

# THE ROLE OF TRIGGERS AND CONDITIONS AS MODERATORS OF THE EFFECT OF SATISFACTION ON WORD OF MOUTH (STUDY ON RESTAURANTS IN SURABAYA)

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## Abstract

It is theoretically assumed that service quality affects consumer satisfaction. If the consumer is satisfied to the service, such consumer is likely willing to give positive recommendation to other consumer. Nowadays, restaurants face so many challenges such as how to retain their consumers and to prevent them from turning to the other restaurants. The shifting of consumers to other restaurants may be due to dissatisfaction to the service given by the restaurant. One solution to this problem is increasing the quality of service. However, to improve the quality of the service is not enough by attracting consumers because there are some factors triggering the consumers to give positive recommendation to other consumers. One of these factors is Word of Mouth (WOM).

The objective of this research is to understand the effect of service quality (technical and functional) on WOM. The research also examines the role of the triggers variable and the conditions variable as the moderator between satisfaction and WOM.

This research is conducted on the restaurant consumers in Surabaya. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling type, called as accidental sampling. The data are obtained from 150 restaurant consumers who are analyzed using PLS.

The results of analysis indicate that the quality, type, and variation of food and beverages provided, as well as prime service given by restaurants, all influence consumer satisfaction. The satisfied consumers to the service given will improve their willingness to give good word and positive recommendation to other consumers. The consumers may give more intensive and positive recommendations if there are surprises, discounts or special coupons given to them.

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*Key words:* Technical servqual, functional servqual, consumer satisfaction, triggers, conditions and word of mouth

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## 1. Introduction

Restaurant and meal house businesses have been developed dramatically because the government is planning to improve the tourism rate. It seems that tourism is opening a great chance for such businesses. Economic and demographic growths are also supporting the existence of this business. The 2010 Population Census (www.bisnis. com, accessed on 7 Feb 2011) reports that income per capita has increased to the rate of Rp 20.77 millions. This increase really changes the behavior and life style of the community. One such change is greater passionate to have meal outside the house.

The 2009 Data from The Culture and Tourism Official of Surabaya report that there are 51 restaurants and 94 meal houses located at *main roads, mall or plaza* in Surabaya.

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In pursuance with the Regulation of the Government of Surabaya City No.2 of 2008, on 4 June 2008, on Tourism, *restaurant (restoran)* is defined as a food service business where it is located as part of building or using whole permanent building, equipped with equipments and tools for the preparation, presentation and provision of food and beverage for the people at work place, and pursuant to the prevailed regulation. *Meal House (rumah makan)* is defined as a business to provide the food and beverage for the people at work place.

The definition of both terms is not clearly understood. This research will use the definition of restaurant and meal house based on the Regulation of the Government of Surabaya City No.2 of 2008. Restaurant sells various varieties of food (not specialized on just one food). It has wider building than meal house. Meal house is usually focused on certain kinds of food. On further discussion, the terms of restaurant and meal house will be used together.

Competition rate of restaurant/meal house is very high. It is then harder to prevent the consumers not to shift into other restaurant/meal house. This increased competition reflects a market condition which allows consumers to determine their self-choices. It produces greater desire of consumers to shift into other restaurant/meal house (Ciu, 2004; Srinivasan, 1996).

Restaurant/meal house needs marketing strategies. One of them is promotion. The promotion will develop a positive perception and thus, build an intensity of repurchase. Promotion is not only a communication tool, but also a device to persuade consumers. A company without promotion resembles a person with black glasses standing in the dark at night and giving a wink of eye to other. The other person does not recognize this wink except the winker (Tjiptono, 2005). Promotion consists of five communication methods (Kotler, 2004), *such as: advertising, sales promotion, public relation and publicity, personal selling and direct selling*. In addition to these five methods, there is *word of mouth* (Lupiyadi and Hamdani, 2008). Recently, the role of WOM as the promotion tool is greatly increased, especially for the product characterized by service and *experience* (Mangold *et al.*, 1999). Restaurant/meal house usually employs WOM as the promotion tool because the food is considered as an *experience* product which can be evaluated after sensed (Wirtz and Chew, 2002).

Hogan *et al* as quoted by Mazzarol *et al.* (2007) assert that the success of WOM is three times more effective than the conventional advertisement, and it can change unfavorable or neutral into positive attitude. Pruden and Vavra (2004) add that consumers are 90% not believing the advertisement, but 90% believing WOM. Indeed, WOM is important and empirically admitted as a form of marketing communication with great efficacy to develop an image of a product. The question is how positive WOM can be improved such that this positive experience will stimulate the consumers to disseminate the information about the product and to recommend it, as well as to introduce the restaurant/meal house itself.

There are variables used as the predictor of WOM. These are satisfaction and service quality. The service quality concept used in this research is *SERVQUAL* from Parasuraman *et al.* (1985). Meanwhile, *SERVQUAL* model of Gronroos (1988) adopted by Smith *et al.* (2001) and also by Wicaksono and Ihalauw (2005) is *functional service quality* and *technical service quality*. Precisely, technical service quality represents a description of product service (Rust and Oliver, 1994), which is a service given by a product to meet the demand and interest of consumers, while functional service quality is a service process itself. Maddern *et al* (2007) find that *functional servqual* and *technical servqual* influence the satisfaction. Indeed, the satisfaction is then producing positive attitudes. One of them is a willingness to give recommendation.

Good WOM requires stimulation (Mangold, *et al*, 1999). It means that the stimulation is used to influence the demand of information receiver, to produce

appropriate communication and then to develop satisfaction. Main issues behind WOM are quality, consumer value and price. If these three can deliver a positive perception, it must influence the purchasing behavior. Olaru *et al.* (2008) declare that consumer value can influence repurchase or positive WOM.

Mazzarol *et al.* (2007) explain that if consumers can obtain the satisfaction from service quality in the product or service purchased, they will do positive WOM. They can be more active in giving positive WOM if there are *triggers* and *conditions* which are affecting the WOM.

Research attempts to fill in a *research gap* by integrating the service quality variables (technical and functional), satisfaction, triggers, conditions and WOM into a model, and by clarifying the effect of triggers and conditions on WOM.

### **Objective**

The objective of research is to understand and to measure the effect of service quality (technical and functional) on the satisfaction and *Word of Mouth*, and to calculate the role of triggers and conditions as the moderation of the effect of consumer satisfaction on *Word of Mouth*.

## **2. Review of Literature**

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Consumer Behavior**

Consumer behavior is an obvious attitude by consumer which can be directly observed. Consumer behavior science field has learned how individual, group and organization are choosing, purchasing, using or taking benefit from goods, service, idea or experience in order to satisfy their demand and interest (Kotler, 2002). Consumer behavior can be said as a direct action to acquire, to use and to manage the product and service, including a decision to precede and to follow this action (Engel *et al.*, 1995). In addition, consumer behavior is not only representing a process occurred during a transaction, but it is also underscoring entirely a consumption process, including anything affecting the consumers before, during and after the purchase (Solomon, 2002).

A business world supported by information technology is possibly producing behavior change. Consumer behavior can be analyzed not only on the observable activity, but also on the decision making. There are three perspectives in the decision making, which are: traditional decision making perspective (decision making perspective), experience perspective, and behavior effect perspective. The traditional decision making has limit and therefore, alternative models of decision making with different emphasis are used, such as experience perspective and behavior effect perspective (Mowen and Minor, 2001). Behavior effect perspective and the result of experiment over consumer behavior in making choice, planned purchase or sudden purchase, are examined from the environmental change viewpoint (Alzate, 2003). A problem approach from behavior effect perspective always emphasizes on the consumer behavior and the environment influencing it. Based on behavior effect perspective, consumer behavior is a response to the environmental stimulation with its central point on the identification of environmental empowerment influencing it. According to Mowen and Minor (2001), empowerment can be social, sociological and promotion of sale.

#### **Marketing Strategy**

A marketing strategy is a way to reach the goal of a company. The company usually develops a marketing strategy by giving attention to the internal and external environments. External factors are those beyond the company coverage such as competitor, economic condition and government regulation. Internal factors include variables in the marketing mix such as *product*, *price*, *place* and *promotion*.

The company definitely needs promotion to make its product/service recognized. Promotion can be carried out through advertising, sales promotion, public relation and

publicity, personal selling and direct selling (Kotler, 2004), but one recently popular way of marketing communication is *word of mouth* (Lupiyoadi and Hamdani, 2008). This marketing of word of mouth is very simple because it does not need great cost, but it remains effective. In the modern era, WOM is not only by *face to face*, but also using technology such as email and website. WOM phenomenon is believed as being able to increase purchase and to influence community and consumer emotion. However, WOM involves not only good news, but also bad news. Therefore, WOM shall be examined before setting up the marketing strategy. According to Khasali (2003), Indonesian community is a mouth community, in which it is always often using the mouth for communication rather than the hand and eye though these are more useful in the writing and reading.

### **Service Quality**

Service quality is an expected superiority rate. This rate must be controlled to meet the demand of consumer, and thus, the dissemination of this rate shall be good. Quality itself is a marker and characteristic of a product in terms of shape, dependability, easy to use, and esthetic. Similarly, service is measured from *tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance* and *empathy* to acknowledge its ability in meeting the demand and interest of consumer (Goetsch and Davis quoted in Tjiptono, 2005; Kotler, 2002). All these definitions show that the quality of product and service has centralized on the consumer. Therefore, a company is being said as having a quality if its product or service can meet the demand and interest of consumer (Voss *et al.*, 2004a; Vilares and Coehlo, 2003; der Wiele van *et al.*, 2002). The quality of product and service is a competitive weapon for company (Rosen *et al.*, 2003) to obtain profit or to keep the company survived (Newman and Cowling, 1996).

A concept of quality is basically relative depending on the perspective. Mainly, the quality comprises to three issues that are consistently used, which are: consumer perception, product/service, and process. For goods, consumer perception, product/service, and process can almost be distinguished, but not for service. The product and process of the service are difficult to differentiate, and even, the product is just the process.

A product is a something offered to the market to meet the demand or curiosity (Kotler, 2004). Indeed, a product can be classified based on the characteristics such as wearability, tangibility and usability. Based on wearability and tangibility characteristics, any products can be classified as tangible or intangible. The intangible one is service.

A service has many meanings. It can be *personal service* or even just a product. A service is an activity or a benefit offered by a party to other party in the intangibility basis without involving ownership transfer but being consumed immediately after production, and therefore, requiring interaction with consumer. A service can also be a process or activity to serve consumer because there is always an interactive aspect between service provider and consumer (Lupiyoadi and Hamdani, 2008). Any services are impossible to be similar. The service can be understood through some ways such as: (a) based on the contact rate between consumer and consumer as part of system, and (b) based on the similarity of manufacture operation (Griffin, in Lupiyoadi and Hamdani, 2008).

The measurement of service quality has been developed in many dimensions as following:

#### **1. SERVQUAL (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985)**

The approach to service quality through *SERVQUAL* model is by comparing between the perception about service which is obviously received (*perceived service*) and the service actually given (*expected service*). If the perceived service is greater the expected service, the service is having a quality, and so is the opposite. Therefore, *servqual* is defined as the difference rate between the reality and the

expectation of service that the consumers want to receive (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988).

Parasuraman *et al.* (1985) develop a measurement of service quality using an instrument consisting 10 dimensions and 97 items of question. In 1988, the composition is briefed into 5 dimensions and 22 items of question. These dimensions are *tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance* and *empathy*.

## 2. TECHNICAL and FUNCTIONAL SERVQUAL Models (Gronroos, 1988)

The approach of Gronroos's service quality model (1988) involves two factors, *technical servqual* and *functional servqual*. Both are influencing the *image*.

- 1) *Technical servqual* is the perception of consumers over the service they accept compared to the expected service. *Technical servqual* represents an evaluation over the service quality due to the interaction with company.
- 2) *Functional servqual* is about how consumers can acquire the result from *technical servqual*. *Functional servqual* is very important because it influences the consumer perception about the quality of the service they accept.
- 3) *Image* is an important factor for the company because good image is expected to build up *technical servqual* and *functional servqual*.

## 3. SERVPERF (Cronin and Taylor, 1992)

Cronin and Taylor (1992) presuppose four ways to measure service quality, which are: (a) Service quality = service providing score (*SERVPERF*); (b) Service quality = performance score – consumer expectation score (*SERVQUAL*); (c) Service quality = interest score x (performance score – expectation score), or called as *weighted servqual*; and (d) Service quality = consumer interest score X performance score, or called as *weighted servperf*. Of these four measurements, the measurement of service quality based on the performance of service provider is considered by consumers (*SERVPERF*) as the best.

According to Cronin and Taylor (1992), *servqual* has weakness, which is the compilation between satisfaction and attitude. Service quality may be similar to an attitude, and can be operational into the important value conformance model, or *adequacy importance model*. They think that performance and expectation are not determining the service quality, and therefore, an alternative is proposed, which is *servperf*. The measurement scale of *servperf* is a perceptive part of *servqual*. The empirical result shows that *servqual* has two significant outputs in the researched industry, but *servperf* is useful for all industries. Brandy and Cronin (2002) have replicated Cronin and Taylor (1992), and they find that the measurement of service quality only concerns with *SERVPERF* and the result is better.

## 4. RCQS - Retail Service Quality Scale (Dabholkar *et al.*, 1996)

To settle down the debate between *SERVQUAL* and *SERVPERF*, Dabholkar *et al.* (1996) develop an instrument to measure the quality of service given in the retail, called RCQS. There are five dimensions affecting the service quality, which are: *physical aspects, reliability, personal interaction, problem solving, and policy*.

RCQS model involves 24 items of service quality measures, where 11 items are taken from *SERVQUAL* (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988) and other 11 items are developed from literature review and qualitative study.

## Consumer Satisfaction

Satisfaction is a feeling of happy or disappointed after comparing between perception or impression about the performance or result of a product and its expectations (Kotler, 2004). Engel *et al.* (1995) define satisfaction as an evaluation after the consumers do consumption to ensure whether an already chosen alternative can meet the expectation or not. Oliver (1997) adds that consumer satisfaction is a response of consumer after the consumption of product/ service. It is such that satisfaction is an assessment over the feature of product/service after consumption. Consumer satisfaction is a target which is always changing. Therefore, a clear description about what is the demand of consumer in every transaction shall be

needed. Based on these definitions, in general, satisfaction can be said as a comparison between the accepted service or result and the expected, by which, the latter is at least similar to, or even exceeding, the former.

Theoretically, two assessments are included in the evaluation over satisfaction (Oliver in Jones *et al.*, 2006), which are: the effect of response caused by the evaluation over the use of product/service and the cognitive interpretation related to the process (*expectancy-disconfirmation*) which causes the satisfaction. Concerning with the paradigm, the consumer establishes an expectation, which becomes a standard to assess the actual performance of product/service. If the expectation is met, there is *confirmation*, or in other word, the consumers are satisfied. In contrast, if the expectation is not met, there is *disconfirmation*. There are positive and negative *disconfirmations*. Positive *disconfirmation* is evident if product/service meets the demand of consumers by exceeding the expectation. The opposite is causing negative *disconfirmation*. Indeed, *confirmation* and positive *disconfirmation* allow the consumers to be satisfied, while negative *disconfirmation* leads to the unsatisfied consumers. Consumer satisfaction may be functional satisfaction and psychological satisfaction. Functional satisfaction is obtained from the function or the use of product/service, while psychological satisfaction is acquired from the intangible attribute during the purchase of product/service.

The consumer satisfaction is begun from relationship between the entrepreneur and consumer, meaning that there is a mutual situation. Therefore, a company shall attend its service by increasing the quality of service to ensure the satisfaction of consumers and their repurchase. The benefit behind the satisfied consumers is trust and purchasing value. The purchasing value means that consumers will fast and easily use all benefits of the product/service they have bought. The benefit of product/service and the service given will increase the loyalty.

According to Parasuraman *et al.* (1994), satisfaction on restaurant/meal house is determined by the experience and evaluation of consumers over the quality of product, service and price. Restaurant/meal house produces a mixture of product and service such that the evaluation is preceded by consumption. It means that consumers conduct evaluation by considering specific aspects of product (such as food quality and the atmosphere of restaurant/meal house), service (ability and experience of employee), and price.

### **Triggers and Conditions**

Consumer satisfaction becomes a goal of every company (Anderson, 1998; Bitner, 1990; Heskett *et al.*, 1994). The satisfied consumers will give recommendation to others. However, the relationship between satisfaction and WOM is not consistent. Harrison and Walker (2001) admit that the satisfaction on the service quality is negatively related to WOM activity, but positively related to WOM of *praise*. Therefore, it is important to explore the triggers and conditions which are strengthening the satisfaction to produce WOM activity (Gremler and Brown, 1999). Triggers and conditions can explain the difference.

Triggers are things that are influencing persons to act because they have ever accepted "*surprise*". Indeed, *surprise* is given in free of charge basis (Longart, 2010). For instance, the extras of drink water or warm tea/coffee, *dessert* or discount can be given to the consumers. If the consumers are often given *surprise*, they will give recommendation. Promotion is also a trigger to disseminate recommendation.

Individual characteristic can influence the process of WOM. For instance, a person with high self-confidence is easily socializing, has good knowledge about product, and has many relations of people to be recommended (Dichter, 1966; Engel *et al.*, 1969; Lampert and Rosenberg, 1975). Consumer characteristic can be a trigger influencing WOM because a situational factor may activate the consumers. According to Mazzarol *et al.* (2007), triggers which are increasing positive WOM are *responding to the recognized need, serendipity and adv/promotion*.

Conditions are things increasing the occurrence of triggers. In general, conditions are related to the characteristic of giver and receiver of information, the product and service, and the evaluation of service. If the quality of product and service is satisfied, the consumer will always be willing to use it again, to persuade others, and to increase the purchase. A condition influencing the consumers to do positive WOM is a good relationship between the giver and the receiver of information. For instance, if someone has used product "X" and feels satisfied with the product, this individual will repurchase and persuade their relatives and friends to purchase.

Some results of the study have identified that such conditions are not enough to cause someone to do positive WOM. Persuading the relatives and friends to use the product/service will always need sustainable interaction in longer term. *Organizational advocacy, closeness of giver and receiver, self-confidence of giver and low risk associated with communication* are also identified as influencing consumer (Mazzaro *et al.*, 2007).

### Word of Mouth

The marketing by *Word of Mouth* (WOM) is simple, cheap and effective. The behavioral pattern of Indonesian with the inclination of gathering and socializing facilitates WOM.

Indeed, WOM is a communication way between consumer personals to discuss the product and the performance of service (Richins in Datta *et al.*, 2003). WOM is used as a concept of marketing, which is being as "a promotion of product and service through an initiative designed in such that people will talk positively about the company ....." (Kirby and Marsden, 2006). The implication of WOM is facilitating the marketer policy, such as to conclude the concept of "*connected marketing*" (Kirby and Marsden, 2006), and to develop a dominant attitude, behavior and strength in the market (Mangold *et al.*, 1999). If individuals are asking for recommendation from others, friends, and relatives, and they believe this recommendation, it is a normal when they act based on the reference. The giver of recommendation can benefit the provider and the seeker of service. Recommendation about the service provider is often used by the potential consumers as the source of reference (Gremler and Brown, 1999; Harrison-Walker, 2001). Therefore, the giver of recommendation is always having great potential being as the source of reference.

WOM communication is defined as "all informal communications between consumers and others about the evaluation of goods and service" (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner and Gremler, 2002, p. 231). WOM strongly influences the product/service, loyalty, and repurchase (Buttle, 1998; Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2002). Therefore, WOM can be considered as one success key of marketing because it reduces the advertising cost, it empowers the brand, and it builds up bigger survivability against the competitor (Berman, 2005; Butcher, K., Sparks, B., O'Callaghan, F., 2001; Dwyer *et al.*, 1987; Gummesson, 2002; McNeilly and Barr, 2006).

According to Sernovitz (2006), there are 5 important elements in the WOM, which are **talkers, topics, tools, taking part** and **tracking**. Besides, reasons why people talk about product/service of company are: (1) *like the person/product/service*, (2) *glad and proud to give recommendation*, and (3) *feel as part of a big family of the user of similar product/service*.

Michael Cafferky in the website *Word-of-Mouth Marketing* offers tips to construct a network of reference source, such as: (1) involving the consumers into the manufacture or the delivery of product/service; (2) compiling the witnesses from the consumers; (3) transferring the actual story to the consumers; (4) educating the best consumer; and (5) offering the fast follow-up against complaint (Herriott, 1992; Riengen and Keman, 1986; Wilson, 1991).

For WOM marketing, the producer must be focused more on making the consumers *do the talking, do the promotion* and *do the selling*. Producer can use the potential consumer to change other consumer toward positive attitude because the consumers are *profitable talkers* who have great influence and network to influence, to try and to

purchase the product.

Reasons of using WOM are: (1) independent and honesty-based (people do not associate with company or product); (2) used as the investigator through indirect experience about the product; (3) likely conforming with the talkative person; (4) the trigger of informal advertisement, or as a single source with its influence distributed widely and fast; and (5) not limited by money, time, family or physic.

Strategies to stimulate WOM (Duct Tape Marketing, vebizportal. corn accessed on 30 Oct 2009) are: 1) *ask them*, 2) *teach them*, 3) *include them*, 4) *star them* and 5) *surprise them*. It is difficult to assess the success and the effectiveness of WOM. Some results of research are showing that WOM is influential. At least, the marketing strategy of WOM can be used as the complement to the promotion activity.

### 3. Research Framework

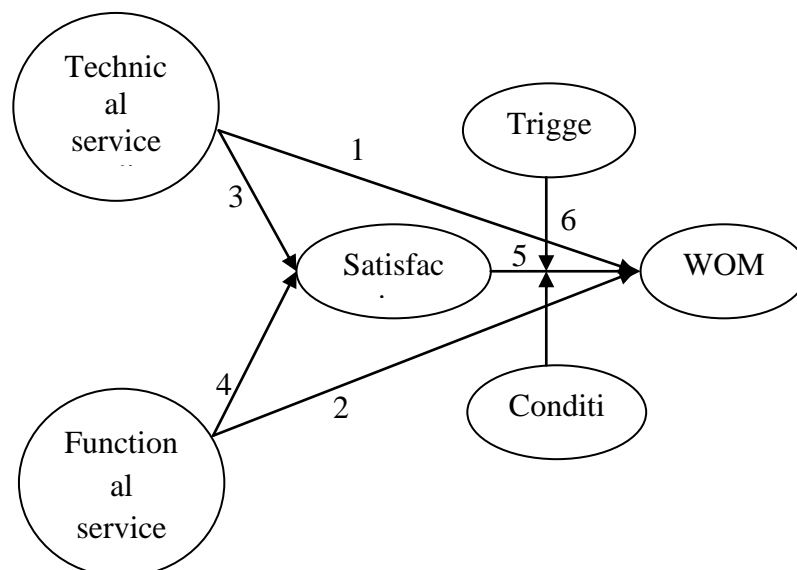
#### Conceptual Framework of Research

Conceptual framework of research is developed using Gronroos's *servqual* approach. The framework is a structure to measure service quality and satisfaction, and to attest the role of triggers and conditions as the moderation of the effect of consumer satisfaction on WOM (Mazzarol et al., 2007).

Recently, the role of WOM as the promotion tool is widely recognized especially for the service because service is associated with *experience*. Restaurant/meal house is usually using WOM as the promotion tool because the food is classified as the *experience* product which can be evaluated after being tasted (Wirtz and Chew, 2002).

*Technical* and *functional servqual* influence WOM through consumer satisfaction (Smith et al., 2001; Kang et al., 2004 and Wicaksono and Ihalauw, 2005). Consistent to Maddern et al. (2007), *technical* and *functional servqual* can influence satisfaction. If consumers who buy and use the product or service are satisfied, these consumers will do positive WOM, especially when there are triggers and conditions influencing WOM.

**Figure 1**  
**Conceptual Framework**



#### Research Hypotheses



Based on the conceptual framework, hypotheses are formulated as following:

- H1 : The better technical service quality felt by the consumers, the stronger willingness of consumers to do positive WOM to the other consumers.
- H2 : The better functional service quality felt by the consumers, the stronger willingness of consumers to do positive WOM to the other consumers.
- H3 : The better technical service quality felt by the consumers, the greater consumer satisfaction.
- H4 : The better functional service quality felt by the consumers, the greater consumer satisfaction.
- H5a :The better technical service quality felt by the consumers, the stronger willingness of consumers to do positive WOM to the other consumer through consumer satisfaction.
- H5b :The better functional service quality felt by the consumers, the stronger willingness of consumers to do positive WOM to the other consumer through consumer satisfaction.
- H6a :The stronger the moderating role of triggers, the stronger the effect of consumer satisfaction on positive WOM.
- H6b :The better the moderating role of conditions, the stronger the effect of consumer satisfaction on positive WOM.

#### 4. Research Method

Research population is whole consumers of restaurant/meal house in Surabaya based on the 2009 data of the Culture and Tourism Official of Surabaya. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling type, called as accidental sampling.

Data analysis methods are (1) descriptive analysis which is used to complete the description of empirical fact in the conceptual model which its hypothesis has been tested, and to describe the explicit management logic in the hypothesis to acknowledge the distribution of answer frequency from the questionnaire result (Ferdinand, 2005), and (2) the inferential statistic analysis which is used to examine the research hypotheses using *Partial Least Square* (PLS).

#### 5. Result and Discussion

The respondent of this research is 150 persons. Of this number, 50 respondents are restaurant consumer (33.3 %), while 100 respondents are meal house consumer (66.7 %). The number of meal house consumer is greater than that of restaurant because proportionally, the number of meal house is more than restaurant.

There are 85 male respondents (56.7%) and 65 female respondents (43.3%). It is 23.3% of them working as Civil Servant, 24.7% as college student, 45.3% private and 6.7 % in other occupations. Of 100% consumers of restaurant/meal house, 68.6 % of them are working and 31.4 % are representing student, college student and housewife. These findings mean that the consumers of restaurant/meal house already have job or income.

The consumers of restaurant/meal house are dominated by respondents with income/pocket money from Rp. 2,000,000.- to Rp. 4,000,000.-. It is followed by other respondents with income of more than Rp. 4,000,000.-. It indicates that there is a relationship between the income rate and the frequency of food and beverage consumed in restaurant/meal house. The respondents with higher income are more often having meal at restaurant/meal house.

Before interpreting the statistic parameters in the data processing, it is important firstly to attest the basic assumptions of PLS, which are linearity and *multiple outliers*.

Result of the examination over *curve fit* indicates that all the relationships of variables are significant (smaller  $\alpha = 0.05$ ), meaning that linearity assumption is met. *Goodness of fit model* is known by *predictive-relevance* value ( $Q^2$ ). For  $R^2$  value of each endogenous variable,  $R^2$  for Consumer Satisfaction (Y1) variable is 0.770, while

for WOM (Y2) variable is 0.931. *Predictive-relevance* ( $Q^2$ ) value is  $Q^2 = 1 - (1 - 0.770) (1 - 0.931) = 0.9841$ . *Predictive-relevance* ( $Q^2$ ) value is 98/41 %, such that the model has good predictive value and seems reliable to be used to attest hypotheses.

Result of the reliability and validity tests indicates that whole research instruments are reliable as shown by *Alpha Cronbach* greater than 0.6 (Hair *et al.*, 2005). Whole indicators of research instrument are valid with greater than 0.3.

## Discussion

Result of research hypotheses testing is displayed in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3. The path diagram equation model is shown in Figure 2.

### Technical Service Quality on Word of Mouth

Result of H1 test shows that the better technical service quality felt by consumers is not directly increasing the willingness of consumers to do positive WOM. It means that food and beverage qualities and good presentation are not directly influencing consumer to do positive WOM.

It is understandable because food and beverage tastes of each consumer shall be different. One consumer may say delicious, but other may not so due to different taste.

This result of research is contrasting with the result of research of Smith and Ennew (2001). The impact of *technical servqual* is a willingness to do positive WOM. The positive WOM is reflected by giving recommendation. Indeed, giving recommendation is an indicator of loyalty and as an important part of *functional servqual*. This result of study is aligned with Madden Madder *et al.*, (2007) that *technical servqual* has a relatively strong role in determining *functional servqual*.

### Functional Service Quality on Word of Mouth

Result of H2 test indicates that the better functional service quality felt by consumers is directly increasing the willingness of consumers to do positive WOM. The effect of functional service quality on WOM is mainly coming from the availability of physical structures such as building, interior, pleasant lighting, wide and safe parking lot, and strategic location.

In addition to the availability of physical structures, the willingness to give recommendation is also affected by the trust onto the quality of employee in providing service, the attention given to the consumer, the responsiveness of employee in meeting the consumer demand, and the willingness to be proactive in giving assistance, as well as the knowledge about the menu.

**Table 1**  
**Result of The Test of Hypotheses with Direct Effect**

Hypotheses	Results
H1: The better technical service quality felt by the consumers, the stronger willingness of consumers to do positive WOM to the other consumers.	Not Significant
H2: The better functional service quality felt by the consumers, the stronger willingness of consumers to do positive WOM to the other consumers.	Significant
H3: The better technical service quality felt by the consumers, the greater consumer satisfaction.	Significant
H4: The better functional service quality felt by the consumers, the greater consumer satisfaction.	Significant

### Technical Service Quality on Consumer Satisfaction

Result of H3 test shows that the better of technical quality service felt by consumer,

the greater consumer satisfaction. The effect of technical service quality on consumer satisfaction is perceived by respondents as developing from the food menu and the variation of food and beverage. If the food and beverage menus are various and specific, the consumers are willing to make repurchase.

Food quality is a main factor to produce consumer satisfaction (Vavra quoted in Pizam and Ellis, 1999). Good technical service quality will have impact on consumer satisfaction and willingness to give recommendation (Smith and Ennew, 2001; Maddern *et al.*, 2007).

#### **Functional Service Quality on Consumer Satisfaction**

Result of H4 test indicates that the better functional service quality felt by the consumers, the greater consumer satisfaction. The effect of functional service quality on the satisfaction is perceived by consumers as established by the availability of physical structures. The implementation is realized within building shape, interior, food completion and strategic location.

Consumer satisfaction is mainly the expression of consumers for the satisfaction with what they expect, and also the result of comparison between expectation and reality of the consumers perceive (Kivela, *et al.*, 1999; Oliver in Blodgett *et al.*, 1993). According to Finkelstein in Auty (1992), conditions and cleanliness are as important as food.

#### **Technical Quality Service on WOM through Consumer Satisfaction**

Result of H5a test shows that the better technical service quality is not directly increasing the willingness of consumers to give recommendation to other consumers. The effect of technical quality service on WOM is occurred through the mediation of consumer satisfaction. As explained in the hypothesis 3, the better technical quality service felt by consumers, the greater consumer satisfaction. Through satisfaction, consumers are willing to speak well and to give recommendation.

Result of testing this hypothesis is supporting some previous results (Smith *et al.*, 2001; Kang and James, 2004; Wicaksono and Ihalauw, 2005).

**Table 2**

#### **Result of The Test of Hypotheses with Indirect Effect**

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Results</b>
H5a: The better technical service quality felt by the consumers, the stronger willingness of consumers to do positive WOM to the other consumer through consumer satisfaction.	Significant
H5b: The better functional service quality felt by the consumers, the stronger willingness of consumers to do positive WOM to the other consumer through consumer satisfaction.	Significant

#### **Functional Service Quality on WOM through Consumer Satisfaction**

Result of H5b test indicates that the better functional service quality is not directly increasing the willingness of the consumers to give recommendation to other consumers. The effect of functional service quality on WOM is apparent through the mediation of consumer satisfaction. As shown in hypothesis 4, the better functional service quality felt by consumers, the greater consumer satisfaction. Through satisfaction, the consumers are willing to give recommendation.

These results of hypothesis test are supporting some previous researches (Smith *et al.*, 2002; Wicaksono and Ihalauw, 2005; Babin *et al.*, 2005; Chaniotakis *et al.*, 2009; Arasli *et al.*, 2005). Meanwhile, Rigopoulou *et al.* (2008) add that besides a willingness to give positive recommendation, consumers also do repurchase. According to Nadiri *et al.* (2008), these actions have impacted company image.

**Table 3**  
**Result of The Test of Hypotheses with Moderation Effect**

Hypotheses	Results
H6a: The stronger the moderating role of triggers, the stronger the effect of consumer satisfaction on positive WOM.	Significant
H6b: The better the moderating role of conditions, the stronger the effect of consumer satisfaction on positive WOM.	Significant

#### The Triggers Strengthening The Effect of Consumer Satisfaction on WOM

Result of H6a test shows that the stronger the role of triggers will strengthen the effect of consumer satisfaction on positive WOM. The triggers strengthening the effect of consumer satisfaction on WOM are implemented in the form of the giving of drink water, snack, and dessert in free of charge basis, and also of price discount and coupon.

This result of research is consistent to Mazzarol *et al.* (2007) who report that a factor triggering consumers to have willingness to speak well and to give recommendation is the satisfaction. Longart (2010) finds that *surprise* is a factor triggering consumers in giving positive recommendation. Indeed, *surprise* may be the presentation of tea or coffee as the appetizer and dessert, or the favorable meal experience in restaurant. The experience can be positive or negative. The positive experience will produce consumer satisfaction and build up the willingness of consumers to give recommendation.

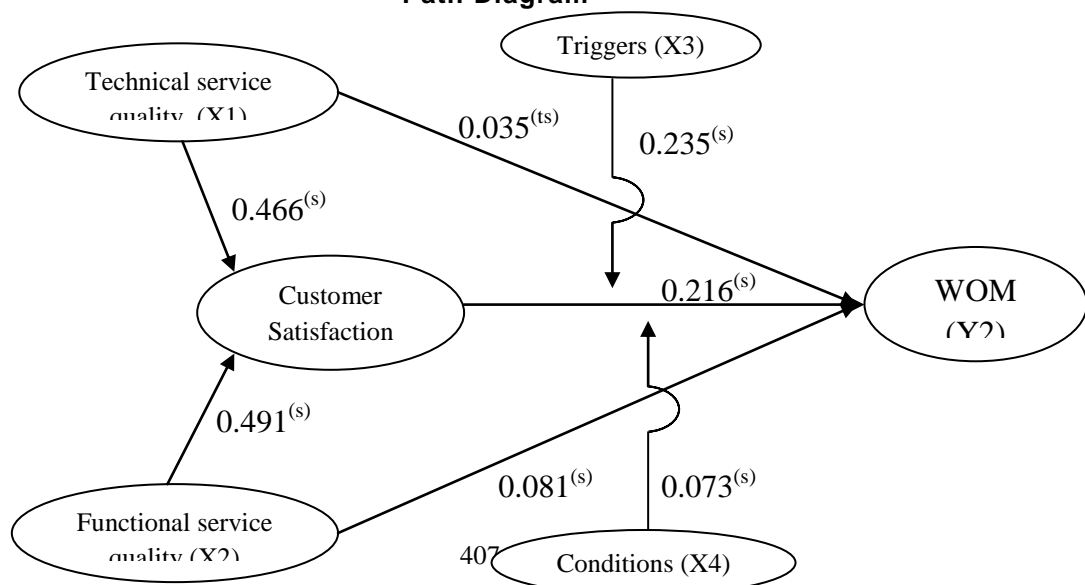
#### Conditions Strengthening The Effect of Consumer Satisfaction on WOM

Result of H6b test indicates the stronger the role of conditions in strengthening the effect of consumer satisfaction on WOM. Some conditions strengthening the effect of consumer satisfaction on WOM include the ability of employee in disseminating information and the closeness of relation with consumers. The information of menu, therefore, can be given accurately with good service to the consumers.

These results are supporting Mazzarol *et al.*, (2007). The fact shows that respondents perceive the ability to disseminate information and the closeness of relation with consumers in the moderate level (*mean* = 3.67).

Result of the test of the effect between research variables is shown by path coefficient rate and p-value. It is displayed in the path diagram of Figure 2 as following:

**Figure 2**  
**Path Diagram**



### The Model of Research Results

As shown by Figure 2, there are some important findings as following:

- 1) Technical quality service is not proved as directly influencing WOM. Technical quality service established by the variety of food and beverage is not able to stimulate consumers to give positive recommendation.
- 2) Functional service quality, although very small (0.081), is proved as directly influencing WOM. Result indicates that functional service quality is made mainly from the availability of physical structures. It seems that the physical appearance of restaurant/meal house is very influential to the consumers. Therefore, restaurant/meal house shall give attention to the building and its supporting factors such as design, interior and strategic location. This research finding declares that functional service quality which is developed from *servqual* of Parasuraman *et al* (1984) is proved as having effect on positive WOM.
1. Service quality (technical and functional) is proved as not the direct determinant of WOM, but it contributes to WOM through consumer satisfaction. It is seen from the total path coefficient of the indirect effect for each quality service. The indirect effect of technical quality service on WOM through consumer satisfaction is greater than the direct effect of technical quality service on WOM. The similar result is also found in the functional service quality. However, functional service quality has greater effect than technical quality service. In this research, it is revealed that the consumer satisfaction has relatively important role in building up the willingness of consumers to do positive WOM. Consumer satisfaction is established by the exact feeling in determining the choice onto restaurant/meal house and by the satisfaction with the food and service accepted. Consumer satisfaction represents a valuable capital for restaurant/meal house because it becomes a strategic structure to defend and to increase the consumers. The satisfied consumers will always have positive communication and recommendation.
2. The findings are supporting Mazzarol *et al.*, (2007) that triggers and conditions are the moderation variables strengthening *servqual satisfaction value* on WOM. Triggers are moderating greater than conditions. It means that *surprise* through free of charge service and the provision of discount and coupon will strengthen consumer satisfaction on WOM. One condition behind consumer satisfaction is closeness of relation with consumers.

Entirely, it is acknowledged that service quality (technical and functional) has greater effect on consumer satisfaction such that the consumers do positive WOM. The satisfaction caused by technical quality service and functional service quality is a capital for the competition of restaurant/meal house.

### Limits

The research object is limited on restaurant/meal house in Surabaya. Therefore, the generalization shall be made to collect data during meal hour or busy hour, either lunch or dinner.

## 6. Conclusion and Suggestion

Concerning with the results, some conclusions are made as following:

1. Technical quality service is not directly increasing the willingness of consumers to give recommendation. Good technical quality service is realized by improving the food taste and the beverage freshness, producing fabulous and distinctive flavor, and giving good and artistic presentation.
2. Functional service quality is directly increasing the willingness of consumers to

give recommendation. Functional service quality is seen from the process of delivering food and beverage. Efforts and activities must be oriented toward the increase of employee quality. Functional service quality decreases if the consumer perception is negative, and so is the opposite.

3. Good technical quality service can increase cacao seed. Technical quality service represents consumers' perception about food taste, beverage freshness, and presentation. Consumer satisfaction is a feeling of joy or regret after comparing between perception or impression and expectation. The delicious food, the fresh beverage, and the orderly presentation, will satisfy consumers.
4. Good functional service quality can increase consumer satisfaction. High satisfaction is caused by the positive perception of consumers on the trust to employee quality, employee responsiveness, employee knowledge about food and beverage, employee attention, and the availability of physical structures.
5. Technical quality service and functional service quality are not directly increasing the intensity of consumers to give positive recommendation, but indirectly through satisfaction. The greater satisfaction perceived by consumers with good service quality (technical and functional) will increase their willingness in giving positive recommendation. Consumer satisfaction is not only concerning with delicious food and fresh beverage, but also with the quality and responsiveness of employee, employee knowledge about food and beverage, employee attention, and the availability of physical structures.
6. The satisfied consumers are willing to give positive recommendation to others if there is *surprise* with free of charge. The ability of employee in disseminating information and in having close relation with consumers will motivate consumers to speak well and to give recommendation.

In relative with the conclusion, research may suggest that:

1. Restaurant/meal house must increase the quality of food and beverage by creating the unique and specific cook and providing the excellent service such that the consumers are satisfied and willing to communicate and to give positive recommendation.
2. Consumer satisfaction represents a mediation of service quality (technical and functional) on WOM. Therefore, to ensure that the consumers are satisfied, willing to communicate and to give recommendation, restaurant/meal house needs to create a distinguishing service which is different from other restaurant/meal house, mainly in the variety of food and beverage and the availability of physical structures.
3. Research on triggers and conditions is not yet conducted. Further research shall explore and conduct a deeper review about triggers and conditions as the moderating variable.
4. Further research shall observe different object to increase the generalization of result of the current research.

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