

**INFLUENCE OF SERVICESCAPE ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN
RESTAURANTS IN THIKA SUB COUNTY, KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY,
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DECLARATION

Declaration by the student

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award for a degree or any similar purpose in any other institution.

Signature 

Date 07/10/2025

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Declaration by the supervisor

This research problem has been submitted with my approval as university supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Almighty God for the far he has brought me and for granting me this opportunity and golden chance to this project. My special dedications to my loving mother Ms. Janet and my caring grandmother Ms. Sarah for their endless support in my education.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

S-O-R. Stimulus – Organism – Response.

SPSS. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

- Servicescape:** Is a combination of all dimensions that can alter customer satisfaction and perceptions in service delivery establishments, they include ambient conditions, social factors and restaurant layout.
- Customer satisfaction:** Is the measure of how happy a customer becomes after consuming a given good or service.
- Ambient conditions:** Are the background characteristics of an environment including scent, music, temperature, and noise levels.
- Restaurant layout:** Is the general arrangement of furniture's, furnishings and flow of space in a restaurant. Includes tables and chairs arrangement

ABSTRACT

The term “servicescape” means the physical environment that constitutes a combination of dimensions like ambient conditions, social factors, cleanliness and restaurant layout that alter customer satisfaction and perceptions in dining areas. It combines elements like ambient conditions (lighting, scent, temperature, noise level and music), restaurant layout, social factors and cleanliness of an establishment. A lot of customers from the hospitality industry expect an environment that will boost their satisfaction thus the need of restaurateurs to make effort on improving this aspect. Majority of studies are only focusing on single elements of servicescape thus the need to do a study combining all the servicescape elements on how they affect customer satisfaction. Similarly a lot of studies have only been carried out in Europe and Northern America thus the gap to conduct more studies locally. Those few done in Kenya have failed to fully focus on this aspect of servicescape effects on customer satisfaction. This study aimed to investigate the influence of servicescape on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya. This study applied a cross-sectional survey design. The target population was 298 registered restaurants in Thika sub-county where the sample size will be three restaurants without total of 90 customers in the sample frame. Data collection method was by use of questionnaires for customers. The collected data was analyzed by use of both descriptive and inferential analysis techniques. Descriptive analysis involved use of percentages to represent and analysis inferential analysis was by use of the Peterson correlation test presentation methods. From the data collected it was noticed that majority of the respondents were men, most of them 19 to 36 years and frequency of restaurant visit most one to three times in a month. From the inferential analysis it was noticed that servicescape factors had a weak but positive relationship with customer satisfaction since the p level was greater than the threshold value of 0.05. This meant that a change in servicescape lead to a very slight change in customer satisfaction. The study concluded that ambience conditions, social factors, restaurants arrangement and cleanliness had a weak positive but statistically insignificant relationship with customer satisfaction thus accepting the null hypothesis and concluding that servicescape has no impacts on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county. Restaurant owners should focus on other factors like service quality and food quality so as to increase the level of customer satisfaction instead of focusing on servicescape elements and also train staff on quality service delivery. Further research have to be carried out focusing on other factors like food quality and service quality and also be more specific to restaurants settings researched on.

Key Words: Servicescape, Customer Satisfaction

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Preview

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, research hypothesis and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

In the competitive hospitality industry, all service providers aim at achieving the goal of all customer's expectations and needs to be met and this brings about the concept of customer satisfaction (Abror & Putri, 2019). According to Dudovskiy (2021), Customer satisfaction is the pleasure or disappointment from a consumer after comparing the performance of a product against a product's real performance after consumption. Customer satisfaction is also the cognitive and emotional evaluations of consumers after consuming a certain product or service (Del Bosque, 2006). According to this study, customer satisfaction is a measure of how happy a customer becomes after using a given product or service.

Customer satisfaction greatly affects customer's repurchase behaviour, word-of-mouth recommendations and customer loyalty which can either affect business success positively or negatively, (Ryu & Han, 2010). In case customers are dissatisfied in a restaurant there may rise a number of business problems including low employee motivation and performance where continuous customer complaints will demotivate employees thus lowering productivity, increasing employee turnover and loss of sales (Kim *et al.*, 2019). Unsatisfied customers can lead to reduced customer loyalty and retention that will cause loss of business, high costs of promotion thus reducing business profits (Homburg *et al.*, 2018). Negative word of mouth also results from unsatisfied customers as customers share the negative meal experiences to other potential customers thus loss of customers and bad brand reputation to the restaurants (Lathari & Michaud, 2015). All these negative effects of unsatisfied customers make it relevant to carry out this study to provide long lasting solutions.

Customer satisfaction achievement is greatly affected by the surroundings where service delivery is done in restaurants, altering delivery of excellent service (Dcunha *et al.*, 2019). This physical environment that constitutes a combination of dimensions like restaurants layout, social factors, cleanliness and ambient conditions alter customer satisfaction and perceptions in dining areas is called servicescape (Miles *et al.*, 2012). According to Ferrera (2015, p.19) defines servicescape as "the environment in which a service is delivered and in

which a firm and the customer interact and any tangible commodities that facilitates performance or communication of the service. Servicescape is also a combination of physical environment and social factors that impact customer behaviour and emotions in a service setting (Tepper & Hill.,2018). The key servicescape dimensions that impact customer satisfaction include:

Ambient conditions, which are the background characteristics of an environment including lighting, music, scent and noise levels. Favorable ambient conditions stimulates customer emotions encouraging customer satisfaction (Baker ,2022). Restaurant layout which is the furniture arrangement and the partitioning and flow of restaurant space in terms of positioning of seats, kitchen area and also size of pathways. Efficient layout creates positive meal experience for customers (Kwortnik & Thompson., 2021). Cleanliness and interior decor in a restaurant include level of cleanliness and decor and it greatly affects guest's first impression which creates a perception in customer's minds thus customer satisfaction (Liu *et al.*,2020).

Poorly developed servicescape can lead to negative behavioral intentions on customer such as no return visits and negative word of mouth recommendations by customers which lead to loss of customers in a restaurant (Kwortnit & Thompson, 2009). Poorly designed restaurant layout can lead to congestion and crowding that causes discomfort among customers hindering social interactions. This diminishes customer satisfaction due to the stressful environment (Kim & Moon, 2009). Excess noise, insufficient light and unfavorable temperatures in restaurants affects customer comfortability and satisfaction (Liu & Jang, 2009)

A study carried out by Heung and Gu (2012) in luxury restaurants in Hong Kong discovered that atmospheric conditions such as seating arrangements in restaurants, employees, plants authentic and windows appearance impacted customer satisfaction. Another study by Ryu (2010) in luxury restaurants in Northwest and Southeast of United States of America revealed that facility aesthetic, lighting, ambience, seating arrangements and service personnel had an impact in customer satisfaction.

Another study by Kamau (2017) done in Kenya in classified restaurants concluded that Ambience had an effect on customer satisfaction. A similar study by Nyangarika *et al.*, (2020), exploring on how restaurant environment impacted on customer satisfaction in Kenya, concluded that customers looks the quality of servicescape elements in restaurants like

cleanliness, music and comfort so as to be satisfied by the restaurant service. Another study by Loise .W. (2019) about physical environment in restaurants based in Thika town concluded that the physical surroundings in some restaurants was not on a standard level and this diminished customer satisfaction. This research aims to address the influence of servicescape on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Physical surroundings of a restaurant where service takes place greatly influences customer satisfaction (Egle & Maria, 2012). Since services are intangible in that they can't be seen, touched or felt thus customers will judge the capabilities of a restaurant depending on what they can see in the environment to predict the kind of service they are likely to get from the restaurant (Kang, Boger, Back & Madera, 2010). The physical environment of a restaurant has this cues that customers look for and may display the restaurant image to them (Bigne .et al., 2005).

Many articles have highlighted the importance of servicescape but not showing the influence of this physical environment on customer satisfaction which hasn't been well captured in most of the previous studies (Newman, 2007). A study by Ezeh and Harris (2007) highlights that though the effect of servicescape on customer satisfaction is widely known; there remains a gap in addressing its role in consumption setting in restaurants thus the need for further research to be done in this area.

Previous studies focus on single elements of servicescape and only a few have been able to investigate on more than one element of servicescape (Kearney et al., 2007). For example, Spangenberg et al., (2006) researched on music and color concluding that both color and music influenced customer expectations and experience in service settings. Similarly, Babin, (2003) did research on color and lighting also concluding that both elements had an impact on customer satisfaction. Additionally, since physical environment influences customer satisfaction, then there is a need to understand how customer satisfaction and behaviour changes depending on the physical environment elements (Ryu & Han, 2010).

According to Mahlangu et al.,(2014), most servicescape studies have been done in Europe and North America thus the need to do more research in other continents to have more viable comparisons. Due to this reason, it was important to look into the restaurant and hotel industry in Kenya to find a way of marketing the Kenyan restaurants especially those in Thika with

unique features. Therefore the need to carry out this research on the influence of servicescape on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore on how physical and social environments influenced customer experience and behavioral interventions. It aimed at explaining the relationship between servicescape and customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

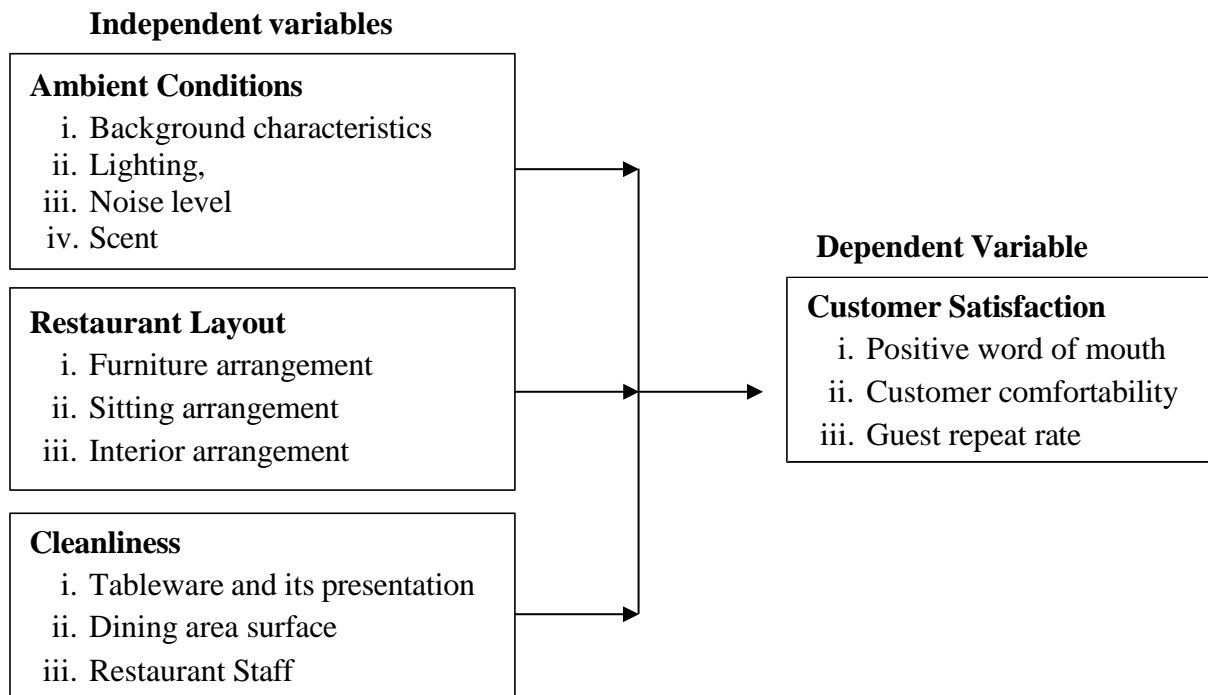


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Research Data (2025)

1.5 Research Questions

- i. In what ways do ambient conditions affect customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya?
- ii. How does the layout of a restaurant influence customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya?
- iii. What is the effect of cleanliness on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

1.6.1 General Objective

To investigate the influence of servicescape on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county Kenya.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To investigate the influence of ambient conditions on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county Kenya.
- ii. To investigate the influence of restaurant layout on customer satisfaction in Thika sub-county Kenya.
- iii. To investigate the influence of cleanliness on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county Kenya.

1.7 Hypothesis of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of ambient conditions on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county Kenya.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of restaurant layout on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county Kenya.

H₀₃: There is no significant influence of cleanliness on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study will benefit various stakeholders in several ways.

Customers will enjoy improved servicescape features that enhance their satisfaction, creating a positive meal experience and a sense of good value for money, thereby increasing their enjoyment of both the meals and the overall experience. Hotel owners and managers will benefit from enhanced customer satisfaction and improved competitiveness, while also reducing overall costs by focusing on essential improvements ultimately leading to higher sales and increased revenues.

Hotel employees will experience a better working environment, as a pleasant physical setting contributes to happier customers, resulting in more positive interactions that boost employee motivation and job satisfaction. Researchers and academics will gain from the findings of this study, which will serve as a valuable reference source on the importance of servicescape, making it easier to access relevant information without much strain. Lastly, interior designers

and architects can utilize insights from the study to create more appealing environments that align better with customer expectations and satisfaction..

1.9 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in Thika Sub-County, specifically targeting Thika Town, which is known for having a number of well-established restaurants. The focus of the study was limited to the influence of servicescape on customer satisfaction, with specific attention given to key elements such as ambient conditions, social factors, restaurant layout, and cleanliness.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

Restaurant wait staff and customers were reluctant to share their honest opinions about servicescape. However, this unlikely affected the research since the researcher employed strategies like use of open-ended questions to encourage participants provide truthful information

1.11 Assumptions

The respondents were sincere in responding to the researcher's questions, providing honest and thoughtful feedback that contributed to the reliability and accuracy of the study's findings. Their openness and willingness to share their experiences and perceptions played a crucial role in capturing the true impact of servicescape on customer satisfaction.

The restaurant's managers were cooperative and allowed the researcher to conduct the study within their establishments. Their support included granting access to the premises, enabling interactions with customers, and facilitating the distribution and collection of questionnaires. This cooperation significantly contributed to the smooth data collection process.

The findings of this study were generalized to the entire restaurant population in Kenya. Although the research was conducted in Thika Sub-County, the consistency in restaurant operations and customer expectations across the country allowed the results to be applicable to similar settings, offering valuable insights that can inform practices and improvements in other restaurants nationwide..

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses and reviews literature on the four specific objectives of this study. It focuses on views and thoughts of different authors on the matter of implications of servicescape on customer satisfaction in restaurants. The review is based on the independent variables of servicescape that are ambient conditions, social factors, restaurant layout and cleanliness. Literature review involves a systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem being investigated (Mugenda , 2020)

2.1 Ambient Conditions

Ambient conditions of a restaurant are the basic drivers of customer satisfaction and increasing profit margins for restaurants, (Jin, 2018). Each element of servicescape is essential for the survival of the restaurant industry since the level of customer satisfaction tends to increase when given the best form of ambient in restaurants which inturn attracts and retains more customers (Liu & Jang, 2009). The most critical ambient conditions for restaurants to focus on are conditions like music, noise, system and scent, (Zeithaml, 2009). Factors like lighting and scent highly affects customer perceptions of quality and satisfaction, (Karma & Sharma, 2020)

2.1.1. Lighting

Adequate lighting in restaurants sets a positive customer mood and also uplifting their personal feelings of being safe in the environment (Gareth, 2011). Good use of lighting systems in restaurants allow guests to get a better view of the food served and get eye appeal and experience the expected pleasure and also dining excitements (Ryu & Hang, 2010). Restaurants should set their lighting systems in such a way that it creates a spacious dining environment that will attract more customers (Ciani, 2010). A study by Bake et al., (2002), explore the role of lighting design in customer satisfaction in retail environments, it focused on aspects like brightness, color, temperature and fixture placement, the results of this study showed that well designed lighting improved appeal and also customers retention due to comfortability that led to high customers satisfaction.

2.1.2 Music

Background music in restaurants influences customer emotions, behavior and overall dining experience which can lead to high customer retention and spending power (Chun , 2020).A

study by Maria et al., (2022) on how music impacts customer satisfaction in terms of behavior dialing experience and perceptions results of this study show that specific music elements like volume, tempo and type of music affects customers satisfaction thus emphasizing on the need of restaurants to check on music to enhance customer satisfaction.

2.2 Restaurant Layout

Restaurant layout is the arrangement of facilities, equipment's and furnishings in terms of size and shape among them (Han & Ryu, 2010). Effective layout that allows entry, exit and occurrence of other activities like drinking and moving around the restaurant helps in creation of a positive impression in customers minds leading to customers satisfaction (Harri & Goode, 2010). A layout where the space is adequate facilitating moving around and sitting comfortably without causing congestion in the restaurant makes customers to be satisfied and create a good impression due to the well-designed physical environment layout. (Han & Ryu, 2009). Similarly a layout that is poorly designed makes customers feel constrained and congested in a dining area reducing levels of customer satisfaction, excitement and chances of returning back reduces (Ryu & Han, 2011). Customers are likely to become uncomfortable and feel insecure if they are too close to each other and this uncomfortability in the dining area will definitely cause customer dissatisfaction with the service rendered (Ryu & Jang, 2008). Sometimes customers can spend more money and more time in a restaurant that is comfortable with a pleasing layout that creates a positive first impression which encourages customers to spend more time in the restaurant (Kimes, 2008).

2.3 Cleanliness and Customer Satisfaction

Cleanliness is becoming a main concern in the restaurant industry including restaurant cleanliness and food safety which are more emphasized by managerial staff and customers in restaurants (Seung Ah Too, 2012). Generally, cleanliness influences both the physical environment and psychological comfort of customers in that it creates the overall impression of the establishment (Barber & Scarlleli, 2010) Restaurant cleanliness constitutes of various dimensions including:

Dining areas cleanliness, where most customers kindly check on cleanliness of tables and sitting areas which generally impact customer satisfaction (Ryu & Han , 2011).

Kitchen hygiene where food preparation and production is carried out as most restaurants have open kitchens enabling customers to have a good view of the kitchen and able to see

whether it is clean or not since a clean kitchen leads to customer trust and satisfaction in the service and products offered (Moon & Ham, 2020).

According to Liu & Tse (2018) minor things like sticky tables will directly lead to satisfaction thus restaurant should maintain high level of cleanliness for it decides the quality of dining experience that in turn affects customer satisfaction.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

2.4.1 Stimulus – Organism – Response (S -O – R) Model

This model was developed by Mehrabian and Russoll's in 1994. It is a psychological framework that explains how external stimuli in an environment can affect an organism's internal state that results to specific different responses. The model helps in explaining the effects of servicescape elements: ambient conditions, restaurant layout, Social factors and cleanliness influences customer behaviour and perceptions during service delivery.

In this model the Stimulus (S) is the environmental stimuli, Organism (O) is the emotional state and Response (R) is the resulting action of the customer according to the emotional and cognitive evaluation. The (S) is the environmental stimuli that is servicescape elements like ambient conditions that affects the (O) component that in turn influences the (R) which is the approach-avoidance behavior (Auber Gamet, 1996).

The S – O – R model proposes that servicescape stimuli affects emotional states of customers during service delivery leading to specific responses .This theory shows the significant relationship between servicescape (Stimuli), customer satisfaction (Organism) and customer behaviour and perceptions (Response) (Bake et al., 2002).

2.4.2. Bitner's Theoretical Framework

This model was framed by Bitner in 1992 based on the S – O – R model for it considers the influence of servicescape on customer satisfaction. It majorly focuses on impacts of servicescape elements like ambient conditions, social factors, restaurant layout and functionality on customer satisfaction. This model suggests that servicescape affects both employees and customers satisfaction in service delivery establishments. This framework assumes that physical environment affects customer behaviours and satisfaction (Muhammand et al., 2014).Bitner identifies several servicescape components that alter customer satisfaction as:

Ambient conditions that includes factors like light, temperature, noise levels and music that affects customer's comfort and mood (Bitner et al., 2020) Spatial layout that includes the arrangement of furniture and general layout in service settings which also affects customer dining experience which in turns influences customer behavior and intentions (Smith, 2021). Generally this model shows how servicescape affects customer satisfaction in service establishments.

2.5. Summary of the Identified Gaps in the Literature Review

It is clearly evident that most customers depend on physical evidence or tangible items so as to evaluate the services before purchase. The servicescape element that affects customers satisfactio include ambient conditions, social factors, restaurant layout and cleanliness therefore more customers in hospitality industry expect a fine dining atmosphere that the that will ensure they get positive meal experience that will bring about satisfaction.

Majority of studies focus on single elements of servicescape and also a large number of them have been based in Europe and North America concerning servicescape and customer satisfaction thus the need to do this research in other continents to get viable cooperation's (Kearney et al., 2012). This study on influence of servicescape on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county, Kenya therefore tried to address the gaps identified.

CHAPTER OF THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter describes the procedure and methods used in this study. It covers the research design, study area, target population, sampling techniques, sampling instruments and data collection and analysis procedures.

3.1. Research Design

A research design is a pre planned sketch for the explanation of a problem (Farooq, 2013). It is also a procedure that shows when the research will be done, how it will be done and who will be the data source (Cooper & Sekaran, 2013). The study adopted the cross-sectional survey design which involved observation studies that analyzed the data from the population at a specific point and time. The method was reliable since it allowed information gathering from customers on the influence of servicecape on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-country, Kenya. The method was adopted because it made it easy to explain the existing relationship between independent and dependent variables that is servicescape and customer satisfaction. This study employed questionnaires to obtain data from the respondents.

3.2. Study Area

The study was carried out in Thika sub-county, Kenya where Thika town is located. The town has a total number of 298 registered restaurants (Kisembi, 2010). This was suitable because it provided a wide sampling frame for the study.

3.3. Target Population

Population refers to the whole group being studied as per objective of a research (Newman, 2003).The population targeted comprised six restaurants as a sample from the whole restaurant population of 298. Those six restaurants were SpoonZoom restaurant, Cascade restaurant, Alas and Co restaurant, Chicken Inn, Bluepost restaurant and Mama's pride lounge. It targeted the customers who dine in the restaurants as well as the restaurant managers.

3.4. Sampling Techniques

Systematic random sampling was used where every fourth customer was picked to fill the questionnaire in the restaurants.

3.5. Sample Size

A sample size is the number of individuals of pieces of data collected as a whole or representative of the whole population in a research (Zamboni, 2017). This study adopted a sample size formula proposed by Yamane because of the presence of a finite population and also because the population size can be estimated. The formula was:

$$\text{Sample size (n)} = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where N= population size

e= margin error.

Therefore,

$$n = \frac{116}{1 + 116(0.071)^2}$$

$$n = 90$$

3.6. Measurement of Variables

Table 3.1: Measurement of Variables

Variable	Measurement/Indicator	Measurement scale	Question number
Ambient conditions	Lighting, Noise level, Music, Scent and temperature	Interval scale	Number 1 in Section B
Restaurant layout	Furniture arrangement, pathways and spaces	Interval scale	Number 2 in Section C
Cleanliness	Dining areas cleanliness, kitchen cleanliness and Employees hygiene.	Ordinal scale	Number 3 in section D

Source: Research Data (2025)

3.7. Research Instruments

The study adopted the use of semi structured questionnaires The study employed closed-ended questions to obtain primary information from the customers. The questionnaire included a number of sections where Section A addressed demographic like gender, Section B will addressed the first objective of ambient condition, Section C will addressed the second

objective of social factors, Section D to address the third objective of restaurants layout then Section E which addressed the fourth objective of cleanliness.

3.8. Validity of Measurements

Validity is the degree to which a measurement tool measures what is intended to be measured (Mugenda & Mugenda 2008). Content validity was applied in testing to test the research instruments with the help of the supervisor and this ensured that the questions helped in collecting the information from respondents.

3.9. Reliability in Measurements

Reliability is the measure of the degree to which the research methods can reproduce consistent results in more than one trial (Mugenda & Mugenda 2008). Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of factor analysis was used to measure the reliability of this study. This was supplied in assessing the questionnaires' questions to check where whether they correlate with each other where 0.05 was considered as an acceptable threshold point (Ryu & Jang, 2008). All the items that were found to be below 0.50 were restructured to be reliable.

3.9.1 Reliability Test

I conducted a reliability test on the three variables to measure the consistency or stability of a research instrument. Cronbach's Alpha was conducted and the results were as follows. The reliability shows a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.789. Typically, a score above 0.7 is considered good and dependable for further analysis.

3.10. Data Collection Techniques

Before data collection, the researcher carried out a pre visit to the selected restaurants to know their locations and requested for permission from manager. He also explained more about the research to the managers and checked on the selected days to carry out the research which would not affect the restaurant normal operations. On the day of research, every fourth customer was given the questionnaire after getting the permission from them and the researcher helped those customers who needed more explanation about the questionnaire. Filled questionnaires were taken after customers left the restaurant.

3.11. Data Analysis

Data analysis is the application of statistical and logical techniques to describe, illustrate and evaluate data (Shamoo & Resnik 2003). Questionnaires were cleaned by eliminating the incomplete and irrelevant from the collected questionnaires. The data was then checked coded

and transformed to allow it to be analyzed by statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to analyze the collected data. Descriptive analysis techniques applied was calculation of percentages while inferential analysis techniques included Pearson correlation test to calculate the effect of change to one variable when the other one changes that is servicescape and customer satisfaction.

Table 3.2: Data Analysis

Hypothesis	Hypothesis test	Statistical model
Ambient conditions	Null hypothesis	Pearson correlation test
Restaurant layout	Null hypothesis	Pearson correlation test
Cleanliness	Null hypothesis	Pearson correlation test

Source: Research Data (2025)

The data collected was presented by use of tables, graphs like bar graphs in pie charts to display the data collected during presentation.

3.12. Logistical and Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained data collection letter from Grets University. He then revisited the restaurants to ask for permission from the restaurant managers to do the research in their establishments and also explained to them the purpose of the research and get consent to collect data from customers. The data collected from customers will be handled with high confidentiality, this was ensured by not asking the respondent to fill their names in the questionnaires

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter the findings and discussions of the present study are presented. The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of servicecape on customers' satisfaction in restaurants in Thika Sub-county, Kenya. To achieve this purpose the information presented was guided by the study objectives.

The first section covered the background information that is demographic information of the respondent like age, gender and rate of dining in restaurants. The second part covered the effects of ambient conditions including lighting, noise level, furniture arrangement and aroma. The third part covered the restaurant layout including layout and arrangements, sitting and furniture and interior design. The fourth part covered the social factors including friendliness of staff, employee attitude in distance between guests. The fifth part covered cleanliness including table where presentation dining area surfaces and staff hygiene. And the last part covered customer satisfaction in relation to servicecape. The collected data was presented by use of percentages for descriptive statistics while inferential statistics was analyzed using SPSS tool.

4.1 Response Rate

From the Sample size of 119, same numbers of questionnaires were sent out to the field where 68 of the customers completed the questionnaires representing a response of 75%. From the responses, Spoonzoom restaurant has a response rate 32.4%, Cascade restaurant had a response rate of 29.4% and Alas & Co restaurant had a response rate of 38.2%.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Name	Sample Size	Response Rate	Percentage Response
Spoonzoom	30	22	32.4%
Cascade	30	20	29.4%
Alas & co	30	26	38.2%
Total	90	68	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.2 Demographical Analysis

4.2.1 Age

Respondents were requested to indicate their ages so as to know how servicecape dimensions influence different groups. The results show that the highest age was 19-25years (39.1%) followed by 26-35 years (35.4%) while the lowest age groups were 36-45 years and above 45 years with 17.9% and 7.6% respectively. It indicated that most respondents were youth and

the middle aged people. This is because the youth are in schools thus having much time to spend restaurants while the middle aged people are the young working population who have energy, time and money to spend dining in restaurants. This facts shows that restaurants manager should focus more youth and middle aged population as there main market segment. The results are displayed below

Tabl 4.2:Age

Age	Percentage
19yrs – 25yrs	39.1 %
26yrs- 35yrs	35.4%
36yrs- 45yrs	17.9%
Above 45%	7.6%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.2.2 Gender of the Respondents

From the survey, the number of male (45.9%) is higher than that of the female respondents (44.3%) with a very slight difference. This information shows that male are likely to dine out more than women on a daily basis. This trend can be due to work schedules or social habits of men that cause them to prefer dining in restaurants but not home like women (Kim and Cho et Al, 2020).

Table 4.3:Gender

Gender	Percentage
Male	50.9%
Female	49.1%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.2.3 Number of Visits to Restaurants

The respondents were also requested to indicate how frequently do they visit restaurants in a monthly basis. From the results, most of the respondents visit restaurants occasionally (1 to 3 times in a month) with 51.6% followed by rarely (once in month) with 32.3% and lastly Frequently (more than 4 time in a month) with 6.1%. This shows that most people do not dine in restaurants which can be related with the fact that the economy is not favorable thus no money for dining in restaurants causing low restaurants customer turnovers. The results were as in table below

Table 4.4 Number of Visits to Restaurants

Number of visits to the restaurant	Percentage
Rarely (once in a month)	32.3
Occasionally (1 to 4 times in a month)	51.6
Frequently (more than 4 times in a month)	6.1
Total	100

Source: Research Data(2025)

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

4.3.1 Ambience Conditions

This was the first objective of the study and the researcher assessed how respondents perceived ambience conditions in restaurants In Thika Sub-county, Kenya in a likert scale ranging from 1(agreed), 2(Neutral), 3(disagree). The results were as represented below.

4.3.2 Lightning

From the data I collected, 52.3% of respondents agreed that lighting affects their satisfaction, 23.8% disagreed, and 23.8% were unsure. The large percentage of respondents who agreed indicates that ambience, specifically lighting, plays a significant role in customer satisfaction. This shows that a well-lit environment likely contributes to a more positive dining experience for customers.

Table 4.5: Lighting

Lighting	Percentage
Disagree	23.8%
Neutral	23.8%
Agree	52.3%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.3.3 Noise Level Disagree

Regarding noise level, from the data I observed, 41.6% of respondents agreed that the noise level in the restaurants contributed to a good dining experience by making them feel comfortable. 22.2% were unsure, and 31.7% disagreed. This suggests that while a significant portion of customers finds the noise level to enhance their dining experience, there is still a notable number of people who are either unsure or feel that it doesn't have a positive impact

Table 4.6: Noise Level

Noise Level	Percentage
Disagree	32.8%
Neutral	25.4%
Agree	41.7%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.3.4. Restaurant Aroma

Regarding restaurant aroma, the majority of respondents (46.0%) agreed that the aroma in the restaurant helped them feel comfortable, while a smaller percentage (20.6%) disagreed, and 33.3% were unsure. This indicates that the aroma in the restaurant plays a significant role in creating a comfortable environment for many customers, although there is still some uncertainty among others.

Table 4.7: Restaurant Aroma

Restaurant Aroma	Percentage
Disagree	20.6 %
Neutral	33.3%
Agree	46.1%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.3.5 Restaurant layout

It formed the second objective the I tested on furniture arrangement sitting arrangement and interior design effects on customer satisfaction there results are in the table.

4.3.6 Furniture Arrangement

When it comes to furniture arrangement, 50.5% of respondents felt that the arrangement positively influenced their dining experience, 28.5% disagreed, and 21.0% were neutral. This

suggests that most customers appreciate the furniture layout as an important part of their overall experience, though a smaller group disagrees, and some are indifferent.

Table 4.8: Furniture Arrangement

Furniture	Percentage
Disagree	28.5 %
Neutral	21.0%
Agree	50.5%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.3.7 Seating Arrangement

The second question on sitting arrangement, 53.0% of respondents agreed that the seating arrangement contributed positively to their dining experience, 28.6% disagreed, and 18.4% were neutral. This shows that the majority of customers find the seating arrangement to be beneficial, while a smaller portion disagrees, and some remain neutral.

Table 4.9: Seating Arrangement

Sitting	Percentage
Disagree	28.6 %
Neutral	18.4%
Agree	53.0%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.3.8 Interior Layout

The finding on the third question regarding interior arrangement shows that 47.6% of respondents agreed that the interior layout positively impacted their dining experience, 28.6% disagreed, and 23.8% were neutral. This suggests that nearly half of the customers find the interior arrangement beneficial, though a significant portion disagrees, and a portion remains neutral.

Table 4.10: Interior layout

Interior	Percentage
Disagree	28.6 %
Neutral	23.8%
Agree	47.6%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.3.9 Cleanliness

It was the last objective of the research. The researcher wanted to know if the restaurant clients were affected by tableware and its presentation dining area surfaces and restaurants staff cleanliness there results are in the table.

4.3.10 Tableware and its Presentation

Analysis of tableware and its presentation shows that 44.4% of respondents agreed that it positively impacted their dining experience, 28.6% disagreed, and 27.0% were neutral. This indicates that a substantial portion of customers recognize the importance of well-presented tableware in enhancing their overall experience. However, the fact that a significant percentage (28.6%) disagrees, coupled with 27.0% who are neutral, suggests that tableware and its presentation may not be as crucial for everyone, and there may be varying expectations among customers.

Table 4.11: Tableware and its Presentation

Tableware	Percentage
Disagree	28.6 %
Neutral	27.0%
Agree	44.4%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.3.11 Dining Area Surfaces

Analysis of dining area surface shows that 42.8% of respondents agreed that the surface of the dining area positively impacted their dining experience, 33.4% disagreed, and 23.8% were neutral. This suggests that while a significant portion of customers value the cleanliness and condition of the dining area surface, there is still a notable group who disagrees, and a portion remains neutral.

Table 4.12: Dining Area Surfaces

Dining surface	Percentage
Disagree	33.4 %
Neutral	23.8%
Agree	42.8%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.3.12 Restaurant Staff

Analysis of restaurant staff shows that 43.0% of respondents agreed that the staff positively impacted their dining experience, 31.7% disagreed, and 22.2% were neutral. This indicates that while a substantial portion of customers recognize the importance of good service from restaurant staff, a significant percentage disagrees, suggesting that staff service might not meet everyone's expectations.

Table 4.13: Restaurant Staff

Restaurant staff	Percentage
Disagree	31.7 %
Neutral	22.2%
Agree	43.0%
Total	100

Source: Research Data (2025)

4.4 Inferential Statistics

This section will focus on hypothesis testing to analyze the data collected differentially the researcher use the correlation analysis.

4.4.1 Ambiance Conditions and Customer Satisfaction

The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.204$) suggests a weak positive relationship between ambiance and customer satisfaction. The p-value (0.116) indicates that this relationship is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. With $N = 61$, the sample size is moderate, but huge samples can bring more power to detect significant effects.

According to Chun (2020), demographics and customer responses can moderate the effect of Ambience on customer satisfaction. The waek correlation in this study can indicate that other factors like food quality and service quality have stronger impact on customer satisfaction in this particular setting than ambience.

Table 18: Ambiance Pearson Correlation

		Correlations	
		ambiance	customer satisfaction
ambiance	Pearson Correlation	1	.204
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.116
	N	61	61
customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.204	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.116	
	N	61	61

4.4.2 Restaurant Layout and Customer Satisfaction

The Pearson correlation coefficient $r = 0.142$ has a weak and positive correlation between restaurant layouts and customers satisfaction suggesting that improved restaurant layout may slightly enhance customers but the effect is not very strong.

The significance level $p = 0.273$ is greater than the threshold value of 0.05 that's the correlation is not statistically significant. This weak correlation suggest that layout alone does not impact

customer satisfaction contradicting with studies of Kime (2008) who found out that layout head is strong satisfaction effect on satisfaction and this difference contradiction may be due to difference size culture and expectation so they customers surveyed.

Table 19: Layout Pearson Correlation

		Correlations	
		restaurant layout	customer satisfaction
restaurant layout	Pearson Correlation	1	.142
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.273
	N	61	61
customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.142	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.273	
	N	61	61

4.4.3 Cleanliness and Customer Satisfaction

The Pearson correlation coefficient $r = 0.137$ shows a weak and positive relationship between customer satisfaction and cleanliness thus an improvement in cleanliness causes a slight growth in customer satisfaction.

The significant level $p = 0.296$ is much higher than the threshold value of 0.05 thus the significance is not statistically significant in the sample Ryu Han (2011) who highlighted the cleanliness was a strong determinant of customer satisfaction contradicts with this study that shows cleanliness might not be there primary concern for customer satisfaction since it may be overshadowed by other factors like service quality.

Table 20: Cleanliness Correlation

		Correlations	
		cleanliness	customer satisfaction
cleanliness	Pearson Correlation	1	.137
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.296
	N	60	60
customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.137	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.296	
	N	60	61

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter will focus on providing the summary of the research findings and results, providing conclusions and future recommendations related to this research.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The researcher summarized the results of findings obtained in this section based on the objectives questions dealt with earlier. The objectives were to investigate the influence of ambient conditions on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county Kenya, to investigate the influence of social factors on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county Kenya, to investigate the influence of restaurant layout on customer satisfaction in Thika sub-county Kenya and to investigate the influence of cleanliness on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub-county Kenya. Servicescape elements in this research included ambience conditions, restaurant layout, Social factors and cleanliness.

5.1.1 Demographic Information

From the study, it was seen that majority of the respondents were 19 to 25 years and 26 to 35 years with 39.5% and 17% respectively showing that they are the ones who mostly visit or dine in restaurants due to accessibility to time, money and energy. In gender, it was discovered that most respondents were male with 45.9% while female had 44.3% showing that men were mostly likely to dine in restaurants more than women due to factors like social habit and work schedules. On the frequency of restaurant visits, it was seen that most of the population dines in restaurants occasionally that is less than 3 times in month which might be due to reasons like unfavorable economic conditions that has caused scarcity of money thus unaffordable to dine in restaurants frequently.

5.1.2 Ambience Conditions and Customer Satisfaction

This objective aimed at investigating on the impact of ambience conditions on customer 5. The ambience conditions mostly focused on during data collection were lighting, noise level and restaurant aroma. From the data 52.3% of the respondents agreed that lighting influenced their satisfaction, 41.6% of the respondents agreed that the noise level contributed to a good dining experience and 46% agreed that the restaurant's aroma enhanced their comfort.

The correlation analysis where the Pearson correlation coefficient was 0.204 while significance level p was 0.116 indicated a weak positive but statistically insignificant relationship between ambience conditions and customer satisfaction. This might mean that customer satisfaction is affected by many other factors like food and service quality. Therefore, the null hypothesis that ambient conditions have no significant influence on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub county, Kenya was accepted.

5.1.3 Social Factors and Customer Satisfaction

The objective was to investigate on the impact of social factors on customer satisfaction. The tested elements of social factors included friendliness of the staff, employee attitude and distance between guests while dining. The descriptive statistics showed that 49.2% of the respondents agreed that friendly staff enhanced satisfaction, 43.5% agreed that employee attitude significantly affected their satisfaction and 44.5% felt that proximity to other guests impacted their comfort.

The Correlation analysis where the Pearson correlation coefficient, r was 0.479 while the significance level was 0.479 showed a weak and statistically insignificant relationship between social factors and customer satisfaction. The results contradicted with previous researches maybe due to different industrial settings and how the social factors were measured. Therefore, the null hypothesis that social factors have no significant influence on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub county, Kenya was accepted.

5.1.4 Restaurant Layout and Customer Satisfaction

This objective aimed at investigating the impacts of restaurant layout on customer satisfaction in restaurants. The elements tested under restaurant layout were furniture arrangement, seating arrangement and interior layout. The customers perceptions from the descriptive statistics from the results showed that 50.8% agreed that furniture arrangement influenced their dining experience, 50.8% agreed that seating arrangement affected their comfort while 47.5% agreed that interior layout had an impact on their satisfaction while dining in restaurants.

The Pearson correlation coefficient R was 0.142 while the significance level p was 0.273 indicating a weak and statistically insignificant relationship between restaurant layout and customer satisfaction which might also suggest that customer satisfaction is affected by many other factors apart from restaurant layout. Therefore the null hypothesis that restaurant layout

has no significant influence on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub county ,Kenya was accepted.

5.1.5 Cleanliness and Customer Satisfaction

It formed the last objective aimed at investigating the impacts of restaurant layout on customer satisfaction in restaurant and the main elements researched on included tableware cleanliness and presentation, dining area surfaces and staff hygiene. From the collected data it was seen that 44.4% of the respondents agreed that cleanliness affected their satisfaction, 42.8% agreed that clean dining areas enhanced their experience to create positive perceptions while 43% agreed that clean and well-groomed staff improved their satisfaction.

The Pearson correlation coefficient r was 0.137 while the significance level p was 0.296 which indicated a weak and statistically insignificant relationship between cleanliness and customer satisfaction. Therefore the null hypothesis that cleanliness has no significant influence on customer satisfaction in Thika sub county Kenya was accepted.

5.2 Conclusions

The study found that ambience conditions, social factors, restaurant layout, and cleanliness had a weak positive but statistically insignificant relationship with customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika Sub-county.

Lighting and restaurant aroma were the most influential ambience factors among the respondents while staff friendliness and seating arrangements were the most notable social and layout factors respectively.

The results showed that there are other most effective factors such as food quality and service efficiency, may have a stronger influence on customer satisfaction than servicecape elements because of the weak relationship between servicecape elements and customer satisfaction.

The study's results fail to align with previous studies that found a strong relationship between servicecape and customer satisfaction, and this might be due differences in economic conditions, cultural differences, or varying customer expectations in the study area.

5.3 Recommendations for Policy or Practice

From the findings of this research, the following recommendations should be put in place by the hoteliers and the government in the hospitality industry.

5.3.1 Restaurant Owners and Managers

They should focus on enhancing lighting and restaurant aroma to improve the overall dining experience of the customers which can lead to customer loyalty thus more revenue.

They should invest in staff training programs in their establishments to improve staff friendliness and development of the right attitude towards guests.

They should ensure that furniture and seating arrangements are well spaced and placed to maximize customer comfort that will increase customer satisfaction.

They should also implement strict cleanliness and hygiene standards to their staff to ensure a pleasant dining environment.

5.3.2 Government and Regulatory Bodies

They should develop clear guidelines on restaurant servicescape standards to enhance customer experiences. They should focus on providing training and awareness programs for restaurant operators on the importance of servicescape elements to ensure that such elements are not ignored.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

Future studies should explore the impact of food quality and service efficiency on customer satisfaction, as these factors may be more significant than servicescape impacts on customer satisfaction. Conduct research on different or specific restaurant types like fast food, fine dining or casual restaurants to determine if servicescape impacts customers differently in each restaurants.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of introduction

Caxton Matendechehere,
P.o Box 3-01000,
Thika, Kenya,

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST FOR DATA COLLECTION

My name is Caxton Matendechehere a student at Grets University pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Hospitality Management. As part of my academic requirements, I am conducting a research study titled "Influence of servicescape on customer satisfaction in restaurants in Thika sub county, Kenya."

The study aims to assess how servicescape elements like ambient conditions, restaurant layout and cleanliness have an impact on how customers can be satisfied in restaurants in Thika sub county. The research will majorly focus on areas like background characteristics of a restaurant, lighting, noise level, scent, furniture arrangement, sitting arrangement, interior arrangement, dining area surfaces and restaurant staff.

I kindly seek your permission to conduct this research within your esteemed restaurant. The study will only collect data from customers by use of questionnaires. I assure you that all responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes.

Your support and cooperation will be highly appreciated. Please let me know a convenient time to discuss further details or clarify any concerns you may have.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your positive response.

Faithfully,

Caxton Matendechehere
Grets University

Appendix II: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE INFLUENCE OF SERVICESCAPE ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN A RESTAURANT IN THIKA SUB COUNTY KENYA

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. AGE
 - 19-25yrs
 - 26-35yrs
 - 36-45yrs
 - Above 45yrs
2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Prefer not to say
3. How often do you dine at restaurants.
 - Rarely (less than once in a month)
 - Occasionally (1 to 3 times a month)
 - Frequently (4+ times in a month)

SECTION B: RATING SCALE

Ambiance condition	Strong Disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	Agree strongly
The restaurant lighting creates a positive dining environment					
The noise level is comfortable for all guests					
The lighting creates a conducive environment					

SECTION C: RESTAURANT LAYOUT

	Strong Disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	Agree strongly
The restaurant layout allows easy movement.					
The furniture arrangement is comfortable and well spread					
The interior design is visually appealing.					

SECTION D: CLEANLINESS

	Strong Disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	Agree strongly
The tableware are well presented and clean.					
The dining area surfaces are clean.					
The staff are clean and groomed					

SECTION E: SOCIAL FACTORS

	Strong Disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	Agree strongly
Staffs are friendly and welcoming to all guests.					
Employees have a positive attitude.					

SECTION F: OVERALL SATISFACTION

	Strong Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Agree strongly
You are likely to visit the restaurant again.					
You are satisfied with the general experience in the restaurant.					