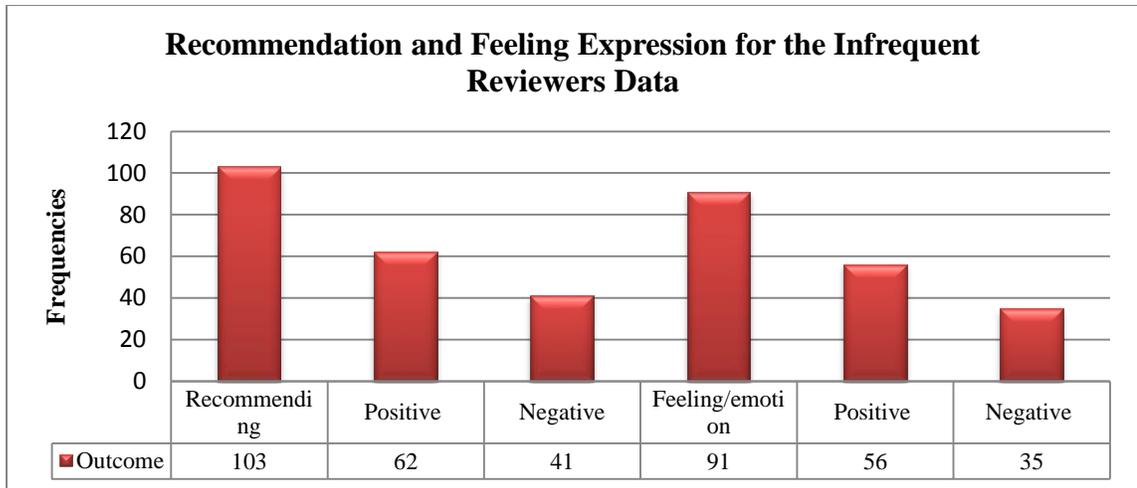


Figure 22. Frequencies of Outcomes 1 - Recommendation and Feeling Expression for the Infrequent Reviewers Data

More than one-fourth of the reviewers in the infrequent reviewers data have some sort of recommendation for other people. Among those people who have made recommendations, most of them encourage others to visit the place, following the general positive rating pattern. This fact has been reflected in the feeling/emotion element as well that most of the cases have stated that they had a positive feeling as a result of their dining experience.

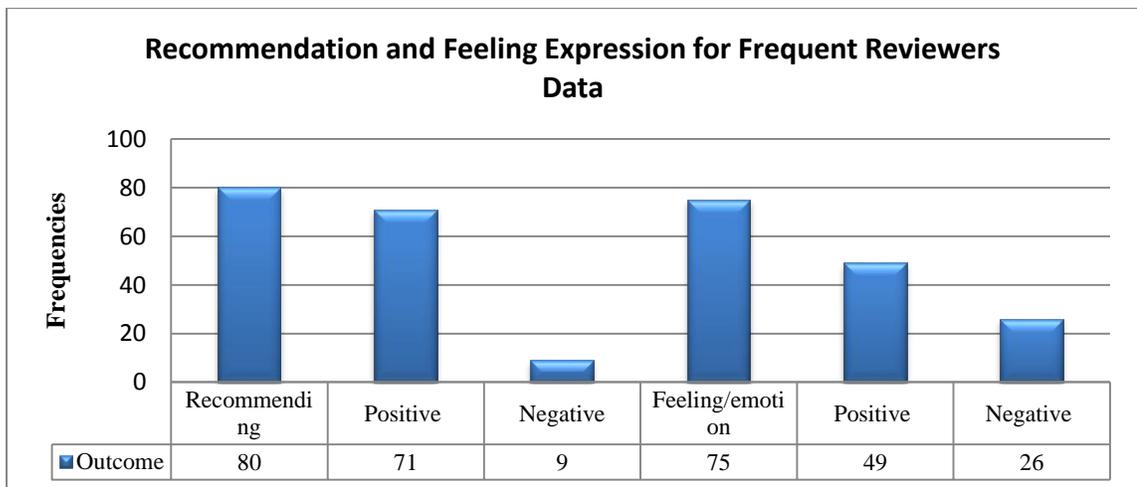


Figure 23. Frequencies of Outcomes 1 - Recommendation and Feeling Expression for the Frequent Reviewers Data

The proportion of the cases that recommend the restaurant to review readers drops from approximately one fourth in the infrequent reviewers data to one fifth in the frequent reviewers data. Also, negative recommendations are very rare in the frequent reviewers data. It seems that frequent reviewers do not tend to negatively recommend others to go to a place. Although the pattern is similar for feeling expressions variable in both data, again the frequent reviewers data has less comments about this variable than what the infrequent reviewers data has.

When looking for the tipping habit patterns, very few people talk about this aspect, and usually to show their sadness or revenge. In the comparison between two data, the frequent reviewers data talked a little bit more about tipping decision as a part of their dining experience; as demonstrated in the following graphs (See Figure 24):

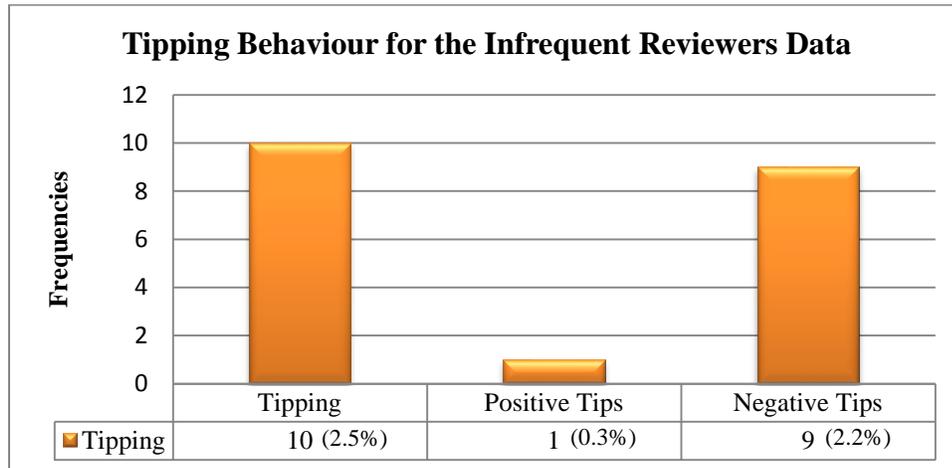


Figure 24. Frequencies of Outcomes 2 - Tipping Behaviour for the Infrequent Reviewers Data

Unlike the general pattern, 90% of the comments about tipping in the infrequent reviewers data are negative, suggesting that people usually talk about tipping if they have had bad experience. The absolute percentage of the comments about tipping is very low with less than 2.5% for the infrequent reviewers data.

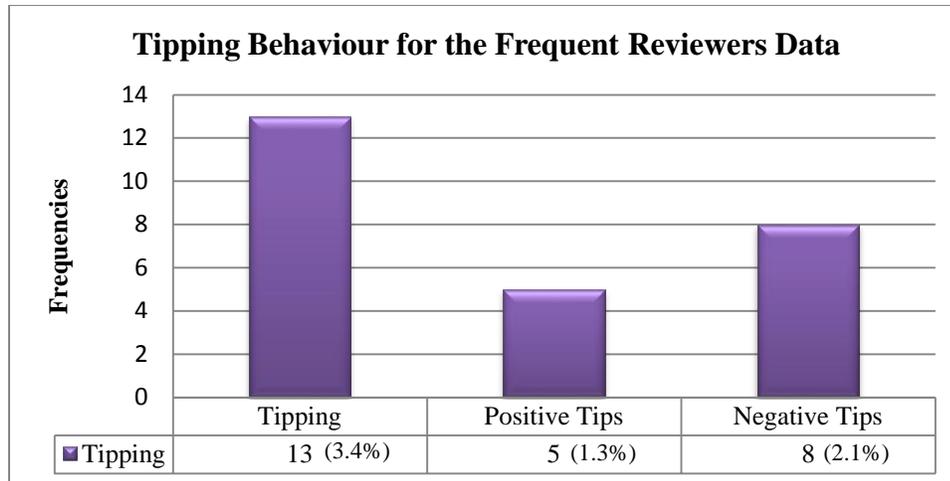


Figure 25. Frequencies of Outcomes 2 - Tipping Behaviour for the Frequent Reviewers Data

As demonstrated in the above graph (See Figure 25), in the frequent reviewers data, the negative tipping comments continue to be more prominent than the positive ones, however, the percentage of the negative comments is totally different from the infrequent reviewers data; 61% of the comments about tipping are negative. Even though the absolute comments about tipping comments is still low, the proportion of the tipping comments has increased from less than 2.5% in the infrequent reviewers data to 3.3% in the frequent reviewers data. Positive comments for tipping in the frequent reviewers data are much more considerable than the ones seen in the infrequent reviewers data.

Summary

Two different content analysis methods have been applied in this chapter; the qualitative part provides concepts and themes of expectations elements and dining consumption factors and the quantitative part demonstrates the frequencies of the repetition of the variables (concepts) which are found in the previous part. Also, descriptive graphs of the related variables are shown. These variables are used in testing several hypotheses. For many variables, there are clear differences between the results for

the non-frequent review writers data and the frequent review writers data. The negative and positive comments are also interesting as in most cases (variables), people mostly had more positive comments about the elements of dining experience, and however, for some concepts people did not follow the general pattern of the positive attitudes. These results can help this study to develop hypotheses and to discuss better the inferential statistics tests results.

Hypotheses and Inferential Statistics Results

The purpose of this chapter (phase 3) is to develop several hypotheses based on the literature and the results of the qualitative and quantitative content analyses, then test these hypotheses with appropriate inferential statistics techniques. Logistic regression and non-parametric and parametric correlation tests have been applied to test the hypotheses. Based on the suggested model for this study, the dichotomous dependent variable “return patronage”, and not-normalized not-homoscedastic distribution of the available independent variables, it seems that logistic regression is the best method to test the hypotheses about the suggested model. It is noteworthy that even simple transformation cannot make the consumption variables normally distributed. For most of the hypotheses about the coded variables, as they do not have the characteristics of interval variables, non-parametric correlation tests seem to be appropriate.

As it is explained before the data which are used in this study is from an online restaurant review website (restaurantica.ca). There are two datasets available for analyzing, the infrequent reviewers data includes 405 reviews of “non-frequent review writers” and the frequent reviewers data includes 388 cases of reviews of “frequent review writers”². The frequent review writers are around only 4% of the original sample. Because reviews by reputed reviewers have higher quality and receive more attention than reviews by non-multiple reviewers (Hemmington et al., 2008; Hu et al., 2008), it is valuable to analyze this group of people. In addition to the separated data sets, twenty nine new variables are defined and coded in the previous chapter, some of the tests are not conducted with all of the original number of the cases (405 for the infrequent

² Frequent review writers are those identifications who have at least ten reviews on their profiles.

reviewers data, 388 for the frequent reviewers data); however, the numbers of the cases under each of those tests are provided.

Hypotheses Shaping and Statement

Hypotheses shaping. The hypotheses in this section are rendered based on the literature review section and findings from the results of the qualitative results. For each hypothesis, a short note has been provided regarding how the suggestion has been made. Eleven hypotheses are proposed.

Hypotheses statement. In past research, three different consumption elements have been found to be contributing to the dining experience (Berry & Wall, 2007; Hensley & Sulek, 2004; Jang & Namkung 2008). According to this statement, if customers have higher perception of the quality of the consumption elements (food, service and atmosphere perception) it contributes to a higher level of their intentional behaviour in a dining experience. Also, from the initial analyses of the reviews, all three of these elements were found to be important.

H1: The higher the perception of the quality of food, service and atmosphere in a dining experience event, the higher the likelihood of customer's intention to return.

Studies have repeatedly shown that food (in particular taste of the food) is still the most important consumption element in the dining consumption (Basil et al., 1998; Hensley & Sulek, 2004; Jang & Namkung, 2007). The frequencies of the comments of the review writers also indicate that food factor has received more attention than the other elements. So, it seems that food is the most important factor in determining dining experience outcomes.

H2: The perception of the quality of food is the most important predictor for the likelihood of customer repeat patronage.

Cost of a meal has been found as one of the main reasons for customer decisions (Basil et al., 1998). Review writers also talked about the price of their meal a lot. If the price perception can influence the satisfaction level, beside other dining consumption elements, it can affect the intentional behaviour. In other word, a model of four independent variables, price factor and three consumption variables can generate better prediction of the intention to return in a dining experience. It is noteworthy that price factor is not a “performance” of the dining consumption, but it is more of an “expectation” element of the dining consumption.

H3: In addition to consumption elements (quality of food, atmosphere and service), price factor is another predictor of the intentional behaviour.

During the qualitative analysis, it was found that the reviewers’ expectations increase when the price goes up. In other words, when customers note that the price is high, they intuitively will have higher expectations. As the expectations have negative relationship with the satisfaction, customers who pay more are less likely to be loyal and come back to that particular place. Another explanation about high-priced restaurant experience is that sometimes people visit a place only for one-time extraordinary experience that is not going to be repeated later (Basil & Basil, 2009). So, there is a high probability that these sort of high-priced events lead to negative intention to return.

H4: People who have paid considerably high prices for their dining (ultra-fine diners) have more negative response to the return intention question than those who have paid inexpensive prices.

One direct outcome of consumers' rating is the extreme rating. This aggressive rating³ probably has specific reasons. Previous studies have also indicated that many customers have rated the elements of their experience with extreme (positive) values (Basil & Basil, 2009; Jang & Namkung, 2009). Hypothesis five tries to test some propositions regarding the reasons of extreme rating. First, in addition to the fact that customer expectations will increase when the price goes up, the performance of the event also directly affects the satisfaction and return patronage (Extended general model – See Figure 1). This, in turn, creates two groups for people who pay for expensive dinners: one group, whose expectations are met by the performance, will be highly satisfied. The other group, whose expectations are not met, will become highly dissatisfied. Assuming that ratings for intention to return are based on satisfaction (Brun et al., 2008; Dube et al., 1994), people may rate the extreme choices in this condition. In this situation, not enough variations would be generated for further analysis.

³ In this study, “aggressive rating” is operationalised as rating (Likert scale of 5) three consumption elements in a way that either at least two variables are rated 5 and the other variable is rated at least 4 (positive aggressive rating) or at least two variables are rated 1 and the other variable is rated at most 2 (negative aggressive rating).

In another phrase, if the total value of the rating numbers falls into either more than 90% of the maximum amount of rating (positive aggressive rating) or less than 10% of the minimum amount of rating (negative aggressive rating), then the rating would be considered an aggressive one.

H5 – a: People who have paid considerably high prices for their meal rank the perception of the consumption elements aggressively (whether it has the lowest quality perception or the highest one).

Social dining, as another element of creating satisfaction in the dining experience context, has been mentioned several times (Andersson & Mossberg, 2004; June & Lorraine, 2006). In the analyses of the reviews, it has been found that review writers were also affected by other people or guests' feelings, which can affect their rating to extreme choices. It seems that the existence of this factor can negatively affect the middle range rating for the perceived quality of the dining consumption elements.

H5 – b: People who state they had social experiences during their dining rank the perception of the consumption elements aggressively.

Another feature that has been widely mentioned in the reviews is general evaluation or judgment. Many people do not have specific descriptions of dining element separately and they preferred just to evaluate their overall experiences. This group of people may have more desire to rate their dining event aggressively.

H5 – c: People who have overall experience judgment in their reviews rank the perception of the consumption elements aggressively.

Another outcome behaviour that has been studied several times is tipping behaviour. Some scholars state that the changes in tipping behaviour is only altered by the perceived quality of service, some suggest tipping behaviour is only related to the overall satisfaction level while some others suggest that tipping behaviour has direct

relationship with both service and satisfaction level (Lynn, 2000). Hypothesis 6 is going to investigate this relationship.

H6: People who talk about positive (negative) tipping behaviour are more likely to have positive (negative) perceived quality of service and intention (not) to return.

As many models of hedonic consumption assert, emotional status is a consequence of a consumption experience; negative emotions result in dissatisfaction and positive emotions result in satisfaction (Babin et al., 2005; Barrena & Sánchez, 2009; Gross & Pullman, 2004; Jang & Namkung, 2009). It seems there should be a high correlation between emotional statements in reviews and the intentional behaviour of review writers.

H7: People who report positive (negative) emotions during their dining experience are more likely to have positive (negative) attitudes toward the intention to return.

The reason consumers visit a restaurant can affect intentional behaviour. People who have been advised to go to a restaurant by their friends or an article in a magazine may have reasonable and realistic expectations, while people who have been influenced by advertisements or restaurant websites probably have higher expectations. The moderate or high expectations can result in positive or negative intentional behaviour. So word of mouth may have positive effect on customer patronage whereas advertisement would have negative effect on that. Previously, Richins (1995) has suggested that idealized image in advertisements and the number of exposures to these images increase customers' expectations. More recently, a case study of restaurant dining has shown that

website visiting increases customers' expectations (Cheng, Huang, & Wang, 2005). Higher expectations will increase the chance of dissatisfaction according to Levin's (1938) theory. Moreover, it has been widely argued that word of mouth has more effectiveness in customer purchase than advertising (Brown & Reingen, 1987, Kimes & Thompson, 2004).

H8: People who write they have been advised to visit the restaurant have more positive attitude toward the intention to return than people who write they have been affected by the restaurant's advertisements or website pages.

Size and crowding seems to be a controversial variable. Kimes and Thompson (2004) argue that restaurant size is negatively related to customers' desire to travel (to the place); that is, optimal size of the restaurant depends on the type of the customers. Moreover, Bateson and Hui (1991) suggested that consumer's control can minimize the effect of high density of consumers in two different service – based environment; in bank environment, being crowd was associated with lower perceived control while in bar environment (similar to restaurant setting) high density was related with higher control. So, it seems literature does not agree on the effect of size and crowding on consumers' intentional behaviour. Within the qualitative content analyses, many consumers find small and crowded places as friendly and cozy, though, by just being small and crowded does not mean a restaurant has negative atmosphere impression. So, this study suggests that size and crowding is not a predictor of dining experience outcomes and tries to show that there is no support for the positive effect of size and crowding on the outcome.

H9: The size and crowding comments of a dining experience improve the likelihood of intention to return.

Direct and indirect expectation statements may show higher expectation before visiting a place. Higher expectations usually result in dissatisfaction as it is harder for a restaurant to meet several aspects of customers' needs according to expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Lewin, 1938). Assuming an expectation expression shows a higher expectation for dining experience, it can be suggested that people who have talked about their expectations have higher expectations and hence they are more likely to answer negatively about their patronage.

H10: People who talk about their direct or indirect expectations are more likely to have negative attitude toward the intention to return.

Service speed has been mentioned in many studies as a main contributor to a dining satisfaction (Brun et al., 2008; Dube et al., 1994). While this statement may be supported in many fast food restaurant contexts, it may not be the same for fine dining restaurants. Moreover, Kimes et al. (2009) have suggested that customers may perceive fast service speed as a negative cue in some situations. As many people stated in their reviews, speed of the event service does not always contribute to their total satisfaction level, in fact, in many cases service speed created unhappy feeling for the review writers.

H11: The perceived speed of the service of a dining experience does not improve the likelihood of the intentional behaviour.

Hypotheses Testing with Inferential Statistics Techniques

Here are the results for the hypotheses testing with SPSS software package version 18. Before running the logistic regression model, a Pearson Correlation test was applied for multi-collinearity among the independent variables for both the frequent and the infrequent data. While the correlation coefficients for frequent reviewers data were lower than the value of 0.79 – which is recommended as an appropriate level (Field, 2000) – the consumption variables (quality of food, atmosphere and service) of the infrequent data has correlation coefficients a little bit higher than this number. The other independent variable, price or fine dining, does not have a high correlation with the consumption variables.

**Table 3. Correlation Matrix between Independent Variables
Infrequent Reviewers**

Correlations (N=405)

N=405		FoodQual_NF	ServiceQual_N F	AtmospherQual _NF	FineDinin g
FoodQual_NF	Pearson Correlation	1	.820**	.822**	-.089*
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.000	.041
	N	405	405	405	381
ServiceQual_NF	Pearson Correlation	.820**	1	.830**	-.073
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.000	.077
	N	405	405	405	381
AtmospherQual_NF	Pearson Correlation	.822**	.830**	1	-.167**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000		.001
	N	405	405	405	381
FineDining	Pearson Correlation	-.089*	-.073	-.167**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.041	.077	.001	
	N	381	381	381	381

Frequent Reviewers

Correlations (N=388)

N=388		FoodQual_FR	ServiceQual_F R	AtmospherQual _FR	FineDinin g
FoodQual_FR	Pearson Correlation	1	.612**	.471**	.087
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.087
	N	388	388	388	388
ServiceQual_FR	Pearson Correlation	.612**	1	.573**	.126*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.013
	N	388	388	388	388
AtmospherQual_FR	Pearson Correlation	.471**	.573**	1	.233**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	388	388	388	388
FineDining	Pearson Correlation	.087	.126*	.233**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.087	.013	.000	
	N	388	388	388	388

Although the correlation coefficient is a little bit more than the suggested number, it has been decided to keep all consumption variables (quality of food, atmosphere and service) in the model because of several reasons. First, the literature has been widely recommended these three variables have distinctive and important effect on consumer intention to return in the dining context (Berry & Wall, 2007; Brun et al., 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Jang & Namkung, 2008). Second, based on the suggested model and the available data, there are only three to four independent variables, predicting the outcome. Deleting one or two of the variables can significantly change the power of the model. Third, further analysis has revealed that omitting any of the consumption variables would generate lower “Cox & Snell R Square” values than that of the suggested original model. Fourth, the following graph (Figure 26) shows that the Beta coefficients for the reduced model (the model that does not have one of the multi-collinear variables) have been changed very little and the directions are the same.

In order to watch for the multi-collinearity issue, another model with an omitted variable (Atmosphere) has been tested. The results are shown in the following graph (Figure 26). The values in the parenthesis are for the smaller model. It shows that eliminating multi-collinear variables does not change the results, and because the first model has a more powerful “Cox & Snell” and Pseudo R Square, it is decided to keep all elements in the model.

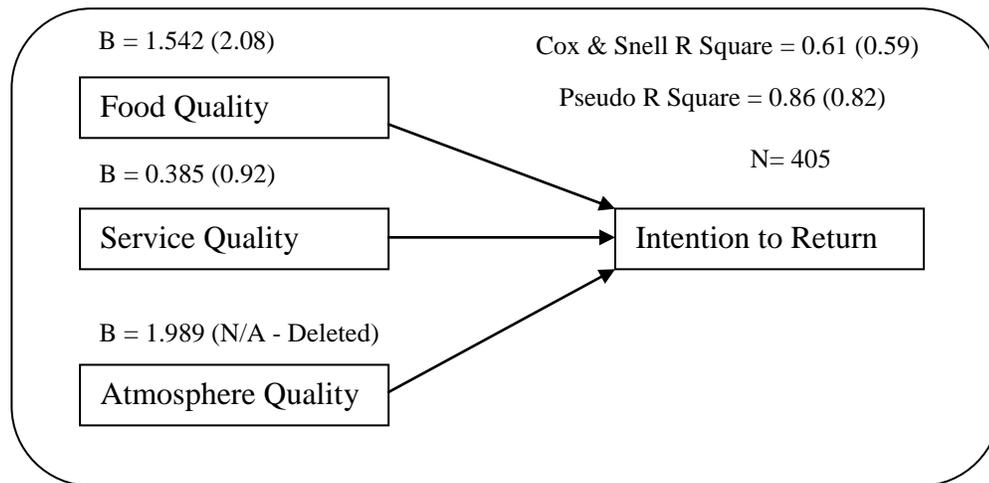


Figure 26. Beta Coefficients for the Model with 3 (2) Independent Variables

Note. As the figure shows, the direction and the order of beta coefficients have not been changed after atmosphere variable has been deleted (the numbers in the prentices show the second model with only two predictors). The Cox & Snell R Square value has been dropped due to the deletion of one variable. So, multi-collinearity does not create problems for the model and it is better to keep all variable in the model.

Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 (logistic regression model). In order to test the first and the second hypotheses, all of the dining experience concepts should be the predictors for customer patronage or being loyal. So, the perceived quality of food, atmosphere and service are considered the independent variables (rated in the 5-point Likert scale style) of the model. A new binary variable named “LoyaltyIndicator” has been created as the dependent variable of the model. The categories for this new variable have been coded as

1, for the individuals who have had the intention to return (n=272 for infrequent reviewers data, n=274 for frequent reviewers data) and as 0, for the other cases which have answered the question of returning as maybe or no (n=133 for infrequent reviewers data, n=114 for frequent reviewers data), to differentiate between those cases who have been loyal and who have been not sure or disloyal. Moreover, in infrequent reviews data, just 5% answered “maybe” for their intentional behaviour, that rationalizes better why this category has been merged.

Table 4. Variables in the Logistic Regression Model

Infrequent Reviewers Data

Variables N=405	Food Quality	Atmosphere Quality	Service Quality	Fine Dining	Loyalty Indicator
Type	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Mean Value	3.78	3.87	3.77	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Frequent Reviewers Data

Variables N=388	Food Quality	Atmosphere Quality	Service Quality	Fine Dining	Loyalty Indicator
Type	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Mean Value	3.74	3.59	3.65	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Because the outcome variable is dichotomous and the independent variables in the two data sets are not normal (quality of food, atmosphere and service) or categorical

(price), logistic regression technique has been used to shape a model; here are the results for the infrequent reviewers data:

Table 5. Results of the Logistic Regression Model of the Consumption Elements for the Infrequent Reviewers Data

Variables in the Equation (N=405)							
N=405		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	FoodQual_NF	1.542	.306	25.386	1	.000	4.672
	ServiceQual_NF	.385	.257	2.247	1	.134	1.469
	AtmospherQualNF	1.989	.441	20.374	1	.000	7.308
	Constant	-13.931	1.976	49.689	1	.000	.000

The above table indicates that although all of the dining quality variables in the infrequent reviewers data are positively related to the loyalty indicator, only the perceived food quality (B=1.542) and the perceived atmosphere quality (B=1.989) are significantly related to the intention to return. The perceived service quality (B=0.385) is not significant in this model (Cox & Snell R Square = 0.617, Nagelkerke R Square or Pseudo R Square = 0.860, n= 405, P < 0.05), while the goodness of fit test shows that the model is significant (Hosmer and Lemeshow test significance level is 0.369 which is larger than 0.05). So, hypothesis 1 is partially supported for the infrequent reviewers data. Hypothesis 2 is not supported for the infrequent reviewers data as the perceived food quality has a lower prediction value than the perceived atmosphere prediction value (1.542<1.989); so, the food is not the main predictor of the return patronage in this model.

Table 6. Results of the Logistic Regression Model of the Consumption Elements for the Frequent Reviewers Data

Variables in the Equation (N=388)							
N=388		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	FoodQual_FR	1.703	.253	45.386	1	.000	5.488
	ServiceQual_FR	.802	.215	13.900	1	.000	2.230
	AtmospherQualFR	.357	.199	3.205	1	.073	1.428
	Constant	-9.374	1.112	71.082	1	.000	.000
a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: FoodQual_FR, ServiceQual_FR, AtmospherQual_FR.							

The above table (See Table 6) indicates that although all of the dining quality variables are positively related to the loyalty indicator, only the perceived food quality (B = 1.703) and the perceived service quality (B = 0.802) are significantly predicting the intention to return (loyalty indicator) and the perceived atmosphere quality (B = 0.357) is not significant in this model (Cox & Snell R Square = 0.378, Nagelkerke R Square or Pseudo R Square = 0.531, n= 388, P < 0.05) , while the goodness of fit test shows that the model is significant (Hosmer and Lemeshow test significance level is 0.294 which is larger than 0.05). So, hypothesis 1 is partially supported for the frequent reviewers data. Hypothesis 2 is supported as the perceived food quality has a highest beta value (B = 1.703) more than any other variable prediction values; the food is the main predictor of the intention to return in the frequent reviewers data.

After this preliminary result, it seems that the service or atmosphere could have been non-significant because in different situation those variables have different meanings. For instance, in so called fast food restaurant or even in other relatively cheap restaurants, service is really important for regular customers. However, in fine dining experience, while service should provide a minimum level of standard, the rest is not really important. Another point is that based on many studies, it has been expected that

the perception of food quality should be more important than atmosphere in the infrequent reviewers data, which is not true in the current model.

Entering price concept as the fourth independent variable in the model enhances the predictive power of the model predictability. To shape a meaningful price concept, cases with prices equal or less than \$25 fell into non-fine dining and cases with prices more than \$25 have been coded as fine-dining. Logistic regression has been applied similarly to previous models to see if the new variable (fine dining) has significant prediction value and how the importance of the dining element would be altered.

Table 7. Results of the Logistic Regression Model of the Consumption Elements and Price Factor for the Infrequent Reviewers Data

N=405		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	FoodQual_NF	1.952	.403	23.415	1	.000	7.042
	ServiceQual_NF	.402	.262	2.363	1	.124	1.496
	AtmospherQual_NF	1.622	.461	12.400	1	.000	5.065
	FineDining	-1.312	.561	5.468	1	.019	.269
	Constant	-13.444	2.076	41.946	1	.000	.000

As it is expected, the new model has improved some predictive features for the infrequent reviewers data. First, the Cox & Snell R Square has increased to 0.624 and the Nagelkerke R Square or Pseudo R Square has also increased to 0.866 (the model significance level is 0.656 which is larger than 0.05). Second, the perceived food quality has become the most important predictor (B = 1.952) after the participation of one more element in this model. Third, fine dining has a negative prediction value (B = - 1.312)

that says the relationship between higher prices events and intention to return is negative. Although the prediction value of perceived service quality ($B = 0.402$) has been improved in this model, service element is still not significant (at the level of 0.05).

In order to elaborate more the role of service variable in the model for infrequent reviewers data, the data is split into two parts: one part has only the cases of non-fine dining experiences and the other part has only the fine dining cases. This is because to find out in which group service variable is not contributing to intention to return. Two new logistic regression tests with the three consumption variables have been applied on each split data. The new results indicate that on one hand, service consumption concept is not important for people who had fine dining experience. On the other hand, the perceived service quality for people who had non-fine dining plays an important role (significant at the level of $P=0.05$).

Entering the price element into the dining experience model for the frequent reviewers data shows that the model is become significant for all of its elements ($n=388$, $p < 0.05$). Also, the “Cox & Snell R Square” has been increased to 0.393 and , the Nagelkerke R Square or Pseudo R Square has increased to 0.559 , and the goodness of fit test shows that the model significance level is 0.194 which is larger than 0.05. Food quality is again the most important element to predict the outcome behaviour ($B = 1.733$). The following table indicates that the model has been improved by the intervention of the price range with other consumption elements. Now, even the perceived atmosphere quality is significant ($B = 0.518$) which was not significant in the previous model without price element ($n=388$, $P < 0.05$).

Table 8. Results of the Logistic Regression Model of the Consumption Elements and Price Factor for the Frequent Reviewers Data

N=388		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	FoodQual_FR	1.733	.259	44.793	1	.000	5.658
	ServiceQual_FR	.883	.219	16.194	1	.000	2.419
	AtmospherQual_FR	.518	.208	6.199	1	.013	1.679
	FineDining	-1.390	.406	11.755	1	.001	.249
	Constant	-10.084	1.191	71.723	1	.000	.000

So, the intervention of the price concept has a positive effect on the models for both data. In short, Hypothesis 3 has not only been supported for both data, but also created models that could better explain the interaction between consumption elements and outcome behaviour. Furthermore, if the infrequent reviewers data has been split into two sets which one is for high prices cases and the other is for not-high prices cases, the model can generate insightful results.

Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 4 says that people who have paid considerably high prices for their dining have more negative response to the return intention question than those who have paid inexpensive prices. To identify the relation between price variable and negative intentional behaviour, two variables has been tested for correlation: one variable is “ultra-fine dining” which indicates if the price range is higher than \$60 and the other variable is “disloyalty indicator” which separated those review writers who have said they never come back again from those who have expressed they may or definitely revisit the place.

For the infrequent reviewers data, the correlation is positive and significant (correlation coefficient (r) = 0.324, $n=242$, $P < 0.01$), supporting hypothesis 4. However, for the frequent reviewers data, the difference is not significant and the hypothesis 4 has not been supported ($n=114$, $P < 0.05$). One reason may be that there has been no case in the price variable for the fifth category and there have been just 5 cases that falls into the fourth category. The mean value of the third category is not really making variations to the mean values of the first and the second category. The following graphs (See Figure 27 and Figure 28) elaborate these facts more clearly:

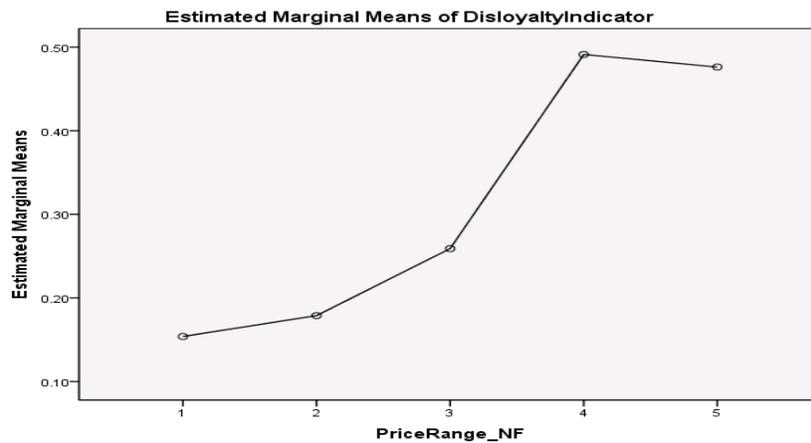


Figure 27. The Differences between the Marginal Means of Disloyalty Indicator in Terms of Different Price Categories for the Infrequent Reviewers Data

As you can see, the differences between the first, second and third category with the fourth and fifth category is relatively clear. The numbers of the cases in both sides (regular and cheap dining price versus high price dining) are enough to make the correlation test significant. In the frequent reviewers data, however, the differences between the price categories are not so high and there are not enough cases for the high price side. To summarize, hypothesis 4 has been supported for the infrequent reviewers

data, but, it has not been supported in the frequent reviewers data test.

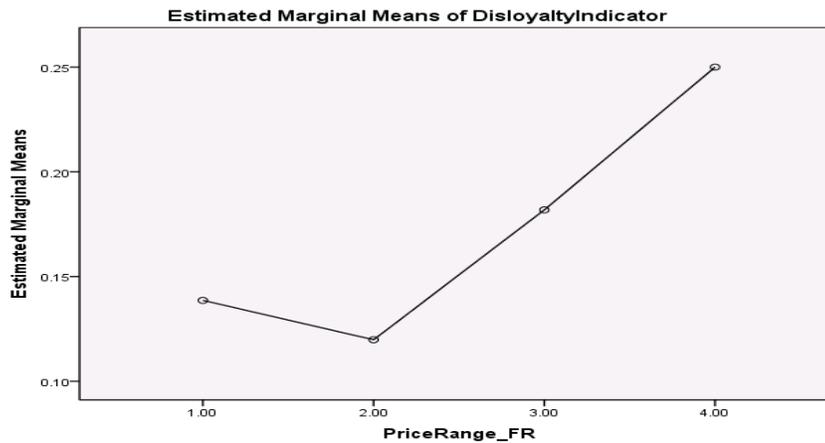


Figure 28. The Differences between the Marginal Means of Disloyalty Indicator in Terms of Different Price Categories for the Frequent Reviewers Data

Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 5 was tested through creating a new variable named aggressive raters. The hypothesis says that people who rated the perception of consumption qualities very low or very high have some special characteristics. It is important to know why people rate too extremely as this sort of rating. This phenomenon does not reflect all level of variation of dining experience. This hypothesis is tested only for the infrequent reviewers data as the frequent reviewers data has less than 9% of its cases which can be considered aggressive raters.

To test the hypothesis 5, several variables are needed to be defined.

Consumption quality indicator is an index which varies between 0 and 1 and the value is basically showing how much each subject perceived the value of those three consumption elements (quality of food, atmosphere and service). Aggressive raters, though, are people who rated the perceived consumption quality indicator very low or very high. It is acceptable to confidently use this index because the reliability is high enough among

those three variables (Cronbachs Alpha = 0.935). Social dining elements, family members and friends and other social events are used in the analyses. Moreover, ultra-fine dining, a variable for more than \$60 per meal cases, has been used as a representative for high-priced cases.

A non-parametric correlation test has been performed between all of the variables in the fifth hypothesis. The results indicate that H5 –a is not supported, H5 –b is partially supported and H5-c is supported. There is no relationship between higher price diners and aggressive raters (n=405). In terms of social elements, there is no significant relationship between people who talk about their family members and friends with those who rate aggressively, however, cases with other social events phrases has a weak correlation with aggressive raters (correlation coefficient (r) =0.12, n=405, $p < 0.01$). Finally, there is a weak correlation between cases with overall judgment statements and aggressive rating people (correlation coefficient (r) =0.17, n=405, $p < 0.01$). Generally speaking, although weak correlations exist, no moderate or high correlation has been found between aggressive rating and other factors.

Hypothesis 6. The results show that for the infrequent reviewers data, the relationship between the perceived service quality and the tipping behaviour is not significant, however, the correlation between the tipping behaviour and intention to return is high and significant (correlation coefficient = 0.67, n=10, $p < 0.01$). Contrary to the previous result, in the frequent reviewers data, the correlation coefficient between perceived service quality and tipping behaviour is very high (correlation coefficient (r) =0.87 , n=14, $p < 0.01$), however, the correlation between tipping behaviour and intention to return is not significant even at the 0.05 level. These results should be interpreted

carefully as the number of cases which talk about their tipping behaviour is very limited. So, H6 has been partially supported but does not have practical significance.

Hypothesis 7. Hypothesis 7 is about emotional phrases correlation with intention to return. Before testing the Hypothesis 7, another test has been done between emotion variable and the “hedonic index” to see if the emotion variable is reliable (only on the infrequent review writers). Hedonic index is a composite variable of several experiential variables which shows some level of hedonic and excitement experience within restaurant reviews. These variables are recommendation to other, social events and sidelong events and overall judgement. The correlation test has shown that there is a moderate and significant relationship between emotional expressions and the hedonic index. (correlation coefficient $(r)=0.32$, $n=91$, $p < 0.01$).

Then, non-parametric correlation tests have been done in both data between the emotional phrases variable and the intention to return. Both correlations are high and significant. The correlation coefficient for the infrequent reviewers data is 0.82 ($n=91$, $p < 0.01$) and for the frequent reviewers data is 0.71 ($n=75$, $p < 0.01$). So, Hypothesis 7 has been supported.

Hypothesis 8. A variable “reason of visit” has been shaped in a way that people who have stated they had their visit because of an advice are coded as 1 and people who have talked they had their visit because of advertisements or online web pages are coded as zero. A non-parametric correlation test is performed between reason of visit variable and the intention to return. In the infrequent reviewers data, there is a moderate and significant correlation (Correlation Coefficient $(r) = 0.51$, $n= 48$, $p < 0.05$) between

reason of visit and intention to return, supporting the hypothesis 8. In the frequent reviewers data, the relationship is small and not significant ($n=43$). Hypothesis 8 is supported for the infrequent reviewers data and is not supported for the frequent reviewers data.

Hypothesis 9. Size and crowding variable has been coded as positive and negative. Non-parametric correlation tests have been done in both data between the size and crowding variable and the intention to return. In the infrequent reviewers data, the correlation between size and crowding and intention to return is almost zero ($r= 0.006$, $n=47$). In the frequent reviewers data, however, the correlation is directly positive and moderate ($r = 0.30$, $n=91$, $P < 0.05$). Hypothesis 9 is not supported for the infrequent reviewers data but is supported for the frequent reviewers data.

Hypothesis 10. A non-parametric correlation test has been performed between expectation variables and the intention to return. The results show that for the infrequent reviewers data, there is a moderate negative relation ($r = - 0.31$, $n=70$, $P < 0.05$) between expectation statement and intention to return, supporting the hypothesis 10. For the frequent reviewers data, the relationship is also negative and significant but with a weak strength ($r = - 0.18$, $n=141$, $P < 0.05$). So, hypothesis 10 is supported.

Hypothesis 11. For the hypothesis 11, a simple Pearson correlation has been applied. The results shows not only the service speed does not have positive relationship with intention to return, but also the relationship between service speed and intention to return is negative. In the infrequent reviewers data, there is a negative, high and significant correlation ($r = - 0.63$, $n=64$, $P < 0.05$) and in the frequent reviewers data, the

correlation in question is negative, moderate and significant ($r = - 0.35$, $n=65$, $P < 0.05$) supporting the Hypothesis 11.

Summary

Hypothesis 1 is partially supported as almost all dining experience elements (perceived quality of food, atmosphere and service) contribute to the outcome (intention to return). The only exceptional element is the service quality for the infrequent reviewers data. Further analysis has revealed that this element is just not significant for high priced meals. Hypothesis 2 is supported in the four element model, indicating that food is the main determinant of dining experience outcome. Hypothesis 3 is supported as entering the price factor has enhanced the power of the models. It shows that price is an important predictor for outcomes in dining experience context. Hypothesis 4 is supported for the infrequent reviewers data, emphasizing that high-priced events are vulnerable to create disloyalty for customers.

Hypothesis 5 is partially supported. This study cannot fully explain the reasons for aggressive rating phenomenon that exist among non-frequent reviewers; however, it seems that people with overall judgment and social experience during dining (other than family and friends socializing) have more chance to rate aggressively. Hypothesis 6 is partially supported; indicating that for the non-frequent review writers would increase the amount of tipping by their overall decision about returning while frequent review writers would increase the amount of tipping only by considering the perceived quality of service. The results do not have practical significance due to limited number of the cases.

Hypothesis 7 is supported, demonstrating that emotional status has significant relationship with the intention to return particularly for the non-frequent reviewers.

Hypothesis 8 is supported for non-frequent review writers and is not supported for frequent review writers. It suggests that word of mouth is a powerful tool for non-frequent reviewers to create reasonable expectations for themselves before visiting a place. The decision of patronage for frequent review writers are less affected by either advertisement or word of mouth. Hypothesis 9 is not supported for the non-frequent review writers but it is supported for the frequent review writers. Considering the proportion of the non-frequent to frequent reviewers (14 times), size and crowding can hardly be considered as a predictor for dining experience outcomes.

Hypothesis 10 is supported and it is especially powerful for non-frequent reviewers. This would again support the Lewin's (1938) theory about expectancy-disconfirmation, that is, more expectations would lead to higher dissatisfaction.

Hypothesis 11 is not supported, but it shows that the relationship between service speed and intention to return is negative for both data. Particularly for the infrequent reviewers data, the relationship is very significant (negative). So, it seems that this element of service quality (service speed) is not a predictor of dining experience outcomes.

Despite the similarities between non-frequent and frequent reviewers results found in the qualitative part, there have been distinctive differences between the two datasets in term of descriptive graphs and inferential statistics results. First, unlike the infrequent reviewers, the frequent reviewers data does not have any multi-collinearity issue, as the correlation values between variables are lower than the suggested cut-off. Second, frequent reviewers had more comments for the food and atmosphere sub-categories, while the service sub-category received almost the same amount of comments from both datasets. Third, infrequent reviewers are more likely to rate their experience

aggressively, they have usually chosen extreme values for rating. Fourth, it seems that tipping behaviour is different in that infrequent reviewers consider their general evaluation for the changing the amount of tipping while frequent reviewers change their tipping amount based on the perceived service performance. Fifth, non-frequent reviewers' emotions are highly related to their intention to return decisions, and they accept word of mouth better than advertisement in terms of their intention to return. Sixth, social dining comment is more common for the infrequent reviewers. The following table (table 9) shows the similarities and differences between frequent and infrequent datasets:

Table 9. Some Similarities and Differences between Frequent and Infrequent Data

No.	Similarities	Differences
1	Emerging dining experience categories and sub-categories	Higher number of comments for frequent reviewers in terms of food and atmosphere sub-categories
2	Comments on the service sub-categories	Higher number of comments for infrequent reviewers in terms of social dining
3	Food quality as the most important predictor of the dining experience	No high correlation coefficient for independent variables of frequent reviewers
4	Supporting the suggested model of dining experience	Different tipping behaviour based on service quality or general evaluation
5	Price as a negative predictor of intention to return	Extreme rating for infrequent reviewers
6	General positive pattern for the comments	Emotional relationship with intention to return more for infrequent reviewers
7	Almost same graph shapes for sub-category comments	Word of mouth more important for infrequent reviewers
8	Service speed as a negative predictor of intention to return	More influenced for intention to return base on the expectations

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

Discussion

The results of this study have two major themes for discussion: the first theme is the dining experience expectations, model and outcomes; second theme is the differences between the results of the non-frequent reviewers and frequent reviewers. Also, negative and positive reviews with different characteristics have been analysed. Discussion on the qualitative and the quantitative results has been included, indicating new concepts in dining literature review and suggesting a better understanding of the interaction between dining experience elements in the online reviews context. Differences between various consumer groups of high-priced and medium-low priced restaurant are also discussed in this section.

Qualitative and Quantitative Results

In the qualitative section, this study has found that the review writers sometimes directly or indirectly stated their expectations, and sometimes identified what prompted their visits (advertisement or word of mouth). Food, atmosphere and service quality perceptions have been mentioned in the reviews in terms of different concepts such as taste, healthy options, cleanliness, comfort, and service professionalism. So, one part of qualitative section has identified the categories and sub-categories of a dining review. In the other part of qualitative analysis, hedonic dining experience was investigated in which review writers showed their high satisfaction with phrases such as “wow”, “amazing” or “wonderfull”. It has come out that adding at least one premium feature to a series of good performance elements, creating holistic extra-ordinary experience, facilitating social-romantic dining or special events, providing authentic theme, and

enhancing comfy/homey/friendly environment can enhance the hedonic aspects of dining experience and in some cases result in highly satisfied customers.

In the quantitative content analysis, negative/positive analysis has indicated that some of the variables do not follow the general pattern as they received more negative comments than positive ones. These variables can be considered hygiene factors (Crompton, 2003) for dining satisfaction. The new variables which are found in the quantitative content analysis become the information needed for hypothesis testing. In the inferential statistics section, eleven hypotheses have been tested through logistic regression technique and several correlation tests. The general suggested model has also been supported, indicating that expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Lewin, 1938) works in dining experience context.

It has been found that food quality is the most important contributor to intentional behaviour in restaurant experience. Service quality (particularly service speed) is not always a significant determinant of intention to return, especially for high-priced meals. Atmosphere quality has a positive and price of the event has a negative relationship with the outcome of a dining experience. Social dining is evident in the evening dining out, but, was not identified as important for breakfast or lunch meals. For non-frequent writers, word of mouth would work better than advertisement or web page visiting in terms of the intention to return. It has also been supported that expectation statements may be a representative of higher expectations and it would increase the likelihood of dissatisfaction.

Dining Expectations

Results show that consumers' expectations have an important role in dining experience and a considerable effect on the consumption outcomes. First of all, people comment on their various expectations in the body of the reviews. In the qualitative analysis, review writers even state if their expectations were met or were not met by the performance of the restaurant and how this process lead to intentional behaviour. Also, indirect expectations such as price perception effect have been seen in the review texts.

Second, the quantitative results of this study support the Lewin's (1938) theory that the expectation-confirmation theory is partly explaining the interaction between expectation and outcome elements in dining experience context. As an example, price perception plays an important role in increasing the customers' expectations; thus creating dissatisfaction for high-priced meals more than that for inexpensive or average priced dining events.

Another support for the expectation - disconfirmation theory is the relationship between expectation expressions and the negative outcomes. Assuming that people who have expressed their expectations have a high level of expectations, they are more likely to negatively respond to the patronage question. This indicates that higher expectation creates a greater likelihood of being disappointed with the dining experience; thus, the negative disconfirmation would occur. This negative disconfirmation in turn leads to negative outcome such as negative intention to return.

One of the particular findings of this study is that expectations of people may come from word of mouth or advertisement/websites; there are of course distinctive differences in the reasonableness of the expectations that has been created by either

method: word of mouth creates more realistic expectations while advertisement/websites generate high expectations. The outcome shows that initially, people have talked about word of mouth more than advertisement/websites as a reason of visit the place. Second, people who visited a restaurant due to a prior word of mouth message are more likely to revisit the place than people who was bombarded by advertisement or see online websites. These results provide a better explanation for the ideas of Babin et al. (2005) and Pieters and Wetzer and Zeelenberg (2007) regarding the importance of the word of mouth and how the word of mouth affects the consumers patronage in restaurant context.

Dining Experience Model

It is found that without price factor, the interaction between dining consumption variables are not complete and in some cases not significant. After the intervention of the price concept (fine-dining variable), the logistic regression models have become stronger and the roles of dining consumption elements have become more meaningful. The Cox & Snell R square is 0.624 for the non-frequent review writers, suggesting a powerful model with only 5 components.

This study has identified that among dining experience consumption elements, food is the most important and is the best predictor of the outcomes. Within the food quality perception category, taste has been repeatedly reported by the review writers especially for frequent review writers. On the contrary, healthy or veggie options are not the focus of visitors attention and have been mentioned rarely. Given that the frequency of the sub-categories is a representative of the importance of a concept, this study suggests that the temperature of the food is not a very important element whereas consistency/wine/pairing and presentation/aroma of a meal been a significant focus.

This study identifies the importance of taste and presentation of food in agreement with the result of the work of Namkung and Jang (2008), however, this study add another important element, consistency/wine/pairing, which is found to be even more important than the presentation/aroma. The non-importance of healthy/veggie options and freshness of the ingredients are similar with the results of Namkung and Jang (2008), however, the result of this study suggests that the temperature of the food is not a major concern of people while Namkung and Jang (2008) found the temperature of the food marginally significant of the satisfaction. For high-priced dining, this study and the study by Basil and Basil (2009) find food quality perception as the most powerful predictor of dining experience outcome.

In terms of negative and positive comments, for non-frequent review writers, temperature and presentation/aroma of the food have received relatively high percentage of negative comments against the general positive attitude. According to Crompton (2003), these variables might be considered hygiene factors, as a minimum level of performance is required to make people not dissatisfied, but more than that level, the performance seldom leads to motivation or satisfaction. For frequent review writers, however, all sub-categories for food quality have higher positive comments than they have for negative comments.

The results for ambiance quality perception indicate that atmosphere is an important element in dining experience outcome especially for non-frequent reviewers. The view/décor of the place followed by the size/crowding and the comfort/temperature of the place have been mentioned often by the reviewers whereas the lighting and music/noise have rarely been mentioned. These facts support the model of Namkung and

Jang (2008) about atmosphere role in dining experience. Cleanliness, however, has a moderate-low attention for non-frequent review writers and moderate-high consideration for frequent review writers.

In terms of negative/positive proportionality, for non frequent review writers, music/noise, size/crowding and cleanliness do not follow the general pattern; however, it is naturally expected for the first two sub-categories to receive more negative comments, as “crowd” and “noise” can be assumed negative terms. Cleanliness though, can be considered a definite hygiene factor for the perceived ambiance quality. The frequent review writers figure, however, shows that only size/crowding has received more negative comments which is expected.

This study finds the service quality perception as a non-significant element in fine dining experience for non-frequent review writers while the Namkung and Jang (2008) model suggests one of the service sub-category elements (willingness to help) as the most important variable to create the outcome and Basil and Basil (2009) find the service category as the second important variable in ultra-fine dining. However, in this study, the comparison between the results of fine and non-fine dining shows only non-fine dining review writers perceive service as an important contributor to their dining satisfaction.

For the non-fine restaurant review writers, it is important for the service to be good. Customers are not paying too much, so the restaurant owner may want to reduce the expenses, by keeping the service quality near the standard. Customers would notice this and will be aware of that deficiency. Another explanation for the importance of the service quality is that, the nature of dining in this kind of restaurants is different with high-priced restaurants and service performance is more related to the need of this group

of customers. Not pleasant behaviour or mistakes in order-taking can make a customer easily dissatisfied. In this regard, service category can be considered a hygiene factor (Crompton, 2003) for only fine dining experiences. Negative/positive proportionality analyses reveal that for both data, three out of four service quality sub-categories (specifically mistake/correction concept) have received more negative comments, not following the positive general pattern. This would indicate that service quality concept can be assumed as a dissatisfier factor in dining experience context.

In dining experience model, it has been found that price concept is playing an important role and it is always negative and significant. High-priced meals tend to result in negative intentional behaviour, supporting the idea that higher prices create higher expectation and lead to negative disconfirmation of expectation and performance. This notion may better explain some of the controversial results of the studies that did not encounter or at least control the price factor in their dining consumption models.

The social aspects of dining experience, which are not widely used to measure the level of customers' satisfaction, have emerged in the qualitative and quantitative results. This dimension has been viewed repeatedly in the online reviews; two variables derived from the analyses. It is found that "friends and family members" variable have been mentioned more than the "other social aspects/events" variable. Non-frequent review writers have more comments in regard to the social dimension of their dining experience especially for friends and family. The correlation tests between social related comments and meal type confirm the idea of Andersson and Mossberg (2004) that social needs are more related to evening dining, particularly for the non-frequent review writers.

Dining Experience Outcome

Some sort of general evaluations exist among most of the reviews, indicating customers have a holistic memory from their dining consumptions. There is a direct relationship between emotional phrases and hedonic index on one hand, and emotional phrases and intention to return attitude on the other hand for both frequent and non-frequent review writers, supporting the emotion-response relationship in environmental psychology (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). For non-frequent review writers the relationship is stronger than for the other group suggesting that the decision of intention to return for frequent review writers are less affected by their emotional status than that for non-frequent review writers.

Another controversial outcome of dining experience in the literature is tipping behaviour (Lynn, 2000). Current results show that comments about tipping almost always occur when there was dissatisfaction about dining experience, particularly for non-frequent reviewers. This study suggests that the frequent review writers and non-frequent review writers behave differently toward their tipping decision in which non-frequent reviewers consider the intention to return or what can be said as their general evaluation for the amount of their tips while frequent reviewers are more concerned about service quality in order to make changes in their normal tipping amount. The results of this section do not have practical implications as the samples are too small, but it is an interesting area for future research.

The results of this study also suggest that several pre-assumed dining experience predictors do not have any relationship or they have even negative relationship with the intentional behaviour. Being large or not-crowded for a restaurant, on one side, is a

symbol of comfort and provides privacy perception; on the other side, large space or not-crowded environment represents low quality or not sociable/not cozy atmosphere. The results for non-frequent review writers show that there is no relationship between size and crowding comments and the intentional behaviour.

Another important predictor variable is believed to be the service speed. Kimes et al. (2009) suggest that there is an inverted U-shape relationship between the service waiting time and satisfaction. Another study suggested that pleasure diners do not really care about the waiting time but they care about the variety of the menu while business diners are less concern about the variety of foods but they care about the service speed (Dube et al., 1994), assuming that mostly pleasure diners write the reviews, one would expect that waiting time is not an important factor in the present study.

The current results suggest that the relationship correlation between the service speed and intention to return is negative and it is particularly powerful for non-frequent review writers. One rationale for such result is that high speed service providers may ignore another important aspect of service experience which is professional treatment. Customers may also perceive high speed service as a negative sign for the restaurant management pressure to make them leave the place and let other people benefit the restaurant. The final rationale for this contradictory result is that as the previous results of this research suggested, service experience factor as a whole is not a predictor of intentional return for many people, specifically for non-frequent review writers.

Aggressive rating is a feature for online review websites. This study has found that generally, frequent review writers do not rate aggressively. Statistical tests for non-frequent review data could not find any powerful relationship between other variables

and this type of behaviour. Reviews with overall judgment or other social aspects in their text bodies are more likely to have aggressive ratings. For non-frequent review writers, Overall judgment usually prevents people from rational scoring of every single variable. So, it seems people simplify their scoring by rating all variables to the extreme. There has been no relationship between luxury meals and aggressive rating in the data.

Frequent Review Writers versus Non-Frequent Review Writers

Only less than 4% of the random reviews are from frequent review writers, however, the results shows that this group of people has interesting characteristics that separate them from other people. The multiple online reviewers of restaurant experience have had particular attention in previous research and sometimes referred as “foodies” because they talk a lot about food aspects of their consumptions (Hemmington et al., 2008). Results of this study emphasis that food quality element, and especially the taste of foods, is the most important part of the dining experience for frequent review writers. Unlike service quality, frequent review writers have mentioned food quality much more than non-frequent reviewers. They write reviews of their breakfast and lunch experiences more than the non-frequent reviewers and they mention social aspects less than non-frequent reviewers.

Although the skewness values of the variables for both data are very similar, frequent review writers rate their experience variables carefully and avoid extreme ratings. Consumption variables in the frequent reviewers data (for frequent review writers) have much less reliability value than those in the infrequent reviewers data, clarifying that each variable is judged more rationally and separately by the frequent review writers. Reviews of frequent review writers are richer in terms of the average

number of words are used in each review and the concepts are talked. Expectation comments are more within the reviews of the frequent reviewers; however, these people are less affected by their expectations or their emotional status. This would suggest that the direct relationship between performance and outcome is more obvious for this group of people, bypassing the mediator effects and supporting our suggested model. In short, frequent review writers are logical and performance based raters and food expert consumers.

Limitations

Despite the new results provided for the dining experience context, this study has its own limitations. Using a secondary source of information restricted the design as the data do not cover all the topics of interest of the research .Some of the results do not have practical significance due to the very limited number of cases talking about a particular concept. Also, the data is not a true representative of all restaurant diners; the data are only about online review writers of restaurant experience. Moreover, consumption variables are not measured as multi-dimensional factors and not defined very well by the first source questionnaire, making the values not very reliable. The results should be interpreted carefully as the data belong only to the people living in several English speaking cities in Canada; though, the cultural habits of those cities would greatly influence dining experience perception.

Recommendation and Implications for Future Research

This study has some implications for future research. One area in need of further exploration in dining context is to design a survey-based study that includes all the variables and important sub-categories of the above results in order to test the findings of

the current research. Unfortunately, the sub-categories that have been emerged in this study are not compatible for comparing with SERVQUAL or DINEQUAL variables, so, another possible future study could be the comparison the power of prediction of a SERVQUAL or DINEQUAL model and the suggested model in this study with all sub-categories variables. Another study could be conducted on clarifying the concept of “social dining” and its relationship with the dining satisfaction.

This study has found some of the relationships of aggressive rating and other dining experience variables but it seems that scholars of this field still need to investigate more about the behaviours of the aggressive raters; i.e., who these people are and what their characteristics would be. This study suggests that frequent review writers (or in general experts of a field) have distinctive and more detailed view about their consumption which may not be similar to ordinary people. Measuring just the foodies’ opinion or analysing the frequent review writers’ comments would not guarantee a general consumers’ view about dining consumption, so, future studies should be aware of this point.

Managerial Implications

Restaurant manager can benefits from the results of this study. First, type of their restaurants is an important indicator of how they should prioritize their activities, that is, for high-priced or ultra fine dining, a standard level of service is sufficient while more efforts should be put on the food quality and, to some extent, on atmosphere quality. For low-priced meals, food quality is definitely the most important element while removing negative cues such as very load music or noise, dirtiness and long waiting time can be very helpful for enhancing customer patronage.

Second, the restaurant owners should be aware to create realistic expectations if they want to enhance customers' patronage; especially setting relatively fair prices and fostering word of mouth of current customers would have a great positive effect on the intention to return. Restaurant managers can also enhance the dining experiences in evenings by shaping social life environment for their customers, as social dining elements were more prominent in evenings.

Third, it is found that several factors in restaurant experience consumption need only a standard level of performance to prevent dissatisfaction, while superior performance on some other factors can create high satisfaction. Results of the current research also indicate that still the taste of the food is the most repeated phrase in the customers' reviews, moreover, consistency/wine and pairing has mentioned many times. Service speed is not a predictor for many restaurants; even in considerable amount of the cases the speed of the service has negative effect on the return patronage. Décor and interior design of the place and the customers' treatment have a great influence on customers satisfaction while proper mistake/complain handling would easily avoid bad experience for customers.

Conclusion

This research has successfully supported the proposed model of dining experience prediction including food, atmosphere and service quality and price factor as independent variables and intention to return as the dependent variable. All variables except the service quality, (food and atmosphere quality and price factor) have predicted the outcome variable (intention to return) significantly. The main argument of this study with previous service-based restaurant studies is that the service quality is not as

important as food and atmosphere quality; that is, for high-priced restaurants, service quality does not have significant impact on the return patronage. The idea that food quality is the most important factor in dining experience has been supported in this study. Another dining experience dimension, social dining, appears to be more important for evening events than for lunch or breakfast situations.

The model proposed for dining experience interaction based on expectation-disconfirmation theory (Lewin, 1938) has been supported by most of the hypotheses, that is, higher expectations would result in negative disconfirmation and this finally lead to dissatisfaction/negative intentional behaviour. For example, high-priced meal seems to increase the customers' expectations and this lead to negative disconfirmation for a considerable number of people that result in negative intention to return.

Several factors for shaping expectations, dining experience performance and dining experience outcomes have been found by this research. Reason of visit, previous experience and type of meal are the main factors that have been identified for shaping consumer's expectation. For each of the food, atmosphere and service quality several concepts have been identified such as consistency/pairing/wine and presentation for the food quality, comfort and décor for the atmosphere quality and completeness and mistake correction for the service quality. Other than intention to return, emotional status, tipping, general evaluations (overall judgement) and recommendations have been identified as factors for intentional behaviour in restaurant context. The negative/positive proportionality analysis also suggests which factors in dining experience can be assumed as hygiene variables and which factors can be considered motivator elements (Crompton, 2003).

This study suggests that frequent and infrequent writers' comments have distinctive characteristics in terms of food quality importance, emotional impacts, overall judgments, writing quality (average review length) and aggressive rating. Two data of frequent review writers and non-frequent review writers have had distinctive results in several areas, indicating that frequent review writers have more food-based and functional opinion about their dining consumption.

Several studies made an effort to explain the service quality prediction particularly in low priced restaurant consumption with DINESERV questionnaire (Brun et al. 2008; Fu & Parks, 2001), however, Namkung and Jang (2008) explained that DINESERV service-based measures are not enough to fully determine elements involved in a dining experience. This research emphasizes the results of Hensley and Sulek (2004) and Namkung and Jang (2008) that major predictors for intentional behaviour in dining experience are food quality and atmosphere quality rather than service related elements. Also, the price perception can be a dissatisfaction factor. That would suggest it is better to use more measurement criteria than just DINESERV measurements in order to have a holistic view on dining experience consumption.

This research shows that there are other importance factors that lead to the "Wow" experience, especially in higher priced restaurants. It seems that SERVQUAL or similar type of questionnaires have missed the hedonic aspects of the dining experience. As it is demonstrated in the last part of the qualitative analysis results, there are particular elements such as homey/friendly environment or premium features in restaurant ambiance that can create high satisfaction or surprise for high priced restaurant

customers. Considering these hedonic aspects would give a better understanding of fine dining experience phenomenon.

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Appendix I: List of the 29 Coded Variables

Table 10. List of Coded Variables

N#	Variable Name	Values	Meaning
1	Recommendation	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
2	Tipping	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
3	Feeling/Emotion	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
4	Expectation Expression	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Direct Expectation, 2: Indirect Expectation
5	Previous Experience	0,1	0: No comment, 1: Have Comments
6	Visit Reason People's Recommendation	0,1	0: No comment, 1: Have Comments
7	Visit Reason Advertisements/Websites	0,1	0: No comment, 1: Have Comments
8	Type of Meal	0,1,2	0: Breakfast or Brunch, 2: Lunch 3: Dinner
9	Taste	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
10	Presentation/appearance/ aroma	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
11	Portion	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
12	Freshness	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
13	Temperature	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
14	Healthy/Veggie	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
15	Variety/Selection	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
16	Consistency/Wine	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
17	Cleanliness	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
18	Music	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
19	Lighting	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
20	Size/crowding	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
21	Temperature/comfort	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
22	View/decorations	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
23	Service speed	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
24	Quality/Professionalism	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
25	Completeness of order	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
26	Mistakes/Correction	0,1,2	0: No comment, 1: Positive Comments, 2: Negative Comments
27	Friends and family	0,1	0: No comment, 1: Have Comments
28	Other diners/Sidelong events	0,1	0: No comment, 1: Have Comments
29	Overall	0,1	0: No comment, 1: Have Comments