

**MODERATING EFFECT OF CUSTOMER PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE ON
MEAL EXPERIENCE DIMENSIONS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN
STAR RATED HOTELS WITHIN THE NORTH RIFT REGION, KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

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DEDICATION

I personally dedicate this thesis to my entire family members for the encouragement they have granted me all the way throughout my education life.

ABSTRACT

Meal experience dimensions and knowledge level determine destination selection and customers' satisfaction. Most hotels have had a drop in providing excellent services which directly affects customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and retention rates leading to most hotels closing down immediately they open. The main objective of this study was to establish the moderating effect of Customer Product Knowledge on Meal Experience Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction in hotels within North Rift region of Kenya. Specific objectives were; to examine the effect of cuisine quality, service quality and interior environment on customer satisfaction as well as establish the moderating effect of Customer Product Knowledge on the relationship between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction. SERVQUAL Model, Five Aspect Meal Model, Customer loyalty and Human Processing theories grounded this study. Explanatory research design was used for the study. Target population was 1652 while sample size was 490 being 30% of the population. Data was collected by use of questionnaires administered to guests taking accommodation in hotels. Pilot study of 49 questionnaires was performed in Nakuru County. Stratified sampling technique was used to select respondents. Research experts checked validity while reliability test was performed by use of Cronbach Alpha test set at alpha 0.7 threshold. Descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) Version 25. Inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis were performed to test the hypotheses. Data was presented in frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation tables. Results showed that cuisine quality had a positive and statistically significant effect on the customer satisfaction ($\beta_1=0.348$, $p<0.05$). Service quality had a positive and statistically significant effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta_2=-.555$, $p<0.05$). The interior environment had a significant effect on customer satisfaction albeit negative ($\beta_3=-.103$, $p<0.05$). Customer product knowledge has a positive and statistically significant effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta_{4a}=-.888$, $p<0.05$). Customer product knowledge has a positive and statistically significant moderating effect on the relationship between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction (customer product knowledge and cuisine quality $\beta_{4a}=-.325$, $p<0.05$). Customer product knowledge has a positive and statistically significant moderating effect on service quality and customer satisfaction (customer product knowledge and service quality $\beta_{4b}=.130$, $p<0.05$). Customer product knowledge has a positive and statistically significant moderating effect on interior environment and customer satisfaction (customer product knowledge and interior environment $\beta_{4c}=.181$, $p<0.05$). The study concluded that interaction of customer product knowledge with Cuisine quality leads to negative statistically significant change in levels of customer Satisfaction. Interaction of customer product knowledge with service quality and interior environment leads to a positive change in levels of customer satisfaction. Customer product knowledge moderates' relationship between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction. The study recommends that the hospitality industry managers must have customer product knowledge through research, customize products and services, employ trained staff, implement training programs and embrace quality service delivery. Moderation of customer product knowledge on service quality was weak, therefore the study recommends that further study be conducted on moderation effect of Customer product knowledge on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in different geographical regions or service setup.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

CMEM	Customer Meal Experience Model
CPK	Customer product knowledge
CS	Customer Satisfaction
EDT	Expectation Disconfirmation Theory
EE	Employee empathy
FAMM	Five Aspect Meal Model
MED	Meal Experience dimension
PPMCC	Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient
PWOM	Positive word-of-mouth
RATER	Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles Empathy, Responsiveness
RI	Repurchase intentions
SERVQUAL	Service Quality
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SWOT	Strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Cuisine quality: Cuisine is a style of cooking meals based on particular establishment, region religion Food is prepared and cooked in certain manner depending on type of customer. Kim & Hwang, (2010), posits that among cleanliness, convenience, food quality, menu variety, most important attribute that determine visiting fast cuisine restaurant is food quality. Basing on this study, food quality is excellent features of meal that are standard to hotel customers. This consists of exterior food features such as appearance, texture, and flavor, variety in menu list, garden fresh ingredients, nutritive value, safety, and hygienic aspect.

Customer Product Knowledge: Understanding products' features allows you to present their benefits accurately and persuasively. Customers respond to enthusiastic sales staff who are passionate about their products and eager to share the benefits with them. According to this study, it is understanding the cuisine quality, service quality, and interior environment in hotels through your own experiences using the products product, literature such as brochures and catalogues, online forums feedback from customers' publications and internal sales records

- Customer Satisfaction:** This is where products and services provided meet or surpass what a client expects, (Beard, 2014). According to this study, it denotes a measurement to determine how pleased customers may be as concerns hotel cuisine, service quality, interior environment.
- Hotel:** This is any establishment which provides food, drink, accommodation and other ancillary services in exchange of a price. Customers seek services for relaxing, enjoying and socializing experiences other than cuisine in hotel, (Lin & Tse, 2018).
- Interior Environment:** Interior environment is a place in restaurants where people visit and meet for social, business, leisure and cultural purposes during the meal experience period, (Kafel & Sikora, 2013). It includes design of the hotel, ambience, air quality, the aesthetics, layout of the interior environment and the social factors in terms of employees. According to this study, interior décor relates to theme and interior components, like furniture, use of appropriate colors, finishes, lighting systems, movement space. colors, center piece, furniture, and distant objects defines hotel interior, (Hwang & Hyun,2013).
- Meal experience:** The meal experience is a sequence of events both physical and nonphysical that a client experiences when dining out. Physical included restaurant furniture,

equipment, conference and front office facilities, kitchen equipment and the food stuff. Nonphysical can only be felt and this include interior environment and service given by service personnel. Basically, cuisine, service quality and interior environment form meal experience dimensions.

Service Quality:

This is the difference between service given to clients and what is expected compared to the observed, (Berry & Zeithan, 1985). According to this study, it implies the reliability, assurance, tangibility, responsiveness, empathy, courteousness by the service personnel who meets or surpass customer's expectations.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary

This chapter comprises of key concepts of the study as well as description of the objectives. The chapter also explains the problem statement, purpose of the study, research hypotheses, justification and the significance of conducting the study. Additionally, research limitations and assumptions have been highlighted. Theoretical and conceptual framework is also discussed in this section. Additionally, theories guiding the study for dependent, independent and moderating variables, were highlighted.

1.2 Background of the Study

A business in any service sector cannot succeed without customers because they play vital roles in customer service delivery. Nejadjavad & Gilaninia (2016) noted that, guests receive services and products from service organizations and therefore interaction between customer and service provider is important for both parties. Fecikova (2004) suggests that, hotel managers need to work closely with loyal customers because acquiring new ones is much costlier and also they are important in the success of their business. Fecikova, (2004), explained that the main factor that contribute to organizational continued existence is the retention of customers who are happy and contented.

To achieve sustainable growth, establishments need to deliver excellent products and services so that customers' loyalty and retention is achieved (Dimitriades, 2006). For many years, customer loyalty has been an important objective for business operations since they influence consumer retention and good market share (Anwar & Gill, 2015).

According to Santouriidis & Trivellas (2010), customer satisfaction is defined as the level consumer's expectations are perceived by consuming the products and services. Satisfaction denotes personal perception of pleasure. Frustration occurs when peoples' desire levels are not met on consumption of products and services. Client happiness with a service is important for each business, whether in public or private sector although it may not be possible to satisfy each and every customer. Liu & Bu, (2019) noted that, customers will be happy if they personally like the item basing on their preferences during post purchase period.

Understanding consumers' behavior and what they expect when dining out is very important because there are many contemporary issues in the hospitality industry which brings about sophisticatism. The businesses are not advised to predict consumer behavior because Liu & Bu, (2019) posits that customers will be happy if they personally like the item basing on their preferences during post purchase period and therefore understanding consumers' behavior and expectations is very important. Despite the fact that good customer service delivery is viewed as an important meal dimension element, other personal needs like face value, perceived value, product knowledge, appropriate atmosphere, accessibility and technology influence customer satisfaction.

The hospitality industry has been affected by emerging contemporary issues like changing life styles, demographics, modern technology, interaction and integration among people in the world (Thwin, 2020). The characteristics of hotels distinguish them from other service industries because they depend on discretionary income and free time. Post purchase experience, good atmosphere, product knowledge, dietary factors and perceived value help customers make selections on hotel destinations they would wish to visit. The post purchase experience becomes a concern for hotel managers

because they need to strategize on how to influence customer purchase decision process as well as satisfaction depending on services offered. Meal experience consists of numerous interconnected elements like time taken to deliver a service, value for service, employee empathy, attractive environment, accessibility and convenience (Cardello, 2020). Mhalanga (2016) noted that, restaurant context consists of tangible and intangible dimensions that form overall meal experience. The main example is the services offered by waiters to client cannot be stored for later sale, cannot be kept, set aside, reverted, or put on sale after sale.

The service is absolutely used once rendered to a consumer. The service is heterogeneous in that once given to another by same individual differs. Another important characteristic of a service is that they are inseparable. This means that the services are inseparable between service provider and customer. The other key dimensions affecting meal experience include, foodstuff, drink, service atmosphere, quality of service, and employee empathy. Pricing as well as hygiene, customer product knowledge, recreational centers and destinations all together with food and beverages served form total individual experience. (Mhalanga, 2016)

Food and drink affect customer satisfaction in terms of quality attributes. The food should be healthy, fulfill the sensory attributes, variety in menu list and free from the contaminants. The products and services provided should give value to the consumers. The service atmosphere should be comfortable and appropriate to the occasion. The hotel design should be activating gorgeous in terms of shape, building materials as it gives complete meal experience. Ambience and air quality contribute to aroma, feeling in relation to specific places. The layout and furniture arrangement, aesthetics should match the theme of the day. Service quality contributes to customer satisfaction when

services provided are reliable, prompt, friendly and staff are trusted and empathetic to clients. Sulek and Hensley, (2004) demonstrated that, customers consider food when deciding on hotel they wish to visit. Food and drink must be of good quality, in terms of flavor, texture, consistency, glossiness and presentation because it determines success of restaurant, (Liu & Jang, 2009). The food should also be clean and safe for consumption. Service of fresh nutritious and authentic food items matter most to clients visiting the hotel, (Ham & Hyun, 2017)

Need for healthy dining is on the increase, this indicates that the hotels put emphasis on integrating garden-fresh healthy meals on their menu list. Kim & Ryu, (2013) noted that, food healthiness attributes is emphasized in restaurants who facilitate healthy eating based on characteristics of their customers. Most customers want to avoid the life style diseases by cutting down on high calorie diet. Besides that, Gustafsson & Mossberg (2006) posits that, colors, center piece, lighting system, furniture, and decorations make up a hotel interior and have impact on meal situation. The diners identified the atmosphere as most important attribute in luxurious hotels.

Several scholars studied how patrons' view the service atmosphere and how it influenced consumer contentment. Interior décor is composed of important elements like building itself, light systems, canvases, and wall décor that contribute to customer satisfaction. Shashikala (2017). It can also be defined as sensation, mood possessed at a specific dwelling or situation, for instance, the welcoming atmosphere customer experiences, use of music and appropriate lighting systems creates a romantic atmosphere for particular type of guests.

The internal and exterior appearance of a building in which meal is consumed is measured through element of interior environment, Kirima & Mutungi(2017) Lighting

increases levels of atmosphere warmth in places of taking meals served. When the clients interact with service employees, the personal social meeting occurs. The guests meet with employees of the hotel as well as fellow guests during the dining meal experience encounter. Politeness, attentiveness and compassion are components that clients share during meal encounter. Relationship between new customers and employees determines whether they will revisit the hotel (Ryu & Han, 2011).

Customer retention should be emphasized in today's competitive market environment (Yu & Hyun, 2021). Retaining the current customers or increasing the revisits by customers is very important to hotel businesses. Prompt follow-ups by visiting the social media sites enables quick service recovery. The marketing department with the help of hotel management, implement strategies for solving the identified problems by giving quick solutions with an aim of retaining the potential customer.

Wen & Chi (2013) posits that, evaluating and monitoring customer's complaints and compliments aid the sales team in coming up with concrete solutions to identified feedback made by online customers. Service recovery dimensions to be evaluated include customer satisfaction, trust and the repurchase intentions. (Funk 2014) The sales representatives repair the brand credibility and image in order to enhance customer service delivery. The marketing personnel implement strategies to improve the cuisine quality, service quality and interior environment in order to increase the satisfaction levels. Additionally, Ligery and Bangsawan (2021), highlighted on strategies to pull potential clients, withhold the existing consumers and establish lifetime customer loyalty which is an important tool of achieving profitable business. Communication technique that constructs jointly beneficial relationships between establishments and their people are put in place to serve hotel community. According to AL-

Wugayan (2019), oral communication is relational message aiming at previous circumstances and significances of relationship quality in hospitality sector. The practice of managing communication between a business and its people is very important for the hospitality industry worldwide.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Most hotels have had a drop in providing excellent services which directly affects customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and retention rates leading to most hotels closing down immediately they open (Dipesh & Pnithi, 2018). Additionally, customer retention has become a challenge worldwide because of the high customer turnover. According to the article in Government of Kenya, (2019), the coastal region received 60% of all tourist in the country while Western region, North Rift region inclusive received only 2% indicating poor performance in hotel services (Agayi, & Gündüz ,2020) In view of this, Waseen (2018) recommended for a study to be undertaken with the use of customer product knowledge variable to comprehend the relationship between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction after interaction process. Therefore, the study sought to examine the moderating role of customer product knowledge on meal experience dimensions and how it affects customer satisfaction.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The main objective of the study was to examine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction in star rated hotels within North Rift Region, Kenya.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- i. To examine the effect of cuisine quality on customer satisfaction
- ii. To investigate the effects of service quality on customer satisfaction
- iii. To determine the effect of interior environment on customer satisfaction
- iv. To examine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on the relationship between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

- i. H₀₁: There is no significant effect of cuisine quality on customer satisfaction.
- ii. H₀₂: There is no significant effect of service quality on customer satisfaction
- iii. H₀₃: There is no significant effect of interior environment on customer satisfaction.
- iv. H₀₄: customer product knowledge has no significant effect on the meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study results may assist hotel managers in understanding as well as betterment of the customer service delivery to improve on customer satisfaction. It will also be of help for managers to monitor, evaluate and correct service deliveries, hence solving the arising problems affecting client satisfaction and encourage high rates of customer satisfaction, loyalty and retention. The study would avail valued information to hotels and other service industries in formulation of policy regarding customer satisfaction.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The Covid-19 protocols posed a big challenge while collecting the data, however, every measure was taken like wearing of masks and staying one meter away from the respondents.

Secondly, the study was undertaken in hotels within North Rift region only as opposed to other parts of the country According to standard media article of 23rd April, 2013, the North rift region was witnessing a steady growth in hospitality industry with a number of hotels having reached 200 in number by the beginning of that year. The rapid growth of hotel and tourism sector in Eldoret town also has potential for the improvement of agro tourism which contributes to customer satisfaction. The pull factors for heavy investment in hotel industry has increased demand for accommodation and conference facilities in terms of meal experience dimensions

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The assumption was that, information collected was accurate, that meal experience dimensions affected customer satisfaction that the selected hotels had the utmost number of clients, and that customer product knowledge affected link between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction.

1.9 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted within North Rift region Kenya specifically on selected star rated hotels. The study covered all the selected hotels in terms of meal experience dimension, and customer product knowledge link to customer satisfaction. This study adopted explanatory research design. This design is applied in getting opinions as well as views on prevailing status of a phenomenon in comparison with prevailing circumstances. Target population was 1632 customers and sample size of 490. Researcher adopted Tourism Regulatory Association (2019) to establish the target population and sample size. The researcher used Fellner Schall formula to calculate target population Stratified sampling technique was adopted to classify hotels into strata to enable achieve representation from a number of sub groups in a population based on

star rates of the hotels. The researcher followed all research protocols, To gather the information from the respondents, researcher with assistance of two assistants who are bachelor degree holders used self-administering technique to distribute the questionnaires to respondents Five-point Likert scale with a set of standardized questions were used to gather information from customers who would had been booked in for accommodation. Data preparation is done with the aim to determine and remove beneficial information that is used for coming to conclusion and making decisions based upon study findings that is efficient and communicated easily, (Creswell, 2013). The questionnaire generated quantitative data. Collected data were cleaned and checked for completeness.

The analysis process was conducted by use of descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. To analyze the moderation effect on link between independent and dependent variables, inferential statistics were used. Descriptive statistics described data for a sample and it included frequencies, percentages and standard deviation. Inferential statistics consisted of correlation and multiple regression analysis. Presentation of the results were presented in frequency distribution tables. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to establish the level of link between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction.

Hierarchical moderating regression analysis was employed to test moderation effect of customer product knowledge on link between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction. (The scores for cuisine and service quality, interior environment) which were independent variables, scores for customer product knowledge, (second predictor moderator) and scores for customer satisfaction, (third dependent variable) were computed.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a study. the theoretical framework gives an introduction that describes and explain why the research problem under study exists The discussion of servqual, five aspect meal model, customer loyalty and human information processing theory are presented in this subsection.

1.10.1 SERVQUAL Model for Customer Satisfaction

The SERVQUAL model denotes short form of Service Quality Model. Parasuraman & Zeithami, (1985) described service quality as when business entity is able to meet or exceed customers' prospects. This model is used in measuring and analyzing the consumer expectations and perceptions of intangible which include service quality, service environment aesthetics and tangible products in terms of the building design, furniture and equipment layout conference facilities, food and drink and people within the destination. The two key elements of customer satisfaction based on SERVQUAL are the expectations and perceptions of customer (Tan & Chen, 2021).

The model consists of the physical and nonphysical products. The SERVQUAL Model was imitated and modified from the research by (Prasuraman,& Zeithaml, 1985). The model was founded on belief – perception gap model. Customers' satisfaction is affected by five different discrepancies taking place among hotel establishments (Zeithaml & Berry, 1985). The gaps experienced by customers, the observed difference between guest beliefs and how the hotel administration observes customer expectations can create a gap. Luk & Layton (2002) noted that, the perception of consumer service delivery gap, expectations by managers and specification of the service quality which results to standard gap occurs when the service provider fails to design product in terms

of cuisine, interior environment and service quality that matches customer needs and wants. The gap may occur due to insufficient communication between contact employees and managers, lack of market segmentation as well as market research to comprehend the customer's needs and wants as pertains, type of cuisine, service and service interior environment they expect. The variance of customer anticipations and observations perceived services results to variations in customer satisfaction. The observed service excellence is impacted by the meal experience dimensions as well as the direction in which the four gaps take as connected to quality of service delivered. Gap one to four denotes functions and style of providing service, while the fifth refer to the consumer hence the correct measure of service quality. Shahin and Dabestani (2010) posits that, SERVQUAL has been extensively used to assess quality of service.

The nine original dimensions of service quality were competence, dependability, receptiveness admittance, courteousness, communiqué, trustworthiness, safety and the tangibles (Hanning & Putra, 2019). The variables were reduced to five elements and this included physical, responsiveness, assurance and reliability and empathy. The good service delivery determines its reliability. Promptness and swiftness in responding to customer questions or complaints denotes responsiveness while customer service recovery and contact with the right department is determined by the accessibility factor. Additionally, courtesy is politeness in staff giving service to customers.

1.10.1.1 The Five Gaps SERVQUAL Model

Gap is an area for which inadequate information limits the capability of reviewers to reach a conclusion for a given question. For that reason, the SERVQUAL model identifies five gaps likely to occur between the consumer needs, wants and the services provided by the establishment. Knowledge gap occurs when managers lack knowledge

about cuisine quality service quality and interior environment to correctly address customer's needs and wants and may lead to dissatisfaction, hence need for training to reduce this knowledge gap (Gafni-Lechter, (2021)). Standards gap occurs when organization implement unmatched policies that don't concur with the guest expectations. The reason is that there is gap between service delivery and service specifications by customers (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). The policies formulated by organization may have wrong specification as concerns meal experience dimensions. If the specification doesn't meet customer's expectation, a significant risk may occur. This means the products designed didn't match customer expectations.

A delivery gap occurs the minute the organization offer services that are different from what guests expects (Luk & Layton, 2002). This is when managers provide services and food stuff that is not expected. This may result due to lack of proper training incapability or unwillingness to meet the set standards, inappropriate evaluation and compensation systems and lack of empowerment. Good example is where restaurant may have specific standards of cuisine communicated but the waiters may not be given proper instruction on how to follow the standards. Sometimes marketers communicate and promise cuisine interior environment to customers that they cannot deliver through promotional channels. If the consumer encounters different service from the promised, then the gap occurs.

Satisfaction gap may also occur during service delivery because there is difference between perceived and actual services provided. This may occur when the services provided don't meet customers' needs and wants. If organization meets the customer expectations, then satisfaction occurs and when it fails the satisfaction gap occurs. Shoemaker and Lewis (1999), stresses on the importance of measuring and finding out

effectiveness of service on both existing and new customers as soon as possible. Perception gap occurs when services experienced differs with the expected service in terms of meal experience dimensions. The customer may misunderstand the service quality

1.10.1.2 Service Quality as Concept of SERVQUAL Model

The concept of service quality defined is a measure of how a business entity provides its services to customers in comparison to what they expect in terms of meal experience dimensions. A well delivered service that equals or exceeds what a consumer expects, is service quality. If a hotel offers a service that does not meet customer expectations then he or she will not be satisfied which indicates that the observed actual service given to a client was below in terms of performance hence dissatisfaction (Franncechin & Mastrogiacomo, 2018).

1.10.1.3 Customer Satisfaction as concept of Servqual model

This is an indication of fulfillment that consumers derive from consuming a product or service. Hoang, (2019), defines customer satisfaction as an effective response or mental estate resulting from the consumption of product. It is also a measure to what extend a customer is happy with product or service provided. The service should be able to fulfill consumer needs and desires to create satisfaction feeling before, during and after meal experience interactions. Important long-term' aim of organizations is client contentment.

A customer who is satisfied is likely to make repetitive purchases of hotel products than those dissatisfied according to marketing concept. Satisfaction is a mental state resulting from consumption of service or product. Employees who are, welcoming,

polite, well-informed, accurate in billing systems, appropriate price, and prompt quality service, are among different elements affecting consumer contentment.

All business outlets have to understand how to meet consumer expectation so as to attain the objective of satisfaction. Needs of customers denotes the situation of which buyer feels deprived of something. Consumers' requirements refer to human needs shaped by culture and individual character. Customer satisfaction has direct positive impacts on establishment's profit levels. Customers who are satisfied increases probability of business growth, because of customer loyalty to the brand, repeat purchases, and recommendation of products to other customers.

Nurhidayati (2020) states that, a direct and positive word of mouth influences customer loyalty, trust, revisit intentions in upscale hotels. Clients who are dissatisfied can cease to pay for the service, convey negative communication to organization, other party and possibly refuse the service as well. According to past studies concerning satisfied and dissatisfied customers, customer 'contentment affects repurchase intents while those not satisfied will defect.

Also, positive and direct customer loyalty as well as retention is impacted by customer satisfaction. It was noted that main goal of assessing client contentment is to ensure his /her consistency on consumption of hotel services and products. Good service makes customer pleased and contented with meal experience dimensions at selected facility. Also complaints become less and the hotel can retain its clients. Also, satisfied guests will become consistent and buy repetitively from the company (Gillis J & Vivek, 2018). Additionally, based on retaining cost for existing customers becomes significantly lower than getting new clients.

1.10.2 Five Aspect Meal Model for Meal Experience Dimension

The model starts when guest enters room and meet waiters, other client, consume varied cuisine prepared in different styles under management control system, which refers to the economic aspects, laws and logistics when providing the whole meal. The aspects are defined, discussed and suggested questions handed over to managers and chefs for consideration in decision making. The five aspect meal model form five major factors used for developing meal experience in hotel as well as restaurants. Gustafson and Mossberg (2006), developed” the five aspects meal model. Hansen & Gustafsson (2005) developed Client Meal Experience Model (CMEM) which gave meal experience facets that are significant for consumers today. Cuisine, hotel Interior environment, quality of service, company control system and people are the identified five aspects determining the meal experience in dining places.

Five aspect meal model was established using the Michelin Guide, while (CMEM)client meal experience was founded on interviews with hotel’s clients; The FAMM was not initially established as assessment tools, nevertheless, the outcomes were significant for knowing and appreciating hotel consumers’ meal experiences. The hotel cuisine, room interior environment, waiting services or service quality, atmospheric environment, and management control systems are considered as elements of five aspect meal model.

Cuisine consists of food and beverages which are core elements of the five dimensions. During the dinning encounter, cuisine interacts with all other components. Hwang, & Ok, (2013) asserts that, variety in menu list, food taste, texture, glossiness and temperature impacts consumer contentment as well as behavioral intents. The quality of food makes persons to visit target restaurant (Pratminingsih, & Saudi, 2018).

Presentation is also important in that customer's meal experience expectations can be reduced if these five-meal chain is broken. It was noted that liking of the hotel cuisine, menu list, dining with, family, service by waiting staff "are key determinants to willingness to revisit a restaurant, (Murall & Alison, 2019). Hang & Ruan (2021) added that, excellent cuisine in sophisticated restaurants influences customer satisfaction. Satisfying client's expectations is guided by culture, tastes and preferences. The knowledge acquired is used in preparation of certain dishes hence help the production of better products and services while trained waiters impart knowledge in customers to create trust and recommend hotel 'products to other parties. The sales team need to have product knowledge on items they are selling to the customer. It is noted that food and wine affects perceived sensory qualities in exchange, (Book & Wendin, 2022).

Furthermore, service staff, interior amenities and general environment are important to customer's relaxation, comfort and peace. This is where the guests and staff interact and communicate during the meet aspect of meal experience model (Warde & Williams, 2020). Design of textiles, sounds, lighting, and colors can have a great effect on food condition, hence being main factors leading to the difference in experiences of the similar meal consumption in hospitality set ups (Meisemen, 2003). People serving the customers play a big role in client retention, service recovery and public relations handling

The serving and handling of guest's complaints through public relation is very important. (Ha & Jang, 2010). Mental, communication techniques and guiding principles of etiquette are important to waiters because they interact with customers hence impacting their pleasure. Understanding of menus aid in control of clients and business survival. Customers may thus pose to be rich, up-to-the-minute, classy and

urbane in a restaurant, so people giving services need to be prepared to handle such circumstances (Krivela & Inbakaran, 1999).

The service staff may encounter clients who are inexperienced and without enough money, so they must be observant as well as helpful, instead of being arrogant to avoid costing a restaurant's objective as well as image. Dining away from home is not only entertainment but it is also for healthy purposes. Eating out is one way of meeting all types of people as well socializing during the meet. The hotel business has governing rules and laws enacted by which management control its business, it also applies to human resources management, as well as trade and industry rules to guide a corporation as it increases service excellence (Strongren, 2017).

Leadership and management responsibilities integration leads to the effectiveness of the business (Pudjiono & Sihombing, 2022). Planning and allocating enough financial and human resources for banqueting room, cafeterias, restaurants, and guesthouses is important. Peak periods must be planned for during the day. The managers should plan in terms of capacity, lay out, design, location, human resources management, strategies to ensure effective output. Sophisticated logistical system is required for à la carte menu because it needs more time, skills and communication to guests by chefs and waiters.

For successful control systems, all staff in company should be well informed besides their practical, knowledge. Quality service together with value affects consumers' contentment, which means there is relationship amongst the five element of meal experience. The success and long term, survival of business in competitive market depends on customer service delivery. Customer satisfaction should be achieved by offering excellent services at affordable price as perceived quality affects post purchase

feelings. Customer satisfaction is enhanced by using five aspect meal model in planning service delivery process

The model is a tool to understand and handle the diverse facets used to make resourceful hotel products and services. The model has many benefits, especially in the education of kitchen and restaurant personnel. The better understanding of a product together with excellent service delivery can increase satisfaction levels of a customer as well the competitive advantage over other hotel business (Suchanek & Kralova, 2018).

Occasionally it is difficult to make meals based on intention of the model. Short-term changes like renting space by guest is difficult to carry forward because it is perishable. Short term changes are hard to implement although employees want to provide reliable service delivery. The quality standards based on five aspect meal model may not be met for the guests who are willing to pay because it involves both long and short term plans. Nevertheless, with the aims of this model awareness there are opportunities, to improve meals offered in the restaurant. Therefore, a whole meal time encounter can help satisfy consumer.

1.10.3 Customer Loyalty Theory for Customer Product Knowledge.by

The customer loyalty theory by Bert'al Ellis, (2000). Was established some years back after researchers studied the behaviors of consumer basing on variable demographics. The theory defines drivers of what makes consumers become loyal to a brand. Song and Han (2019) asserts that, satisfaction, trust, love and respect for a particular brand and brand loyalty leads to customer loyalty. Several theories, were incorporated in development of this theoretical framework of customer product knowledge customer loyalty theory and the human information processing theory grounded the moderating variable. The perspectives-based framework of client loyalty, is represented in three

stages –the trust of client, the feelings or affect, and intent – in the customer attitude structure. The fourth phase of stages is action, representing customer progress, of reliability. Han & Lee (2019) noted that, in the cognitive and affective evaluation phases, consumers show loyalty. The loyalty stages are cognition, affection and action. Customers who buy repeatedly are very loyal to the brand. Consumer contentment, waiting time (WT) and consistency in buying relationships indicated that repetitive buying leads to loyalty. Loyalty is mental act of loving a brand under all circumstances. Buyers with higher level of social trust are probable to follow the product or service than their counterparts with low trust.

Nurhidayati (2020) states that, a direct and positive word of mouth influences customer loyalty, trust, and revisit intentions in upscale hotels. Trust and revisit intents are indicators of customer satisfaction and therefore individuals develop belief about the hotel employees because they have post purchase experience and knowledge (Suchánek & Králová, 2019). They believe that hotel environment, cuisine quality and service quality are credible resulting from effective management control systems. According to Khoo (2020), clients are probable to come back to previous hotel if it created and communicated positively as well as if they trust in a service the level of awareness on the hotel services is increased by efficient flow of information to loyal customers.

According to Suchánek & Králová (2019), the information about the product, consumer contentment and loyalty impacts levels of a customer happiness. The state of being emotional and rational are both loyalty in a customer. Loyalty programs is an outcome of rational loyalty and it includes the, form of awards, which inspires the customer to purchase the business' goods and services. The preference for certain goods is referred

to as approach loyalty. A method to identify attitudinal and behavioral loyalty is approach loyalty and is divided into: high, medium and low levels.

It is significant for each business to have regular and loyal clients who purchase products continually, pass on constructive info, and will not buy a substitute from other entrants. Clients differ in levels of loyalty. (Fedotova & Shynkarenko, 2019). The business management is encouraged to meet or exceed consumers' expectations, to increase number of loyal customers. Marketers are therefore required to provide information and knowledge to its loyal consumers through programs on the service delivered. Customers first become loyal in a cognitive sense, for instance, in this study the customers will become loyal to the hotel cuisine, the interior environment of the hotel and the quality of service delivered.

Guest's love and respect for a brand are positively related to their brand loyalty and intimacy, trust which are drivers of customer loyalty (Song & Han, 2019). Oliver (1999), extended this framework by adding the fourth phase of action, representing customer progress. 'The, loyalty stages are; cognition, affective, conative and action. At cognitive loyalty stage, the consumer develops desire based on price and considered the weakest loyalty stage. They compare cost to value ration. At affective stage loyalty is characterized by strong brand recognition. Customers match brand attributes to their expectations. At conative stage, customer develop desire to purchase the products repeatedly.

Customers are willing to recommend, and even develop intents to purchase the products and services. At action stage, brand identification occurs, and if he/she experienced a good or unsatisfying services he may buy or look for alternatives. Gagić & Jovičić, (2013) asserts that, quality dimensions that impacts guest satisfaction in

hospitality industry include food and drink, service, interior environment in fine dining restaurants. The positive word of mouth is initiated at this point, hence adding brand promotion. Action loyalty shows a well thought habit, a routinized behavior shape when the customer connects.

1.10.4 Theory of Human information processing by Miller, G. A. (1960).

George Armitage Miller was the first scholar to develop the theory of information processing. Theory of human information processing is defined as a mental theory focusing on coding of information into memory. It gives details on how information filtration process by human brains, from current point of attention to portion put in temporary storage thereafter into human lasting memory. The theory explains how information is captured and retrieved (Çeliköz, Erişen, & Şahin, 2019) Information is received from stimuli which may be advertisement, promotional activities on cuisine, service quality and service interior environment.

The basis of data processing denotes building a lasting memory normally it occurs in phases; the person observes something through sensory memory, through seeing, hearing, feeling or tasting in short time and send to the brains for processing. Diab & Mansour (2016) asserts that, the customers must be given active service quality as well as food presentation must be top notch as it also contributes to customer satisfaction and loyalty.

According to Piqueras-Fiszman & Jaeger, (2014), the emotion-related terms connected with goods vary when foods are presented in diverse colors because glowing color pictures used in the food image creates attention and attract individuals at different levels. The people process the information received, instead of just responding to stimuli is found in human information processing theory. (Wang, 2007)

This perception equates the mind to computer which is accountable for evaluating environmental information which includes hotel cuisine, service quality as well as interior atmosphere. The information is taken in through influence of attention mechanisms, manipulation of information is done by working memory, holding information for the future is by long-term memory for mental development based on standard information-processing model. Information is retrieved when an individual need as the information processing affects consumer's behavior. (Hann, Hui, Lee, & Png, 2007). Hwang, & Ok, (2013), asserts that, variety in menu list, food taste, texture, glossiness and temperature impacts customer satisfaction as well as behavioral intentions.

Customers regularly make decisions about a product, its benefits, and probable results on consumption hence proper forecasting leads to constructive results. Overall attitude of a customer is his opinions as concerns product; qualities as well as strength of these views of particular brands. Customer product knowledge is crucial in awareness of the services offered, hence not able veer customer's decision towards purchasing what suits his need and want.

Dastane & Fazlin (2017) noted that, for any business to achieve product and service oriented customers, it must meet their needs monitor and evaluate levels of satisfaction. Product knowledge equips customers and the service team with knowledge hence develop complete self-confident, capability and well-organized.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

The dependent variable in conceptual framework whose constructs are revisit intents, repeat purchases, and positive word of mouth is customer satisfaction Meal Experience dimension consists (cuisine quality, service quality, and interior environment) which

form independent variables in the study. Nutritional value, sensory attributes like freshness, smell and aroma, temperature, appearance food safety and hygiene and diverse menu form attribute indicators for cuisine quality. Constructs for service quality were responsiveness, reliability, assurance and employee empathy and tangibility Interior environment indicators were the hotel interior design, facility aesthetics, social factor like employees, and the layout as well as the arrangement of the dining areas, lobbies and bars. Moderating variable was customer product knowledge whose constructs were trust, feeling and lasting impression The hypotheses was customer product knowledge moderated link between meal experience dimensions (independent variable) and customer satisfaction) dependent variable.

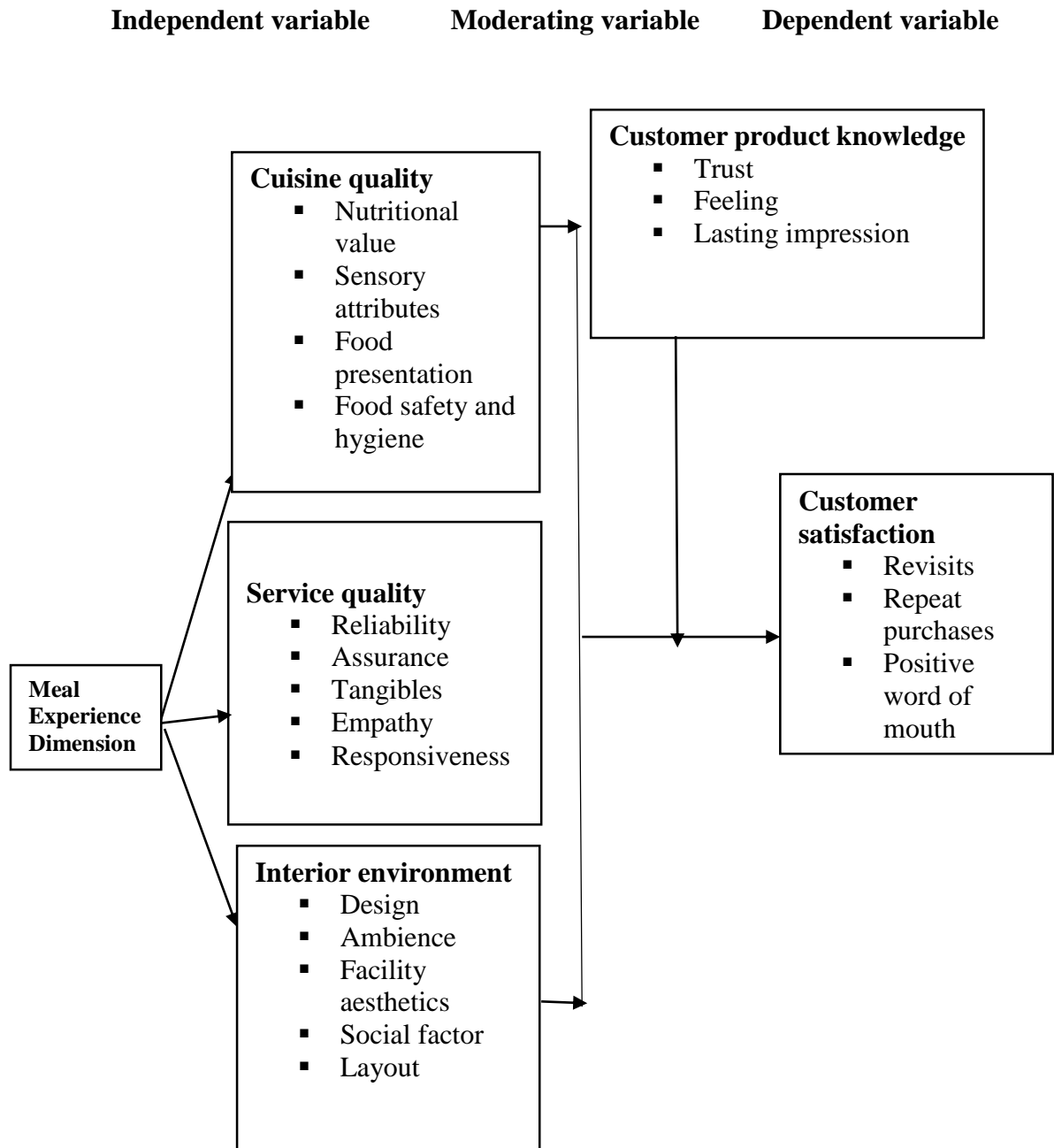


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

(Source: Adopted from Dipesh and Panthi 2018)

1.12 Research Gap

Hotel Business has undergone through a distinctive growth in previous years which has made customers to come up with planned approach to deciding what is needed hence making the concept of loyalty and retention more difficult (Toufaily & Perrien, 2013).

Additionally, there has been a drop in number of customers visiting hotels due to low performance as concerns cuisine quality, service quality and interior environment which determine consumer behaviour. The most important predictor for long lasting customer behavior is customer satisfaction (Aksoy, 2013). Due to struggling for business opportunities in competitive environment, hotel businesses are striving hard to manage customers with aim of keeping as well as retaining them.

Gap is that rate by which customers switch from restaurants to another resulting from poor performance is still too high. The poor performance gaps include standard, delivery, knowledge, and satisfaction gaps. This may occur in terms of cuisine quality, service quality and service interior environment. Study sought to use customer product knowledge and its effect on meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction in hotels to address the gaps.

1.13 Chapter summary

This chapter comprised of key concepts of the study as well as description of the objectives. The chapter also explained the problem statement, purpose of the study, research hypotheses and significance of conducting the study. Additionally, research limitations and assumptions have been highlighted. Theoretical review and conceptual framework has been explained in this section. The theories guiding the study include the SERVQUAL model for customer satisfaction, five aspect meal model consisting of five facets of meal experience which are product (food and drink, space which is the interior environment and service quality, staff and management system. Meal Experience dimension consists of cuisine quality, service quality, and interior environment which form independent variables in the study. The research gap is that there has a drop in customer visiting hotels leading to them closing down. The rate of switching from one hotel to the other because of poor cuisine service quality, and

interior environment is still high. The moderating variable was used to ascertain moderation effect on meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter consist of literature review of studies conducted in previous years about meals experience dimensions and how it affects customer satisfaction. Literature was also reviewed on customer product knowledge as the moderating variable. Finally, the summary of chapter two was presented in this section.

2.2 The concept of customer satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction is fulfilment or effective response customers derive from consumption of both tangible and intangible goods and services, Hoang, (2019), The level consumer's expectations are perceived by consuming products also denotes customer satisfaction. Consumer expectation avails feedback to sales team, hence being an important tool to decision makers. It helps the public relations team to improve on customer management because unhappy clients are unlikely to make repeat purchases, making it difficult for business to grow (Lee & McDonald, 2020).

According to Au & Law (2014), hotel guest's feedback is important for effective service recovery and development. In addition, customer satisfaction assists hotel managers in improving operational and functional processes. Client expectations and preferences like the needs and wants help managers to improve customer service delivery. The expectations by customers allows the hotel business to develop products and services as per the specification. The elements that may require improvement may include cuisine quality, pricing, service quality, ambience of environment, and convenience. Law & Cobanoglu (2014) noted that, client service dimensions are highly related with guest's reviews. The interior environment, price and information customer possess on product/ services, and ability of the employees to perform their duties determines degree

of customer's satisfaction, (Liu, & Tse, 2018). According to Mannan & Amir (2019), service and food quality, service environment, employee and fellow guests conduct determines customer satisfaction. Foodstuff is an important component for satisfying the customer (Albelalat & Twaissi, 2017). The other personal needs like face value, perceived value, product knowledge, technology determine customer satisfaction (Ramphal & Nicolaidis, 2014).

According to Balony & Abdel (2017), both physical and nonphysical services comprise of dimensions that satisfy clients hence increased customer satisfaction and make them to return for same services in future. Service excellence, perceived value, consumer contentment, and post-purchase intent have a relationship (Van & El-Geneidy, 2016). The organization that offers the services should convince the customers by showing the credibility of product developed and presented to customers who willing and are able to buy. The developments perceived in service quality increases attractiveness to clients, which enhances customer satisfaction as well as increases loyalty (Van & El-Geneidy, 2016.).

Customer satisfaction helps in identification of most preferred product for customers in hospitality industry. Customer satisfaction is assessed by use of multi-attribute scales because it has been accepted for that task in restaurants. A client who is dissatisfied will not return for a service offered, (Lee & McDonald, 2020). Attribute scores reveals that customer intents for repeat purchase with complex menu mind about waiting period, nevertheless, in luxurious hotels, cuisine, interior environment, service quality were rated high in terms meal experience dimensions that affect customer attraction. Physical environment consists of stimuli that predict emotional responses and later consumer behavior. Kirima & Mutungi (2017) further explained that, the tangible and intangible

elements of hotel design enhance a guest 'general encounter at the hotel of their choice. Ng (2005) asserts that, the atmosphere in which service takes place contributes to high levels of customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction affects online service recovery because it affects consumer behavior in that environment. According to research by on small restaurants, buyers' emotional bonding with the hotel owners determine return intents.

The responsiveness by waiters, waiting time, services quality, the cuisine, interior environment and décor influences the selection of dining places or restaurants. Food hygiene, safety, value and quality are considered important as compared to atmosphere as well as menu variety in marginalized communities. Food is most important element used to satisfy a client and was ranked number one, then hygiene and price, various items in menu list, atmosphere and service were ranked the least (Qu, 2014). A study by Hussain Jing, & Parveen, (2018). on Chinese cafeteria revealed that cuisine determined choice of a destination and intent for return purchase.

Bufquin & Partlow (2017) noted that, cuisine aspect, service quality influenced consumer contentment, purchase intentions and retention. Customer satisfaction differentiates competitive market environment and therefore during policy formulation, managers should employ marketing concepts that identify customer's preferences thus leading to their satisfaction and businesses growth in a competitive environment (Gagić & Jovičić, 2013). Companies providing extraordinary meal experience creates environment which satisfy wants and desires of customer, increase motivation and satisfaction levels as well as rebranding the hotel image. Gagić & Jovičić, (2013) asserts that, quality dimensions that impacts guest satisfaction in hospitality industry include food and drink, service, the interior environment of fine dining restaurants. Promotional

sales and discount, value of service, excellent services all add up to motivational factors. Types of products are presented for consumers to make a choice based on quality as well as personal needs. Every shopper's need is fulfilled, or attained by support of the establishment's management. Buyers will be attached to product and service if their expectations are met. Consumer satisfaction becomes a relative concept (Panthi & Karki, 2018).

Cuisine quality, value, atmosphere, and service quality affects consumer contentment. Kim, Ng, & Kim, (2009). Businesses credibility and long lasting buyer relationships are attained when the customer is satisfied but dissatisfied customers change to other brands in same marketplace. Numerous consumer characteristics affect their satisfaction therefore, need to be checked and monitored to get feedback on both positive and negative feedback from the clients. Additionally, based on Liu & Hung (2017), retaining cost for existing customers is significantly lower as compared to that of getting new clients.

The aspect of acquiring new customers is very expensive as compared to retaining the old ones as a lot of funds are invested in marketing processes hence lowering the sales and profit margins (Liu & Hung, 2017). Visits made by guests who have intent to return, repetitive purchases and verbal communication are related to connection between feelings and faithfulness of customers about the dining places. Pratminingsih and Saudi (2018) explained that, quality of food is the reason why people dine in target restaurants. The food atmosphere and fairness of waiters is important in restaurants. Cuisine quality plays a major role in restaurants in terms of food safety, appeal or presentation and dietary acceptability which are most desired quality in hotel cuisine (Namkung & Jang, 2007). The characteristics of restaurants and satisfaction determines

levels of consistent buying behavior (intending to come back). Measuring of customer satisfaction plays big role as high level of consumer contentment increases return visits, repeat purchases, positive verbal communication by a consumer to new customers, brand reliability, as well as attracts new ones.

2.2.1 Return Visit intents to the hotels

According to this study, return visit is a trip to a hotel that you have been to once before, and buy products and services you have already used. Bookings are done online, through phones, face to face, physical through public relation which should always be friendly. Weiss (2003) noted that, customer satisfaction directly influences the intent of customers. This is determined by the first experience when the visit is made. The liking of restaurant is determined by food quality, assurance, brand, credibility, loyalty to brand, and other roles attached to the place.

Food quality, safety presentation, and dietary aspects and general food characteristics determine choice of hotel (Konu & Macknonen, 2020). Konu (2011) added that, service quality, locally produced food, service environment, resources and cuisine quality influences customer satisfaction and loyalty. The core resources mentioned in wellbeing tourism offering were environmental resources and food. The food, attractive interior environment, and service quality contributes to return visits by clients who are loyal to the brand (Ryu & Han, 2011). Happy customers will return to the destinations frequently because of loyalty in them.

2.2.2 Repeat Purchases intents to the hotels

According to Konu & Mikkonen (2020), repeat purchase is where hotel guests on any leisure experiences, are willing to make return visits to hotels where they were before Repurchase is buying decision made by end user of very-quality item for consumption

as bought earlier. Magnini & Karande (2011) gave an example of hotel room to explain repeat purchase as obtaining a room at that specific destination or hotel. Repeat purchase indicates degree of customer brand. The services provided in terms of reliability, assurance and empathy influenced positively customers' contentment and intent to coming back or commend the hotel towards the hotel selection (Baiomy & Azeem 2017).

A high level of repurchases is an indicator of happy customers as well as retention of existing clients which automatically reduces cost for acquiring potential customers and increases general profits. The consumer contentment as well as hotel attributes predicts repeat purchase behavior for a customer who is determined to return, (Weiss, 2003). Excellent customer service delivery leads to revisit by loyal guest, hence a restaurant with unifying dominant attributes, food quality and atmosphere, as revealed in the study also influence customer return intension.

2.2.3 Positive Word of Mouth by customers who visited the hotels

Ferguson, (2014), asserts that word of mouth is what and when customers communicate on product and services. Additionally, Lopez (2014) explains that, oral communication is mostly a significant source for valuable information for consumers because it has more impact than that one created from the firm itself. Alsulaiman (2017) posits that, positive verbal communication made on tangible and nontangible products impacts consumer purchase decision. Positive verbal communication is to recommend and encourage other customers to buy products and services by highlighting the strong point. According to Khoo (2020), clients are probable to return to a destination, create and communicate positively if they trust a service. Nurhidayati (2020) added that, a direct and positive word of mouth influences customer loyalty, trust and revisit

intentions in upscale hotels. They will also become loyal to services and products that please and meet or go beyond client's prospects. Further, Aminudin and Jamal (2019) posits that, getting back service to normal is crucial for both reinstating consumer contentment and refining consumer dependability. According to Deyà-Tortella & Rejón-Guardia (2021), discontented clients would never recommend a product, service and previous hotel to other customers. Consumer contentment is firmly connected to income and repeat purchases. Wong & Mohamad (2014) posits that, if customers are dissatisfied with their current suppliers, they switch to other competitors but will have trust, and communicate positively if the services provided by hotel are reliable.

Businesses lose customers because they are unpleased, others are influenced negatively by word of mouth hence need of regular measuring of customer Satisfaction. The clients' positive verbal communication affects buyer intent (BI) on package provided by hotel. Barns & Hoffman (2016) added that, managers should ensure hotel's competitive advantage by improving long lasting loyalty and retention. Funk (2014) suggests that, follow ups on displeased customers and brand monitoring of both national and international customers at large should be conducted through one-on-one interview or social media methods.

The management has to monitor any changes in customer satisfaction levels to identify any unhappy consumers and take control measures of rectifying the situations. Tracking changes on customer's satisfaction status lead to service recovery processes. Monitoring and evaluating customer satisfaction will help in identifying clients who are really pleased with your products and services. The variance of customer anticipations and observations perceived services results to variations in customer satisfaction. The

observed service excellence is impacted by the dimensions as well as the direction in which the four gaps take as connected to quality of service delivered. gaps likely to occur between the consumer needs, wants and the services provided by the establishment. Knowledge gap occurs when managers lack knowledge about cuisine quality service quality and interior environment to correctly address customer's needs and wants and may lead to dissatisfaction, hence need for training to reduce this knowledge gap (Gafni-Lechter, (2021). Standards gap occurs when organization implement unmatched policies that don't concur with the guest expectations.

The reason is that there is gap between service delivery and service specifications by customers (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). The policies formulated by organization may have wrong specification as concerns meal experience dimensions. If the specification doesn't meet customer's expectation, a significant risk may occur. This means the products designed didn't match customer expectations. A delivery gap occurs the minute the organization offer services that are different from what guests expects (Luk & Layton, 2002). This is when managers provide services and food stuff that is not expected. Sometimes marketers communicate and promise cuisine interior environment to customers that they cannot deliver through promotional channels.

2.3 Cuisine Quality of the Hotel

Cuisine can be defined as skill or profession of cooking interesting food in any kind of dining set up. Food and beverages form key component of the five meal dimensions. Hwang & Ok (2013) asserts that, variety in menu list, food taste, texture, glossiness and temperature impacts levels of satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Additionally, Pratminingsih and Saudi (2018) explained that, quality of the food is main determining factor for people to visit a target restaurant. The way food tastes, diverse menu list, and

food portion sizes is a prominent role of consumer contentment in determining behavioral intents (Han & Hyun, 2017). The food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages relates with other dimensions during the dining experience. According to Bufquin and Partlow (2017), cuisine quality influenced consumer contentment, purchase intentions and retention. The food healthiness and quality are most attributes associated with customer satisfaction (Kim & Ryu, 2013). The consumption of product based on traditional and spiritual aspects, socio-demographic factors, personal behaviors, post purchase experience, and motivational factors influence customer satisfaction (Seo & Yun, 2013).

Food preparation methods as well as culture aids in the identification of a target market. Food plays a significant part in the destination and dining experience (Bichler & Peters, 2020). It's critical to pay attention to the plating, garnishing, and presentation in order to meet customer expectations. According to marketing understanding, purchaser observations together with consumer satisfaction resulting from food presentation and freshness are linked (Shaharudin & Elisha, 2011). According to Shazadi & Shabbit (2018), healthy food options and food freshness, contribute to customer satisfaction.

The reason for this is that customers prefer garden-fresh dishes or items that are served quickly and served in clean environment and at the right time frame. Components of food attributes include appearance, texture, flavor, temperature, consistency, color and glossiness (McClements & Decker (2011). Ye (2015) noted that, a new technique to measure contentment is through best presentation of food color and ingredients used to prepare the dish. The base of food presentation is determined by the way perishable items are prepared as well as the garnished used on the final meal before it is served to client. According to Diab & Mansour (2016), the customers must be given active service

quality as well as food presentation must be top notch as it also contributes to customer satisfaction and loyalty.

2.3.1 Nutritional Value of cuisine

Cuisine experts prepare and cook ingredients into healthy, delectable dishes. Kim & Kim (2013) posits that, a variety of healthy food aspect influences customer satisfaction and emotional loyalty. According to Han & Hyun (2017), the plated food should be delicious, nutritious and well-presented before it is served to guests at the right temperature. The meal must comprise of foods with vitamins, high fiber, energy giving and body building foods and their accompaniments. Gagić & Jovičić (2013) noted that, food and drink, service delivery quality, portions size and varieties in menu list determines customer satisfaction. Cuisine quality begins with the procedure of preparing various cuts such as tying or sewing meats, the types of cuts that are utilized in moldings pastries, drained dish, attractive to the eye, garnished with well-shaped eatable vegetable, coated with creams and distributed with accompaniments (Amy, 2012) Garnishes play major role in customer meal experience as it contributes to brightening of the plate as well enhancing the flavor of a dish.

2.3.2 Sensory attributes

Food served supply non-visual components in terms of aroma and flavor. This also include texture and consistency of food. The way a customer feels when he puts food in the mouth defines texture while firmness, runny, and gelatinous state of food means consistency. It is advisable to serve food of different texture and consistency to avoid boredom. Crispy foods should be accompanied by suitable pudding as asserted by Reinhert (2012) that, variation in food texture flavor and consistency makes the menu more attractive to the client. According to Ha & Jang (2010), food taste is a factor that

influences the quality of the food, the variety in menu, and the nutritional value. Texture and flavor are most sensory attributes that influence customer satisfaction. Civile (2010) posits that, if the food consistency is not according to what a client expects, they will be discontented. Ryu (2012) asserts that, customers are happy when there is a variation in items on menu list and the scent or aroma of the foodstuff is appealing. Additionally, Kwun & Kim (2013) noted that, customers seek varieties when choosing cuisines to increase their satisfaction as menu options affect customer satisfaction. Taste of food with variety in menu enhances the overall guest's meal experience. Cold foods lack an appealing scent, which is particularly significant because even seeing something wonderful to eat can cause digestive juices to flow, (Punchay & Wangpakapattanawong,2020).

2.3.3 Food presentation

Aesthetic appeal of meal is influenced by shape of the food like cube, julliens, cylinders lines and pyramids. According to Hessong (2013), garnishes play major role in client meal experience as it contributes to brightening of the plate as well enhancing the flavor of a dish. Professional chefs realize that the manner foods are presented is part of the secret to presenting excellent food. All food must be prepared in an appealing manner in that before the waiter delivers each plate to the client, it is thoroughly checked to verify that it fulfills its visual function.

According to Stewart & Goss (2013), the color and shape of plated food is the determinant of guest's perceptions in assessment of product served. The use of white round plates modifies the taste of food to delicious and sweet (Stewart & Goss, 2013). Reinhert (2012) explains that, the more food color balance, the more eye-catching the dish is, especially with inclusion of green and orange colors. Meals can satisfy hunger,

while certain colors can activate the taste buds since our eyes have been trained to see certain foods in a certain way (Amy, 2012). According to Piqueras-Fiszman, and Jaeger, (2014), when foods are displayed in different colors, the feelings-related with products will vary because glowing color pictures of the incentives used in the food image creates attention and attract at individual level. The plated food should have balanced colors as customers react differently to individual colors. According to Mwangi, (2010), customers consider cool or soft colors to be green, blue, and violet. The appearance or arrangement of food has an important effect on meals you choose to eat. Food that is both hot and chilly in temperature is acceptable. The objective of food presentation is to be appealing to the eye of customer. The food presentation (Mwangi, 2010),

2.3.4 Food Safety and Hygiene

Food hygiene standards are key element to destination selection where by customers who perceived restaurants to be dirty will be less committed to consume their products (Cha & Borchgrevink, 2018). Food safety is a vital constituent of food security that is often overlooked. Many people globally fall ill on consumption of polluted food infested with bacteria, viruses, parasites, or chemical substances, especially resulting from unhygienic fresh foods which are responsible for a number of illnesses.

Henson & Knowles (2006) asserted that, the selection of a restaurants is determined by the way customers observe food safety in the dining environment. Li & Guo (2021) suggest that, limiting of the pathogens will guarantee food safety and customer satisfaction. According to the few studies contacted, food safety has been realized as a determinant aspect in the choice of a restaurant. Gesage & Ondara (2020) argued that amongst other food attributes, food safety enables hotels to favorably contend in competitive environment as well as management commitment in ensuring food safety.

Choi and Almanza (2019) asserts that, the customer's behavioral intention to eat at the hotel is increased when it has good food safety culture. According to Adam & Afenyo (2014), food safety aspect is an important component that helps in improving food services as well as enhancing patronage of food outlets. Additional essential elements of the foodstuff include product excellence, safety and security, cleanliness, food arts, product appeal texture, flavor, temperature, consistency, color, and glossiness. Page-Reeves & Apodaca (2014) asserts that, food security and safety are associated with guest feelings when choosing destinations especially it affects women seeking safe food and clean destinations. The gaps identified may be delivery gap which occurs the minute the organization offer services that are different from what guests expects (Luk & Layton, 2002).

This is when managers provide services and food stuff that is not expected. Sometimes marketers communicate and promise cuisine interior environment to customers that they cannot deliver through promotional channels. The solution to these is to offer the promised services and products to clients. Secondly, effective and clear communication should be emphasized by the hotel managers. Satisfaction gap may also occur during service delivery because there is difference between perceived and actual services provided. Hotel managers should employ skilled personnel, implement training programs for their staff in order to provide standard results

2.4 Service Quality of Hotel

Quality of the services provided is a measure of how a hotel business delivers its services compared to what clients expect Qiu & Zhang (2019), noted that, hotel industry experiences high competition and therefore the service quality will be important for business to have competitive advantage over others. The services may include cuisine,

accommodation, transport facilities, and destination attractions. Customer satisfaction as well as loyalty is affected by the six components of service quality as noted by (Nguyen-Phuoc & Van, 2021). The meet aspect consists of consumers, hotel employees, but also customers meet amongst themselves and others. The contact between the organization and client is through waiting employees hence the way they carry out their duties affect guest's satisfaction. It was noted that, increased state of satisfaction can make a customer to become loyal to a brand because service quality affects meal experience. SERVQUAL model is a tool for measuring customer satisfaction. SERVQUAL denotes short form for service quality and it is defined as when business entity is able to meet or surpass customer's expectations This study regard reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, responsiveness, as the service components of service quality that impact consumer contentment.

2.4.1 Reliability of Service

Reliability is defined as the possibility that a tangible and intangible product will carry out its planned purpose efficiently in defined environment for a specified period of time without failure. Shin & Severt (2019) noted that, the customers considered provision of consistence services in terms of cuisine quality, room records, point of sale operations as well as housekeeping and front office operations. Megahed & Abbas (2021) noted that, reliability and responsiveness as well as food quality influenced consumer behavioral intentions. In relation to this study, it is the capacity by waiters to serve clients with consistency, on time and in credible manner as promised.

2.4.2 Assurance by the Hotel employees

The assurance by employees means giving a positive declaration intended to instill confidence, trust, and promise to client. This is in terms of security and safety of workers

and guests, credibility of product and services offered, courtesy as well as competency of employees gives guests assurance and trust. According to Nguyen-Phuoc & Van (2021), customer loyalty and contentment has been understood as two-way based on how customer trust the service because it influences customer satisfaction. Hotel business assure customer satisfaction through quality practices in terms of cuisine, service and interior environment. The employees with great personalities, well behaved, and knowledgeable instill confidence and trust to the esteemed clients (Al Idrus and Al Idrus 2021) Conduct staff must be knowledgeable cuisine quality and interior environment in order to clearly explain their advantages to esteemed customers. The waiters must be to interpret and advice on items on menu lists to create trust in customers

2.4.3 Tangible Aspects of the Hotel

It denotes physical facilities of the hotel, the examples include building itself, equipment used in all department, communication material, and workforce. Khoo-Lattimore and Ekiz (2014), hotel employees feel that, for guests to have a pleasant and luxury meal experience, they need friendly service staff who will strive for them during meal encounter. Barber & Scarcelli (2010) states that, the competitive marketing techniques by the hotel sales team is very useful in creating awareness to guests hence improves service delivery. This include the physical facilities like hotel buildings, equipment, conference facilities, employees and materials for communication. The appearance of the hotel, machines, and tools determine the level of services provided.

Han, & Hyun (2017) noted that, the overall restaurant image affects both core quality and customer satisfaction. The external appearance, interior décor, design of the kitchen and restaurants, and accommodation services also help customers to select preferred destinations. Conte (2022) noted that, hotel design is one of the few physical

components that clients could see and assess before making a choice of their own. Chi & Ouyang, (2020) posits that, accessibility, ease, hygiene/tidiness of the service environment as well as the employees are some the hard attributes.

2.4.4 Empathy of the Employees

The empathy of the employees denotes they understand and share the feelings of their customers. Barber & Scarcelli (2010) states that, the competitive marketing techniques by the hotel sales team is very useful in creating awareness to guests hence improves service delivery. Because the way customer perceives the product and services can influence customer satisfaction negatively, (Agnihotri & Krush, 2015). Customer interrelations with sales persons with commitment to promote a general feeling is very important.

Meneses & Larkin (2012) asserts that, empathetic behavior is crucial for leveraging trust and loyalty among visitors. Customer satisfaction affects business brand loyalty and it is an essential parameter for the organizational development and growth based on benefits resulting from products and services. According to Agnihotri and Krush (2015), lack of understanding of customer's perspectives may lead to unsatisfying service interactions and result to customer dissatisfaction. The waiters must keep customer's interests in their hearts by attending and caring for all types of customers. Waiters should smile and engage customers with conversations to make them feel at home.

2.4.5 Responsiveness of the Employees

The act of employees providing constant and prompt service in readiness to help customers is referred to as responsiveness. Parasuraman (1985) pointed out that, the willingness of employees to create awareness about hotel package, delivering of quick and prompt services and responding in accordance with the request made leads to

customer satisfaction. Alberlalat & Twaisse (2017) suggests that, service quality consist of food quality, employee behavior and friendliness which impacts level of customer satisfaction. According to Sharma & Srivastava (2018), responsiveness denotes to be responsible for giving prompt service because it increases customer satisfaction and helps hotels to retain the potential customer as well as applied to measure the customer satisfaction on service quality.

Knowledge, delivery and satisfaction gap occurs when managers lack knowledge about cuisine quality service quality and interior environment to correctly address customer's needs and wants and may lead to dissatisfaction, hence need for training to reduce this knowledge gap (Gafni-Lechter, (2021) The gaps are addressed by product awareness by service providers and customer sensitization on products and services by waiters and marketing team.

2.5 Interior Environment of the Hotel

Interior Environment of the hotel is space inside building of hotel or restaurant Gustafson and Mossberg (2006). Restaurants provide space room where meals are always consumed. Han & Hyun, (2017) noted that, the overall restaurant image affects both core quality and customer satisfaction. Mostly, waiters need to know what customer wants as pertains interior décor in order to equal or surpass what they expect. According to Kirima & Mutungi(2017), the tangible and intangible elements of hotel design creates guest's complete meal experience at the dining place they have chosen. Room setting should be done by a professional who understands kind of features required in different service rooms. According to Shashikala (2017), interior environment ambience, aesthetics, and social factors in terms of employees affects the level of pleasure during meal experience encounter. This are in terms of historical styles,

building designs and layouts, decorations, the fixtures, paintings and lighting systems and scent. Massawe, (2013) asserted that, competitiveness of a destination is achieved when provision of services is excellent and guests are satisfied with the good environment, facilities and hospitality of the service staff. Some even visit restaurant for social and cultural purposes to fulfill their needs. Apart from cuisine quality, the hotels equally need other major aspects like quality service, tangible facilities, internal beautifications, and location accessibility. According to Litavniece & Dembovska (2019), location and overall restaurant experience are customers' key drivers to customers' choice of a particular full service restaurant within a hotel.

The dining encounter has extra elements than just eating like physical environment. Customers seek services for relaxing, enjoying and socializing experiences other than cuisine. The hotels need to understand that a visit by a customer is a communal and ethnic act as they seek achievement of certain physical and mental requirements. The components of physical environment include, exterior and interior design, spatial layout, color, and light, air quality and the social factor. The design of hotel and materials used affect customer satisfaction. A physical component that determines choice of hotel by guest

2.5.1 Design of the Hotel

A design of hotel is a plan produced to show the appearance and purpose of a structure prior to it's a building, or making. A physical component that determines choice of hotel by guest is design. According to Kirima & Mutungi(2017), the tangible and intangible elements of hotel design creates a guest 'complete meal experience at the hotel of they have chosen. The tangibles include architectural layout, lobby design) and intangible are

the aesthetics and ambience. The ambience, interior décor, windows, theme and walls of hotel buildings determines customer turnover (Ciani, 2010).

The design of hotel in terms of ambience is important because it is a determinant to hotel selection (Ciani, 2010). Hotel design is of predominant significance during the guest meet because enjoying and having fun is the key reason of customer visits. According to Ayinla & Obi (2022), the aspect of built form of architectural design were highly correlated with customer satisfaction. Customers walking into hotel will develop first impression from the hotel interior and exterior design and therefore interior atmosphere should be activating and gorgeous to make guests have a rewarding and comfortable, calm and pleasant encounter that is satisfying and encouraging return visits.

Conte (2022) noted that, hotel design is one of the few physical components that clients could see and assess before making a choice of their own. Also design of the hotel location's history and architecture can very well strengthen the branding of the destination, hence most of these hotels are built in a stylish form with customized service (Conte, 2022). The examples include: well-designed hotel, lobbies, front office, parking area, accommodation rooms. Also, lobby with outdated old fixtures can send away visitor looking for hygienic and modern services. (Wa Ayinla, OS Okedele, 2022) The author asserts that aspect of built is highly correlated to customer satisfaction. Customers walking in will form first impression from the hotel exterior and interior environment and will determine whether to stay or not.

Potential customers browse online for accommodation services grounded firstly on the design before considering the value of services offered. According to Harjit (2018), the main determinant of customer satisfaction on hotel facility is the nearness to other

hotels, the place where it is located, architectural structure design, colors used and height of the building, External factors also determine creation of the desired service environment, landscape, parks, signposts, and surroundings add up to the exterior areas in hotel establishment. Türker & Ayşegül (2019) noted that, service scape, both internal and external presentation influence customer satisfaction and loyalty.

2.5.2 Ambience and Air quality

The impression or feeling resulting from aroma, fragrance, aura, feeling or mood related with a specific place, individual, article, or environment is referred to as ambience. Nethengwe & Shambare (2018) defines ambience as the design of the space, the way hotel employees design or arrange the space during the previous preparation. According to Rai & Anirvinna (2019), features under ambient and air quality include, lighting, comfortable furniture, background music, the room temperature, humidity, noise levels, ventilation, cleanliness, room scent calmness and security.

Ambience is significant in customer's encounter because it leads to either positive or negative impression from visitors based on service condition. A restaurant atmosphere should instill sense of enjoyment experience and individual well-being, calmness and safety, cleanliness and ambience of hotel public areas that. Gives quality to hotel. The architectural features create an impression on people visiting hotel like the building, architecture itself, the lighting color scheme level of temperature, internal, wall texture, cleanliness, decoration choices and uniforms for workers are part of hotel ambience.

Ciani, (2010) asserts that, guest will recommend a hotel if it has distinctive lighting devices as well as framework. According to İregöl (2019), fuzzy logic systems are used to create the most appropriate ambience in dining environment Uncomfortable

environment, which makes customers feel not welcomed can lead to high risk of losing them to new entrants in hospitality market.

According to Hanayasha (2016), temperature, lighting, scent, noise, service environment, and music will help a hotel's existing customer retention as well as attracting new ones. It is significant for hotels to embrace appealing as well as pleasing ambient environment. Business can have competitive edge by deliberately creating and designing the facility because lighting and colour for creates a memorable customer experience. Mateus, (2019) study in environmental psychology, reveals that mood has an influential outcome on consumer's behavior, attitudes, as well as emotions.

Managers should pay attentions on graphics, illumination, the color, symbols and artifacts of hotels rooms, restaurants, lobby, clubs, the bar area, conference rooms as they contribute massively to ambience of the establishment which impacts mood and emotion of the guests, (Wang & Mattila,2015). Red color increase blood pressure as well as appetite, blue reduce blood pressure and creates a calming environment. Restaurants establishment need its own environment. Lighting is needed by a customer for viewing the food in dining area, creates smaller spaces within a bigger space, and also enables attainment of the emotional needs of each person.

Therefore, for effective management of the restaurant, managers have to install appropriate lighting system, and right lighting intensity that compliments the color and openness of the sky as well as based on the required mood (Zhao & Paradiso, 2017). For hotel bar areas, a warm and friendly feeling for consumers is reflected through dim low lights, while for lobby bright lighting helps customers find items faster make food

and beverage choices, reception area pathways, creates a sense of space and view the menus with less difficulty

Ryu, & Ryu (2021) noted that, scent and music are matched to create excitement in consumers. According to Lashkova & Camarero, (2020), sensory experience is adequate to stimulate our senses and feelings. Distinctive and exceptional scents can also be determinants of sensory experience because customers are pinched individually depending on their feelings, and emotional state during meal experience encounter. According to Das and Hagtvedt (2016), the hotel business is encouraged to select two Hollywood music as an arousal-inducing stimuli to avoid service failure. Background Music impacts mood, leads to relaxation and pleasure as noted by Ryu & Han (2008), hence powerfully shaping consumer's experience.

Appropriate music genre from different indigenous groups and dance performances creates the preferred customer satisfaction (Chao & Liang, 2021). The dimensions of scent are excitement, emotional quality and intensity in service environment. Scent has the strongest effect from all of senses, resulting to variations in expressive form as well as long time perceptions spent in a place. Therefore, hotel restaurants, rooms as well as fitness centers need to have their specific aroma. Oktay (2016) asserts that, scent is important constituent of hotel service environment. Illumination, color and scent, spatial order and functionality are ambient factors that affect customer satisfaction which support the customer loyalty.

Prominence of flower aroma suits warm air guesthouses; sea aroma should be for hotel in resort areas. On the other hand, personal features differ in choosing fragrance. Though some consumers prefer scent from herbs, others may dislike. The same hotel managers must be mindful of the different fragrances of florets, diffusers as well as

detergent in the lavatories at hotel. Cuny & deMarles, (2020) asserts that, emotions evoked by the artwork, intercommunication between engagement arousal, the conformity of art work and melody create an appealing ambient environment to guests visiting the hotel. A neat environment is top notch of consumer experience. The different temperature zones as well as people's desires creates challenges that require good management. Hotel managers must ensure that ambience of the business surroundings remains clean and attractive daily. Hotel dining places need cooling and heating systems, good ventilation systems, and hot water systems so that nothing divert guests from excellent ambience (Chiguvi, 2017). This is to build a culture of neatness in the hotel establishment especially areas with heavy traffic. The areas with heavy traffic are reception, restrooms lounge, front desk, the back offices, stairs, and canteen. Hotel ceilings should be neat as well as with bright lighting, and well maintained furniture.

Managers in hotel should give standard services since consumers differ in physical and expressive nature. The balancing of cooling and humidity level can lead to the desired level of satisfaction. At any time, consumers who are in crowded public places, or extreme air moisture and warm temperatures seems very uncomfortable. Customers look for zone that is comfortable with air conditioning as well as low in humidity levels. Unfavorable temperature levels in hotel restaurants make customers change to different hospitality establishment. Air conditioning is used by facility managers to regulate indoor temperatures and moisture levels. Customers need fresh air, spacious meeting rooms appropriate room temperature.

2.5.3 The facility aesthetic

The facility aesthetic denotes quality that gives pleasure to the guests. All architectural design, internal design as well as beautification contributing to the pleasure and attraction of the hotel area is facility aesthetics. According to Ryu & Jang (2007), interior environment aesthetics, ambience, and workforce affects the level of customer pleasure. Overall color, decor as well as ambience is significant for consumer's valuable experience. Lockwood & Pyun (2019) asserts that, 'aesthetic quality' mostly has an impact on 'arousal' and 'Propensity to spend' Lee & Lee (2015) asserts that, the facility aesthetics play important role as key a differentiator from other competitors in the hospitality industry. Furniture, plants or flowers, drawings or paintings, decorations on walls and ceiling are facility aesthetics used as marketing tools to win over customer reactions like, emotions, attitudes, prices perceptions, value perceptions, customer contentment and behavior

2.5.4 The Social Factor in Terms of Hotel Employees

Workforces selling product and service are referred to as waiters representing social factor. Fakharyan & Vosta (2015) posits that, guest-to-guest communications have emotional impact on contentment, dependability, and verbal communication behaviors in the hotel set up. Performance by waiting staff during a face-to-face service encounter influences customer's satisfaction, trust, and behavioral intentions, positive or negative oral communication, repurchases, as well as revisits (Han, & Ryu, 2012). The gender looks and number of workers, forms service personnel. Waiters have emotional impact on mental reactions of clients that affect consumer purchasing decision (Kim & Ryu, 2013). Waiters play significant part in the food and beverage setup Conduct staff mainly link between the client and the kitchenette or bar, taking orders from customers as well as delivering, food and drinks and make sure that every need is taken care of.

2.5.5 Layout of interior environment.

It is components that make customers happy when dining out in restaurant. Placement of modern machineries, working tool and fittings arranged in an environment in hospitality set up is layout. Barber & Scarcelli (2010) noted that, the way dining room is designed and laid out can enhance the pleasure and satisfaction of the visiting clients. Location and dining table arrangement has impact on the customer experience therefore, the waiters should create spacious dining environment for easy movements (Ciani, 2010). The time of staying and buying more product and service will be longer because decent layout will recommend a constructive impression for consumers. The important tangible environment components in middle to upper class eatery is the laying of the tables. Placing florets or candles as a decoration a table makes customers feel a good, warm service environment. Table laying can impact mental reactions and affective responses (sensations) customers hence affecting customer behavior. Table settings will influence consumer behavior. Appropriate restaurant layout ensures proper circulation of air, easier movements by both customers and staff in and out. It facilitates connectivity of the waiters and backend during service time. Furthermore, good layout enhances comfort for both diners and hotel employees. The appropriate layout allows for enough ventilation hence creating pleasant environment for the clients

2.6 Customer Product Knowledge

Customer product knowledge is understanding the products' features which allows one to present their benefits accurately and persuasively. Customer product knowledge is a skill each client, manager and sales personnel should have. Dastane & Fazlin (2017) noted that, for any business to achieve product and service oriented customers, it must meet their needs and monitor as well as evaluate levels of satisfaction. It is necessary for employee to have knowledge about a product's characteristics and ability to clearly

explain it' for better understanding. Product knowledge and service quality can increase competitive advantage and customer satisfaction in hotels

Al Idrus and Al Idrus (2021) further explained that, when a customer has a better understanding of the product together with excellent service delivery, competitive advantage and customer satisfaction is increased based on individual levels of trust. According to Suchánek & Králová (2019), the information about the product, consumer contentment and customer loyalty impacts levels of customer satisfaction. Post purchase experience with particular good over specific period affects the customer satisfaction, intent and loyalty (Suchánek & Králová, 2019). The process includes collecting information on products and services that influences guest's purchase decisions making and customer satisfaction. Customers should have information on product attributes for future recommendation to potential customers hence vital for improving performance and business growth. According to Kralova (2018), customer product knowledge determines value of customer satisfaction because it leads to creation of trust and assurance in terms of service quality.

Information is always about products, suppliers, markets and consumer wants and needs, as well as ideas about product invention and trends. Customer product knowledge is classified into three, procuring, usage, and consumption knowledge and plays a significant role in customer behavior, because clients act differently at different levels of information (Zagreb Nova, 2017). Product knowledge was classified into three classes: brand knowledge; attribute knowledge, and knowledge of post purchase experience.

Product knowledge is influenced by consumer awareness about a product. Customer product knowledge consists of self-assessed knowledge, denoting the level of consumer

personal understanding of a product, objective knowledge, which means the level and type of product information that customer stores in his memory. Post purchase experience-based knowledge occurs when guest previously used the product. It was noted that product-knowledge has direct impacts on consumer contentment. Customer product knowledge creates lasting impression on products offered hence leads to customer contentment.

2.6.1 Trust as indicator for customer product knowledge

Trust is the confidence a person has over something or an individual. According to this study, it is the belief consumers have over cuisine and service quality and interior environment. Trust is a powerful technique for increasing impact by making customers feel comfortable about the whole meal experience. The trust is created through effective communication and marketing strategies implemented by service providers it is the aptitude for understanding the company's offerings thereby enhancing the prowess of the customer service role. Customers will respond to products and services when the sales team communicate clearly and instill confidence in them. The accurate information will prompt the customers to develop trust on what is being offered in the market.

2.6.2 Lasting impression indicator for customer product knowledge

Lasting impression is long lasting perceptions an individual has about product and services based on this study. This include impression on cuisine, service quality and interior environment. The customer who are happy and satisfied with services and products become loyal, develop purchase intents. The clear information from the service providers create trust amongst their customers hence leading to lasting impression.

2.6.3 Feeling as an indicator for customer product knowledge

The payment can be huge when hotel managers connect well with clients' emotions, This is conducted through promotional sales, discounts, motivational package like free meals for children under three years' provision of safe comfortable environment Effective communication fosters trust with others. The ability by sales team to pay attention and embrace different opinions and views helps customers to develop trust. As waiters serve as a role model, trust will extend to customers as well as fellow customers and this makes them feel trusted and therefore trust others.

2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter consist of literature review of studies conducted in previous years about meals experience dimensions and how it affects customer satisfaction. Literature was also reviewed on customer satisfaction, cuisine quality, service quality, interior environment and customer product knowledge as the moderating variable. The constructs of every variable was discussed in details The indicators for customer satisfaction were Revisits Repeat Purchases Positive word of mouth. The cuisine indicators were nutritional value sensory attributes food presentation food safety and hygiene indicators for service quality were service quality reliability, assurance tangibles empath responsiveness. Indicators for interior environment included design ambience facility aesthetics social factor layout. Indicators for moderating variable which was Customer product knowledge were trust feeling lasting impression

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Overview

This chapter gives an explanation on methodology used to ensure achievement of research objectives. Methodology included, research design, target population, study area, sample frame, procedures for sampling, approaches used in gathering the data, and instrument, validity and reliability of research tool, data analysis procedures and matters on ethical considerations.

3.2. Research Design

Research design is a framework consisting of study approaches selected to conduct a study. The design helps person conducting study choose appropriate research methods that suits the study in order to yield standard and reliable results. This study adopted explanatory research design. This design is applied in getting opinions as well as views on prevailing status of a phenomenon in comparison with prevailing circumstances. Source Additionally the design is appropriate for investigating phenomenon that had not been explained well. This research used explanatory research design for collection of quantitative data that explained the features of meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction in selected hotels in North Rift Region Kenya. Explanatory research design was highly recommended because the researcher is able to gather quantitative data. The responses were tabulated descriptively using; percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviations.

3.3. Study Area

Study area is a place the researcher need to find the information or articles relevant to the study. The area may be national or region with particular culture, geographical sites.

The study area was within North Rift Region Kenya, specifically on selected star rated hotels as per the Tourism Regulatory Association (2019.) According to standard media article of 23rd April, 2013, the North rift region was witnessing a steady growth in hospitality industry with a number of hotels having reached 200 in number by the beginning of that year. Additional boost for the prospects of tourism and hospitality in the region made it more appropriate area to conduct this study.

The newly formed regional economic bloc North Rift Economic Bloc (NOREB) has attributed to continuous expansion of Eldoret and other small towns within the region. The rapid growth of hotel and tourism sector in Eldoret town also has potential for the improvement of agro tourism which contributes to customer satisfaction. The pull factors for heavy investment in hotel industry has increased demand for accommodation and conference facilities in terms of meal experience dimensions.

In addition, modern hotels have come up with modern interior designs and attractive environment. Eldoret town is characterized by hotel business which is rapidly growing and offers variety tourism package in terms of cuisine, well designed buildings to the public and travelers coming from foreign countries. Conference facilities are highly needed by tourists who visit destinations for meetings and business missions. There has been an advancement of towns like Eldoret, Kabarnet in the area due to availability of funds channeled to county governments by the National Government.

3.4. Target Population

The target population *is a* group of items or people that the researcher intends to conduct study and make conclusions based on findings. Target population was 1632 customers. Researcher adopted Tourism Regulatory Association (2019) to establish the sample frame and target population size. The researcher used Fellner Schall formula to calculate

the target population from number of guests spending night in the star rated hotels within North Rift Region Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

Table 3.1: Capacity of star rated Selected Hotels

NO	ESTABLISHMENT	CAPACITY		RATING
		ROOMS	BEDS	
1	Boma Inn, Eldoret	68	80	****
2	The Noble Conference Centre	53	67	***
3	Kerio View Lodge	28	40	***
4	Sirikwa Hotel Eldoret	70	100	***
5	Samich Resort	15	30	***
6	Hotel Comfy & Lodge	80	100	**
7	Starbucks Hotel and Restaurant	80	160	**
8	Hotel Winstar	70	85	**
9	Poa Place Resort	15	35	**
10	Kenmosa Resort	15	20	**
11	Cicada Hotel	50	50	**
TOTALS				

(Source: TRA, 2019)

Target population (N) = $\frac{\text{Number of rooms} \times 30 \text{ nights} \times \text{occupancy rate}}{\text{Average length of stay}}$

Therefore, the target population = $\frac{544 \times 30 \times 0.30}{3} = 1632$

Table 3.2: Population per Strata

(Source: Author, 2022)

S/N	HOTEL STAR RATES	NUMBER OF HOTELS	No of rooms per strata
1	Four star hotels	1	68
2	Three star hotels	4	166
3	Two star hotels	6	310
	TOTAL	11	544

3.5 Sampling Procedure

Sampling denotes selecting representative group a researcher wishes to collect data from in the study. Sampling procedure is a process to select a sub group that represents a population to be respondents in a study. Stratified sampling technique was adopted to classify hotels into strata to enable achieve representation from a number of sub groups in a population, (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). Strata are subgroups with similar characteristics. According to this study, hotels were grouped into strata based on star rates and guest who had booked for accommodation services at the time The selected star rated hotels were stratified based on star rate levels namely four, three and two star rated hotels. Since target population was large, the sampling techniques used was: stratified and systematic sampling Kothari (2004).

3.6 Sample Size

Sample Size the number of people or subjects that represents a population and intended to participate in a study. A sample size is a subsection representing population chosen to be studied, (Latham, 2007). An adequate sample size must be selected by the researcher in order to obtain sufficient data on population and to be examined easily (Kothari, 2004). Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) noted that, sample size must be big and sufficient for good representation of the entire population of the study. Samples of 10% to 30% of a population, according to Kotler, (2009), can be reliable if picked carefully. According to Kerlinger (1973), 10-30% of certain group of the population with comparable features and is identified as the intended audience for research forms a representative sample. Researcher used 30% of the population. This study used 490 participants as a sample size. Table 3.3 shows number of participants per stratum.

Table 3.3: Number of participants per Stratum

	Hotel rates	star	Number of hotels	No of participants	No of questionnaires per hotel
1	Four hotels	star	1	61	61
2	Three hotels	star	4	150	38
3	Two hotels	star	6	279	47
	TOTAL		11	490	

(Source: Author, 2022)

3.7 Sampling Techniques

Stratified sampling is described as technique in which the total population with similar characteristics grouped smaller strata. The strata is formed based on some common characteristics in the population data. According to this study, targeted group was those customers who had booked for accommodation service in selected hotels after dividing the population into strata, the researcher randomly selects the sample proportionally. Stratified sampling was adopted for sampling the representative population. In the situation with greater number of the population, stratified sampling is the best procedure because it can be equally being inclusive in strata. Source the star rated hotels were grouped into strata based on star rates and this were four, three and two star.

3.8. Data Collection Instrument

Questionnaires are tools for data collection which provides effective means of getting feedback from a big sample before quantitative analysis as observed, (Singh & Gupta, 2015). To gather the information from the respondents, researcher with assistance of two assistants used self-administering technique to distribute the questionnaires Five-point

Likert scale with a set of standardized questions with a fixed scheme were used to gather information from customers who would have been booked in for accommodation at that time of survey in star rated hotels. Questionnaires were employed to obtain the data from respondents who were mainly customers booked and spending a night in star rated hotels. The researcher adopted and modified questionnaires from, (Dipesh & Panthi,2018). Five-point Likert scale measurement which was employed to gather information. Researcher used quantitative observation which uses numerical measurement, because its results are more accurate than qualitative observation methods, which cannot be measured. an appropriate sample size was determined to ensure accuracy and consistency A sample included enough respondents to make general observations that reflect the entire population.

3.9 Pilot Study

A pilot study is a smaller-sized study done to assist in planning and modification of the main study Pilot study on the research instruments was done in Nakuru town for validity and reliability testing. Pilot study was conducted to test the research process and allowed detection of mistakes. Questionnaire were administered to 10% of the sample size which was 490 and 49 respondents participated in pilot study. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2012), (10%) of the sample size is appropriate to conduct pilot study. Magalhaes & Gill, (2010) posits that, sample size for pilot study varied between 5-10% of research sample size.

It involved process of monitoring and correction on any mistakes identified. Problems detected in study method and data instruments implementation and gathering processes were evaluated and corrected, in order to yield valid and reliable results. (Cooper & Schindler,2011). Respondents who booked for accommodation were systematically

selected in star rated hotels in Nakuru with similar characteristic to the selected hotels in North Rift Region, Kenya. Hotels and individuals had similarities as those of target population in North Rift region. This indicates that the town also showed potential growth in hospitality sector with a number of star rated hotels as those in North rift region.

3.10 Validity and Reliability of the study Instruments

Data collection tools credibility is discussed in the sections below.

3.10.1 Validity of study Instruments

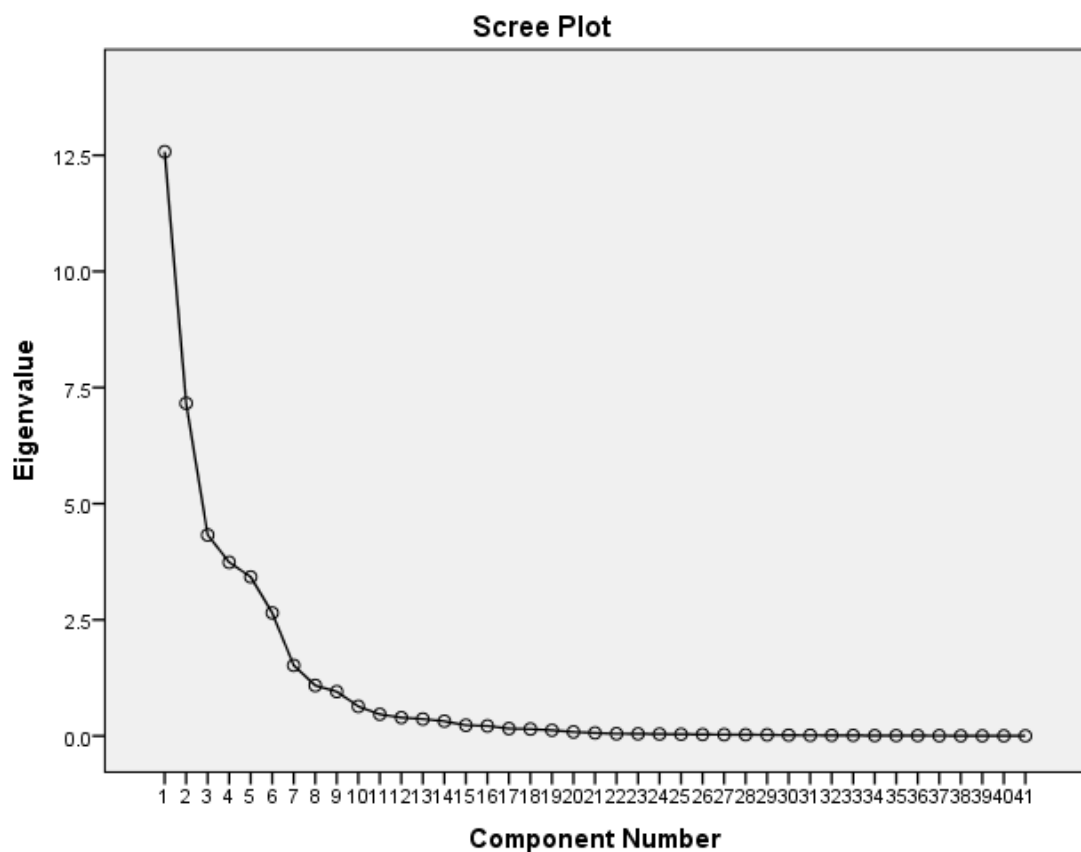
The extent to which the instrument is precisely measured in quantitative study is validity. Source It indicates point to which the instrument measures constructs of this research. Both construct as well as content validity were conducted with aim of ascertaining if the study tools were valid. Oluwatayo (2012) further explained that, content validity aims at validating research instruments. The aim of research instrument validation was to reduce mistakes during measuring processes. Any unclear feedback form was to be addressed before actual data collection respectively, (DeAngelo, 1981). Kuntari,, Chariri, & Nurdhiana, (2017).posit Validity test is used to measure validity of the questionnaires For a tool's ease of usage, clarity, and availability, validity valuations were crucial. The two supervisors monitored and checked question content and face value of study tools.

Factor analysis is a technique used to decrease a big number of variables into smaller numbers of factors Maximum common variance is extracted from all variables and puts them into a common score. As an index of all variables, scores can be used for further analysis. The factor analysis was also used for validity testing and yielded the results as tabularized in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy Survey Scale

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.729
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	37554.261
	Df	820
	Sig.	.000

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.729, as showed in Table 3.4. After the test of Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity the results were significant with a value of Chi-Square (χ^2) of 37554.261, df = 820, p = 0.000. The KMO of .729, with a significant Chi-square. The test revealed that the data were adequate to carry out a study

**Figure 3.1 Scree Plot**

(Source: Author, 2022)

There were no items which were problematic since they did not fail to reach the cut-off point of 0.4; therefore, no item was excluded in all further analyses. Eighteen factors emerged with the first factors made up of 18 items and the last having two items. This implies that the study instrument was adequate to carry out a study.

Table 3.5: Factors loadings (item-component correlations) of itemsComponent Matrix^a

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Food at facility was nutritious	.919				
2. Customer would like to experience feeling in the hotel	.883				
3. Customer would like to build everlasting relationship with the hotel service providers	.878				
4. Food smell provided at the facility was enticing	.860				
5. Food provided at the facility was delicious	.858				
6. Food was well presented and eye catching	.851				
7. Customer would like to invite friends and family along to hotel	.790				
8. Variety of menu items was at the hotel	.782				
9. Waiters were never too busy to respond to customers request at hotel			.758		
10. Customer had known the type of products offered at the facility			.757		
11. The products offered at the facility was of good quality			.737		

12. Fresh food was served at the facility	.705
13. Products provided at the facility matched product innovation and trends as per their brand and packaging	.696
14. Food served was clean and free from pathogens and additives	.690
15. The hotel image was well known	.661
16. The hotel had adequate number of staff	.541
17. Food portions was satisfying and served at right temperature	.506
18. The curtains provided adequate lighting	.350
19. Type of products that the customer had known and preferred had high nutritious content were offered at the facility	.776
20. Interior design and decoration of the hotel were visually appealing	.740
21. Products was prepared at the facility using right ingredients	.731
22. Customer had made repetitive purchase at the facility	.695
23. Attendants gave service any time n order was made and promptly	.674
24. Customer would like to make hotel as the future choice	.668
25. Hotel room temperature was comfortable	.513

26. Attendants served and treated customers with respect	.500	
27. The products offered alongside the incentives in pricing	.529	
28. Ambience reflects the theme heritage and culture of the hotel	.471	
29. Restaurant attendants had customers interest at heart		.716
30. Waiters spoke eloquently and clearly		.692
31. Seating arrangements was good and gave enough movement space		.685
32. Attendants created trust and confidence in customers		.648
33. Customer had referred new clients to consume meals at the facility		.597
34. Painting and pictures on the wall were attractive		.540
35. Staff were neat and well dressed in work uniform		.693
36. Background music and sound gives a pleasurable sensation		.547
37. Furniture in hotel was clean and appropriate		.494
38. Attendants gave customers personal attention and care		.451
39. Hotel staff were very friendly and welcoming		.418

40. Hotel attendants were very compassionate in serving clients	.457
41. Knowledge level and politeness of employees created excellent trust and confidence	.583

(Source: Author, 2022)

According to Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2009), three variables and above are necessary to reflect one construct so as to provide minimum coverage of the construct's theoretical domain. Consequently, all factors which had three and above variables attaining the cut-off point of 0.4 were retained and new subscales renamed as indicated in Table 3.5. According to Yong and Pearce (2013) loading item cut off can be chosen for a statistically meaningful rotated factor loading based on pragmatic reasoning.

3.10.2 Reliability results of the Research Instruments:

The measure of level where a study tool produces a set of ideas that are consistent after pre-testing is referred to as reliability, (Saunders & Wang, 2010). Reliability was tested to determine the internal consistency of scale of research tools Measurement and calculation used Cronbach's alpha coefficient of which a measure of 0.6 to 0.9 was considered enough to yield consistent and reliable results. Reliable generated scale is shown by higher value. Threshold of 0.7 was an acceptable reliability coefficient, (Cooper & Shandler, 2011) . The data was reliable when consistency continues being higher.

Testing of reliability was checked to examine the consistency of results after retesting the specimen or items for the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Cronbach's alpha more or equivalent to 0.6 was regarded dependable, (Garson, 2010). After the reliability analysis the whole tool, the findings indicated Cronbach's alpha for the variable tools were as indicated in Table 3.6. Reliability analysis the whole tool of 41 items resulted to a measure of scale reliability of 0.855 which indicated the scale to be reliable because the level of internal consistency was high.

Table 3.6 Reliability Statistics

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Cuisine quality	0.855	8
Service quality	0.740	9
Interior environment	0.721	9
Customer product knowledge	0.747	7
Customer satisfaction	0.792	8

(Source: Author, 2022)

3.11 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher followed all research protocols, the researcher with help of two assistants who are holders of bachelor degree personally gave out the questionnaires to respondents. The approach of collecting data by use of questionnaire allowed use of large representative samples and for that reason the outcomes were very reliable. The information gathered assisted the researcher to answer questions measure and predict the future probabilities. The researcher obtained an introduction letter from the University as well as permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Once granting of permits are is done, appointments was booked with the Hotel management to determine the most suitable day and time to carry out the study. The questionnaires were used to collect information from all the respondents

3.12. Data Analysis and interpretation:

It is a process of screening, cleaning, altering, and modeling data to check out the accuracy of the data before processing. Data preparation is done with the aim to determine and remove beneficial information that is used for coming to conclusion and making decisions based upon study findings that is efficient and communicated easily, (Creswell, 2013). The questionnaire generated quantitative data. Collected data were

cleaned and checked for completeness. The analysis process was done by use of descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

To analyze the moderator effect link between independent and dependent variables, descriptive as well as inferential statistics were used. Descriptive statistics described data for a sample and it included frequencies, percentages and standard deviation. Inferential statistics consisted of correlation and multiple regression analysis. Presentation of the results were done by frequency distribution tables. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to establish the level of link between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction.

Hierarchical moderating regression analysis was employed to test moderation effect of customer product knowledge on link between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction. (The scores for cuisine and service quality, interior environment) which were independent variables, scores for customer product knowledge, (second predictor moderator) and scores for customer satisfaction, (third dependent variable)

3.12.1 Steps in testing moderation before introducing model one and model two

- i. The variables in the study should be standardized for easier interpretation.
- ii. The model Y should be fitted in regression from the independent variables x
- iii. Fitting a regression model predicting the dependent variable Y from both the independent variable x and the moderating variable z. Both effects as well as the model in general (R^2) the variation in dependent variable should be significant.
- iv. The interaction effect should be added to the previous model one by one and check for a significant proportion of variance in dependent variable (R^2)'also

check significant effect by the new interaction term and the coefficient of the interaction should be different from zero. If both are significant, then moderation is occurring.

Equation 1: Regressing the independent variables (cuisine quality service quality, interior environment) on dependent variables (customer satisfaction).

Ordinary Least Square Equation

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots$$

(i)

Moderated regression model

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon_1 \dots\dots\dots$$

(ii)

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 Z + \varepsilon_2 \dots\dots\dots$$

(iii)

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 Z + \beta_5 Z \cdot X_1 + \varepsilon_3 \dots\dots\dots$$

(iv)

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 Z + \beta_5 Z \cdot X_1 + \beta_6 Z \cdot X_2 + \varepsilon_4 \dots\dots\dots$$

(v)

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 Z + \beta_5 Z \cdot X_1 + \beta_6 Z \cdot X_2 + \beta_7 Z \cdot X_3 + \varepsilon_5 \dots\dots\dots$$

(vi)

Whereby:

Y represents customer satisfaction

β_0 represents constant

β_i represents beta coefficients

X_1 represents cuisine quality

X_2 represents service quality

X_3 represents interior environment

Z represents customer product knowledge

ε represents error term

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots$$

Customer satisfaction = constant + β_1 cuisine quality + β_2 service quality + β_3 interior environment + error term *i*

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 Z + \varepsilon_2 \dots\dots\dots$$

Customer satisfaction = constant + β_1 cuisine quality + β_2 Service quality + β_3 interior environment + β_4 customer product knowledge + error term *ii*

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 Z + \beta_5 Z \cdot X_1 + \varepsilon_3$$

Customer satisfaction = Constant + β_1 cuisine quality + β_2 Service quality + β_3 interior environment + β_4 customer product knowledge + β_5 customer product knowledge* cuisine quality + error term *iii*

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 Z + \beta_5 Z \cdot X_1 + \beta_6 Z \cdot X_2 + \varepsilon_4..$$

Customer satisfaction = Constant + β_1 cuisine quality + β_2 Service quality + β_3 interior environment + β_4 customer product knowledge + β_5 customer product knowledge* cuisine quality + β_6 customer product knowledge* service quality + error term *iiii*

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 Z + \beta_5 Z \cdot X_1 + \beta_6 Z \cdot X_2 + \beta_7 Z \cdot X_3 + \varepsilon_5.$$

Customer satisfaction = Constant + β_1 cuisine quality + β_2 Service quality + β_3 interior environment + β_4 customer product knowledge + β_5 customer product knowledge* cuisine quality + β_6 customer product knowledge* service quality + β_7 customer product knowledge* interior environment + error term *iiii*

Customer satisfaction is the dependent variable, β are regression parameters, customer product knowledge is moderating variable while ε are random error terms in this study.

3.12.2 Regression Assumptions

Regression assumptions formed basis for multiple regression. Linearity assumption indicates that independence of observations. Independence means that there is no relation between the different examples the link of predicted and the group of predictor variables was linear. Assumption of Linear regression was tested by use of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficients. Residual for each observation in the data set was plotted on the vertical axis against the fitted value (predicted values) on the horizontal axis as shown on scatter plot.

A scatter plot is a chart, or graph that represent values for two different numeric variables by using the dots and is used to observe relationship between variables. It was expected that after plotting, that the residual plots showed both negative and positive values randomly distributed across the entire range of the variable plotted on the horizontal axis. If the residual points were scattered without an obvious pattern. The Multicollinearity assumes that none of the predictor variables are highly correlated with each other and is measured by use of Tolerance and variance inflation factor.

Tolerance measures how much beta coefficients are affected by the presence of other independent variables in a model. When tolerance values are small, it indicates Multicollinearity levels are high. Tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) was used to test Multicollinearity assumption. A tolerance value that is below 0.10 and a VIF value that exceeds 10 reveals that there is Multicollinearity problems. Potential problem may occur when tolerance value is below 0.2, additionally if tolerance value is near to 1 it is revealed that there is little Multicollinearity for all predictor variables.

According to Field (2009) and Williams (2015), Multicollinearity threat may occur when tolerance is close to 0. According to Lind & Wathen (2012), all independent variables with a Variance Inflation Factor that is close to 1 and exceeds threshold of 10 indicates no correlation between them hence retaining them in the analysis. If the researcher wants to visualize correlation effect among the variables, then the scatter plot can be used. When VIF value ≤ 4 while a value of ≥ 10 suggests extreme Multicollinearity.

When the data roughly fits a bell curve shape before running regression, the normality assumption is upheld. Residuals should normally be distributed with a mean of zero. Shapiro-Wilk was used to check a normal distribution of residuals. The Shapiro–Wilk test is a test used to find out if the model was good fit in a study. That is, it looks at how close the sample data fit to a normal distribution. This is done by converting the data to a distribution with mean and standard deviation. Residuals should normally be distributed with a mean of zero.

Shapiro-Wilk was used to check a normal distribution of residuals. Expected cumulative probability and observed cumulative probability on the vertical and horizontal axes respectively is shown by normal probability plot. Lind & Wathen, (2012) asserts that the data is normally distributed when the plotted points of residuals in the normal probability plot fall a long roughly straight line at 45 –degree angle drawn from the lower left to the upper right of the graph. Random error components which are identically and independently distributed upholds the autocorrelation assumption. The correlation between the successive disturbances is zero. In a situation the residuals have no pattern, not highly correlated, no long runs of positive or negative residuals is referred to as successive residuals. Autocorrelation will occur when residuals are

correlated and it was checked by use of the Durbin-Watson statistic. According to Lind, Marchal and Wathen (,2012), the Durbin-Watson test statistic is between 0 and 4, when value of Durbin- Watson statistic is 2.00 it indicates no autocorrelation among the residuals, there is positive autocorrelation when it gets close to 0 then and when it exceeds 2 then that is an indicator of negative autocorrelation. It is a rule that Watson (DW) statistic value must be between 0 and 4. If $DW = 2$, it means that there is no autocorrelation, $0 < DW < 2$ the interpretation is that autocorrelation is positive while $2 < DW < 4$ means the autocorrelation is negative. (Marchal and Wathen 2012), Seasonal or correlated pattern in residual value is showed by the residual vs time plot. Homoscedasticity assumption means the residuals are equal in variances or similar in different groups that are being compared. Whether values of dependent variable is small or large, the errors are similar. Equality of error difference was checked by Levenes test.

3.12.3 Results for Multiple Regression Model Assumption

The researcher had to ensure that data does not violate multiple regression model assumptions by testing for linear assumption, data normality, multiple correlation, autocorrelation and Homoscedasticity.

3.12.3.1 Test for Linearity Assumption

Linearity assumption is statistical model that explains dependent variable depending on variation in one or more independent variables. Normal distribution scores of each variable was tested and checked for assumption of linear regression Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficients was used to test the assumption of linearity. Outcome values showed in Table 3.7 showed the correlation coefficient values of the independent variables. Cuisine quality 0.740. Service quality 0.750, interior environment 0.169 and

customer product knowledge 0.888. The study revealed that correlation coefficient values differed from zero which indicated that linearity assumption was upheld.

Table 3.7 Linearity Test

Variables	Coeff	Sig.
Cuisine quality	.740**	.000
Service quality	.750**	.000
The interior environment	.169**	.000
Customer Product Knowledge	.888**	.000

(Source: Author, 2022)

Linearity assumption in this study was also tested with Normal p-p plot of regression standardized residual as shown in Figure 3.2.

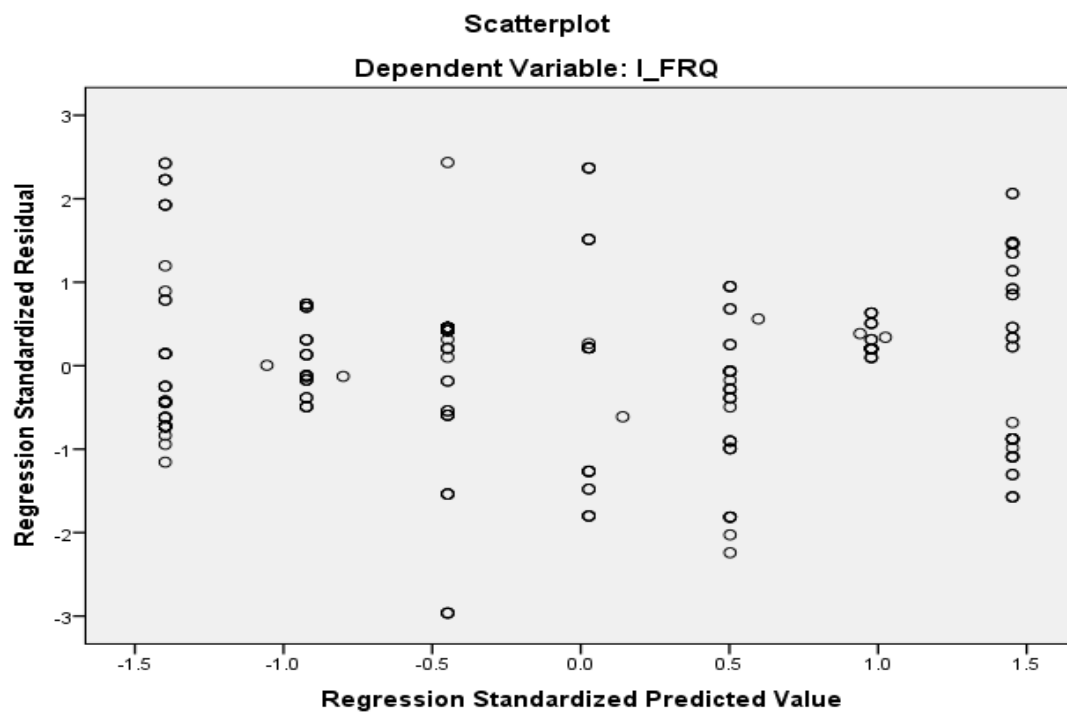


Figure 3.2: Adopted Scatter plot for standardized residual for testing linearity

3.12.3.2 Multicollinearity Test Assumption

Multicollinearity is referred to as a state in which more than two independent variables are linearly related in multiple regression model. Variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance were used in assessing Multicollinearity assumption. The tolerance and variance inflation factor values for cuisine and service quality as well as interior environment are presented in Table 3.8. Tolerance value for cuisine quality was (tolerance=0.635 with VIF=1.576), tolerance value for service quality was (tolerance=0.660 with VIF=1.516) and tolerance value for the interior environment was (tolerance=0.910 with VIF=1.099). Findings revealed that the three variables had all tolerance values which exceeded 0.10 and VIF values all below 10 resembling that of Field, (2009) results. This indicates lack of Multicollinearity.

Table 3.8 Multicollinearity Assumption Test

Variables	Tolerance	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
Cuisine quality	.635	1.576
Service quality	.660	1.516
The Interior environment	.910	1.099

(Source: Author, 2022)

3.12.3.3 Normality Assumption Test

Normality assumption states that the data means across independent variables. is normally distributed. Data is normally distributed if the probability exceeds 0.05. Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted to test whether the data was normal or not. Normality assumption test findings in Table 3.9 revealed that the data was normal since the

significance values for Shapiro-Wilk exceeded 0.05. The Shapiro-Wilk significance value for cuisine quality was $p=.849>0.05$. The Shapiro-Wilk significance value for Service quality was $p=.631>0.05$. The Shapiro-Wilk significance value for interior environment was $p=.367>0.05$. The results revealed that data was normally distributed. According to Saunders and Thornhill (2012), data is normally distributed if the probability exceeds 0.05. Also, number of observations was large, therefore normality of the data was assumed

Table 3.9 Normality Assumption Test

Variables	Statistic	Sig.
Cuisine quality	.849	.224
Service quality	.631	.199
The Interior environment	.367	.180

(Source: Author, 2022)

Plot shows the distribution of the data against the expected normal distribution. Observations points lied approximately on a straight line. The curve did not deviate from the straight line.

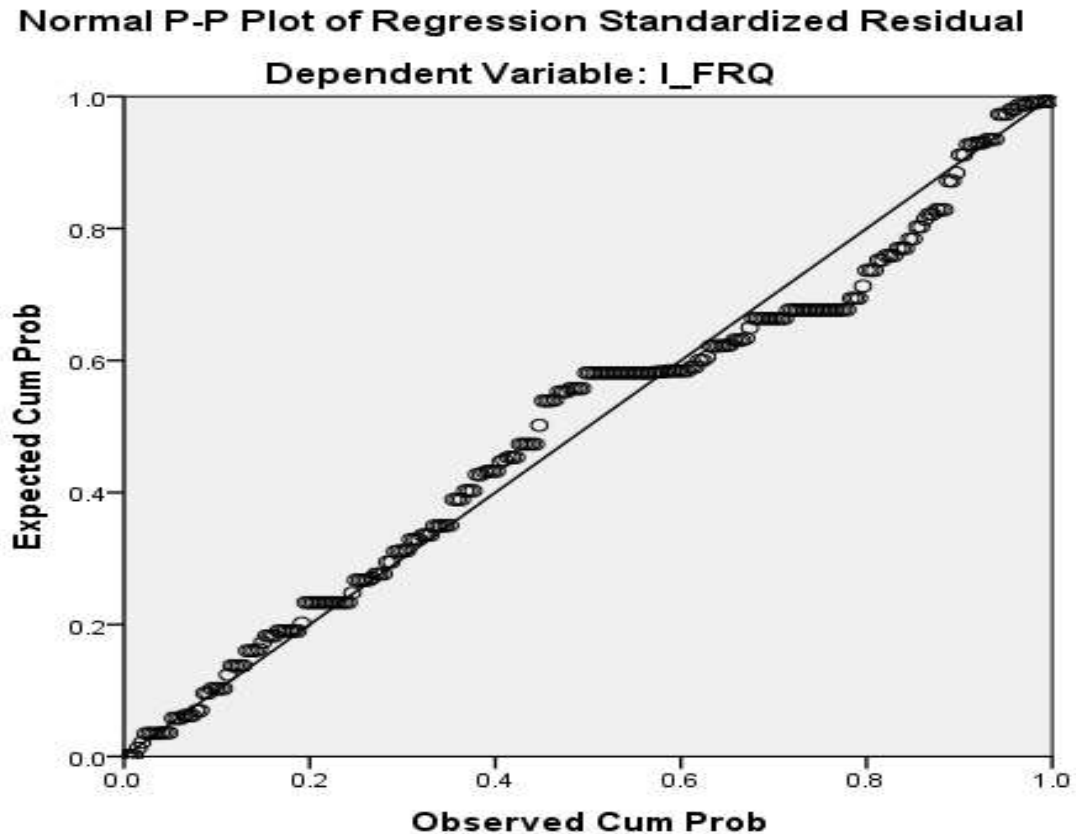


Figure 3.3: Normal p-p plot of regression standardized residual for normality testing

3.12.3.4 Autocorrelation Assumption Test

Autocorrelation refers to the degree of correlation between the values of the similar variables across different observations in the data. The coefficients are constant over a time. The assumption is that random error components or disturbances are identically and independently distributed. So in the model

Durbin-Watson was used to test autocorrelation assumption. Table 3.10 revealed that the Durbin-Watson statistic for cuisine quality was $d=1.050$, service quality was $d=.554$ and Durbin-Watson statistic for interior environment was $d=.235$. Durbin-Watson values were between $0.2 < d < 1.5$ and hence there was no first order linear autocorrelation in the multiple linear regression data. Further, this implied the

autocorrelation assumption was made since the Durbin-Watson was within the range of which indicates this implied the autocorrelation assumption was upheld

Table 3.10 Autocorrelation Assumption Test

Variables	Durbin-Watson
Cuisine quality	1.050
Service quality	.554
The interior environment	.235

(Source: Author, 2022)

3.12.3.5 Homoscedasticity Test Assumption

This assumption means same variance across the values of the dependent and independent variables. The violation of homoscedasticity occurs when the size of the error term is different across values of an independent variable. Levine's test of error variances was used to test this assumption. Table 3.11 showed Levene statistical significance for cuisine quality was 54.407 with an associated p-value of .190. Service quality had a Levene statistical significance value of 52.574 with an associated p-value of .177. Levene Statistic significance for interior environment was 57.464 with an associated p-value of .129. Customer product knowledge has a Levene statistical significance value of 85.318 with an associated p-value of .188. Since the probability associated with the Levene Statistic were all above 0.05 level of significance, it implied that the variance of the independent variables was homogeneous.

Table 3.11 Homoscedasticity Assumption Test

Variables	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Cuisine quality	54.407	6	392	.190
Service quality	52.574	4	394	.177
The interior environment	57.464	8	390	.129
Customer Product Knowledge	85.318	4	394	.188

(Source: Author, 2022)

3.13 Chapter summary

This section presents the summary of chapter three Overview is highlighted on research design which explanatory research design. This design is applied in getting opinions as well as views on prevailing status of a phenomenon in comparison with prevailing circumstance. The study area was within North Rift Region Kenya, specifically on selected star rated hotels as per the Tourism Regulatory Association (2019.) Stratified sampling technique was adopted to classify hotels into strata to enable achieve representation from a number of sub groups in a population. This study used 490 participants as a sample size. Five-point Likert scale with a set of standardized questions with a fixed scheme were used to gather information from customers

Pilot study on the research instruments was done in Nakuru town for validity and reliability testing. The factor analysis was also used for validity testing and yielded the results which revealed that the data was adequate to carry out a study Data was reliable Researcher observed all study protocols Descriptive and inferential analysis were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Regression assumptions formed basis for multiple regression data and did not violet the regression model.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview

The chapter covers analysis of primary data collected using questionnaires as well as explanation of research results. The purpose of the study was to examine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction in star rated hotels within North Rift Region, Kenya. Specific objectives were to examine the effect of cuisine quality on customer satisfaction, investigate the effects of service quality on customer satisfaction, determine the effect of interior environment on customer satisfaction, and to examine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on the relationship between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction

Hypotheses of the Study H₀₁: There is no significant effect of cuisine quality on customer satisfaction, h₀₂: there is no significant effect of service quality on customer satisfaction, h₀₃: there is no significant effect of interior environment on customer satisfaction, h₀₄: customer product knowledge has no significant effect on the meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction.

The response rate and the demographic characteristics of the customers is presented in this chapter. Additionally, background information on descriptive statistics related to (cuisine quality, service quality, interior environment, customer satisfaction and customer product knowledge is highlighted in this section. The findings on effects of cuisine and service quality, interior environment on customer satisfaction are presented in sub section three, four and five respectively. Moderation effect of customer product knowledge on relationship of independent and dependent variables as well as Inferential

statistics that comprise of correlation and regression analysis as hypothesis testing is presented in this chapter.

4.2 Response Rate

Four hundred and ninety questionnaires were given out to respondents, but 399 questionnaires were accurately completed and returned as presented in Table 4.1. This represented an 81.4% response rate, which was relatively appropriate to make a conclusion in the study, hence it was considered very good and acceptable (Hendra & Hill, 2018). The high response rate was credited to method of administration of questionnaire According to a study by Hardy, Bell & Brocklehurst, (2016) the method of researcher administering questionnaires contributes to high response rates. The method of administering questionnaire that ensures questions to the respondents are addressed clearly during the data collection exercise contributes to high response rate (Patten, 2016). Respondents were available and willing during research process and therefore also contributed to good response from the sampled population.

Table 4.1 Questionnaire Response Rate

Questionnaire issued	Questionnaire returned	Incomplete Questionnaires	Response rate
490	399	91	81.4%

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.2.1 Demographic characteristics of Respondents

The basic information of respondents which include their gender, age, education as well as number of visits made by respondents to selected dining destination is highlighted in this section.

4.2.2 The Gender Identity of Respondents.

The study sought to comprehend respondents by gender as pointed out in Table 4.2. According to findings in Table 4.2, gender distribution indicated (41%) of male while female was at (59.0%) This was ascertained by 41% and 59. % respectively. According to study findings female customers that visited hotels at the time of data collection were more than male. According to this study, the cuisine quality service quality and interior environment were pulling factors to women than men.

Table 4.2 Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	165	41
Female	234	59
Total	399	100

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.2.3 The Age of Respondents

Study findings showed that out of all hotel customers who participated in this study, (33.4%) were above 40 years old, (33.3%) of them ranged from 31 to 40 years old and (25.1%) of them were between 21 to 30 years (7.3%) were less than twenty years. This shows that most customers visiting the selected hotel were above 40 years old as Table 4.3 This implies that relaxing and high incomes are the reasons why 33.4% of respondents travel and consume products and services from hospitality firms. Some like adventures.

Table 4.3 Respondents Age

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<20 Years	29	7.3
21-30 Years	100	25.1
31-40 Years	133	33.3
>40 Years	137	34.3
Total	399	100

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.2.4 The Education level of the Respondents

The study findings indicated that most respondents (32.8%) had Diploma level of education. Those who had had bachelor degree were (16%), (9.0%), had secondary education, (8.8%), had elementary education (8.0%), had Master's degree while (8.3%) had certificate level of education. The respondent who Master's Degree totaled to 34 giving percentage of (8.5%) PhD holders were (8.0%) respectively. In addition to that, (8.5%) of the hotel customers were illiterate as indicated in Table 4.4 The most determining factor could have been the spending power of respondent visiting the hotels. The data was based on study findings and the statistics collected by the researcher at that particular period. The town has also higher learning institution which could attract such group of respondents seeking for conference facilities in the hotels within North Rift region.

Table 4.4 Respondents Level of Education

Education level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	34	8.5
Elementary education	35	8.8
Secondary	36	9.0
Certificate	33	8.3
Diploma	131	32.8
Bachelor's Degree	64	16.0
Master's Degree	34	8.5
PhD (Doctorate	32	8.0
Total	399	100

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.2.5 The Number of Visits

Findings also revealed that majority (74.7%) of the hotel customers had visited the hotel more than two times, (16.5%) of the hotel customers had spent time in the hotel once and finally (8.8%) of the hotel customers had visited the hotel twice Table 4.5 This implies that the respondents were regular customers and had information on cuisine quality, service quality and interior environment. The respondents knew what they expected from the service providers in terms of brands and accommodation

Table 4.5: The number of respondent's visit

Number of respondent's visit	Frequency	Percentages
Once	66	16.5
Twice	35	8.8
More than twice	298	74.6
Total	399	100

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.3 Descriptive Analysis

Researcher examined the information from respondents on the customer product knowledge as a moderator and how it affected meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction in hotels within North Rift Region, Kenya. Sampled respondents were asked to give information by completing questionnaires on a Likert scale of 1-5, SD representing Strongly Disagree, D representing Disagree, UD representing Undecided, A representing Agree and SA representing Strongly Agree. To establish responses on study variables (meal experience dimension), interior environment, customer product knowledge and customer satisfaction, the responses were tabulated descriptively using; percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviations.

4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics for Customer Satisfaction

The study sought to determine whether respondents liked to build lasting relation with the service provider, introduced new clients to eat up meals at this hotel whether the respondents would like to experience feeling in this hotel, made repetitive purchases at the facility, invited a friend and family along to this hotel and whether the respondents had made the hotel their future choice.

In regards to whether the respondents were willing to create endless association with hotel providers' service, respondents who both agreed and strongly were (98.4%). Those who were in disagreement were (1.3%) while (0.3%) were undecided. Whether they have referred new clients to consume meals at this hotel, (98.4%) agreed, (1.0%) disagreed, while (0.5%) were undecided, The results were in tandem with Magar (2019) that customers usually refer new clients to consume meals at this facility.

In regards to whether respondents were willing to have experience feelings in this hotel, (1.6%), disagreed, (0.5%) undecided, (98.4%) agreed. In regards to whether the

respondents made repetitive purchases at the facility, those in agreement were (98.2%) (0.5%) were undecided, while (.1.5%) disagreed. The findings are similar to that of Nayan (2020) that the customers make repetitive purchases at the facilities. The study also sought to determine whether respondents invited a friend or family along to the hotels, those who disagreed were (1.5%), respondents in agreement were (98.4%) while (0.0%) were undecided.

The findings are in tandem with those of Amannullah & Hafez, (2021) that the respondents invited a friend and family along to the hotels. Out of the total respondents, (1.3%), disagreed that they had made the hotel their future choice, (0.5%) were undecided, while (98.2%) agreed. The findings resemble that of Chaudry (2018) that, they had made the hotel their future choice. In relation to SERVQUAL model. The products and services provided affect customer satisfaction positively, the cuisine, service quality, and interior environment affect customer satisfaction because the customers build everlasting relationship, referred clients to hotels visited made repetitive purchase invited friends and family and made hotel future choice. Food quality in terms nutritional value, variety in menu, taste, flavour and cleanliness. The services were reliable, prompt, trusted staff were courteous, and empathetic. The facility had tangible assets. The interior environment had suitable design, good layout and furniture arrangement, appealing atmosphere and comfortable environment., The results were presented in Table 4.6 shows frequencies and percentages for customer satisfaction.

Table 4.6 Descriptive statistics for Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction		SD	D	N	A	SA	mean	Std
Build everlasting relationship	F	2	3	1	201	192	4.4486	.59878
	%	0.5	0.8	0.3	50.4	48.1		
Referred new clients	F	1	3	2	161	232	4.5539	.57719
	%	0.3	0.8	0.5	40.4	58.1		
Have Experience	F	1	3	2	206	187	4.4411	.57670
	%	0.1	0.8	0.5	51.6	46.9		
Repetitive purchases	F	1	4	2	69	323	4.7769	.52368
	%	0.3	1.0	0.5	17.3	81.0		
Invite friend along	F	3	3	0	295	98	4.2080	.54849
	%	0.8	0.8	0.0	73.9	24.6		
Make the hotel future choice	F	3	2	2	97	295	4.7018	.58350
	%	0.8	0.5	0.5	24.3	73.9		
N=399								
Average mean							4.5217	

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.3.2 Descriptive analysis for Cuisine Quality

Objective one was to examine the effect of cuisine quality on customer satisfaction.

The study sought to determine whether the food served at the hotel (s) was clean, free from contaminants and additives. The respondents who disagreed were (1.8%), (0.5%) were neutral, while (97.7%) agreed. The findings resembled agreed with that of Dwaikat (2019), which concluded the food served at the fine restaurant was clean and free from pathogens and additives. Dwaikat (2019), posits that healthy food has been key indicator of quality cuisine.in pizza restarants. In regards to whether the food portions are satisfying and served at right temperature, (1.3%) disagreed, (0.3%) were neutral, while (98.4%) agreed. The study is in agreement with the results of Elias (2011) that the food portions are satisfying and served at right temperature. In regards to whether the smell of the food provided at the facilities was enticing, (1.8%) disagreed, (0.3%) were undecided those who agreed were (98.2%). On whether the hotel menu list had variety of items, (1.25%) disagreed, (0.75%) were undecided, while (98.0%) agreed

Results resembles those of Jang (2009) that the hotel must have menu list with variety of food items. On whether the foodstuff served at the facility was nutritious, (2.5%) disagreed, (.5%) were neutral, while (97.5%) agreed. In relation to whether the food provided at the facility was delicious, (3.0%) disagreed, (2.5%), (0.5%) were undecided, (while (96,5%) were in agreement that the foo was delicious. The study results resembles that of Su (2015) that, the food provided at the facility is delicious. In a bid to establish whether fresh food is served at the facility, respondents who strongly disagreed were (3.0%), respondents in disagreement, those who were neutral were (0.5%), while (96.5%) agreed.

The study also sought to determine whether the food is well presented and eye-catching at the hotel, (2.25%) were in disagreement, (1.0%) were undecided, while (96.75%) agreed. The study findings resemble that of Karen (2007) that, the food provided at the facility in fine dining was delicious. The study findings indicated that a high proportion (65.9%) in this study agreed that they were served clean food and free from pathogens and additives, food portions were satisfying and served it was at right temperature. Also, it was strongly agreed, that smell of food provided was enticing as responded to by most (74.2%) of the hotel customers. The findings also indicated that variety of menu items were at the hotels, food provided at the facility was delicious, and food was well presented and eye-catching at the hotel as it was strongly agreed by majority (81.2%), (57.9%) and (56.9%) of the hotel respondents who took part in the study respectively. On the other hand, most respondents who participated in this study respectively were in agreement food served at the facility was nutritious and fresh as shown by the values that (57.6%) and (58.1%). The findings revealed that hotel menu list had variety of menu items had the highest average value of 4.7769 and standard deviation was 0.52846. On the other hand, food served was clean and free from

pathogens and additives indicated lowest average value of 4.2732 and standard deviation of 0.58718 based on results, it was noted that variety of menu items which was at the hotel, contributed majorly to the satisfaction of customers in the hotel. The cuisine quality contributed positively to customer satisfaction. It means food served was clean, portions were satisfying, nice taste and flavor, menu had variety, Table 4.7 shows the descriptive findings on service quality.

Table 4.7 Statistics Analysis for Cuisine Quality

Cuisine quality		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std D
Food was clean and free of contaminants	F	2	5	2	263	127	4.2732	.58718
	%	0.5	1.3	0.5	65.9	31.8		
Food portions was satisfying and served at right temperature	F	2	3	1	97	296	4.7093	.56327
	%	0.5	0.8	0.3	24.3	74.2		
Food smell was enticing	F	2	4	1	173	219	4.5113	.61329
	%	0.5	1.0	0.3	43.4	54.9		
There were varieties in menu list	F	1	4	3	67	324	4.7769	.52846
	%	0.25	1.0	0.75	16.8	81.2		
Food at the facility was nutritious	F	2	6	2	230	159	4.3484	.62320
	%	0.5	1.5	0.5	57.6	39.8		
Food served at the hotels was delicious	F	2	10	2	154	231	4.5088	.68677
	%	0.5	2.5	0.5	38.6	57.9		
Food served at the hotels was fresh	F	8	4	2	232	153	4.2982	.72207
	%	2.0	1.0	0.5	58.1	39.3		
Food was well presented and eye catching	F	7	2	4	159	227	4.4962	.71549
	%	1.8	0.5	1.0	39.8	56.8		
N=399 Average mean							4.4903	

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.3.3 Descriptive Analysis for Service Quality

Objective two was to investigate the effects of service quality on customer satisfaction.

The study sought to determine whether the waiters are never too busy to respond to customer requests at hotel. Out of the total respondents, (0.75%) disagreed (0.0%) were neutral, while (99.25%) agreed. In regards to whether the restaurant attendants keep

customers interest at heart, (0.75%) disagreed, (0.25%) were undecided, while (99.0%) agreed. The findings are similar to that of Ogba (2015) that, the restaurant attendants keep customers interest at heart. In relation to whether the attendants create trust and confidence in customers, (0.25%) disagreed, (0.75%) were undecided, (50.4%) while (99%) agreed.

On whether attendants give personal attention and care to customers, (0.25%) disagreed, (0.0%) were undecided, (24.3%) agreed while (74.9%) strongly agreed. The findings are similar to those of Trivellas (2010) that attendants give personal attention and care to customers. On whether the the employees level of knowledge, politeness and extent to which they create trust and confidence is excellent, (0.5%) strongly disagreed, (0.3%) disagreed, (0.8%) undecided, respondents in agreement were (40.1%), while those who strongly agreed were (58.4%).

The study sought to determine whether attendants give service any time an order is made and promptly, respondents who strongly disagreed were (0.3%), non-disagreed (0.0%), those who were neutral were (0.8%), while those in agreement were (65.9%), while (33.1%) strongly agreed. The results agree with those of Wieseke (2012) that attendants give service any time an order is made and promptly. In regards to whether, the hotel staff are very friendly and welcoming, (0.3%) strongly disagreed, (0.0%) disagreed, (0.8%) undecided, (65.9%) agreed while (33.1%) strongly agreed. Out of the total respondents, (0.5%) strongly disagreed that the waiters speak eloquently and clearly, (0.3%) disagreed, (0.3%) undecided, (7.5%) agreed while (91.5%) strongly agreed. The findings are similar to those of Widing (2012) that the hotel staff are very friendly and welcoming. The study sought to determine whether the attendants serve and treat customers with respect, (0.3%) strongly disagreed, (0.0%) disagreed, (1.0%)

undecided, (25.6%) agreed while (73.2%) strongly agreed. The results are similar to those of Itani and Inyang (2015) that the attendants serve and treat customers with respect. In regards to whether the hotel attendants are very compassionate in serving clients, respondents who strongly disagreed were 3(0.8%) those who disagreed were (0.8%), (05%) undecided, (16.8%) agreed while 324(81.2%) strongly agreed.

The results are in tandem with that of Troilo (2011) that, the hotel attendants are very compassionate in serving clients. Out of hotel respondents who participated in the research, (99.2%) of the hotel the majority of respondents who were customers in the hotels (99.2%) were in agreement that attendants created trust and confidence in customers while (0.5) disagreed, (0.8%) were neutral. On the other (99.2%) respondents agreed that attendants gave customers personal attention and care, (0.75%) disagreed. (99.25%) agreed.

In regards knowledge level and politeness of employees to create excellent trust and confidence, (0.75%) disagreed, (0.75%) were neutral while (98.5%) were in agreement with the statement. The study findings further revealed that (98.5%) of the hotel customers agreed that attendants gave prompt services when an order is made, (0.8%) disagreed, (0.8%) were neutral (98.9%) agreed that staff were friendly and welcoming, (0.3%), disagreed (0.8%) were neutral, (98.7%) agreed that attendants served and treated customers with respect, (0.3%) disagreed, (1.0%) were neutral. Hotel attendants were very compassionate in serving clients was true to most (98.9%), (1.5%) disagreed while (0.5%) neutral. Waiters spoke eloquently and clearly hence being the key determining factor of hotel customer's contentment with mean = 4.9248 and standard deviation = 0.26403. Also, waiters were never too busy to respond to customer's request at hotel hence being minimum determining factor of customer's contentment with

average value =4.2431 and a standard deviation = 0.42950. Table 4.8 shows descriptive findings of service quality. In relation to five aspect meal model, the services were reliable, waiters created trust by assuring the customers, the hotels had tangible facilities, and employees were courteous and empathetic and prompt in delivering their duties. Find analysis results Table 4.8

Table 4.8 Descriptive Analysis for Service Quality

Service quality		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std D
Waiters respond to customers quickly	F	2	1	0	300	96	4.2431	.42950
	%	0.5	0.3	0.0	75.2	24.1		
Waiters had customers interest at heart	F	0	3	1	93	302	4.7644	.42490
	%	0.0	0.8	0.3	23.3	75.7		
Attendants create trust and confidence	F	1	0	3	299	96	4.4887	.50050
	%	0.3	0.0	0.8	74.9	24.0		
Attendants give personal attention	F	1	2	0	97	299	4.7569	.42950
	%	0.3	0.5	0.0	24.3	74.9		
Employees knowledge and politeness created trust and confidence	F	1	0	3	299	96	4.2456	.43099
	%	0.3	0.0	0.8	74.9	24.0		
Attendants give service promptly	F	2	1	3	160	233	4.5940	.49170
	%	0.5	0.3	0.8	40.1	58.4		
Staff are friendly and welcoming	F	1	0	3	263	132	4.3333	.47200
	%	0.3	0.0	0.8	65.9	33.1		
Waiters speak clearly and eloquently	F	2	1	1	30	365	4.9248	.26403
	%	0.5	0.3	0.3	7.5	91.5		
Attendants respect customers	F	1	0	4	102	292	4.7368	.44090
	%	0.3	0.0	1.0	25.6	73.2		
Hotel attendants are compassionate	F	3	3	2	67	324	4.8296	.37648
	%	0.8	0.8	0.5	16.8	81.2		
N=399	Average mean						4.5917	

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.3.4 Statistics Analysis for Interior Environment

Objective three was to determine the effect of interior environment on customer satisfaction. The study sought to determine whether the Interior design and decorations of the hotel were visually appealing, (0.75%) disagreed, (0.25%) were undecided, while (99%) agreed. The results corroborate with those of Kafel (2013) that the interior design and decorations of the selected star rated hotels were attractive to the eye. On whether the furniture arrangement within the hotels was clean and appropriate, (0.5%) disagreed, (0.75%) were undecided, while (98.75%) agreed.

The results agree with those of Liu (2018) that the furniture in hotels is clean and appropriate. On whether the ambience reflects the theme heritage and respondents who disagreed were (0.75%), (0.25%) were undecided, while (99%) agreed. In regards to whether the background music and sound gives a pleasurable sensation, (0.75%) disagreed, (0.25 %) were undecided, while (99%) agreed. The results resemble those of Kirima, (2017), that the background music and sound gives a pleasurable sensation.

In regards to whether the hotel room temperature was comfortable, (0.50%) disagreed, (0.50%) were undecided, while those who agreed were (99%) The results were in tandem with those of Oktay (2016) that the atmospheric conditions in restaurant room relates to customer satisfaction in terms of temperature and comfort. On whether the seating arrangement is good and gives enough movement space, disagreed, (0.75%) disagreed, (0.25%) were undecided, while (99%) agreed. In regards to whether paintings and pictures are attractive, (0.75%) disagreed, (0.25%) were undecided, while (99%) were in agreement that aesthetics contribute to customer satisfaction. The results are in tandem with that of Hagtvvet (2016) that the seating arrangement is good and gives enough movement space. The study sought to determine whether the hotel had adequate

number of staff (0.75%) disagreed, (0.50%) were undecided, while (98.75%) agreed. On whether the staff are neat and well dressed in work uniform, (1.25%) disagreed, (0.5%) were undecided, while (98.25%) agreed. Study findings agrees with those of Kim (2013) that hotel staff are neat and well dressed in work uniform. The study findings indicated that out of all hotel customers who participated in this study, (98.9%) of the hotel customers were in agreement that interior design and decoration of the hotels were visually appealing.

The study findings are similar to those of Ryu and Han (2011), that the paintings and pictures on the hotel walls are attractive Seating arrangements was good and gave enough movement space. Background music and sound gives a pleasurable sensation hence being a determining factor with average value of 4.8471 and a standard deviation of. 36033 hence being key determining factor of customer's contentment with the average value of 4.847 while the hotel had adequate number of staff hence minimum in determining of dining customers' satisfaction with the average value of 4.4010 and a standard deviation of 0.49072.

In relation to the five aspect meal model, interior environment affects customer satisfaction. The built design, furniture and seating arrangements, music, room temperature and aesthetics, number of staff, personal hygiene and cleanliness were fulfilled as evidenced by study findings. The majority were in agreement that interior environment is one of the key elements of meal experience dimensions. Table 4.9 shows descriptive findings on interior environment.

Table 4.9 Statistics analysis for Interior environment

Interior environment		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
Interior design and decoration are visually appealing	F %	1 0.3	2 0.5	1 0.3	230 57.6	165 41.4	4.4160	.49352
Furniture is clean and appropriate	F %	1 0.3	1 0.3	3 0.8	65 16.3	329 82.5	4.8371	.36974
Ambience reflects the theme heritage and culture	F %	2 0.5	1 0.3	1 0.3	197 49.4	198 49.6	4.4987	.50063
Background Music gives pleasurable sensation	F %	2 0.5	1 0.3	1 0.3	197 49.4	198 49.6	4.8471	.36033
Temperature is comfortable in hotel room	F %	1 0.3	1 0.3	2 0.5	232 58.1	163 40.9	4.4110	.49264
Seating arrangements is good and spacious	F %	1 0.3	2 0.5	1 0.3	95 23.8	300 75.2	4.7594	.42799
Curtains provide adequate lighting	F %	1 0.3	2 0.5	0 0.0	171 42.9	225 56.4	4.5664	.49619
Paintings and pictures are attractive	F %	2 0.5	1 0.3	1 0.3	94 23.6	301 75.4	4.7619	.42645
Hotel has adequate number of staff	F %	2 0.5	1 0.3	2 0.5	238 59.6	156 39.1	4.4010	.49072
Staff are neat and well dressed in uniform		2 0.5	3 0.8	2 0.5	123 30.8	269 67.4	4.6842	.46541
N=399 Average mean							4.6183	

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.3.5 Descriptive Analysis for Customer Product Knowledge

The study sought to establish the effect of moderating variable on relationship between independent and dependent variable. It was to establish how of customer product knowledge affects relationship between cuisine, service quality and interior environment and Customer satisfaction. The researcher wanted to find out whether respondents knew the types of products that the facility offered. Respondents who were in disagreement were (0.25%) (0.75%) were undecided, while those who agreed were (98.0%). In regards to whether products matched innovation and brand (1.25%) disagreed, (0.5%) were undecided while (98.25%) were in agreement.

The results were similar to those of Kralova (2019) that the respondents had knowledge on product and services provided at the facility. On whether the type of products known and preferred by respondents had high nutritive value (1.25%) disagreed (0.75%), were undecided while (98%) agreed. The findings resembles those of Resmawa (2017 that the preferred products offered at the facility had high nutritious value On whether the way the products are prepared at the hotel facilities facility are prepared using the right ingredients, (1.25%) disagreed those undecided were (0.25%) while (98.50%) agreed.

The results are in tandem with those of Agarwal (2019) that the way the foodstuffs are made using the right ingredients. Out of the total respondents, (1.0%) disagreed that the foodstuffs presented at the hotel facility are good, (0.25%) were undecided, while (98.75%) agreed. In regards to whether the goods presented are priced along with the promotional incentives, respondents who disagreed were (0.75%) the same applied those who were in disagreement and indecisive (0.25%), those who agreed were (98.75%). The findings are similar with those of Agahamirian (2015) that the products offered alongside the incentives in pricing influence customer satisfaction. The study also sought to determine whether the hotel image is well known, (1.0%) disagreed, or neutral (0.25%) while (98.75%) were in agreement.

The results corroborate those of Zagretdnova (2017) that the hotel image is well known. Products were prepared using the right ingredients was the determining factor of hotel customer's product knowledge, study revealed average value of 4.7794 and a standard deviation of 0.36033 Clients believed types of goods presented at the facility was the least determining factor for customer product knowledge average value= 4.1328 and a standard deviation =.44822 Table 4.10 shows descriptive findings for customer product knowledge. In relation to customer loyalty and human processing theory, customer

product moderate's relationship between cuisine, service quality, and interior environment. The majority of respondents knew the product and were prepared using right ingredients, the products had nutritional content, matched product innovation and brand, prepared, the products were of good quality. Priced with incentives and customers were well conversant with brand image of the hotels Table 4.10 shows detailed descriptive statistics for customer product knowledge.

Table 4.10 Statistics analysis for Customer Product Knowledge

Customer product knowledge		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
Customers had known types of products offered at facility	F %	1 0.3	3 0.8	2 0.5	329 82.5	64	4.1328	.44822
Products offered at facility had high nutritious content	F %	1 0.3	4 1.0	3 0.8	100 25.1	294 73.7	4.7168	.51363
Products provided matched product innovation and trends as per brand and package	F %	1 0.3	4 0.3	2 0.5	299 74.9	93 23.3	4.2005	.51108
Products were prepared using the right ingredients	F %	2 0.5	3 0.8	1 0.3	69 17.3	324 81.2	4.7794	.53188
Products offered at facility was of good quality	F %	3 0.8	1 0.3	1 0.5	261 64.4	133 33.3	4.3033	.56778
Products were offered with incentives	F %	1 0.3	2 0.5	2 0.5	95 23.8	299 74.9	4.7268	.51904
Hotel image is well known.	F %	2 0.5	2 0.5	1 0.3	232 58.1	162 40.6	4.3784	.57558
N=399 Average mean							4.4626	

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.4 Inferential Analysis

This section presents correlation and multiple regression analysis results in line with the specific objectives is presented below.

4.4.1 Overall Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to obtain information regarding the degree of the relationship or correlation as well as the direction of the association of independent and dependent variables. Results showed in Table 4.11 that association between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction revealed very strong, positive and statistically significant value ($r=0.740$, $p<0.01$) Relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction was very strong, positive and statistically significant with correlation value ($r=0.750$; $p<0.01$). It was also revealed that the relationship between the interior environment and customer satisfaction was weak, positive and statistically significant correlation value ($r=0.169$; $p<0.01$).

The study findings showed that the association between customer product knowledge and customer satisfaction was very strong, positive and statistically significant with correlation value ($r=.888$; $p<0.01$). In this study, regression ranges between +1 and -1. When the correlation is $r = +0.7$ or exceeds the value, then the relationship is said to be very strong, when the correlation value lies between +0.5 and 0.7 ($r = +0.5 - +0.7$), then it implies strong relationship, (Wang, Xie, Chen, Yang, & Yang, 2013).

Additionally, the relationship is moderate when correlation value falls in between +0.3 and 0.49 ($r = +0.3$ to $+0.49$) - while correlation value that is below 0.29 ($r = .029$) is considered weak, (Cohen and Aiken, (2003). According to Cohen and Aiken, (2003), when the correlation value is equivalent to zero it implies that there is no relationship between the independent and dependent variable. Where $r = 0$.

Table 4.11 Correlation Coefficient Matrix

		Customer satisfaction	Cuisine quality	Service quality	The interior environment	Customer Product Knowledge
Customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Cuisine quality	Pearson Correlation	.740**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
Service quality	Pearson Correlation	.750**	.581**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
The interior environment	Pearson Correlation	.169**	.293**	.224**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000		
Customer Product Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	.888**	.655**	.792**	.097	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.052	
	N	399	399	399	399	399

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

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.4.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

The linear statistical relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables was analyzed by multiple linear regression.

4.4.2.1 Model Summary in step one

Variation in y explained by x-variables. (R^2), which showed proportion of the change in customer satisfaction due manipulation of meal experience dimensions (predictor variables) is shown in Table 4.12, Model summary presents correlation coefficient value (R) .842 which indicates the strength and direction association of meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction. The simple linear regression findings in Table 4.18 indicated that $R = 0.842$ was a very strong, positive and statistically linear

relationship between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction. And $R^2 = 0.709$. The (R^2) Variation in y explained by x-variables point out that there was explanatory power of meal experience dimensions on customer satisfaction. Model summary indicates variation in y which is customer satisfaction explained by x-variables. (R^2), was 70.9%. The improvement on cuisine quality, service quality and interior environment will affect the customer satisfaction in positive way as revealed by (R^2), change of 70.9%. The results corroborate with those of Balony & Abdel (2017), who posits that both physical and nonphysical services comprise of dimensions that satisfy clients hence increased customer satisfaction and revisit intents.

Table 4.12 Multiple Regression Model 1 Summary Step one

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.842 ^a	.709	.706	.22662

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.4.2.2 Model Fitness

Model fitness was run to investigate if model best fit the data. From Table 4.13 the F-statistics produced ($F = 320.117$.) and a significant $p = 0.000$, therefore the model was confirmed fit the data. Therefore, link between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction was statistically significant The F value point out that the variables in the equation are vital therefore the complete regression was significant.

Table 4.13 Regression Model Fitness Results step one

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	49.319	3	16.440	320.117	.000 ^b
Residual	20.285	395	.051		
Total	69.604	398			

a. Dependent Variable: customer satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), customer product know, service, Cuisine, interior environment

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.4.2.3 Regression Coefficient analysis step one

Regression model coefficients were run so that they are used in regression equation showed that cuisine quality positively and statistically significant affected customer satisfaction with beta value ($\beta_1=0.348$, $p=0.000$) Additionally, it was determined that beta value for was service quality ($\beta_2=0.555$, $p=0.000$) which means that it had a positive and statistically significant effect on customer satisfaction. Finally, the interior environment was discovered to have a negative beta value but statistically significant effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta_3=-0.103$, $p=0.005$). Therefore, findings of coefficient regression revealed that there was a positive and significant link between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction. Find regression analysis results Table 4.14

Table 4.14 Regression Analysis Coefficients step one

	Unstandardized		Standardized		t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	.948	.191		4.973	.000	
Cuisine quality	.348	.025	.479	14.047	.000	
Service quality	.555	.038	.490	14.661	.000	
The interior environment	-.103	.036	-.081	-2.853	.005	

a. Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction

(Source: Author.2022)

The optimal model was;

$$Y = 0.948 + 0.348X_1 + 0.555X_2 - 0.103X_3 \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation 4.1}$$

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis with Moderation

Customer product knowledge was used as a moderating variable to establish the interaction effect on relationship between independent and dependent variables. The hierarchical linear regression analysis was conducted on each independent variable to ascertain relationship with the dependent variable and also find out the moderation effect.

4.5.1 Moderating Effect of Customer Product Knowledge on the Relationship between Meal Experience Dimensions and Customer satisfaction

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on the link between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction's study findings revealed of difference in R^2 (coefficient of determination). The R^2 difference between model 1 and model 2 was 0.060. Correlation

coefficient (R) value after interaction altered from 0.709 to 0.768 with value of ($p < 0.05$), hence was statistically significant. This was an indication that interacting customer product knowledge with meal experience dimension in the model increased the model explanatory capability of meal experience dimensions' effect on customer satisfaction by increasing present variable count by 6.0%.

Table 4.15 shows findings of model summary. The change in meal experience dimensions led to positive change in customer satisfaction Customer will be satisfied when the cuisine, and service quality and interior environment meets or exceeds the customer expectations. The two key elements of customer satisfaction based on SERVQUAL model are the expectations and perceptions of customer (Tan & Chen, 2021).

Table 4.15 Model Summary step two

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.842 ^a	.709	.706	.22662	.709	320.117	3	395	.000
2	.877 ^b	.768	.766	.20227	.060	101.800	1	394	.000

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.5.1.1 Model Fitness step two

The ANOVA test is used to find out the significance of survey and is important in making decision rule on whether to reject null hypothesis or accept the alternative. Further the ANOVA findings in Table 4.16 revealed that F-value of 326.806 is associated with an R^2 of .768 after moderation it implying that the customer product knowledge and independent variables were best predictors of customer satisfaction and hence model was significant $p = 0.000$ was less than conventional probability 0.05

significance level suggesting a good fit hence simple regression fitted the model because confidence level was (95%)

Table 4.16 Model Fitness step two

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	49.319	3	16.440	320.117	.000 ^b
	Residual	20.285	395	.051		
	Total	69.604	398			
2	Regression	53.484	4	13.371	326.806	.000 ^c
	Residual	16.120	394	.041		
	Total	69.604	398			

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.5.1.2 Regression coefficient analysis step two

According to findings in Table 4.17, the coefficient value of meal experience dimension (cuisine quality, service quality and interior environment) interaction was significant because p-value = 0.00 which did not exceed 0.05. The fact that coefficient was statistically significant, study findings revealed that customer product knowledge moderated the link between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction. It implies that it is important to understand the features of cuisine and service quality, interior environment. This help customer to be aware on what items are on offer. This can be through one's experience, product literature, sales team, advertisement. When waiters engage customers, they use their information to lead client through the sales process, and make their experience more enjoyable hence creating intent to revisit the hotels.

Product knowledge makes customer service team sound confident, competent and efficient. The results are in agreement with those of Han (2019) who asserts that, satisfaction, trust, love and respect for a particular brand and brand loyalty leads

to customer loyalty According to Suchánek & Králová (2019), the information about the product, consumer contentment and loyalty impacts levels of a customer happiness

Table 4.17 Regression Coefficient step two

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.948	.191		4.973	.000
	X1	.348	.025	.479	14.047	.000
	X2	.555	.038	.490	14.661	.000
	X3	-.103	.036	-.081	-2.853	.005
2	(Constant)	.462	.177		2.611	.009
	X1	.270	.023	.372	11.561	.000
	X2	.326	.041	.288	7.999	.000
	X3	-.135	.032	-.106	-4.145	.000
	M	.449	.044	.376	10.090	.000

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.6 Moderating Effect of Customer Product Knowledge on the Relationship between Cuisine Quality and Customer satisfaction.

To determine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on link between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction, a regression analysis was run. Table 4.18 showed the findings of the R^2 change. (Coefficient of determination) in between model 2 and model 3 was 0.023. (R) Correlation coefficient changed from 0.768 to 0.791 and positively statistically significant ($p=0.000<0.05$). There was an indication that customer product knowledge moderates link between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction by 2.3%.

This implies that the information about the product, (cuisine which comprises of food and drink. consumer contentment and loyalty impacts levels of a customer happiness evidenced by change in customer satisfaction, (R^2) of 2.3%.The provision of quality food in terms of flavor, taste, consistency, glossness, crunchiness, varieties in menu, rich

and healthy food, clean and safe food increases customer satisfaction and loyalty amongst the potential customers. Improvement in effective communication and training contact staff help them follow instruction on food preparation methods to yield standard results to seal satisfaction gaps

Table 4.18 Model Summary for Multiple Regression step three

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.842 ^a	.709	.706	.22662	.709	320.117	3	395	.000
2	.877 ^b	.768	.766	.20227	.060	101.800	1	394	.000
3	.889 ^c	.791	.788	.19241	.023	42.428	1	393	.000

(Source: Author, 2022)

The ANOVA findings in Table 4.19 indicated that F-value of 297.420 is associated with an R^2 of .791 The results revealed that after moderation of customer product knowledge, cuisine quality still positively affects customer satisfaction and that the overall model was significant. ($p=0.000<0.05$), p value was less than conventional probability 0.05 significance level meaning a good fit simple regression fitted the model.

Table 4.19 Model Fitness Results step three

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	49.319	3	16.440	320.117	.000 ^b
	Residual	20.285	395	.051		
	Total	69.604	398			
2	Regression	53.484	4	13.371	326.806	.000 ^c
	Residual	16.120	394	.041		
	Total	69.604	398			
3	Regression	55.055	5	11.011	297.420	.000 ^d
	Residual	14.549	393	.037		
	Total	69.604	398			

(Source: Author, 2022)

Table 4.20 Regression Analysis Coefficients step three

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.948	.191		4.973	.000
	X1	.348	.025	.479	14.047	.000
	X2	.555	.038	.490	14.661	.000
	X3	-.103	.036	-.081	-2.853	.005
2	(Constant)	.462	.177		2.611	.009
	X1	.270	.023	.372	11.561	.000
	X2	.326	.041	.288	7.999	.000
	X3	-.135	.032	-.106	-4.145	.000
	M	.449	.044	.376	10.090	.000
3	(Constant)	-1.680	.369		-4.548	.000
	X1	.920	.102	1.267	9.005	.000
	X2	.236	.041	.208	5.737	.000
	X3	-.088	.032	-.069	-2.782	.006
	M	.985	.093	.826	10.642	.000
	MX1	-.148	.023	-1.191	-6.514	.000

(Source: Author, 2022)

4.7 Moderating Effect of Customer Product Knowledge on The Relationship between Service quality and Customer satisfaction

To determine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, a regression analysis was run to examine interaction results. The difference in R^2 between model 3 and model 4 was 0.007. (R) correlation coefficient which changed from .791 to .798 the interaction effect of customer product knowledge on link of service quality and customer satisfaction was statistically significant because ($p < 0.05$) with proportion variance in customer satisfaction of 0.7% .

This implied that addition of product knowledge on service quality leads to customer satisfaction. Product knowledge helps in molding waiters and sales team into enthusiastic experts who know how and whom to sell the services and products. The competition is analyzed by employees. In relation to five aspect meal model, service quality affects customer satisfaction.

The results are in tandem with those of Al Idrus and Al Idrus (2021) that Product knowledge and service quality can increase competitive advantage and customer satisfaction in hotels He further explained that, when a customer has a better understanding of the product together with excellent service delivery, competitive advantage and customer satisfaction is increased based on individual levels of trust Service quality in terms of reliability, staff assurance, the physical facilities, employees empathy and responsiveness amongst the contact staff together with customer product knowledge affects customer satisfaction in positive way. As evidenced by research findings of 0.7% change in y variable Find results in table 4.21

Table 4.21 Multiple Regression Model Summary step four

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.842 ^a	.709	.706	.22662	.709	320.117	3	395	.000
2	.877 ^b	.768	.766	.20227	.060	101.800	1	394	.000
3	.889 ^c	.791	.788	.19241	.023	42.428	1	393	.000
4	.893 ^d	.798	.795	.18937	.007	13.701	1	392	.000

(Source: Author, 2022)

The ANOVA results in Table 4.22 showed that F-value of 258.144 was associated with an R^2 of 0.798. This implied that after moderation of customer product knowledge, service quality is still positively predicted customer satisfaction and that the model was statistically significant. The p value was 0.000 ($p=0.000<0.05$). The model was good fit hence simple regression fitted the model because the P- value did not exceed the conventional probability 0.05 significance level.

Table 4.22 Model Fitness Results step four

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	49.319	3	16.440	320.117	.000 ^b
	Residual	20.285	395	.051		
	Total	69.604	398			
2	Regression	53.484	4	13.371	326.806	.000 ^c
	Residual	16.120	394	.041		
	Total	69.604	398			
3	Regression	55.055	5	11.011	297.420	.000 ^d
	Residual	14.549	393	.037		
	Total	69.604	398			
4	Regression	55.546	6	9.258	258.144	.000 ^e
	Residual	14.058	392	.036		
	Total	69.604	398			

(Source: Author 2022)

According to study results in Table 4.23, coefficient value of customer satisfaction interaction was a p-value of 0.000 which upheld significance level conventional probability of (0.05) which implied the effect was statistically significant. Customer product knowledge had a moderating effect on the link between service quality and customer satisfaction. Service quality still positively affects customer satisfaction when knowledge about products and services is shared to waiting staff as well as customers. Based on the regression analysis coefficients, Beta value for service quality is .155 and $P = 0.000$ indicating the relation was positively statistically significant with t-test of 3.702 as indicated in table 4.23

Table 4.23 Regression Analysis Coefficients step four

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.948	.191		4.973	.000
	X1	.348	.025	.479	14.047	.000
	X2	.555	.038	.490	14.661	.000
	X3	-.103	.036	-.081	-2.853	.005
2	(Constant)	.462	.177		2.611	.009
	X1	.270	.023	.372	11.561	.000
	X2	.326	.041	.288	7.999	.000
	X3	-.135	.032	-.106	-4.145	.000
	M	.449	.044	.376	10.090	.000
3	(Constant)	-1.680	.369		-4.548	.000
	X1	.920	.102	1.267	9.005	.000
	X2	.236	.041	.208	5.737	.000
	X3	-.088	.032	-.069	-2.782	.006
	M	.985	.093	.826	10.642	.000
	MX1	-.148	.023	-1.191	-6.514	.000
4	(Constant)	-1.128	.393		-2.870	.004
	X1	1.466	.179	2.019	8.208	.000
	X2	-.343	.162	-.303	-2.123	.034
	X3	-.091	.031	-.071	-2.904	.004
	M	.756	.110	.634	6.867	.000
	MX1	-.271	.040	-2.192	-6.749	.000
	MX2	.155	.042	.961	3.702	.000

(Source: Author 2022)

4.8 Moderating Effect of Customer Product Knowledge on the Relationship between the Interior Environment and Customer Satisfaction

A regression analysis was run to determine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on the relationship between interior environment and customer satisfaction and interaction results. The study findings in Table 4.24 revealed that the R^2 (variation in y variable) between model 4 and model 5 was 0.029. The (R) altered from 0.798 to 0.827 and was statistically significant, ($p < 0.05$). This revealed that customer product knowledge moderated link between interior environment and customer satisfaction by 2.9%. This implies that the advertisements, on facility equipment, machine, conference facilities together with interior environment affects customer satisfaction in positive way. The information on different types of hotel designs, layout. Aesthetics, layout and furniture arrangement, are key elements of interior environment that affects customer satisfaction.

The results resemble with those of Kirima & Mutungi(2017) that the tangible and intangible elements of hotel design create a guest ‘complete meal experience at the hotel they have chosen. Additionally, the hotel interior design, ambience and air quality, furniture layout and arrangement, aesthetics of the rooms the social fact in terms of hotel employees together with customer product knowledge positively affect customer satisfaction in selected hotels as evidenced by 2.9%.in customer satisfaction.

The results are in agreement with those of Kralova (2018), that customer product knowledge determines levels of customer satisfaction because it leads to creation of trust and assurance in terms of service delivery. The importance of having product knowledge is that hotel managers are able to convey their benefits in an accurate and persuasive manner because clients respond to enthusiastic sales employees who

passionate about their built design, layout, furniture and material, staff, service atmosphere and are ready to share the information via the promotional channels.

Table 4.24 Multiple Regression Model Summary step five

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.842 ^a	.709	.706	.22662	.709	320.117	3	395	.000
2	.877 ^b	.768	.766	.20227	.060	101.800	1	394	.000
3	.889 ^c	.791	.788	.19241	.023	42.428	1	393	.000
4	.893 ^d	.798	.795	.18937	.007	13.701	1	392	.000
5	.909 ^e	.827	.824	.17555	.029	65.175	1	391	.000

(Source: Author, 2022)

The F test revealing the significance of the fitted regression model is shown in Table 4.25 with an F statistic value of 266.801 produced in model 5 which was associated with an R^2 of 0.827. This implied that after moderation of customer product knowledge, interior environment positively predicted customer satisfaction and that the model was statistically significant. There was an indication that the interior environment predicated customer satisfaction after the interaction action, ($F=266.801$; $p < 0.001$). Model was a good fit and hence the regression fitted, the model.

Table 4.25 Model Fitness Results step five

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	49.319	3	16.440	320.117	.000 ^b
	Residual	20.285	395	.051		
	Total	69.604	398			
2	Regression	53.484	4	13.371	326.806	.000 ^c
	Residual	16.120	394	.041		
	Total	69.604	398			
3	Regression	55.055	5	11.011	297.420	.000 ^d
	Residual	14.549	393	.037		
	Total	69.604	398			
4	Regression	55.546	6	9.258	258.144	.000 ^e
	Residual	14.058	392	.036		
	Total	69.604	398			
5	Regression	57.554	7	8.222	266.801	.000 ^f
	Residual	12.050	391	.031		
	Total	69.604	398			

(Source: **Author, 2022**)

In summary, the moderating variable had a positive and statistically significant effect on the link between cuisine and customer satisfaction ($\beta_1 = -.325$, $p < 0.05$) as revealed by a regression analysis in model five. The moderator had a positive and statistically significant moderation effect on the link between service quality and customer satisfaction ($\beta_3 = .130$, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, the moderator had a positive and statistically significant moderation effect on the link between interior environment and customer satisfaction ($\beta_3 = .181$, $p < 0.05$). Find results in Table 4.26

$$Y = .729 + 1.693X_1 - .345X_2 - .730X_3 + .296Z - .325Z * X_1 + .130Z * X_2 + .181Z * X_3$$

Table 4.26 Regression Analysis Coefficients step five

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.948	.191		4.973	.000
	X1	.348	.025	.479	14.047	.000
	X2	.555	.038	.490	14.661	.000
	X3	-.103	.036	-.081	-2.853	.005
2	(Constant)	.462	.177		2.611	.009
	X1	.270	.023	.372	11.561	.000
	X2	.326	.041	.288	7.999	.000
	X3	-.135	.032	-.106	-4.145	.000
	M	.449	.044	.376	10.090	.000
3	(Constant)	-1.680	.369		-4.548	.000
	X1	.920	.102	1.267	9.005	.000
	X2	.236	.041	.208	5.737	.000
	X3	-.088	.032	-.069	-2.782	.006
	M	.985	.093	.826	10.642	.000
	MX1	-.148	.023	1-1.191	-6.514	.000
4	(Constant)	-1.128	.393		-2.870	.004
	X1	1.466	.179	2.019	8.208	.000
	X2	-.343	.162	-.303	-2.123	.034
	X3	-.091	.031	-.071	-2.904	.004
	M	.756	.110	.634	6.867	.000
	MX1	-.271	.040	-2.192	-6.749	.000
	MX2	.155	.042	.961	3.702	.000
5	(Constant)	.729	.431		1.692	.092
	X1	1.693	.168	2.331	10.078	.000
	X2	-.345	.150	-.305	-2.306	.022
	X3	-.730	.084	-.574	-8.658	.000
	M	.296	.117	.248	2.534	.012
	MX1	-.325	.038	-2.627	-8.591	.000
	MX2	.130	.039	.808	3.348	.001
	MX3	.181	.022	.983	8.073	.000

(Source: Author.2022)

4.9 Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses were tested at a conventional significance level of 0.05. If p value is greater or lesser than 0.05, determined the criteria of acceptance /rejection, if the p-value is more than 0.05, hypotheses is not rejected but if it's less than 0.05, the H_0 fails to be Statistical hypothesis testing is the technique by which the researcher makes this

determination This test provides a p-value, which is the probability of observing results as extreme as those in the data, assuming the results are truly due to chance alone. A p-value of 5% or lower is often considered to be statistically significant accepted.

4.9.1 Hypothesis Testing of Cuisine Quality

The first hypothesis of the study H_{01} was that cuisine quality has no significant effect on customer satisfaction. The results obtained showed ($\beta_1=1.693$, $p<0.05$) which indicated that cuisine quality had a positive and significant effect on the customer satisfaction Based on this results, null hypothesis H_{01} was rejected demonstrating that the effect of cuisine quality on customer satisfaction was significant. Results concur with Hemakumar, (2020) who noted that there is a link between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction. The results are in agreement with those of Bichler & Peters, (2020) that food plays a significant part in the destination and dining experience.

4.9.2 Hypothesis Testing of Service Quality

The second hypothesis of this study H_{02} was that service quality has no significant effect on customer satisfaction. This results show that service quality had a negative but significant effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta_2= -.345$, $p<0.05$). This revealed finding that the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that service quality had a statistically significant effect on customer satisfaction.

4.9.3 Hypothesis Testing of the Interior Environment

The third hypothesis was that H_{03} : Interior environment has no significant effect on customer satisfaction. Results reveals that interior environment has a positive and significant effect on the customer satisfaction ($\beta_3= -.730$, $p<0.05$). Based on study findings, the null hypothesis H_{03} was rejected, demonstrating that interior environment had a significant effect on customer satisfaction. The results concur with those of

Litavniece & Dembovska (2019), that location and overall restaurant experience are customers' key drivers to customers' choice of a particular full service restaurant within a hotel.

4.9.4 Hypothesis Testing of Customer Product Knowledge on the Relationship between Cuisine Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Hypothesis H_{04a} stated that customer product knowledge does not moderate the relationship between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction the study findings value was $\beta_{4a} = -.325$, $p < 0.05$). Based on results the effect of moderating variable on relationship between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction was negative and statistically significant. Based on results the null hypothesis H_{04a} was rejected. Statistical significance is a determination made by an analyst that the results in the data are not explainable by chance alone. Moderation effect was negative which implies moderator did not have effect on cuisine.

Implication may be that there are factors that contribute change in customer satisfaction. Customers understand what they want. The provision of quality food in terms of flavor, taste, consistency, glossiness, crunchiness, varieties in menu, rich and healthy food, clean and safe food increases customer satisfaction and loyalty amongst the potential customers. Improvement in effective communication and training contact staff help them follow instruction on food preparation methods to yield standard results to seal satisfaction

4.9.5 Hypothesis Testing of Customer Product Knowledge on the Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction.

H_{04b} Customer product knowledge does not moderate the link between service quality and customer satisfaction. Results showed that the moderation effect on relationship

between service quality and customer satisfaction was positive and statistically significant with value of $\beta_{4b}=.130$, $p<0.05$) therefore hypothesis was rejected, demonstrating that customer product knowledge had a positive and statistically significant moderating effect on relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. This implied that addition of product knowledge on service quality leads to customer satisfaction.

Product knowledge helps in molding waiters and sales team into enthusiastic experts who know how and whom to sell the services and products. The competition is analyzed by employees. In relation to five aspect meal model, service quality affects customer satisfaction. The results are in tandem with those of Al Idrus and Al Idrus (2021) that Product knowledge and service quality can increase competitive advantage and customer satisfaction in hotels

4.9.6 Hypothesis Testing of Customer Product Knowledge on the Relationship between Interior Environment and Customer Satisfaction

Hypothesis H_{04c} stated that customer product knowledge does no moderating effect on link between the interior environment and customer satisfaction. Based on results the moderation effect on relationship between interior environment and customer satisfaction was positive and statistically significant with value of $\beta_{4c}=.181$, $p<0.05$), and therefore the null hypothesis H_{04} was rejected demonstrating that moderating variable had appositive and statistically significant effect on relationship between the interior environment and customer satisfaction. This implies that the advertisements, on facility equipment, machine and conference facilities together with interior environment affects customer satisfaction in positive way. The information on different

types of hotel designs, layout. Aesthetics, layout and furniture arrangement, are key elements of interior environment that affects customer satisfaction

4.9.7 Hypothesis Testing of Customer Product Knowledge on the Relationship meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction

In summary, multiple Regression analysis was conducted to determine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on the link between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction's study findings revealed of difference in R^2 (coefficient of determination). The R^2 difference between model 1 and model 2 was 0.060. Correlation coefficient (R) value after interaction altered from 0.709 to 0.768 with value of ($p < 0.05$), hence was statistically significant. This was an indication that interacting customer product knowledge with meal experience dimension in the model increased the model explanatory capability of meal experience dimensions' effect on customer satisfaction by increasing present variable count by 6.0%. Table 4.21 shows findings of model summary.

4.10 Summary of variables significance

In summary, the moderating variable had a negative but statistically significant effect on the link between cuisine and customer satisfaction ($\beta_1 = -.325$, $p < 0.05$) as revealed by a regression analysis in model five. The moderator had a positive and statistically significant moderation effect on the link between service quality and customer satisfaction ($\beta_3 = .130$, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, the moderator had a positive and statistically significant moderation effect on the link between interior environment and customer satisfaction ($\beta_3 = .181$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.27: Summary of variables significance

	Hypotheses	Coefficient result	p-value	Interpretation
H01	Customer product knowledge has no significant effect on relationship between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction	-325	.000	Rejected
H02	Customer product knowledge has no significant effect on relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction	.130	.001	Rejected
H03	Customer product knowledge has no significant effect on relationship between interior environment and customer satisfaction.	.181	.000	Rejected
H04	Customer Product Knowledge has no significant effect on the relationship between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction.	.296	.012	Rejected

(Source: Author.2022)

4.11 Summary of chapter four

Results, presentation, interpretation and discussion were discussed in this chapter Demographic results were analyzed and computed in terms of age, gender, education level and number of visit Descriptive analysis was conducted on meal experience dimension whose elements were cuisine quality, service quality and interior environment. Descriptive statistics were transformed into inferential statistics correlation and multiple regression analysis results in line with the specific objectives and results computed. Overall correlation analysis revealed that all independent

variables strong positive and statistically significant $r=.888$ of which is in agreement with those of, Wang, Xie, Chen, Yang, & Yang,(2013) that When the correlation is $r =+0.7$ or exceeds the value, then the relationship is said to be very strong, Multiple Regression Analysis was conducted and results computed. Results revealed that moderation effect on meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction was positive, and statistically significant. The model was good fit 0.000 ($p=0.000<0.05$). Hypothesis testing was conducted all elements and result showed that customer null hypothesis was rejected On moderation effect, customer product knowledge moderated the link between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The section covers summarized research results, conclusions, commendations for action. It also consists of researcher's suggestions for further studies grounded on analyzed data and study results. This was in relation to the aim of the study which was to determine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction in hotels within North Rift Region, Kenya. The chapter comprises of the summary and discussion of study findings, conclusions, recommendations and lastly suggestions for the further research.

5.2 Summary of Results

5.2.1 Demographic Information

The study revealed more female customers visited the hotels than their male counterparts. Majority of respondents in the hotels (137(34.3%)) were above 40 years old while the minority 100 (25.1%) of the hotel customers were between 21 to 30 years. Most of the hotel customers had diploma as their highest level of education (32.8%) while a few (8.0%) had secondary education, primary education, certificate level and master's degree as their highest level of education respectively. Majority (74.7%) of hotel customers had spent time in the hotel more than two times compared to minority (8.8%) of the hotel customers who spent time in the hotel twice.

5.2.2 Effect of Cuisine Quality on Customer Satisfaction.

Initial objective of this study was to examine the effect between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction. The null hypothesis was: H_{01} : There is no significant effect of cuisine quality on customer satisfaction. Multiple regression analysis was run to predict

customer satisfaction from the effect of cuisine quality, service quality and the interior environment. These variables on cuisine quality significantly predicted customer satisfaction, Cuisine quality positively and statistically significantly affected customer satisfaction ($\beta_1=1.693$, $p<0.05$) and therefore the null hypothesis H_{01} was rejected.

On moderating effect of customer product knowledge on relationship between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction, results showed there was a positive and statistically significant moderation effect on customer satisfaction. Interaction of moderation variable with cuisine quality leads to positive change in customer satisfaction. The R^2 coefficient of determination difference from model 2 to model 3 was 0.023. The (R) which is Correlation coefficient altered from 0.768 to 0.791 and was statistically significant ($p=0.000<0.05$). This indicated that customer product knowledge moderates the effect of cuisine quality on customer satisfaction by 2.3%.

This indicates that Hotel customers who took part in this study agreed that they were served clean food that was free from pathogens and additives, food portions were satisfying and served at right temperature. Also it was agreed that food smell provided at the facility was enticing. Variety of menu items were served as well as nutritious and delicious. It was also noted that fresh food was served at the facilities as well presented and eye-catching to customers participating in this study. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the study was rejected because there was substantial moderation effect on relationship between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction in select hotels within North Rift Region Kenya.

5.2.3 Effects of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction

The second objective was to investigate effect of service quality on customer satisfaction. The hypothesis was: H_{02} : There is no significant effect of service quality

on customer satisfaction Results show that service quality had a negative and significant effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta_2 = -0.130$, $p < 0.05$). The results rejected the null hypothesis suggesting that service quality had a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Service quality predicted customer satisfaction

On moderating effect of customer product knowledge on link between service quality and customer satisfaction, results showed that there was a positive and statistically significant moderation effect between service quality and customer satisfaction Interaction of moderation variable on service quality leads to positive change in customer satisfaction (R^2). The R^2 altered from model 3 to model 4 was 0.007 (R altered from .791 to .798 and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This showed that customer product knowledge moderates the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction by 0.7%.

From the study findings majority (75.7%) of the hotel customers agreed that waiters were never too busy to respond to their request, whereas (76.4%) of them who were the majority strongly agreed that restaurant attendants had their interest at heart. Most (51.1%) of the hotel customers within North Rift Region agreed that attendants created trust and confidence in customers. Also the attendants gave them personal attention and care as well as knowledge level and politeness of employees created excellent trust and confidence as (75.7%) of the hotel customers strongly agreed.

However, (59.4%) of the hotel attendants strongly agreed that they gave prompt service and at any time an order is made. Hotel staff were very friendly and welcoming. Waiters spoke eloquently and clearly and the attendants served and treated them with respect. Also, hotel attendants within North Rift Region were very compassionate in serving clients. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the study was rejected because there was

substantial moderation effect of customer product knowledge on relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in selected hotels within North Rift Region Kenya.

5.2.4 Effect of Interior Environment on Customer Satisfaction

The third objective was to establish the effects of interior environment on customer satisfaction. The hypothesis was H₀₃: There is no significant effect of Interior Environment on Customer Satisfaction. A multiple regression was run to predict effect of interior environment on customer satisfaction. Interior environment statistically significantly predicted customer satisfaction, ($\beta_3=0.181$, $p<0.05$). On moderating effect of customer product knowledge on link between interior environment and customer satisfaction, study findings in Table 4.30 revealed that there was difference in R² from model 4 to model 5. The (R²) coefficient of determination was 0.029 (R) altered from 0.798 to 0.827 and was statistically significant ($p<0.05$). This revealed that customer product knowledge moderates the relationship between interior environment and customer satisfaction by 2.9%

5.2.5 Moderating Effect of Customer Product Knowledge on the relationship between Meal Experience Dimension and Customer Satisfaction.

The fourth variable was to establish the Moderating Effect of Customer Product Knowledge on the relationship between meal experience dimension and customer Satisfaction. The hypothesis was H₀₄: customer product knowledge has no significant effect on the relationship between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction. The researcher discovered a strong positive correlation between customer product knowledge on the relationship between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction. The correlation value was ($r=0.888$) hence relationship was

strong positive and statistically significant with P value ($p\text{-value} < 0.00$). Reliability test showed a high level of internal consistency for scale with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.855 which implied scale was reliable. A multiple regression was run to find out how customer satisfaction is affected by meal experience dimensions (cuisine quality, service quality and the interior environment.)

On moderating effect of customer product knowledge on relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, results showed that service quality had positive significant correlation with customer satisfaction. Interactions of moderation variable on service quality leads to positive change in customer satisfaction (coefficient of determination) Findings also revealed there was moderation effect of customer product knowledge on the link between cuisine and service quality and customer satisfaction as well as interior environment. Interaction of moderation variable on cuisine quality leads to positive change in customer satisfaction.

The findings revealed that the customers had known the types of products offered at the facility. The type of products that the customers knew and prefer that have high nutritious content were offered at the facility. The products provided at the facility matched product innovation and trends as per their brand and packaging. The way the products are prepared at the facility were prepared using the right ingredients. The products offered at the facility were of good quality. The products were offered alongside the incentives in pricing and the hotel image was well

5.3 Conclusions

The researcher mainly sought to examine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on relationship between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction in selected hotels within North Rift Region, Kenya. Specific objectives

were grouped into four. The four hypotheses were subjected the multiple regression analysis. The null hypothesis for cuisine quality was rejected as there existed statistically positive moderation effect on relationship between cuisine quality and customer satisfaction.

The study concluded that interaction of customer product knowledge with cuisine quality leads to change in levels of customer satisfaction. Majority of the respondents agreed that cuisine quality is key determinant for customer satisfaction. Further, null hypothesis for service quality was rejected as customer product knowledge had a positive and statistically significant moderating effect on service quality and customer satisfaction. The study concluded that interaction of customer product knowledge with service quality leads to change in levels of customer satisfaction. The majority of hotel customers were in agreement that service quality was important meal dimension element in determining customer satisfaction.

In the third objective the null hypothesis was rejected as there was statistically significant moderating effect of customer product knowledge on relationship between interior environment and customer satisfaction although moderation was weak. In the fourth and last objective of the study, the null hypothesis was rejected as customer product knowledge had a significant moderating influence on the link between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction in selected hotels in North Rift Region, Kenya. Most of the respondents showed that customer product knowledge is very important in determining customer satisfaction because unit added to the cuisine, service quality and interior environment led to change in customer satisfaction. There is statistically significant relationship between customer product knowledge on the relationship between meal experience dimension and customer satisfaction. There was

positive moderating effect of customer product knowledge on the relationship between cuisine and service quality and customer satisfaction except of interior environment which showed weak positive and statistically significant moderation effect.

5.4 Recommendations

The findings in this study are statistically proven that customer product knowledge moderates' relationship between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction. Therefore, the researcher recommends that all business setups should strive to have customer knowledge because this knowledge is about understanding customers in totality in terms of their needs, goals wants and emotional reasons for buying. When companies don't have this knowledge, they will not be able to provide excellent customer services, to their clients. Customers should know the types of products offered at the facility as well as service providers should be aware of consumer needs and wants.

The researcher also recommends that businesses should customize products and services, in terms of cuisine, service and interior environment and align the business processes and operations to create strong long lasting relationships with customers by collecting information from primary and secondary sources on consumer behaviors and browsing histories. The products provided at the facility should match product innovation and trends as per their brand and packaging. The type of food should be nutritious, prepared using right ingredients, good quality products, and be provided alongside incentives. The researcher also recommends that businesses, should stay current because customers' desires and wants vary depending on market conditions like economic, social, environmental, globalization, political situations and their corporate needs. They should know how and when to address concerns of their customers.

Referring to study findings, companies should also employ well-trained and informed employees with essential sales skills who are willing to share information and create trust in customers. Customers respond better to sales pitch when they are able to trust the individual they are speaking to who conveys the information eloquently confidently, and accurately. Knowledge builds enthusiasm, courage, enables responses to objections, gives self-assurance and causes satisfaction of being experts because knowledge is power. Service staff should be familiar with all beverage, food items listed on the menu, their origin and how they are prepared and served.

For items not listed on the menu, all team members need to have basic but correct information of most popular beverage items which exist but are not necessarily served in the establishment. The study recommends that the hotel administration ensures that all properties and attributes of food and beverages are acceptable to all clients. This is in terms of cleanliness and hygiene, food portions, temperature, smell. There should be variety of food items in the menu, delicious, fresh food which is well presented. Hotel businesses should emphasize on quality customer services to guests. This is in terms of reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness.

The service team should give consistent services, be responsive, give prompt services, keep customers interest at heart, instill knowledge to client to create trust and confidence in them, give personal attention and care to customers. They should also be friendly and welcoming, treat customers with respect and be compassionate in serving guests. There is need for annual analyzing of achievements, challenges that has been learnt on effect of interior environment attributes on customer satisfaction in improving the hotel service delivery.

On interior environment, the hospitality managers should ensure the design and beautifications of the hotel should be visually appealing. The fittings in hotel (e.g., chairs, dining table,) should be clean and appropriate. Ambience should reflect the theme heritage and culture of the hotel. The background music and sound should give a pleasurable sensation. The hotel room temperature should be comfortable. The seating arrangements should be good and give enough movement space. The curtains should provide adequate lighting. The paintings and pictures on the walls should be attractive. There should be adequate waiting personnel and staff should be neat and dressed nicely in work uniform.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

The study mainly concentrated on single sector of the economy and this was selected star rated hotels in North Rift region Kenya. Farther research should be conducted in other business establishments or service sector to find out whether constant results could be attained. It would be interesting to find out whether similar results will be established on the subject matter in other regions or service setup. The moderating effect of customer product knowledge on relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction was weak. Therefore, this study recommends a further research be conducted to assess the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on service quality and customer satisfaction in other region or any service set up.

5.6 Chapter summary

The section covers summarized research discussion conclusions, commendations for action It also consist of researcher's suggestions for further studies grounded on analyzed data and study results. This was in relation to the aim of the study which was to determine the moderating effect of customer product knowledge on meal experience

dimension and customer satisfaction in hotels within North Rift Region, Kenya. The chapter comprises of the summary and discussion of study findings, conclusions, recommendations and lastly suggestions for the further studies.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CUSTOMERS

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

Dear respondent

I am a student at the University of Eldoret undertaking a Master degree in Hospitality Management. I am doing my research on *Moderating effect of customer product knowledge on relationship between meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction in North Rift Region Kenya*. The study is purely for academic purposes and the information will be kept confidential. Kindly fill the survey below and thank you for your precious time.

Yours faithfully,

Nabalayo Amina Okutu

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Gender Male Female
2. Age < 20 years 21-30 years 31 - 40 years > 40 years
3. Highest academic qualification? Primary Secondary Certificate level
Diploma Bachelor any other (Specify)
.....
4. How many times have you been to this hotel? Once Twice More than 2
times

SECTION B: GENERAL INFORMATION**SECTION B: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding Customer Satisfaction Please tick [] accordingly: 1: Strongly Disagree (**SD**); 2: Disagree (**D**), 3: Neutral (**N**), 4 Agree (**A**), 5 Strongly Agree (**SA**)

Customer satisfaction		1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	I would like build everlasting relationship with the hotel service providers					
2.	I have referred new clients to consume meals at this facility.					
3.	I would like to experience feeling in this hotel					
4.	I have made repetitive purchases at the facility.					
5	I would like to invite my friend and family along to this hotel					
6	I would like to make this hotel my future choice					

SECTION C: EFFECT OF CUISINE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER

SATISFACTION

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding hotel Cuisine Quality Please tick [√] accordingly: 1: Strongly Disagree (**SD**); 2: Disagree (**D**), 3: Neutral (**N**), 4 Agree (**A**), 5 Strongly Agree (**SA**).

Cuisine Quality		1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The food served is clean and free from pathogens and additives					
2	The food portions are satisfying and served at right temperature.					
3	The smell of the food provided at the facility is enticing					
4	There is a variety of menu items at the hotel					
5.	The food is nutritious at the facility					
6	The food provided at the facility is delicious					
7	Fresh food is served at the facility					
8.	Food is well presented and eye-catching at the hotel.					

SECTION D: EFFECT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER

SATISFACTION

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding hotel Service Quality Please tick [√] accordingly: 1: Strongly Disagree (**SD**); 2: Disagree (**D**), 3: Neutral (**N**), 4 Agree (**A**), 5 Strongly Agree (**SA**).

Service Quality		1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	Waiters are never too busy to respond to customer requests at hotel					
2.	Restaurant attendants customers interest .at heart					
3.	Attendants create trust and confidence in customers					
4.	Attendants gives me personal attention and care to customers					
5.	The knowledge level and politeness of the employees and to what extent they create trust and confidence is excellent					

6.	The attendants give service any time an order is made and promptly					
7	The hotel staff are very friendly and welcoming					
8	The waiters speaks eloquently and clearly					
9	The attendants serve and treat customers with respect					
10	The hotel attendants are very compassionate in serving clients					

SECTION E: EFFECT OF INTERIOR ENVIRONMENT ON CUSTOMER

SATISFACTION

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding hotel Interior Environment. Please tick [√] accordingly: 1: Strongly Disagree (**SD**); 2: Disagree (**D**), 3: Neutral (**N**), 4 Agree (**A**), 5 Strongly Agree (**SA**)

Interior environment		1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	The interior design and decorations of the hotel are visually appealing.					
2.	The furniture in hotel (e.g., dining table, chair) is clean. and appropriate					
3	The ambience reflects the theme heritage and culture of the hotel					
4.	. The background music and sound gives a pleasurable sensation					
5	The hotel room temperature is comfortable					
6	The seating arrangements is good and give enough movement space					
7	The curtains provide adequate lighting					
8	The paintings and pictures on the walls are attractive					
9	The hotel has adequate number of staff					
10	The staff are neat and well dressed in work uniform					

SECTION F: CUSTOMER PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding Customer Product Knowledge Please tick [√] accordingly: 1: Strongly Disagree (**SD**); 2: Disagree (**D**), 3: Neutral (**N**), 4 Agree (**A**), 5 Strongly Agree (**SA**)

Customer product knowledge		1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	I have known the types of products offered at the facility.					
2.	The type of products that I know and prefer that have high nutritious content are offered at the facility.					
3.	Products provided at the facility matches product innovation and trends as per their brand and packaging.					
4.	The way the products are prepared at the facility are prepared using the right ingredients.					
5.	The products offered at the facility are of good quality.					
6.	The products offered alongside the incentives in pricing					
7	The hotel image is well known					

Thank You

APPENDIX II: RESEARCH PERMIT

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Ref No: 644337	Date of Issue: 16/September/2021
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
<p>This is to Certify that Ms. NABALAYO AMINA of University of Eldoret, has been licensed to conduct research in Usain-Gishu on the topic: MODERATING EFFECT OF CUSTOMER PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE ON MEAL EXPERIENCE DIMENSION AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN HOTELS WITHIN NORTH RIFT REGION KENYA for the period ending : 16/September/2022.</p>	
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APPENDIX III: RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER



P. O. Box 1125 - 30100, Eldoret, Kenya
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Mob: 0736 493555; Fax: +254 53 206 3257
E-mail: directordict@uoeld.ac.ke

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
HOTEL AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT**

REF: UoE/B/SBUS/HHM/PGM&SB/041

DATE: 1st July, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: DATA COLLECTION - NABALAYO AMINA OKUTU-
SBUS /HHM/M2000/18**

The bearer of this letter is a postgraduate student in the Department of Hotel and Hospitality Management. The student is currently undertaking Research, collecting data for the proposal titled "*Moderating effect of customer product knowledge on meal experience dimensions and customer satisfaction in selected hotels within North Rift region, Kenya*".

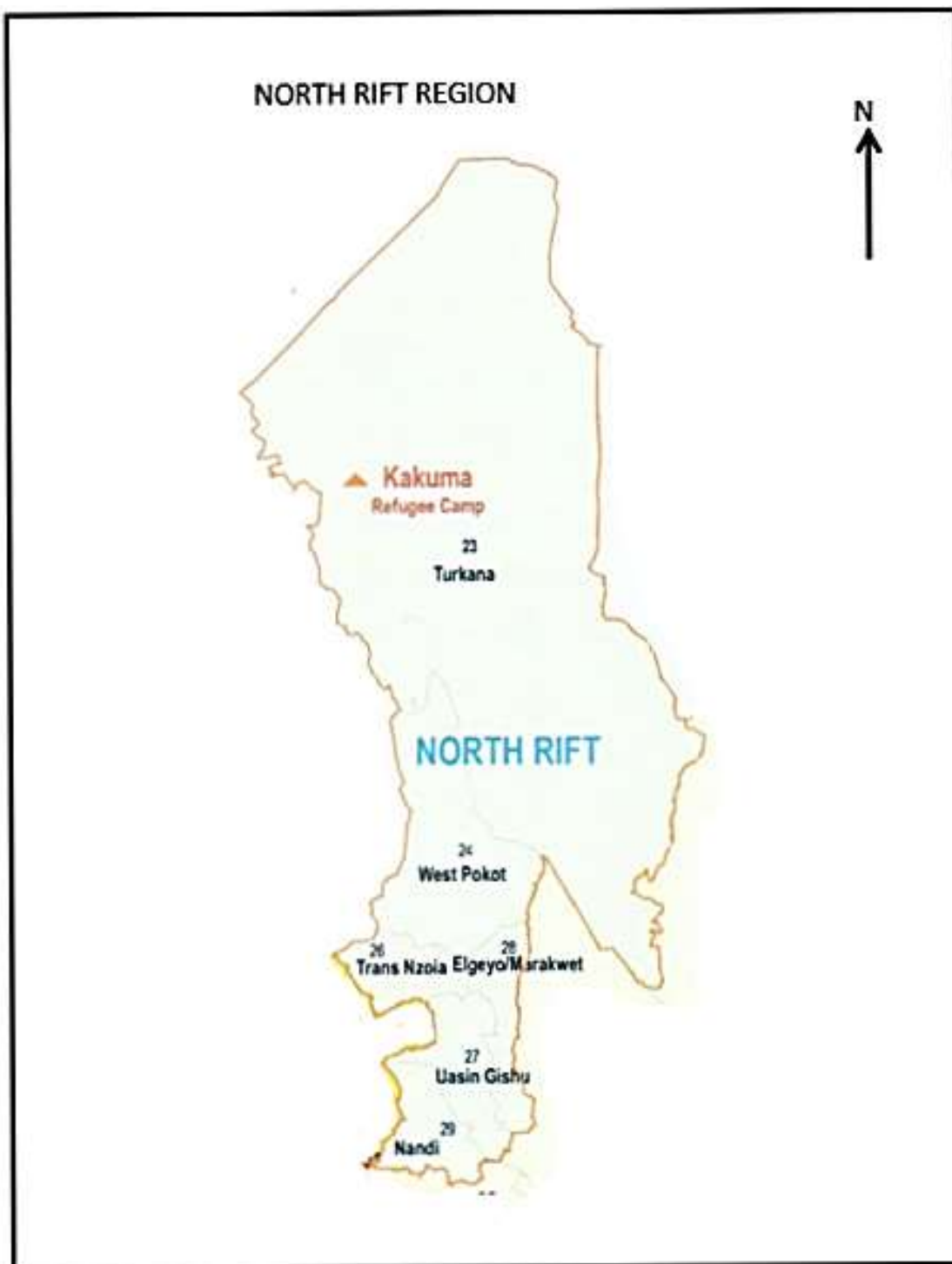
Any assistance accorded to the student will be appreciated.

Thank you.

**DR. CATHERINE SEMPELE
HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF HOTEL & HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT**



APPENDIX IV: MAP OF NORTH RIFT REGION



(Source: Google Maps, 2022)

APPENDIX V: SIMILARITY REPORT

Turnitin Originality Report

MODERATING EFFECT OF CUSTOMER PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE ON MEAL EXPERIENCE DIMENSIONS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN STAR RATED HOTELS WITHIN THE NORTH RIFT REGION: KENYA by Amina Nabalayo



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