

Dining Experience and Customers' Satisfaction in Fast Food Industry

By

Bello Yekinni Ojo

University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

&

Braimah-Jafaru Omoh

Federal Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State, Nigeria

Abstract

The study explores the relationship between dimensions of dining experience and customer's satisfaction in respect to fast food establishment in Benin. Survey method was employed for the collection of data, while multiple regression was used for data analysis. The results reveal a positive and significant relationship between the four dimensions of dining experience and customer's satisfaction in respect to fast food establishment in Benin. Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that the management of fast food establishment in Benin should focus on the provisions of flavoured food, emphasizes on quality food presentation, ensures food variety that is tasty, fresh, and in acceptable temperature among others to impact on the dining satisfaction of their customers. Also, the management should ensure that physical appearances of their restaurant are attractive, including the appearances of their staff. Again, the management should ensure that they deliver on the promised services to customers dependably and accurately. Staff should ensure that they provide prompt service and willing to help customers with sense of caring, individualized attention. Furthermore, fast food business service providers need to remain conscious of the positive implications of convenience for customer value and loyalty. This study contributes to the body of knowledge as it proposed and validates "Dining Experience and Customer's Satisfaction (DINEX- COSAT)" model capable of explaining predictors of dining experience in respect to customer's satisfaction in fast food establishment in Benin City.

Keywords: Dining Experience, Customer's Satisfaction, Fast-Food; DINEX-COSAT Model

INTRODUCTION

The hectic lifestyles in the modern world result in increasing number of peoples' choice of fast food as their regular dining option. This is due to the relative inexpensive costs, quick, and convenient services offered in the fast-food outlets. Thus, fast food industries have become "home away from home" for breakfast, lunch, and dinner (Kim, Raab, and Bergman, 2010). Fast food industry in this context is defined as industry where foods are quickly and easily prepared for sales to customers for consumption on the premises or to be taken out (Habib, Dardak, and Zakaria, 2011). Data Monitor (2005) defined fast food

industry as establishments that offers food and drinks for immediate consumption either on the premises or for consumption elsewhere. The concept of fast food industry therefore is to provide customers with portable and instant meals, without spending much waiting time (Ali, Aw, and Chuah, 2012). The fast food industry's significant growth and contribution to the global economy has been the topic of much research among hospitality professionals (Bareham, 2004; Buchtal, 2006). In the United States, for instance, the National Restaurant Association (NRA), (2011) estimated that the industry employed 12.8 million workers in 2011, making it one of the largest private sector employers in the country. Further, the industry boasts of annual sales of US\$604 billion dollars, representing 4% of the nation's gross domestic product (NRA, 2011). In 2014, Canadian fast food industry accounted for 1.1 million employees in more than 88,000 locations across the country with an estimated value of \$71 billion in sales, representing about 4% of the country's overall economic activity (Restaurants Canada, 2014). The Canada's fast food industry provides one in every five youth jobs in the country — with 22% of Canadians starting their career in a fast food business (Restaurants Canada, 2014). In the context of Nigeria, the fast food industry is a key contributor to the Nigerian economy, with an estimated annual revenue of N230 billion and taxes in excess of a billion naira (Bukola, 2017). The author further opined that the industry collectively provided employment for over 500,000 people at the processing and retailing level in Nigeria in 2017. This implies that the fast food industry has become a mature industry in Nigeria.

Despite the promising business outlook of the fast food industry in Nigeria, a keen observation of the industry in Benin City indicate a negative signal! Only few among the fast food establishments in the City surpasses the first two years of their establishment. The few that exists are characterized with high customer complaint, low customers patronage and rate of return, and in worse cases outright bankruptcy. These problems are considered to be of serious concern in view of the policy of the government of Edo State to explore the food service industry as one of her economy mainstay. Hence, the government plans to generate N24 billion yearly from the food service industry (Aliu, 2015). This implies that the more likely the revenue to be added to the coffers of the government of Edo State in the form of internally generated revenue if the patronage of fast food products and services in the state is sustained. It had been reported that many factors can help sustain the demand for fast food products and services, however, major among them is the knowledge of attributes of dining experience that constitutes customers satisfaction (Chris, Hazrina, and Asad, 2011; Pingali, 2006). However, various studies had being conducted in this domain of study and their finding shows that factors such as food quality (Pingali, 2006), the restaurants physical environment (Davis, 2011; Sulek and Hensley, 2004; Morland, Wing, Diez and Poole, 2002), and service quality (Habib et al., 2011; Ryu, and Han, 2010) were significantly related to the customer's satisfaction. Furthermore, Ryu, Lee and Kim (2012) and Kivela, Inbakaran, and Reece (2000) found that convenience is also a significant factor that determines customer's satisfaction. Even though these literatures supports food quality, physical environment, service quality, and convenience as predictors of dining experience that cumulate to customer satisfaction, it was observed that these studies were not examined in the context of fast food businesses in Edo State. This is a major gap that calls for the present study.

It is therefore important for the fast food business operators in Edo State to identify factors that form positive dining experience among the fast food business customers, and as well influences their satisfaction. This is the focus of the present study; to examine the relationship between dining experiences, and customer's satisfaction in the context of fast food businesses in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Dining Experience

There is no stereotyped definition for the term dining experience. However, it is believed that the concept might have originated from the term "customer experience". Customer experience in this context is defined as a set of interactions between a customer and a product, a company, or parts of its organization, which provoke a reaction (Verhoel et al., 2009). Since the term dining experience is synonymous to the food service establishments, it can therefore be explained using the service / product quality attributes of the food service industry which encourages the patronage of the customers. This implies that fast food establishments use services and goods (i.e. food quality, service quality, physical environment and the convenience of their facility), to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable experience. The index in this explanation shows that dining experience implies the totality of personal feelings which occurs when a customer interact with different product mix of food service organisations. Negi (2009) pointed that delivering quality dining experience is one of the most difficult deliverables facing the contemporary fast food business. Anthony (2005) optioned that selling dining services is the easy part; delivering on that promise offers a tremendous challenge. It is a well-known fact that quality dining experience delivery is beset with a lot of challenges in the fast food industry in Africa and Nigeria in particular (Solomon, 2009). In view of the above literatures the concept of dining experience could be discussed under the following dimensions:

Food Quality

Food quality is an important element in dining facility but there is no consensus on the attributes that constitute food quality. Food quality is the quality characteristics of food that is acceptable to customers (Zopiatis and Pribic, 2007). It can simply be defined as when food is appropriate for consumption with emphasis on quality factors such as food temperature, food freshness, palatability, and been delicious (Liu and Jang, 2009). According to Grunert (2005), the food quality attributes depend on the food type and the individual's food preference itself because the attributes that constitute quality may change over time as well in the customers mind. Shaharudin, Hassan, Mansor, Elias, Harun, and Aziz (2010) therefore define quality food as a diverse meaning which depends specifically on the person or even by the same person but in different conditions and situation. The international standardization organization (ISO) defines quality food as "the totality of features and characteristics of a food that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs (Rijswijk and Frewer, 2008).

Service Quality

Many dining establishment attempt to maintain their survival in the competitive environment, hence strives to offer a high quality of service to their customers

(Dabholkar, Shepherd, and Thorpe, 2000). It is vital for the dining facility to offer a higher level of service quality to their customers in order for them to position themselves in the competitive market place. Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) mentioned that, 'Service quality is a focused evaluation that reflects the customer's perception of specific dimensions of service namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibles. Parasuraman, et al., (1988) had identified service quality measurement tool which is called "SERVQUAL". This model has become a widely accepted instrument for the service operators to diagnose and also improve the service quality in order to achieve high level of customer's satisfaction. This instrument consists of five service quality dimensions which included tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Customers evaluate the service quality based on these five distinct dimensions: tangibility refers to appearance of physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel; reliability indicates ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately; responsiveness represents the ability to provide prompt service and willingness to help customers; assurance is defined as an employee's knowledge and courtesy and their talent to provide trust and confidence to the customers; empathy means caring, individualized attention the firm provides to its customers. According to Andaleeb and Conway (2006), among the SERVQUAL dimensions, the measure of reliability and responsiveness service are more desirable in restaurant context when providing pleasing dining environment to customers. The tangibility refers to the restaurant's physical attributes, which customers experience first when they step in the restaurant (Ramseook-Munhurrun, 2012). However, the service provided by the restaurant is intangible, heterogeneous, and inseparability in terms of production and consumption of the product (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006).

Physical Environment

With years of dining experience, customer's expectation of quality levels towards dining facility has increased (Raajpoot, 2002). Besides, Ryu and Han (2010) opines that customer increasingly put a premium on saving time as well as better eating environment if compared to earlier days. These factors motivate restaurateur to put effort in design and provide a more comfort environment for customers. Many studies indicated that making the atmosphere more pleasant and innovative is essential for a firm's success (Reimer and Kuehn, 2005; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996). This implies that the atmosphere of a restaurant can be as much important as the food itself. Furthermore, a study by Kokko (2005) suggests that atmosphere in a dining facility is often perceived by customers as the single most positive characteristic of the establishment, and even more important than food served. This is because the surrounding creates an expectation of dining experience even before customers are served (Young, Clark, and McIntyre, 2007). This study further stated that physical environment of a dining facility reinforces more intangible aspects such as food quality and services. Although the primary function of any dining facility is to provide food, however customers want to enhance their quality of life and enjoy comfortable dining space, thus improvement of food quality alone is not enough to satisfy their customers (Horng, Chou, Liu, and Tsai, 2013). The index in these information shows that pleasing environment has a potential to stimulate customers buying habit and produce more profit.

Convenience

Berry et al. (2002) has defined service convenience as the “awareness of time and energy expenditure for customers to purchase or accept service”. The authors divided convenience into time effectiveness, easy access, easy to carry, applicability, portability and avoidance of displeasure. Chang (2007) used economic effectiveness theory as the basis and thinks that convenience shall be the concept that has multi-dimensions, including time convenience, location convenience, access convenience, application convenience and implementation convenience. Berry et al. (2002) divided service convenience into decision making convenience, access convenience, transaction convenience, benefit convenience and follow-up benefit convenience. Since customers satisfaction results when a customer’s perception of a given service encounter lives up to his expectations for that encounter (Oliver, 1980), these five dimensions of service convenience reflect the activities that customers engage in during the acquisition and consumption of services (Berry et al., 2002) and that tend to dominate customer satisfaction with a business. The more customers experience necessary and relevant service convenient events, the stronger their satisfaction with the business. Chang (2007) argues that service inconvenience will lead to a customer switching behaviour. Therefore, service providers need to remain conscious of the positive implications of convenience for customer value and loyalty (Berry et al., 2002). If customers experience a high degree of service convenience, they will feel satisfied with the service provider.

Customer’s Satisfaction

Customer’s satisfaction can be defined in the context of meeting the expectations of the customer’s in terms of parameters associated with satisfaction. Oliver (1980) defined customer satisfaction as "the customer’s fulfillment response. It is a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides a pleasurable level of consumption related fulfillment" Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, and Bryant, (1996) in their CSI model defined customer satisfaction as a function of customer expectations, perceived quality, and perceived value. Albinsson (2004), opined that satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfillment of some need, goal or desire”. According to Oliver (1980), “Satisfaction is the customer fulfillment response. It is a finding that a product or service malfunction, or the product or service itself, provides a pleasing level of utilization related fulfillment” It is normally observed that marketing practitioners anticipate customer satisfaction, by using slogans like “Our focus is customer satisfaction” or “Customer is the king”. Customer satisfaction simply means the customer fulfillment response; it means judgment of dining experience or product. Customer satisfaction can be defined as an individual’s pleasure feeling or disappointment that can be resulted by comparing a product’s perceived performance in relation to his or her expectations (Oliver, 1980). The author further opined that the expectancy disconfirmation model which explained that customer satisfaction was determined by comparisons between customer s’ expectations and perceived performance. Based on this theory, customer satisfaction is the measurement of the outcome’s gap between customer expectation and perceived performance. If the perceived performance exceeds the expectation, the expectation is positively disconfirmed and the customer is satisfied where the provided performance was better than expected. In contrast to positive disconfirmation, if the perceived

performance fall below expectations, the comparison results in negative disconfirmation and the customer is dissatisfied with the performance.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING: DINESERV Model

This model visualizes the theoretical framework that investigates the relative importance of institutional DINESERV factors to include food quality, atmosphere, service quality, and convenience that affect satisfaction of patrons of the university dining facilities in United State. The research findings showed that all Institutional DINESERV dimensions show a significant positive relationship towards student satisfaction and dining experience. This research model can be helpful to provide operational insight to the food service managers and thus enhance the operational efficiency of the restaurants. In addition, this model can help the restaurant operators to determine the importance of the factors in DINESERV dimensions in order to allow them to focus on those factors that will contribute to customer satisfaction. Ultimately, this will improve the dining unit image and reputation as well as generate greater profit to the restaurants. As it applied to the present study, the theory posits that customer's satisfaction will be guaranteed in fast food establishment in emerging countries and more so in Benin City, Nigeria if dining experience measures such as food quality, atmosphere, service quality, and convenience are integrated into the offerings of the fast food establishment. In view of the applicability of the DINESERV to the present study, the researchers adopted the four dimensions of dining experience (i.e. food quality, atmosphere, service quality, and convenience) as the dining experience characteristics of the fast food establishment that could lead to customer's satisfaction in the present study.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIMENSIONS OF DINING EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMERS SATISFACTION

Food Quality and Customer's Satisfaction

Food quality appeared to be the most important forecaster of customer's satisfaction by comparing to physical setting and service quality in restaurants (Sulek and Hensley, 2004). Food quality is an absolute requirement to satisfy the needs and expectations of customers. Knowing the importance of food quality in the dining facility, previous studies have examined various food quality attributes and emphasizes on presentation, food variety, healthy options, taste, freshness, flavour, and temperature (Kivela, Inbakaran, and Reece, 2000). According to Delwiche (2004), the flavour of food has provided with other sensory properties such as taste, smell and sight determines food quality. Taste is regarded as a key attribute in food in the dining experience (Kivela et al., 2000). Many customers have become food savvy, so the taste of food in food facility has become increasingly important. Also, the dining facility should offer a wide variety of menus to customers in food service because customers are generally individuals from different cultural, ethnic, and economic background, and mostly having their exact food preferences. Menu variety is needed in order to serve varying dining preferences of the miscellaneous customers. According to Jang and Namkung (2009), presentation refers to technique of plating food, decorated attractively to get an eye catching of customer in order to fulfill the customers' perception of quality. Kivela et al., (2000) highlighted that the presentation of food is one of the factors of food feature in modeling dining satisfaction. In view of these literatures, food quality is therefore one of the important cores attributes that influence restaurant customer's satisfaction, thus hypothesis that:

H₁: There is no significant relationship between Food Quality and Customer's Satisfaction.

Service Quality and Customer's Satisfaction

Service quality and customers' satisfaction are important concepts within services marketing theory (Spreng and Mackoy, 1996). There are several studies that show that service quality is significantly contributing to customers' satisfaction in restaurant context (Huam et al., 2011). According to Ha and Jang (2010), service quality was found to have significant relationship with customers' satisfaction. Their finding indicates that service quality provided by staff is fundamental and crucial to the customers' satisfaction in the restaurants. In a study by Cronin and Taylor (1992), the study examined the relationships between service quality, customers' satisfaction, and purchase intention. Their findings proved that perceived service quality can greatly affect customers' satisfaction. Many restaurants emphasize on service quality because it influences customers' satisfaction (Chow, Lau, Lo, Sha, and Yun, 2007). In addition, service quality had the most significant impact on dining satisfaction at the aggregate market level. Based on Qin and Prybutok (2009) findings, service quality is one of the antecedents of customers' satisfaction in fast food restaurant. Their study indicates that five dimensions which include tangibles, reliability/responsiveness, recovery, assurance, and empathy show a significant result towards customers' satisfaction. Service quality is a cognitive evaluation; therefore a positive service quality perception can lead to customers' satisfaction. The customers' perceptions are greatly influenced by the performance of the service provider because student will evaluate the service quality when the service is delivered to them (Brady et al., 2001). In addition, their study also mentioned that service dimensions such as reliable and responsiveness service are the intangible cues that influence customers' satisfaction. In view of these literatures, service quality is therefore one of the important cores attributes that influence restaurant customer's satisfaction, thus we hypothesis that:

H₂: There is a significant relationship between Service Quality and Customer's Satisfaction.

Physical Environment and Customer's Satisfaction

Physical environment can create image and influence customer's level of satisfaction especially in dining facilities (Ryu and Han, 2010). Although food and service quality are important, pleasing physical environment also determine to a high degree the overall customer's satisfaction in dining facility (Ryu and Han, 2010). Many empirical studies have shown how environment influences customer's satisfaction (Mattila, 2001; Hui et al., 1997; Knutson and Patton, 1995). Additionally, Brady and Cronin (2001) stated that environment can have a significant impact on the perception of overall quality, which turn to affect customer's satisfaction towards a particular restaurant. Another studies by Han, Back, and Barrett (2009) found that environment of a particular restaurant influences customer's satisfaction and loyalty. A pleasing atmosphere contributes a higher level of overall customer's satisfaction (Lim, 2010). Besides, there are also other research that suggest direct link between environment and customer's satisfaction in fast food restaurant (Chang, 2007; Chebat and Michon, 2003). Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) study shows that facility aesthetics, seating comfort and cleanliness of a restaurant

significantly affect customer's satisfaction. In addition, Chang (2007) also mentioned environment of a fast food restaurant is a direct indicator of customer's satisfaction. Furthermore, many studies found that cleanliness is a significant factor in customer's evaluation of restaurant ambience that affect the customer's satisfaction (Barber and Scarcelli, 2009; Liu and Jang, 2009). In view of these literatures, physical environment is therefore one of the important cores attributes that influence restaurant customer's satisfaction, thus we hypothesis that:

H₃: There is a significant relationship between Physical Environment and Customer's Satisfaction.

Convenience and Customer's Satisfaction

The most important thing for a restaurant to keep its customers is to establish more convenience during the service process (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). If customers think the restaurant service is convenient, then their will to repurchase will be higher. Therefore, if the industry can provide various conveniences to customers, then it will increase the customers' purchase will; customers will also have inertia application due to the limitation of convenience factors. In the application of early marketing, convenience refers to the time and energy of customers purchasing product, but not the characteristic or attribute of the product. However, customers in the information era are mostly time poor, and convenience has already been redefined to "when" the customer can obtain the service but not "where". Therefore, Berry et al. (2002) has defined service convenience as the "awareness of time and energy expenditure for customers to purchase or accept service". The authors divided convenience into time effectiveness, easy access, easy to carry, applicability, portability and avoidance of displeasure. Berry et al. (2002) used economic effectiveness theory as the basis and thinks that convenience shall be the concept that has multi-dimensions, including time convenience, location convenience, access convenience, application convenience and implementation convenience. Berry et al. (2002) divided service convenience into decision making convenience, access convenience, transaction convenience, benefit convenience and follow-up benefit convenience. In view of this, the current study hypothesised that;

H₄: There is a significant relationship between Convenience and Customer's Satisfaction.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Dining Experience and Customer's Satisfaction (DINEX- COSAT) Model for hotel industry in Benin City is proposed for this study as shown in Figure 1. The DINEX-COSAT model shows four dimensions of dining experience as independent variables and customer's satisfaction as the dependent variable. The independent variables include; food quality, atmosphere, service quality, and convenience. The model is expected to explain the relationship between these four dimensions of Dining Experience and the dependent variable (i.e. Customer's Satisfaction) in the context of hotels in Benin City, Edo State.

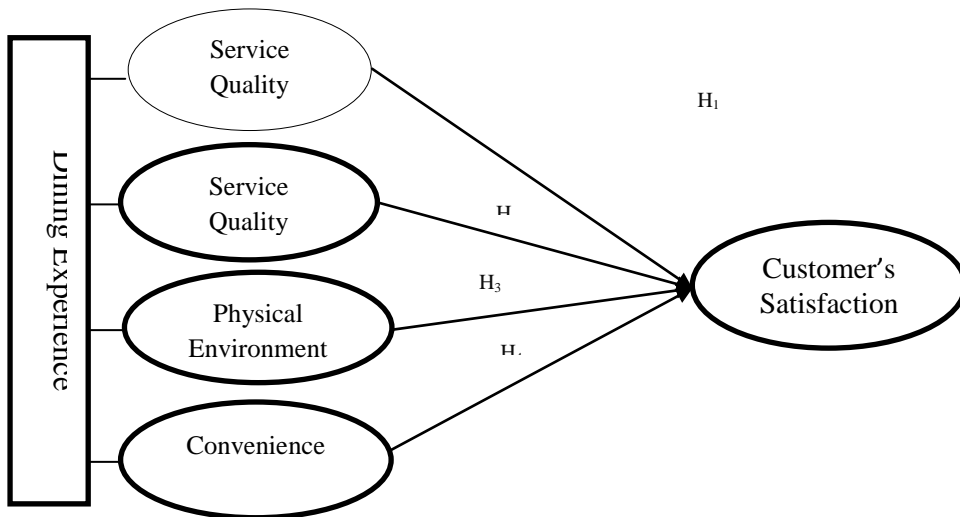
Independent Variables **Dependent Variable**H₄

Figure 1: Dining Experience and Customer's Satisfaction (DINEX- COSAT) Model for Fast Food Establishment in Benin City.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a survey research design, hence, the researchers used structured questionnaire to measure the relationship between dimensions of dining experience and customers' satisfaction in respect to four MrBigg's outlets, Kaydees and Sizzlers fast food establishments in Benin. The questionnaire used for this study were developed based on suggestions in Jang and Namkung (2009); Peneau, Hoehn, Roth, Escher and Nuessli (2006) for "Food quality"; Ryu, Lee and Kim (2012); Lim (2010); and Ramseook-Munhurrun (2012) for "Service quality". Ryu, Lee and Kim (2012); Katimah, Huey, Sambasivan and Salleh (2011); and Sienny, and Serli (2010) for "Physical environment". Others include Ryu, Lee and Kim (2012); Lim (2010) for "Convenience", and "Customers satisfaction". The research population comprised of customers that patronise MrBigg's restaurant in Akpakpava, Sapele Road, and Ugbowo all in Benin City. These three MrBigg's locations are the only functional MrBigg's restaurants in Benin City as at the time of this study. Furthermore, the research population also comprised of customers that patronise Kaydees fast food establishments, and Sizzler fast food in Siluko road and New Benin, Benin City. To determine the exact sample size for the present study, the suggestion in Freneund and William (2009) for determining infinite population were upheld. The authors proposed the formula to determining the sample size (n) as follows:

$$n = \frac{(Z_{\alpha/2})^2 PQ}{e^2}$$

Where

P = Probability for positive response.

Q = Probability for negative response.

e = Tolerable error (0.05).

$Z_{\alpha/2}$ = 1.96 from the critical table Z of 0.05 under infinity ∞ .

α = 0.05, the significant level

n = Sample size

Applying this formula to the present study, the sample size n is put at 323. Since five restaurants in Benin City are being examined in this study, including the fact that the populations of each of these restaurants are not known, the researcher therefore divided 323 by 5 locations of the sampled restaurants, hence, 64 customers in each of the five restaurants were sampled. Since is practically impossible to access the nominal register of all the customers that patronised the five restaurants been examined, the researchers therefore opted for non-probability sampling with convenience sampling technique. The researchers personally visited each of the 5 targeted restaurants in Benin City and, thus, administered the structured questionnaires until the sample size of 323 is met. Multiple regressions analysis that allows for the exploration of the relationship among a set of variables (Pallant, 2010) were adopted for the analysis of data collected. Before proceeding with the analysis of objectives in the present study, the researchers carefully screen the data in terms of missing values, influential outliers, normality, and multicollinearity using statistical package for social science (SPSS) software version 23.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The reliability of each dimensions of dining experience, and customers' satisfaction in selected fast food outlets in Benin City, was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The composite reliability score for each of the variables are; Food quality, ($\alpha=.887$), Physical environment, ($\alpha=.696$), Conveniences, ($\alpha=.698$), Service quality, ($\alpha=.704$), and Customers' Satisfaction, ($\alpha=.685$). This justifies that all the items for the four measures of dining experience and customer satisfaction in respect to the selected Fast Food establishment in Benin City, Edo State are internally consistent. The overall computed reliability value for the constructs is 0.706. This suggests that there is 70.6% level of reliability hence; the underlying constructs are consistent (Coakes et al., 2009).

PERCENTAGE ITEM ANALYSIS OF THE INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Table 1-4 shows the mean score of the items that was used to gather information from respondents concerning the measures of independent and dependent variables in respect to the selected fast food outlets in Benin City, Edo State.

Percentage Item Analysis of measures of Dining Experience in Respect to Fast Food Outlets in Benin City

Table 1: Shows the items that were used to gather information from respondents concerning the measures of dining experience in respect to selected fast food outlets in Benin City, Edo State.

Table 1: Percentage Item Analysis of Food Quality

Food Quality	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifference	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
The smell of the food stimulates my appetite	0.9	7.2	25.2	45	21.6
The crispness of the food attracted me toward the dining facility	7.2	15.3	24.3	31.5	21.6
The foods are served in a fresh and timely manner	9	7.2	12.6	37.8	33.3
Fresh ingredients are used in preparing the foods	4.5	2.7	5.4	34.2	53.2
The food presentation is visually attractive	3.6	4.5	12.6	56.8	22.5
Various colours of food attracted my attention	3.6	5.4	5.4	55	30.6
Varieties of food components within a set of meal was well maintained	4.5	11.7	12.6	52.3	18.9
Food presentation is relatively organized	4.5	7.2	11.7	58.6	18

Total Mean is 3.38. Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree= 2, I do not know=3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree = 5.

Source: Field Survey (2018).

The result in Table 1 shows that item with the statement “Food presentation is relatively organized” has the highest percentage of 58.6%, followed by the statement “The food presentation is visually attractive” with 56.8%, followed by the statement “Verities of colours of food attracted my attention” with 55.0%, followed by the statement “Fresh ingredients are used in preparing the foods” with 53.2%. “Varieties of food components within a set of meal was well maintained” has 52.3% and item with the statement “The smell of the food that stimulates my appetite” has 45.0%. Other items with statement “The foods are served in a fresh and timely manner” has 37.8% followed by the

statement” The crispness of the food attracted me toward the dining facility” has 31.5%. All of the response to each of the statements falls under the Likert scale (Agree), except for the statement “Fresh ingredients are used in preparing the foods” with 53.2%, that fall under the Likert scale (Strongly agree). The results show that majority of the customers believe that the food offered by the fast food service operators in Benin City are well presented, visually attractive, has verities of colour, and stimulates appetite.

Table 2: PercentageItem Analysis of Service Quality

Service Quality	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifference	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
The dining facility shows sincere interest in correcting anything that is wrong	2.7	7.2	11.7	58.6	19.8
The dining facility serves me in the time promised	0.9	5.4	18.9	47.7	27.0
The dining facility serves food exactly as what I ordered	1.8	12.6	18.9	41.4	24.3
During busy time, employees shift to help each other to maintain speed and quality of service	0.9	4.5	16.2	44.1	34.2
The dining facility provides prompt and quick service	2.7	7.2	11.7	58.6	19.8
Employees are willing to help	3.6	5.4	5.4	55	30.6

Total Mean is 3.38. Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree= 2, I do not know=3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree = 5.

Source: Field Survey (2018).

Table 2 depicted the respondents’ feeling about service quality offered in the studied fast food establishments. The result shows that item with statement “The dining facility provides prompt and quick service” and “The dining facility shows sincere interest in correcting anything that is wrong” have the highest percentage of 58.6% respectively, followed by the statement “Employees are willing to help” with 55.0%. Item with the statement “The dining facility serves me in the time promised” has 47.7%, and item with the statement “During busy time, employees shift to help each other to maintain speed and quality of service” has 41.1%. All of the response to each of the statements falls under the Likert scale (Agree). The results show that majority of the customers believe that service quality offered by food service operators in Benin City are measured in terms of promptness and quick nature of the service, sincere interest by staff to do the right thing during service, willingness of staff to help customers, and the culture of keeping to organizational promises among others.

Table 3: PercentageItem Analysis of Physical Environment

Physical Environment	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
The dining area is thoroughly clean and attractive.	1.8	11.7	19.8	49.5	16.2
The external appearance of the dining facilities is attractive.	0.9	4.5	16.2	61.3	17.1
The interior design and decorations of the dining facility are visually appealing.	1.8	5.4	21.6	53.2	18.0
The serenity of the environment is pleasingly and inviting.	1.8	7.2	25.2	43.2	22.5
Pleasant smell in the dining facility.	1.8	11.7	19.8	49.5	16.2
The temperature in this dining facility is comfortable.	3.6	5.4	5.4	55	30.6

Total Mean is 3.38. Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree= 2, I do not know=3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree = 5.

Source: Field Survey (2018).

Table 3 depicted the respondent feeling about individual factor of the physical environment of dining facilities in selected fast food in Benin City. The result shows that item with the statement “The external appearance of the dining facilities is attractive” have 61.3% followed by the statement “The temperature in this dining facility is comfortable” with 55%. Item with the statement “The interior design and decorations of the dining facility are visually appealing” has 53.2% while item with the statement “The dining area is thoroughly clean” and “Pleasant smell in the dining facility” has equal percentage value of 49.5%. Item with the statement “The serenity of the environment is pleasingly and inviting” has the least with percentage value of 43.2%. All of the response to each of the statements falls under the Likert scale (Agree). The results show that majority of the respondents believe that physical environment in the context to food service establishment in Benin City are measured with the attractiveness of external appearance of the dining facilities, degree of comfort of the facility, visually appealing interior design and decorations, clean and pleasant smell of the dining facility, and theserenity of the environment of the food service facility.

Table 4: PercentageItem Analysis of Convenience

Convenience	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifference	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Various conveniences facilities are located close to the dining areas.	4.5	4.5	9.9	47.7	33.3
Food purchasing arrangement is convenient.	4.5	5.4	8.1	48.6	33.3

The tables and chair used is comfortable	2.7	7.2	11.7	58.6	19.8
Sitting arrangement is comfortable	0.9	5.4	18.9	47.7	27.0
The seating arrangements in the restaurant are comfortable and convenient.	1.8	12.6	18.9	41.4	24.3
Proximity of home and or offices to the dining facilities enhances convenience.	0.9	4.5	16.2	44.1	34.2

Total Mean is 3.38. Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree= 2, I do not know= 3, Agree =4, Strongly Agree = 5.

Source: Field Survey (2018).

Table 4 depicted the respondent's feeling about the convenience factor of selected fast food dining facilities to customers. The result shows that item with statement "The tables and chair used is comfortable" has the highest percentage of 58.6%, followed by the statement "Food purchasing arrangement is convenient" with 48.6%, and item with the statement "Various conveniences facilities are located close to the dining areas" and "Sitting arrangement is comfortable" have equal percentages of 47.7%. Item with the statement "Proximity of home and or offices to the dining facilities enhances convenience" has 44.1% while item with statement "The seating arrangements in the restaurant are comfortable and convenient" has 41.4%. All of the responses to each of the statements fall under the Likert scale (Agree). The results show that majority of the respondents believe that conveniences at the dining facilities in selected fast food in Benin City is a function of location, ease of food purchasing arrangement, and comfortable seating arrangement.

Table 5: Percentage Item Analysis of Extent of Customers' Satisfaction

Customers' Satisfaction	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Indifference (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Am satisfied because the performance of the dining facility exceeded my expectation	5.9	12.8	18.4	35.0	27.8
I am satisfied because the dining facility puts me in a good mood.	4.7	7.5	17.8	29.7	40.3
Service staff understand what I want hence, am satisfied.	2.5	6.6	17.8	35.0	38.1
Service staff knows what I want and could deliver due to good facility.	4.7	5.3	7.2	52.2	30.6
Management understands my expectation and staff is willing to deliver.	5.0	4.1	10.0	62.5	18.4
Organization promised what they could offer hence; satisfied.	0.3	6.9	12.2	61.6	19.1

Strongly Disagree = SD, Disagree= D, Neutral= N, Agree =A, Strongly Agree =SA.

Source: Field Survey (2018).

From the Table 5 the item with statement “Management understands my expectation and staff are willing to deliver” constitute the highest percentage score of 62.5%, followed by the item with statement “Organization promised what they could offer hence; satisfied” constituting 61.6%. The Item with the third high percentage is a statement with “Service staff knows what I want and could deliver due to good facility” having 52.2%, statement with “I am satisfied because the dining facility puts me in a good mood” has 40.3%. Item with statement “Service staff understand what I want hence, am satisfied” 38.1%, and “Am satisfied because the performance of dining facility exceeded my expectation” 27.8%. In addition, all the items fall under the Likert scale (Agree) except for the item with statement “I am satisfied because the dining facility puts me in a good mood.” 40.3% and “Service staff understand what I want hence, am satisfied” fall under the Likert scale (Strongly agree). The findings show that greater percentages of the respondents were of the view that satisfaction of customers is achieved when the performance of the dining facility exceeded customers’ expectations. Customers are said to be satisfied when the service staff understand customers’ needs and could deliver same accordingly. In addition, when organization promised what they could offer and deliver same, the customers stand to be satisfied. Finally, Customers are said to be satisfied when the management of fast food establishment understands customer’s expectation and staff are also willing to deliver.

ANALYSIS OF THE CORRELATIONS OF DIMENSIONS OF DINING EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMERS’ SATISFACTION

Table 6 shows the results of the Pearson correlation of independent variables and the dependent variable in respect to the selected fast food outlets in Benin City, Edo State.

Table 6: Correlations of Dimensions of Dining Experience and Customers’ Satisfaction

Variables	R	P	Level	Hypothesis
Customer Satisfaction (COS)	--	--	--	-
Food Quality (FOQ)	0.700**	0.030	High	H _A = Accepted
Service Quality (SEQ)	0.773**	0.020	High	H _A = Accepted
Physical Environment (PYE)	0.317**	0.010	Small	H _A = Accepted
Convenience (CON)	0.533**	0.040	Medium	H _A = Accepted

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Survey (2018).

The results as shown in Table 6 depicted that the four dimensions of dining experience have a positive and significant relationship with customer satisfaction (COS) in respect to fast food establishment in Benin City. Hence, Food Quality (FOQ) ($r = 0.700$; $p = 0.030$), Service Quality (SEQ) ($r = 0.773$; $p = 0.020$), Physical Environment (PYE) ($r = 0.533$; $p = 0.040$) and Convenience (CON) ($r = 0.381$; $p = 0.042$). In terms of the strength of the relationship, the results shown that Convenience (CON) has a medium and positive relationship ($r = 0.533$), physical environment (PYE) has a small and positive relationship ($r = 0.533$), food quality (FOQ) and service quality (SEQ) have positive and high relationship ($r = 0.700$) and ($r = 0.773$) respectively. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is accepted which states that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of dining experience (Food Quality, Service Quality, Physical Environment, convenience) and the dependent variable (Customer's satisfaction).

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df 2	
1	.913 ^a	.834	.792	.07053	.834	20.026	1	4	.011

a. Dependent Variable: Customers' satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Dining Experience

From Table 7 it was depicted that the R-square for the model is .834 which implies that the four dimensions of dining experience explained 83.4% of the variance in customers' satisfaction. Thus, the remaining 16.6% is due to other factors and residuals. Also, the multiple R ($R = .913$) revealed a significantly high relationship between independent variables (i.e. Dimensions of dining experience) and the dependent variable (customers' satisfaction).

Table 8: ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.100	1	.100	20.026	.011 ^b
	Residual	.020	4	.005		
	Total	.120	5			

a. Dependent Variable: Customers' satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Dining Experience

Table 8 indicates that the result of the analysis shows that F value was significant ($F = 20.026$, $p = 0.011$). This shows that the model is valid. Thus, based on the findings it can be concluded that there was a linear relationship between the predictors of dining experience and customers' satisfaction in respect to fast food establishment in Benin City.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between food quality and customers satisfaction in respect to selected fast food establishment in Benin City. In terms of the strength of the relationship, the results shown that food quality have a positive and high relationship with customer's satisfaction. This result is in conformity with previous literature in the domain of dining experience and customer's satisfaction. Sulek and Hensley (2004) opined that food quality appeared to be the most important forecaster of customer's satisfaction compared to physical setting and service quality in restaurants. Kivela, Inbakaran, and Reece (2000) also affirmed that food quality is an absolute requirement to satisfy the needs and expectations of customers in any restaurant or fast food setting. According to Delwiche (2004) indicate that the flavour of food, emphasizes on food presentation, food variety, healthy options, taste, freshness, and temperature among others explains food quality that impacts on customer's satisfactions. This implies that the management of fast food establishment in Edo State and more so in Benin should focus on the provisions of flavoured food, emphasizes on quality food presentation, ensures food variety that is tasty, fresh, and in acceptable temperature among others to impact on the dining experience of their customers for maximum satisfaction.

Furthermore, the current study found that a positive and significant correlation exists between service quality and customer's satisfaction in fast food establishment in Benin City, South-South Nigeria. In terms of the strength of the relationship, the results shown that service quality have positive and high relationship with customer's satisfaction. This finding conforms to previous literature hence, Qin and Prybutok (2009) opined that service quality is one of the antecedents of customer's satisfaction in fast food restaurants. Their study indicates that tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, recovery, assurance, and empathy show a significant result towards customer's satisfaction. In addition, service quality is the highest predictors of dining satisfaction at the aggregate market level (Chow, Lau, Lo, Sha, and Yun, 2007). According to Ha and Jang (2010), service quality was found to have significant relationship with customer's satisfaction in the restaurants. The implication of this is that customers of fast food business evaluate service quality on five distinct dimensions: tangibility which refers to appearance of restaurant's physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel; reliability indicates ability of the establishment to perform the promised service dependably and accurately; responsiveness, representing the ability of staff of the restaurant to provide prompt service and willingness to help customers; assurance is defined as an employee's knowledge and courtesy and their talent to provide trust and confidence to the customers; empathy meaning caring, and individualized attention to customers. The recommendation therefore is that; management of fast food establishment in Edo State should ensure that physical appearances of their restaurant are attractive, including the appearances of their staff. Also, the management should ensure that they deliver on the promised service to customers dependably and accurately. Staff should ensure that they provide prompt service and willing to help customers with sense of caring, individualized attention.

Finally, the current study found a positive and significant correlation between convenience and customer's satisfaction in fast food establishment in Benin City, South-South Nigeria. In terms of the strength of the relationship, the results shown that convenience have a medium and positive relationship with customer's satisfaction. The result conforms to previous studies hence; Berry et al (2002) opined that the more customers experience necessary and relevant service convenient events, the stronger their satisfaction with the business. Chang (2007) argues that service inconvenience will lead to a customer switching behaviour. Reichheld and Sasser (1990) argue that the most important thing for a restaurant to keep its customers is to establish more convenience during the service process. The implication of this result is that fast food business service providers need to remain conscious of the positive implications of convenience for customer value and loyalty. If customers experience a high degree of service convenience, they will feel satisfied with the service provider.

CONCLUSION FROM THE FINDINGS

The conclusion to be drawn base on our findings is that the management of fast food establishment in Edo State and more so in Benin should focus on the provisions of flavoured food, emphasizes on quality food presentation, ensures food variety that is tasty, fresh, and in acceptable temperature among others to impact on the dining experience of their customers for maximum satisfaction. Also, the management should ensure that physical appearances of their restaurant are attractive, including the appearances of their staff. In addition, the management should ensure that they deliver on the promised services to customers dependably and accurately. Staff should ensure that they provide prompt service and willing to help customers with sense of caring, individualized attention. Furthermore, fast food business service providers need to remain conscious of the positive implications of convenience for customer value and loyalty. This implies that if customers experience a high degree of service convenience, they will feel satisfied with the service provider. This study contributes to the body of knowledge as it proposed and validates "Dining Experience and Customer's Satisfaction (DINEX- COSAT)" model capable of explaining predictors of dining experience in respect to customer's satisfaction in fast food establishment in Benin City.

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