

The Influence of Service Quality and Perceived Value on Customer Satisfaction: A Study of Gacoan Noodles Buah Batu, Bandung

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the influence of service quality and perceived value on customer satisfaction at Gacoan Buah Batu, Bandung. As competition in the food and beverage industry intensifies, understanding key drivers of customer satisfaction has become crucial for business sustainability. The primary objective of this research is to investigate how customers' perceptions of service quality and value influence their overall satisfaction and dining experience. A qualitative research approach was employed, involving in-depth interviews with 15 respondents who are regular customers of Gacoan. The data were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and insights. Findings indicate that customers place high importance on speed of service, staff responsiveness, cleanliness, and perceived affordability. When these elements meet or exceed expectations, customer satisfaction significantly increases. Conversely, inconsistencies in service or perceived decline in value lead to dissatisfaction. A notable uniqueness of this study lies in its focus on a single outlet, providing a micro-level understanding of consumer behavior in a specific urban setting. The practical implication of this study suggests that Gacoan can enhance customer loyalty by maintaining consistent service quality and optimizing value perception through promotions or personalized experiences. Businesses in similar markets may also benefit from adopting a localized approach to understanding customer needs. These insights serve as a valuable reference for improving service management strategies in Indonesia's competitive culinary sector.

Keywords: Service Quality, Perceived Value, Customer Satisfaction, Qualitative Research, Gacoan Buah Batu

I. Introduction

In today's rapidly growing culinary industry, customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in determining business sustainability. Consumer expectations continue to rise, making it essential for businesses to consistently deliver excellent service and value. Service quality and perceived value have been extensively examined as key predictors of customer satisfaction. [1] emphasized that service quality significantly affects customer loyalty and purchase intention. Thus, food outlets must prioritize these elements to retain customers in a competitive market.

One prominent player in Indonesia's culinary sector is Gacoan, a fast-growing noodle chain known for its affordability and youth-oriented branding. The Gacoan outlet located in Buah Batu, Bandung, has attracted a large customer base due to its accessible pricing and quick service. However, as customer volume increases, concerns regarding service consistency and value perception have emerged. Some customers report a decline in service quality

during peak hours, which raises questions about sustainability. This indicates a potential gap between customer expectations and their actual dining experience.

Previous studies have consistently linked service quality with customer satisfaction, particularly in the hospitality and F&B sectors. [2] introduced the SERVQUAL model, which remains widely used to evaluate service dimensions. Similarly, perceived value—the trade-off between benefits received and costs incurred—has been identified as a strong predictor of satisfaction [3]. However, some researchers argue that cultural and regional differences can affect how value and service quality are perceived [3]. Therefore, local studies are needed to explore these variables within specific business contexts.

Contradictions exist in the literature regarding which factor—service quality or perceived value—holds more weight in influencing satisfaction. While some findings argue that service quality is the primary determinant [4], others highlight perceived value as a key factor. Consequently, there is a need to examine both constructs together in a specific and practical context.

This study aims to investigate how service quality and perceived value affect customer satisfaction in the Gacoan Buah Batu outlet. By focusing on this single location, the research provides detailed insights into customer experiences in an urban, fast-paced culinary setting. It seeks to address whether Gacoan is meeting the expectations of its primary consumer demographic young and budget-conscious diners. In doing so, it contributes to the broader understanding of satisfaction drivers in Indonesia's fastfood sector. Additionally, it offers practical implications for improving service delivery in similar business models.

The research adopts a qualitative methodology to capture in-depth customer perspectives. Twenty regular customers of Gacoan Buah Batu were interviewed using semi-structured questions. This method enables the researcher to explore not just what customers think, but why they think that way. Qualitative studies are particularly effective for understanding behavioral nuances and unquantifiable experiences [5]. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns and recurring themes across respondents' narratives.

Despite the rich body of literature on customer satisfaction, few studies focus on single-location fast food chains in Southeast Asia. Most previous research centers on larger, multinational brands such as McDonald's or Starbucks, often overlooking localized chains with unique market dynamics [2]. This creates a research gap, especially in fast-expanding chains like Gacoan. By addressing this gap, the current study contributes novel insights into a growing yet underexplored area of customer satisfaction research. It responds to the call for more localized, context-sensitive investigations.

The following research questions guide this study:

1. How do customers perceive the service quality at Gacoan Buah Batu?
2. What is the relationship between perceived value and customer satisfaction?
3. How do both service quality and perceived value interact to influence customer satisfaction in this setting?

These questions help identify which aspects of the dining experience are most impactful from the customer's point of view. They also serve as a foundation for future research or managerial improvement.

In terms of theoretical contribution, this study offers a context-specific extension of the SERVQUAL and PERVAL models. By applying these frameworks to a local Indonesian restaurant, the research tests the flexibility and applicability of these global models. Moreover, it incorporates qualitative insight that is often lacking in quantitative satisfaction studies. As a result, the findings are more grounded in real-life customer experiences. This enhances the

practical utility of the study for business decision-makers.

From a practical standpoint, the study provides actionable recommendations for Gacoan management. For example, ensuring consistent service speed and staff friendliness may enhance customer retention. Additionally, introducing value-based promotions could improve perceived worth among budget-sensitive diners. These strategies can be adopted not only by Gacoan but also by other regional chains aiming to expand. Hence, the study bridges academic theory and operational practice.

The uniqueness or novelty of this research lies in its micro-focus on a single yet significant outlet, combining service quality and perceived value from a qualitative perspective. Unlike prior studies that generalize across branches or rely solely on surveys, this study offers deep insight into customer voice. Such depth is critical for businesses seeking to understand the *why* behind consumer choices. Furthermore, this outlet serves as a strategic location in Bandung's culinary map, making the findings even more valuable. This state-of-the-art approach reinforces the importance of granular, qualitative analysis in service research.

In conclusion, as customer expectations evolve in tandem with the culinary landscape, businesses must adapt by understanding key satisfaction drivers. Service quality and perceived value are interdependent variables that influence the customer journey. Through a localized, qualitative lens, this study enriches existing literature and provides relevant insights for Gacoan and similar F&B businesses. By addressing a research gap and offering novel perspectives, it supports both theoretical development and practical improvement. Future studies are encouraged to build on these findings with broader samples or comparative designs.

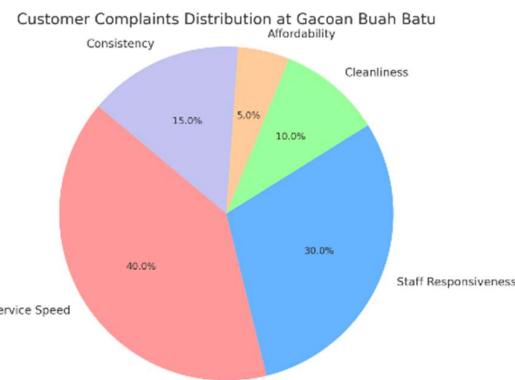


Fig 1. Customer Complaints Distribution at Gacoan Buah Batu

The pie chart illustrates the distribution of customer complaints at Gacoan Buah Batu, highlighting key service-related issues affecting customer satisfaction. The majority of complaints

(40%) pertain to service speed, indicating that delays in order fulfillment are a primary concern among patrons. This is followed by staff responsiveness (30%), suggesting that the quality of interpersonal interactions also significantly influences the dining experience. Issues related to consistency (15%), cleanliness (10%), and affordability (5%) were reported less frequently but still contribute to overall dissatisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of operational efficiency and employee performance in maintaining customer satisfaction in fast-paced, high-volume food service environments.

II. Literature Review

Service quality has long been considered a cornerstone in evaluating customer satisfaction across various industries. [6] developed the SERVQUAL model, which includes five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. This model has been widely adopted and tested in various service contexts. [7], in his foundational book *Service Management and Marketing*, emphasizes that service quality should be seen as a process, not just an outcome. This aligns with contemporary views that focus on customer experience throughout the service journey. Therefore, consistent service delivery is essential for building lasting customer relationships.

Recent studies have affirmed the relevance of service quality in the food and beverage sector, especially in fast-paced environments. According to [8], service quality positively affects customer satisfaction and revisit intention in fast casual restaurants. [8] found that responsiveness and reliability are the most influential dimensions for Indonesian food outlets. These findings support the theoretical foundation laid by [4] and expanded by [9]. As customer expectations evolve, service quality remains a key differentiator. This is particularly critical in establishments like Gacoan that rely heavily on high-volume customer turnover.

Perceived value, often defined as the consumer's evaluation of a product's worth relative to its cost, is another major determinant of customer satisfaction. [10] described perceived value as the overall assessment of utility based on what is received versus what is given. [11], in their book *Marketing Management*, also emphasized the importance of value creation in fostering brand loyalty and customer retention. Perceived value includes functional, emotional, and social dimensions, especially in food service settings. Recent research by Tran, Nguyen, and [9] shows that perceived value has a direct and significant impact on customer loyalty in Vietnamese restaurants. This supports the idea that value perception is context-sensitive and culturally influenced.

The interplay between service quality and perceived value has been explored in many empirical studies, although results vary across contexts. For example, [12] demonstrated that in Indonesian culinary SMEs, perceived value mediated the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. This suggests that customers may not separate service from value, but rather view them as part of a holistic experience. In contrast, [13] found that perceived value

independently influences satisfaction in high-end restaurants, regardless of service quality. These conflicting findings highlight the importance of context and market segment. [14] argued that value creation happens during service encounters, further supporting the interdependence of these constructs.

Customer satisfaction itself is a complex, multidimensional construct influenced by both tangible and intangible factors. [9] define customer satisfaction as the degree to which a product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations. It has been linked not only to customer retention but also to positive word-of-mouth and brand equity. [7], customer satisfaction in the food industry is significantly influenced by service accuracy, staff attitude, and restaurant ambiance. These findings align with earlier service quality models, reaffirming their relevance in modern service sectors. Thus, satisfaction must be viewed as both an outcome and a driver of future behavior.

In the Indonesian context, studies on service quality and perceived value have gained traction in recent years. [15] investigated fast food outlets in Jakarta and found that perceived affordability significantly shaped customers' satisfaction levels. [16] revealed that service quality dimensions such as empathy and responsiveness were key drivers in determining satisfaction among university students. These localized findings highlight cultural and regional factors that affect customer perceptions. This supports the call by [17] for context-specific models in service research. It also validates the need for studies focusing on local brands like Gacoan.

Contradictions in previous literature have led to ongoing debate regarding which factor — service quality or perceived value — has a more dominant influence on satisfaction. In price-sensitive markets, perceived value may outweigh service concerns [1]. However, in premium or niche segments, service quality often takes precedence [4]. [18] posited that customers evaluate service episodes based on both technical (outcome) and functional (process) quality. This dual lens helps reconcile conflicting results in empirical studies. The balance between value and service may shift depending on customer profile and brand positioning.

Customer demographics also play a critical role in shaping perceptions of value and service quality. Younger customers, particularly Generation Z, tend to prioritize speed, digital interaction, and affordability [2]. In contrast, older consumers may value staff courtesy and consistency more. This demographic divergence has implications for brands like Gacoan that primarily target students and young professionals. [17] highlight the importance of segment-specific marketing strategies in managing expectations. Tailoring service strategies based on demographic insights can therefore enhance satisfaction levels.

The use of qualitative research in understanding customer satisfaction offers unique advantages over quantitative approaches. [18], qualitative inquiry allows researchers to capture deep insights, emotions, and motivations behind consumer behavior. This method is especially useful in settings where customer experience is shaped by context-specific nuances. [1]

on local Indonesian cafés revealed that perceived authenticity and emotional value were strong predictors of satisfaction. These insights are difficult to capture through survey methods alone. Thus, the present study's qualitative approach is methodologically justified and relevant.

In summary, the literature establishes strong theoretical and empirical support for the impact of service quality and perceived value on customer satisfaction. [5] provide a solid conceptual base. Recent studies from Southeast Asia and Indonesia further enrich this understanding by highlighting contextual variables. However, inconsistencies in findings suggest that further localized exploration is necessary. The current study responds to this need by focusing on a single outlet of Gacoan in Bandung, using qualitative methods. This contributes to both theoretical development and practical service improvement in the Indonesian culinary sector.

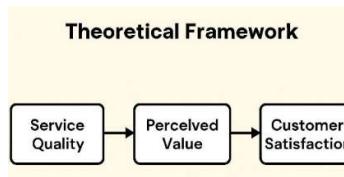


Fig 2. Theoretical Framework

III. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the influence of service quality and perceived value on customer satisfaction. Qualitative research is suitable for capturing in-depth insights and subjective experiences, which are essential in understanding customer perceptions. [9] noted, qualitative methods allow researchers to interpret meaning through participants' lived experiences. Since the study aimed to analyze emotional and contextual elements behind customer satisfaction, this approach was deemed most appropriate. It also allows for greater flexibility in data collection and interpretation. The participants in this study consisted of 15 regular customers of Gacoan Buah Batu, Bandung.

Interview Questions for Informants:

1. How often do you visit Gacoan Buah Batu, and what usually motivates your visit?
2. How would you describe your overall experience with the service at Gacoan?
3. Can you share a recent experience when the service at Gacoan met or did not meet your expectations?
4. How do you perceive the speed of service, especially during busy hours?
5. Do you find the staff at Gacoan helpful, polite, and responsive to your needs? Why or why not?
6. In your opinion, how clean and organized is the dining environment at Gacoan Buah Batu?
7. Do you believe the food and service you receive are worth the price you pay? Please explain.

8. How does Gacoan compare to other similar restaurants in terms of value for money?
9. What specific aspects of Gacoan's service do you value the most?
10. Have you ever felt dissatisfied with your visit to Gacoan? If yes, what caused it?
11. How likely are you to return to Gacoan in the future based on your past experiences?
12. To what extent do service quality and staff behavior influence your satisfaction at Gacoan?
13. How important is pricing and portion size in your overall satisfaction with Gacoan?
14. What suggestions would you give to improve customer satisfaction at Gacoan Buah Batu?
15. Would you recommend Gacoan to others? Why or why not?

These respondents were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that they had relevant and consistent experiences with the restaurant. All participants were aged between 18 and 30 years, mostly students and young professionals—the primary customer demographic of Gacoan. Prior to the interviews, informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality was assured. This demographic profile enabled the study to generate specific insights relevant to Gacoan's core market.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, allowing for both guided and open-ended responses. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participants' permission. The interview questions covered areas such as service speed, staff behavior, cleanliness, pricing, and overall satisfaction. This format allowed respondents to freely express their thoughts while ensuring that all key variables were addressed. Data saturation was reached by the fifteenth interview, indicating that no new themes were emerging.

The collected data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using thematic analysis. [9] six-phase approach, the researcher familiarized themselves with the data, generated initial codes, searched for themes, reviewed themes, defined and named themes, and produced the report. Patterns and relationships among service quality, perceived value, and customer satisfaction were identified during the analysis process. NVivo software was used to assist in the organization and coding of the qualitative data. This systematic method ensured the credibility and reliability of the findings.

The decision to use qualitative analysis was also motivated by the lack of detailed, contextual studies on local fastfood chains in Indonesia. By focusing on a single outlet, the study could investigate specific environmental and operational influences on customer satisfaction. The in-depth narratives provided by participants offered richer explanations than standardized surveys. These insights are particularly valuable for practical decision-making at the

managerial level. As a result, the research contributes both to academic understanding and business application.

Based on the literature and field context, the following hypotheses were proposed to guide the analysis:

H1: Service quality has a positive influence on customer satisfaction at Gacoan Buah Batu.

H2: Perceived value has a positive influence on customer satisfaction.

H3: Perceived value mediates the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

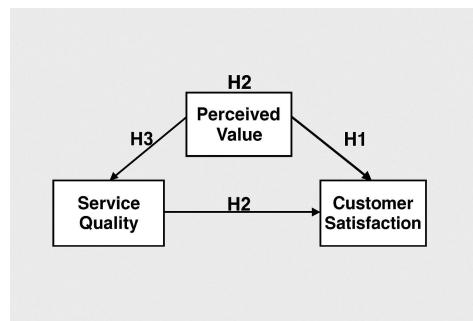


Fig 3. Research Model

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Results

Theme	Sub-Themes / Highlights
Frequency & Motivation	Regular visits (1–3x/month), affordability, convenience, socializing
Service Quality	Generally positive (responsive, polite staff), some delays during peak hours
Cleanliness	Mostly clean, but occasional messes during busy times
Value for Money	Very affordable, portion size praised
Ordering System	Appreciated (QR-based, digital), efficient but occasional system errors
Satisfaction & Loyalty	High satisfaction, many would return, repeat visits likely
Suggestions for Improvement	More menu variety, more staff during busy hours, improve cleanliness consistency
Recommendation Likelihood	Majority would recommend to others, especially students and young people

Respondents generally visit Gacoan Buah Batu between one to three times per month, with a few even visiting weekly or daily. Most are motivated by the restaurant's affordability, strategic location (close to work or home), and the comfort it offers for social gatherings. Several also cited Gacoan's popularity and trendiness among peers as factors influencing their visits.

Overall, the service at Gacoan is perceived positively. Most respondents noted that the staff are polite and that service is generally good. A few mentioned delays during peak hours or instances of incorrect orders, but these were usually resolved quickly and did not significantly affect their satisfaction. The digital ordering system was particularly appreciated for its efficiency.

While many respondents found the speed of service acceptable, especially considering the crowd, a common concern was the delay during peak hours. Several noted that staff seemed overwhelmed during lunch or dinner rush, and although the system was systematic, longer wait times did occur. Nevertheless, the consistency in order delivery and staff responsiveness helped mitigate dissatisfaction.

A strong positive theme emerged regarding staff behavior. Most respondents felt that the staff were friendly, polite, and quick to respond to needs. Some did mention instances where staff were difficult to call or appeared hurried, but these were seen as exceptions rather than the norm. The overall impression was that the human interaction element contributed positively to their dining experience.

Cleanliness was mostly rated positively, with many stating the restaurant was clean and tidy. However, several respondents highlighted lapses in cleanliness during busy hours, such as delayed table clearing or occasional food debris. Despite these concerns, most felt that hygiene was maintained to an acceptable standard, though consistency could be improved.

Almost all respondents agreed that the price and portion size offered by Gacoan was a significant strength. Many emphasized the "value for money" aspect, praising the large portions, good taste, and student-friendly pricing. Gacoan was frequently compared favorably with similar restaurants in terms of price-to-quality ratio.

While overall satisfaction was high, respondents did have clear suggestions for improvement. Many called for more seating and more variety on the menu. Some emphasized the need for additional staff during peak hours, as well as more proactive cleaning during high-traffic periods. These recommendations show that customers are engaged and want Gacoan to maintain its standards.

Most respondents indicated that they would return to Gacoan in the future and would recommend it to others. Several pointed out that the restaurant's reputation is already strong, particularly among students and young adults. Their willingness to recommend Gacoan, despite minor complaints, reflects strong brand loyalty and overall satisfaction with the dining experience.

B. Discussion

Customer experience is a multi-dimensional concept encompassing cognitive, emotional, behavioral, sensory, and social responses to a company's offerings [3]. In the context of the food and beverage (F&B) industry, especially fast-casual restaurants like Gacoan, customer experience becomes crucial for satisfaction, retention, and positive word-of-mouth. This study explores various aspects of customer experience through thematic analysis of qualitative feedback from respondents.

The overarching framework of this study can be anchored in the **Expectation-Confirmation Theory** [19], which posits that customer satisfaction is determined by the gap between expectations and actual experiences. Most respondents indicated that their experiences at Gacoan either met or slightly exceeded their expectations, particularly in terms of affordability and efficiency. This supports the ECT model, where confirmation or positive disconfirmation leads to satisfaction and continued patronage.

A suitable middle-range theory applied in this analysis is the **SERVQUAL model** [9], which evaluates service quality based on five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. The feedback aligns well with this model—respondents emphasized tangible factors such as cleanliness and orderliness, as well as intangible dimensions like staff politeness (assurance) and responsiveness during busy times.

Service speed emerged as a significant theme. Although Gacoan's digital ordering system was generally praised for its efficiency, some respondents expressed concerns about delays during peak hours. [9]perceived reliability and consistency of service are pivotal in shaping service evaluations. Gacoan's ability to manage crowd flow effectively, despite occasional lapses, contributes positively to perceived reliability.

Posits that the physical setting influences both customer perceptions and behaviors. In Gacoan's case, cleanliness affected how respondents evaluated the overall ambiance, indicating that improvements in environmental hygiene could enhance satisfaction further.

Almost all respondents praised Gacoan's affordability, particularly in relation to portion size and taste. [20] defines **perceived value** as the customer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on what is received and what is given. This value perception is especially significant among students, Gacoan's key demographic, reinforcing the brand's strong positioning in the budget-conscious segment.

Staff demeanor and responsiveness were frequently noted as strengths. Respondents described staff as generally polite and helpful, even when the restaurant was busy. [13]positive emotional interactions with employees enhance the affective component of customer satisfaction. The presence of empathetic, well-trained staff in a fast-paced setting like Gacoan aligns with findings [18] on service encounter quality.

A strong intention to revisit and recommend the restaurant to others was evident in most responses. This is consistent with **repurchase intention models**,

which suggest that perceived satisfaction and value drive loyalty [13]. Gacoan's consistent delivery of core customer needs—affordability, speed, and social ambiance—supports repeat behavior and brand advocacy.

The presence of constructive suggestions—such as increasing menu variety and staffing—indicates engaged customers who wish to see the business improve. [4], such engagement behaviors are a key predictor of long-term loyalty and can be seen as emotional investment in the brand. Gacoan's ability to foster this kind of feedback loop suggests a healthy customer-brand relationship.

In summary, the thematic insights from Gacoan's customer feedback can be comprehensively explained using ECT, SERVQUAL, and value perception theories. Academic literature supports the idea that consistent service delivery, emotional engagement, and environmental quality are central to customer satisfaction. Gacoan's alignment with these factors—despite minor operational shortcomings—indicates a strong market fit, especially among young, value-driven consumers.

C. Conclusion

The qualitative analysis of customer feedback at Gacoan Buah Batu reveals an overall positive experience driven by affordability, service quality, and a youthful dining atmosphere. Most respondents reported frequent visits, motivated by the restaurant's budget-friendly pricing, strategic location, and suitability as a social hangout. While the staff were generally perceived as polite and responsive, several participants highlighted occasional delays during peak hours. The digital ordering system was praised for its convenience, though a few users experienced technical glitches. Cleanliness was seen as adequate, but consistency during busy periods remains an area for improvement.

Value for money emerged as the strongest factor contributing to customer satisfaction. Gacoan's large portions and low prices were repeatedly cited as major reasons for loyalty and return visits. When compared to similar establishments, Gacoan stood out for delivering a better price-performance balance, particularly for student and youth demographics. Many respondents expressed strong intentions to return and recommend the restaurant to others, signaling not only satisfaction but also brand loyalty. Suggestions such as increasing staff, expanding menu options, and improving sanitation practices show that customers are engaged and invested in the restaurant's continued success.

These findings align with theoretical models like Expectation-Confirmation Theory and SERVQUAL, emphasizing the importance of meeting expectations through reliable and responsive service. The restaurant's positive performance in tangible and intangible service aspects demonstrates its strong market fit. Although some areas require attention—particularly during peak hours—Gacoan's ability to consistently meet core customer needs suggests that it is well-positioned for sustainable growth and continued customer loyalty.

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