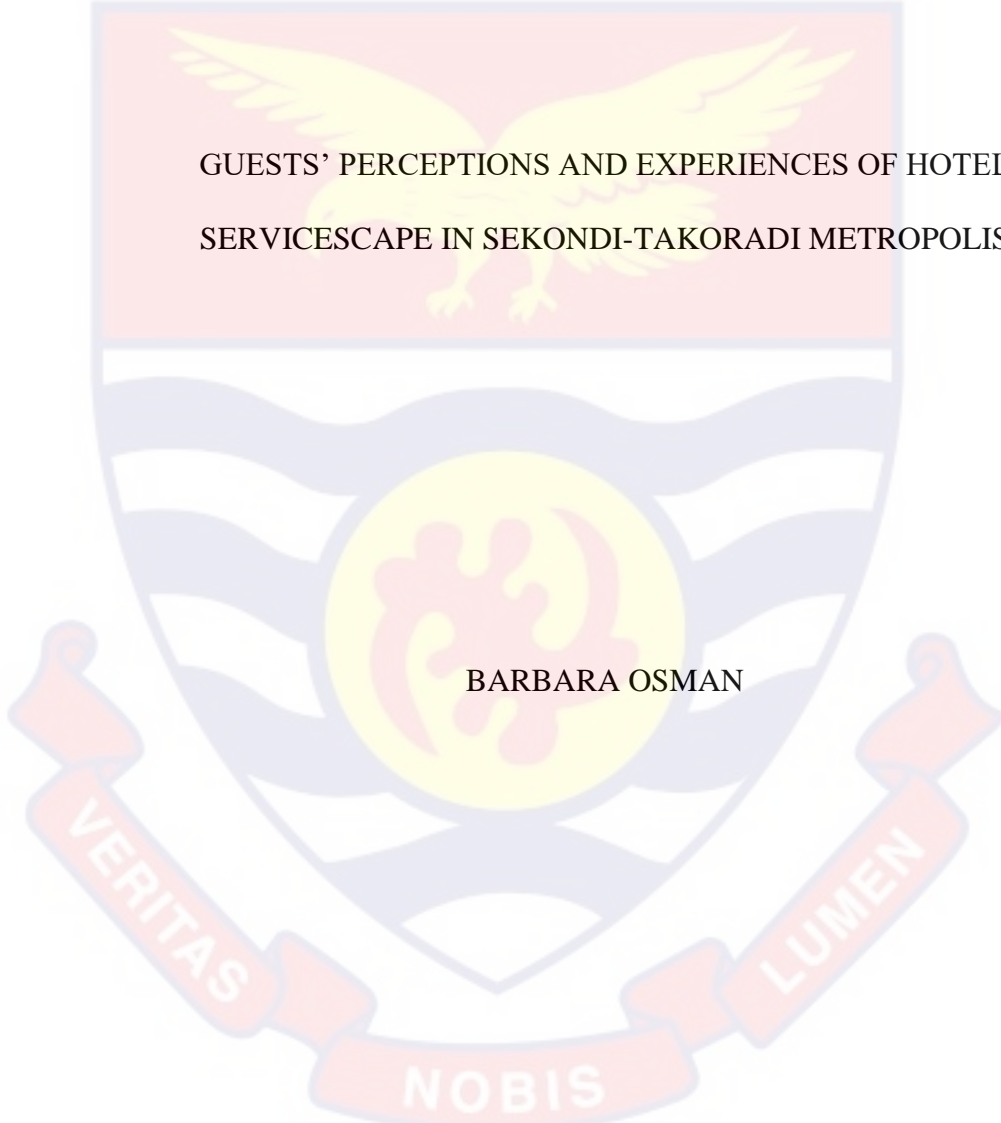


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



GUESTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF HOTEL
SERVICESCAPE IN SEKONDI-TAKORADI METROPOLIS

BARBARA OSMAN

2023

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

GUESTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF HOTEL
SERVICESCAPE IN SEKONDI-TAKORADI METROPOLIS

BY

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Thesis submitted to the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Colleges of Humanities and Legal Studies,
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award of Master of Philosophy degree in Hospitality Management

NOVEMBER 2023

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is a result of my original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree at this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature.....  Date.....

Name: Barbara Osman

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on the supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Dr. Stephen Edem Hiamey

ABSTRACT

A hotel's physical environment (servicescape) plays a crucial role in attracting guests and has the potential to influence various aspects of guest experience, satisfaction, and revisit intentions. Creating unique and memorable experiences for guests is essential for a successful business. The study assessed guests' perceptions, experiences as well as post-behavioural intentions of hotel servicescape in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and utilized a quantitative approach to collect data. A questionnaire was administered to 206 respondents (guests) from various categories of hotels. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables, means, and standard deviations. Exploratory Factor Analysis, ANOVA, independent sample t-test, and chi-square test of independence were also employed to explore the relationship between key variables and respondents' socio-demographics. The findings of the study indicated that, in addition to other factors, hotel guests heavily relied on different dimensions of the servicescape when evaluating their overall experience. These dimensions especially ambient conditions had a positive influence on guest experience and their intentions to engage in post-experience behaviours. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that hotels should adopt a holistic approach to understanding the servicescape in order to enhance customers' experiences, satisfaction, and loyalty. It is therefore significant to focus more on promoting the cognitive, emotional, and physiological benefits that guests derive from their stay at the hotel.

KEYWORDS

Ambiance

Guest Experience

Guest Perception

Physical Environment

Servicescape

Spatial layout

Social Element



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

It is often assumed that providing excellent service will result in satisfied guests and give businesses an advantage in the fiercely competitive hospitality market. However, service providers cannot offer just single service to meet clients' constantly changing demands (Hsie & Chuang, 2020). Hotels have long understood the value of design in pulling in consumers, expressing their service and product offerings, and setting themselves apart from the competition (Lockwood & Pyun, 2019). While it has long been understood that providing psychologically impactful experiences to a variety of traveller (guest) segments is essential to the success of different lodging facilities, today's accommodations facilities place a greater emphasis on hospitableness and environmental design in order to stand out in the market (Song, Suess, Mody, & Dogru, 2020).

The hospitality industry's most significant sub-sector is undoubtedly the hotel (accommodation) sector. It is extremely diverse and, together with the transportation sector, serves both domestic and foreign tourists as well as those who are based locally. It somewhat satisfies the requirements of almost all tourism market segments that support national economies (Akubia, 2021). Location, environment, product and service offerings, quality, price, and reputation are key factors in creating a competitive edge. The level of hospitality provided by the accommodation sector as a whole significantly enhances the entire guest experience. The hotel industry, which has historically placed more emphasis on the physical product, is beginning to

understand that guests want the service promise to be consistently kept and that in some markets, the experiential element will be what sets a successful business apart. As more than ever before, consumers' attitudes and behaviours are changing faster. (Sotiriadis & Sarmaniotis, 2016).

With the growth of experiential economies, suppliers of travel and lodging industries are employing its concepts to produce and develop travel goods and lodging services (Huang, Chen & Gao, 2019). Experience is defined as the sentiments and opinions that customers have of a business based on their interactions with its employees, goods, and service environment (Chan, Wan, & Tam, 2021). As a result, the essential aspect of a service experience is typically an interaction with various elements, such as social factors and physical interfaces, and as a result, the guest is left with a few recollections of their experiences. Although opinions of guests' experiences are likely to vary, the tangible and intangible aspects of hotel services can greatly influence guests' judgments (Dedeoglu, Bilgihan, Ye, Buonincontri, & Okumus, 2018). For instance, combining appealing interior design, lovely music, adaptable lighting, pleasant colour and design, and ambient layout can significantly improve the general customer experience and happiness (Jeloudarlou, Aali, Faryabi, & Bafandeh, 2022).

According to Bitner (1992), the "servicescape" refers to the actual environment in which a service organisation provides services to its clients. Bitner first identified the three components of the servicescape in 1992: ambiance, spatial layout and functionality, and signs, symbols, and artefacts. Particularly in the travel and hospitality industries, guests view the servicescape as a critical component of their experience to gauge the calibre of

the services they receive (Lin, 2016; Türker, Gökkaya, & Ayşegül, 2019). It provides the setting within which concurrent provision and consumption of hotel services can occur and is a contact factor that can significantly affect guests' pleasure and their perception of service excellence, both directly and indirectly (Lockwood & Pyun 2019). The service setting can then assist service providers in changing how clients perceive the service, which has an impact on client behaviour (Dedeoglu et al., 2018).

Numerous components of the hotel's offerings, as well as marketing campaigns and client preferences, have an impact on the experiences of its guests. (Baruca & Civre, 2012). Consumer behaviour research into personality traits can explain why particular personality types may react differently to different service environments and also in accordance with an individual's disposition (Kim & Parker, 2017). A set of cognitive processes called decision-making, which involves the simultaneous effect of beliefs and attitudes anticipating behaviour in the environment, can be affected by variations in reactions that are related to diverse lifestyles, cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and attitudes (Akubia, 2021; Mariani, & Predvoditeleva, 2019). Several elements affect how hotel guests experience their stay, including dimensions related to the hotel's product aspects, marketing initiatives, and customer personal traits (Baruca & Civre, 2012). Likewise in the hospitality markets, situational factors such as the purpose of visit can also influence guests' responses; thus, the significance of cognitive and sensory attributes can differ based on the guest's classification, whether they are business or leisure-oriented. (Line, Hanks & Kim, 2015).

In the hospitality industry, numerous products exhibit similar cognitive attributes and services that can be readily replaced. Environmental psychologists believe that humans react to their surroundings in a holistic manner. Individuals see separate stimuli, but their responses to the environment are determined by the whole composition of stimuli. Similar to this, servicescape generates particular emotional reactions in users and aids in service classification. In other words, a guest's surroundings elicit one of two behavioural responses: approach or avoidance (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Approach-avoidance behaviours are defined as having the purpose to enter or leave a certain setting. An individual's intention to return to the same environment is created when they successfully complete the sequential processes of staying in, investigating, participating with, and imparting meaning to their environment. This behaviour is referred to as the approach behaviour. Contrarily, avoidance behaviour refers to leaving a situation with no plans to return when one is dissatisfied, worried, or bored (Avan, Uyar, Zorlu, & Ozmen, 2019).

Due to the influx of tourists and government initiatives to boost tourism for economic reasons, Ghana's hotel business is among the fastest-growing sectors of the economy (Adzoyi & Klutse, 2015). International chains and other new hotels are currently vying for a larger market share. As a result, the industry's intense competition, innovative techniques are needed to stay competitive. The Ghana Tourist Authority (2021), estimated that, the Western Region has seen the establishment of two hundred and twenty (220) hotels in the past ten years, ranging from budget to four (4) star ratings, with pre-existing ones receiving a facelift in an effort to capitalise on guests and

workers coming in for leisure and business respectively due to the presence of major international companies, some of which are into mining, oil and gas, as well as other businesses. Prioritizing and concentrating on different aspects of the servicescape is essential if the hotel sector is to successfully traverse the continuously shifting market environment and satisfy consumers' ever-changing needs. Therefore, this study sought to assess guests' perceptions and experiences of hotel servicescape in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Statement of the Problem

In the past, hotels primarily provided traditional amenities, but they have now shifted their focus to creating unique experiences by designing and staging their servicescape. (Lee & Chuang, 2021). According to Mettler (2016), the wellness movement has proven that guests prefer to stay in environments that make them happy. Therefore, when the hotel environment satisfies their demands and overall experience, guests are more likely to be happy (Ali, Amin, & Cobanoglu 2016).

Extensive efforts are being made by numerous hotels to develop appealing environments, but a deeper understanding of customer loyalty formation is needed to effectively promote customer experience and loyalty. One emerging area of research is examining this phenomenon through the lens of servicescape, as highlighted by Choi and Kandampully (2019). To provide positive memorable customer experience, several researches have underlined the importance of creating an appealing servicescape as well as assuring a favourable perceived image and value (Chang, 2016; Line & Hanks, 2019; Tran, Dang, & Tournois, 2020).

Consequently, there have also been some studies on servicescape and customer experience mostly in developed economies like Europe and Asia, which focused on customer perceptions of hotel service environment, emotions and behaviour, social interaction and service quality in first-class luxury hotels, resorts and restaurants (Artuger, 2020; Avan et al 2019, Chang, 2016; Choi & Kandampully 2019; Dedeoglu et al, 2018, Ben Haobin 2021; Line, Hanks & Kim 2018; Park et al 2019). The sample from these studies was constrained to the respective facilities of which their guests are distinct from lower-star hotels. With little known about other categories it is impossible to extrapolate the results to various hotel types. Therefore, more certainty in interpreting the results would be provided by a greater distribution across all star ratings. Though there are obviously unique differences in each class, every guests still do have expectations for a particular hotel in terms of servicescape hence the need to look at other classes also.

More studies are required to be carried out in developing nations since the cultural, economic, and social orientations of these places differ from those of affluent societies, which may cause differences in consumer behaviour (Addo, 2017). In Ghana, few studies on the servicescape of hotels and repatronage (Adzoyi & Klutse, 2015; Simpeh, Simpeh, Nasiru & Tawiah, 2011) focused on three dimensions in three (3) star- rated hotels in the Greater Accra region (excluding signs and symbols, and social dimension respectively which are a vital part of servicescape).

Furthermore, in the case of the Western Region, prior studies on hotels have concentrated on how guests perceive the quality of service. Another knowledge gap was revealed in a study by Hagan (2015) that only considered

one aspect of the servicescape (spatial arrangement and functionality), leaving out the other aspects as a significant marketing component. As customer experience has a significant impact on repurchase intentions, which forms the bedrock of the hotel business, this study thus sought to assess guests' perceptions and experiences of hotel servicescape in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to assess guests' perceptions of servicescape and experiences of hotels in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Explore guests' perceptions of the servicescape of hotels in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.
2. Analyze guest experience of servicescape elements of hotels in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis
3. Examine the post-experience behavioural intentions of hotel guests in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Hypothesis

H₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between perceptions of servicescape and guest experience.

Significance of the Study

This study aims to gain a deeper understanding of how guests to the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis view the servicescape and their interactions with hotel services as there are not many empirical studies on this topic. Additionally, it seeks to advance academic discourse in the literature on marketing for hotels.

This study may also benefit hoteliers by making them more aware of the value they bring to assessments of guests' experiences and by assisting hotel managers in enhancing guests' experiences. Thus, it will provide practical implications for hotel executives looking for ways to develop experience marketing strategies by way of providing knowledge about the factors that affect customer behaviour as regards hotel servicescape so that they can in effect better position themselves in their respective facility.

Finally, this study will open up new doors for scholars looking to examine possible research areas for hotels in the hotel services and accommodation management fields. By demonstrating how servicescape dimensions influence the hotel stay experience and how guests share their experiences with the service encounter, it will provide valuable insights and opportunities for further investigation in the field.

Delimitation

This study could on a wider scale, cover other related factors like price, location and many others, but specifically, this work concentrated on guests' perceptions of servicescape and experiences of hotels. Furthermore, it could cover the entire Western Region, but due to time and other resource constraints, the study was limited to selected hotels in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Limitation

Due to the absence of a sampling frame beyond the hotel environment where guests were encountered, using a probability sampling technique were not feasible for guest selection. As a result, accidental procedure, a nonprobability sampling technique, was employed. It is important to

remember that the study was limited to the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. To expand on this topic, future research could consider utilizing a mixed method approach to delve deeper into how servicescape influences the guest experience.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews relevant literature on guests' perceptions of servicescape and experiences of hotels as well as the theoretical and conceptual framework guiding the study. Topics reviewed include servicescape, guest perceptions of servicescape, socio-demographics, response to servicescape, and concept of experience and post-experience behaviour of hotel guests.

The Concept of Servicescape

Bitner (1992) used the word "servicescape" to refer to the physical setting in which a service provider offers its products and services to customers. It comprises the settings where goods and services are provided and where transactions with customers take place. Bitner defines servicescape as the "constructed environment," specifically referring to the "artificial, physical surroundings" rather than the natural or social environment. According to Durna et al, (2015), servicescape includes both visible and invisible communicational variables. Invisible factors include cultural traits, the amount of interest, and the civility of the service staff during the service interaction. Visible variables include things like decoration, design, and colour usage. According to Artuger (2020), the servicescape is the whole physical environment that customers perceive and includes things like furnishings, amenities, signage, temperature, noise, and cleanliness.

The servicescape of a hotel has a substantial effect on consumer decisions and market segmentation for hotels. There are several labels that have been used to symbolise the same concept, even though the phrase "servicescape" is

frequently used to express how customers are affected by both real and abstract components. As described by Baker (1987), servicescape is the "physical environment," Kotler (1973) referred to it as "atmospherics," Arnould et al. (1998) used the term "economic environment," Turley and Milliam (2000) referred to it as the "marketing environment," Mathwich et al. (2001) described it as "interactive theatre," Roy and Tai (2003) used "store environment," Weinrach (2000) described it as the "psychological environment," and Cronin (2000) referred to it as the "service environment". These various concepts have been utilized to reflect different perspectives shared by scholars on the same phenomenon.

According to Çalışkan and Dedeoglu (2018), the physical components encompassed within the boundaries of destinations are just as significant as their geographical locations and other related factors. The ability of contextual factors to alter behaviours and brand perception, particularly in service-oriented enterprises, is further stressed by Avan and Ozmen (2019). Two significant variables in this are the concurrent production and consumption of services, as well as the fact that customers are present in the service setting. The authors contend that because of the nature of the service sector, consumers frequently have little prior knowledge. In such cases, servicescape elements play a significant part in guests' understanding of the business facility, facilitating relevant analysis and evaluation (Artuger, 2020; Lockwood & Pyun, 2019; Li, 2021). Since the physical environment holds importance for customers in evaluating their experience, it also plays a crucial role in customer satisfaction across various service sectors, such as hotels, supermarkets, restaurants, retail stores, and banks.

The servicescape paradigm was first presented by Bitner (1992), who distinguished three main components of the servicescape: ambient circumstances, spatial layout and functionality, and signs, symbols, and artefacts. These components affect how customers view the service landscape overall, including perceived quality, internal characteristics like client happiness with the service received, and extrinsic reactions like approach, avoidance, staying, and repeat business. Bitner also elaborated on how a company's physical environment, or "servicescape," affects a customer's thinking, feeling, and physical state. The servicescape concept has established itself as a pillar of modern understanding of environment as a prelude to different types of customer behaviour. However, it has also faced certain criticisms from researchers (Avant et al., 2019; Line, Hanks & Kim, 2018; Pizam & Tasci, 2019; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011).

While ambiance, architecture, and signage are unquestionably important components of the service atmosphere, critics of the Servicescape model contend that the framework usually ignores the social aspects of the customer experience, particularly its impact on other customers. Pizam and Tasci (2019) also claim that the methodology ignores the cultural, social, and environmental facets of service environments. The servicescape has two dimensions, according to certain studies: physical and social components (Meng and Choi, 2017; Dedeoglu et al., 2018). The servicescape is divided into communicative staging and substantive staging by Chang (2016), Dong and Siu (2013), who emphasise the significance of each in determining a great client experience. Thombs and McColl-Kennedy (2003) discuss the social aspects of the servicescape, and Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) suggest a

framework that takes into account natural, social, and physical stimuli. According to Kandampully, Bilgihan, and Amer (2022), these variables may have an impact on the approach/avoidance decisions and social interaction behaviours of both clients and staff. These social factors, which are equally important and present in the service situation, are the subject of this study's attention on their influence.

Guest Perception of Hotel Servicescape Dimensions

The hotel sector, which includes a variety of lodging options like hotels, motels, guest houses/bed and breakfasts, farmhouses, apartments/villas/flats/cottages, condominiums/timeshare resorts, vacation villages, caravan/camping sites, and inns, is an essential part of the larger hospitality industry (Sotiriadis & Sarmaniotis, 2016). Hotels significantly contribute to the attraction of a destination in the context of leisure and tourism by offering lodging options.

Hotel products are perceived by guests as experiences rather than mere places to sleep (Carrington, 2016). Hotel guests view their stay as an opportunity to have meaningful experiences. As a result, hoteliers' top priority is to provide satisfying experiences for guests since they significantly influence their choice of accommodation. These experiences are planned and designed to specifically address the requirements and desired outcomes of various consumer categories. In the end, what is being advertised and sold is the experience itself. Dedeoglu et al. (2018) confirmed that although guests may view their stay as a whole, the physical and intangible facets of the hotel and its offerings have the greatest influence on guests' perceptions. Customers' perceptions of these external factors might affect how they view the

atmosphere, the people, and the service, which ultimately affects how they perceive the entire experience (Kloosterman, 2017).

Previous studies have demonstrated perception involves the five senses of sight, taste, smell, touch, and hearing, according to earlier research (Ahmed et al., 2020; Cherry, 2014). According to Sotiriadis and Sarmaniotis (2016), perceptions are influenced by both tangible factors like architecture and the availability of food and drink, as well as more intangible benefits like pleasing sight, sound, touch, and scent that are communicated by good design. Perceptions also include psychological advantages, which are felt as mental states of satisfaction, status, and well-being. When people first enter a hotel's servicescape, visual cues are very strong, influencing how they perceive the lobby's physical attributes whether they are there in person or just looking at pictures online (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011). These cues, along with the non-visual experiences of the hotel lobby, contribute to guests' first impressions and influence their perception, emotions, and behaviours (Lin, 2016). A room's appearance and overall aesthetic impact are significantly influenced by a variety of elements, including the furniture, wall colours, pictures/paintings, plants/flowers, dinnerware, linens, and floor coverings (Agnihotri & Chaturvedi, 2018). Along with aesthetic features, it has been discovered that guests' perceptions and evaluations of their experiences in a hotel are positively influenced by pleasant aromas, calming music, a comfortable temperature, low noise levels, and enough lighting (Abdelhady & Abdien, 2020; Ahmed et al., 2020). These elements, when in harmony with other aspects of the hotel, contribute to more favourable customer perceptions and a more positive evaluation of their experiences.

Ambient elements refer to intangible background characteristics that have an impact on all the five senses and can subconsciously affect customers. These components include the following: heat, light, sound, music, and smell (Baker, 1987; Jain & Bagdare, 2011; Kloosterman, 2017). Bitner (1992) concurred and defined ambient conditions as intangible factors that affect how people react to their surroundings. These factors include things like ambient lighting, temperature, aroma, and background music, among other things. Ambience is the physical dimension, according to Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011), who further explain that all-consuming contexts are made up of manipulable, objective, and material stimuli. It includes background environmental inputs that are both nonverbal and invisible. Kloosterman (2017) further argues that these conditions are particularly noticeable when they are extreme. In a related study, Kamau (2017) observes that ambience, even when not consciously noticed, impacts customers' emotional well-being, perceptions, and attitudes. Customers can sense and interpret the mood created by the environment. Kotler (2012) suggests that exposure to positive sounds has a 65% chance of causing a mood change. As a result, background music is used to affect both consumers and workers' emotions and behaviours. Kotler (2012) also points out that 75% of daily emotions are influenced by fragrance. Odours can evoke different emotions, such as sadness or happiness, and they can trigger memories or alleviate stress. In fact, pleasant odours can unconsciously improve mood and be associated with positive feelings. These findings show how the sense of smell affects human behaviour and how pleasant odours might improve the entire consumer experience.

Ibraheem and Tournois (2018) state that the main idea of servicescape is to build up the service environment in such a way that sensory elements like music, colours, light, and fragrances engage the consumer's senses and produce an immersive consumption experience. Numerous studies have shown how the servicescape at hotels affects guest pleasure and experience. Customers' feelings are significantly influenced by the surroundings, furniture, signs, and symbols, as has been shown (Ahmed, Abdelhady & Abdien, 2020; Lee & Chuang, 2021). For instance, Sotiriadis and Sarmaniotis (2016) discovered that the air quality, temperature, music, and noise levels had a beneficial impact on a luxury hotel's reputation overall. The same factors—air quality, odour/aroma, music, and noise levels—also had a positive impact on customer happiness. This study offered more proof of the significance of ambiance, aesthetics, and lighting in influencing how customers view the servicescape. These findings concur with those of other studies (Agnihotri & Chaturvedi, 2018; Suh et al., 2014; Onuoha & Doris, 2017) that have emphasised the effects of these characteristics on customer experiences and satisfaction. Similarly, Tran, Van Dang, and Tournois (2020) discovered that the proper usage of smells in casino environments could improve interaction behaviours among patrons who are strangers to one another. They conducted their research in a coffee shop.

Spatial layout and functionality refer to the arrangement of furnishings and equipment within the hotel environment. This includes considering whether the layout facilitates the smooth movement of customer traffic and if the equipment is both visually appealing and functional for customers to use or observe during their service experience (Kamau, 2017). According to

Kloostermann (2017), the layout and functionality of the area in the service environment are determined by how the furniture, equipment, and other items are arranged.

In leisure service venues like hotels, restaurants, concerts, and theatres, Eliasu (2015) contends that the layout and design of the seats, corridors, walkways, bathrooms, entrances, and exits is particularly significant. These elements can greatly influence guests' enjoyment and comfort. On the other hand, according to Tran, Van Dang, and Tournois (2020), a disorderly seating plan in a music hall not only contributes to a poor customer experience but also conveys a lack of patron confidence. Additionally, Sotiriadis and Sarmaniotis (2016) supported the importance of layout accessibility in influencing how customers view the service landscape. This result is consistent with earlier studies. (Ogbuji et al., 2016; Onuoha and Doris, 2017; Mohi, 2012). In order to optimise the favourable and significant influence on guests, it is necessary to prioritise beautiful design and layout.

Customers receive considerable cognitive support from the servicescape's signs, symbols, and artefacts, which aid them in locating particular locations and physical features (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996; Kim et al., 2016). This dimension, as described by Kloostermann (2017), encompasses tangible objects that are visible to both customers and employees and convey information about the facility. For instance, a "No Smoking" sign on a building door communicates a specific behavioural rule. Additionally, symbolic ideas can be evoked and added to the facility's overall impression by using artwork, high-quality materials, photographs, and other features. Guests are helped in their cognitive activity by the clarity and existence of such signs,

symbols, and artefacts, which makes it easier for them to navigate the servicescape and reduces sensations of being lost (Kamau, 2017). Guests instinctively seek meaning from signs and symbols, Kim et al. (2016) claim, and use these cues to build expectations about the kind and calibre of services being provided. According to the findings of their study, signs and symbols significantly affect consumer happiness, according to Artuger (2020). But it's crucial to understand that the study concentrated on all-inclusive resort hotels. In such hotels, guests may have a greater need for clear signage and signboards to easily find their desired locations within the hotel premises. As a result, the significance of signage and directional components in hotels becomes particularly apparent.

Social aspects, which include the demeanour and friendliness of both other customers and service providers, are crucial in determining how customers perceive hospitality businesses (Pizam & Tasci, 2019). Based on Bennett's (1970) theory that the physical environment affects social interaction, Bitner initially excluded social and natural cues from the servicescape. Experts in social psychology have, nevertheless, accepted that social and human factors in the physical environment have an impact on human behaviour (Baker, 1987; Belk, 1975; Platania and Moran, 2001). Ten years after Bitner (1992) first proposed the idea of the servicescape, Tombs and McColl-Kennedy (2002) developed the idea of the social servicescape, arguing that other consumers inside the servicescape are crucial to the successful delivery of the service.

The service climate, which involves both employees and other guests within the facility, directly influences guests' experience and satisfaction with

hotels (Choi & Kandampully, 2019). In the hospitality sector, customer assessments of businesses are frequently based on interactions between customers and staff (Zhao and Mattila, 2013; Zhao et al., 2014). Customers' contacts with personnel and other customers inside the facility as well as the physical surroundings influence how they view the overall customer service experience. In a study to investigate the social aspect of the expanding servicescape, Lee and Chuang (2021) discovered that interactions with both employees and other customers had a beneficial effect on customer satisfaction. Guests reported higher levels of pleasure when they engaged in satisfying social interactions while staying at the hotel. Merdin-Uygur and Hesapci (2018) found that customers felt happier when discussing experiences with close friends but did not feel the same degree of enjoyment when sharing experiences with strangers, which is consistent with other study (Choi & Kandampully, 2019). This may be due to a lack of affinity or connection with unfamiliar individuals or an inherent characteristic that influences behaviour. Further investigation is needed to understand the specific factors that influence guests' interactions and experiences with others within the hotel setting.

Socio-demographic Characteristics and Servicescape Experience

According to the literature on consumer behaviour, personal traits significantly influence customer decision-making and subsequent actions (Hagan, 2016). It makes sense to presume that customers with various personal traits have varied motivations and causes for their actions. However, Erdem, Atadil, and Nasoz (2019) argue that some conflicting findings in research studies stem from the misconception that all hotel guests are homogeneous in terms of their demographics, attitudes, and perceptions.

Bitner's servicescape model suggests that to solve this, factors including age, gender, marital status, financial situation (income), community, as well as situational variables like expectations, emotions, plans, and reasons for being in the physical environment, be taken into account. These factors can moderate customers' responses to the servicescape. Socio-demographic variables such as sex, age, income, and occupation are significant determinants of experience, satisfaction, and repurchase decisions (Fraikue, 2016). Therefore, these variables are crucial in designing service establishments that meet the desires and preferences of customers. Businesses may better understand their consumers and adjust their services to match their unique requirements and expectations by taking into account the variety of human traits.

The physical environment and perceptions of service quality can be influenced by gender or sex. Stereotypes that people are exposed to during gender role socialisation have an impact on gender differences (Ganesan-Lim, Russel-Bennet & Dagger, 2008 as cited in Fraikue, 2016). Males tend to pay more attention to salespeople while making decisions, but females typically rely more heavily on the atmosphere and service rating. Previous studies have shown that the vast majority of hotel guests are male, representing around 60% - 64.5%, while female guests account for the remaining 35.5% (Lockwood & Pyun, 2019; Sotiriadis & Sarmaniotis, 2016). In terms of dissatisfaction, females tend to report higher levels of dissatisfaction. This might be explained by females placing more emphasis on the social aspects of service interactions (Salle et al., 2016). In addition, Morkunas and Rudien (2020) claim that when evaluating services, females pay more attention to the

social service landscape. They tend to have higher expectations for the social environment of hotels and restaurants compared to males. This difference is also reflected in the intention to revisit a service provider, as males are more inclined to repurchase services when they are pleased. These findings have significant managerial ramifications, emphasising the need for facility owners to focus more on how females perceive the service environment and their overall experience. By meeting female s expectations and enhancing their satisfaction, service providers can foster repeated purchases and potentially improve customer loyalty.

Studies have also shown that people of different age cohorts have different reasons for embarking on a trip (Sotiriadis & Sarmaniotis, 2016). They further point out three main trends: (i) the baby boomers' group, which ranges in age from 45 to 64, is a crucial market, and "experiential" life-improving products are marketed at them. These items are made to appeal to their "forever young" views and desire for experiential travel; (ii) the focus must be on tailored offerings; and (iii) consumer purchasing will continue to be influenced by price, quality, service experience, and convenience.

The ability to pay is a requirement for those who are accountable for their hotel accommodations, which limits people's motivation (Zhang & Peng, 2014). Therefore, it is expected that those with greater incomes will be able to afford accommodations with better star ratings or luxury amenities and more appealing service environments, while those with lesser incomes may choose to stay in hotels of a lower social class. Again, depending on pricing, this would have an impact on the type of physical environment each class of guest would experience, which would then affect the overall accommodation

experience. As an illustration, Fraikue (2016) provided evidence that customers with greater incomes chose ambiance and comfort levels as their determinant selection characteristics.

The beliefs, thoughts, and perspectives of individuals toward both private and public issues are fundamentally shaped by culture (Shepherd, 2015). Similarly, when guests visit a particular destination, it is essential for them to comprehend and appreciate the cultural context to have a satisfying experience. Culture permeates every aspect of individuals' daily lives and significantly influences their decision-making process, behaviour, and the way they interpret and justify their actions (Akubia, 2021). As a result, the impression and expectations of the servicescape will be influenced by the distinctiveness of both the guest and host's cultures. The guest's country of origin serves as a clue to their cultural roots in the context of this study.

Situational factors such as leisure or business purposes, first-timers or repeaters. According to a study by Kamau (2017), as an illustration, situation-specific traits, such as prior experience (first-timers versus repeaters), may lessen the effect of consumer perceptions of the physical environment's quality on disconfirmation. Contrary to Kloosterman's (2017) assertion, trip-related themes and features can also greatly affect the guest experience and their intentions to repurchase, contradicting the assumption that different sorts of guests are often drawn to the same hotel for different reasons (Cetina & Walls, 2016). For instance, Cetina and Walls (2016) asked participants to describe their hotel stays, concentrating on three themes: the trip's objective, the hotel, and the number and kind of travelling companions. Participants revealed that depending on whether the travel was for business or pleasure, their priorities

and expectations for the hotel stay were different. Leisure guests tended to spend more time enjoying the hotel facilities and were more attentive to the features of the servicescape. On the other hand, what kind of hotel they stayed in also played a role in shaping their hotel-stay experiences. Based on the notion that travel-related elements can influence how participants perceive dimensions of the servicescape, this study aimed to examine whether there are differences in understanding and interpreting consumer experiences in a hotel setting based on these trip-related factors. By considering the varying perspectives and expectations of guests depending on the purpose of their trip and the type of hotel, the study aimed to shed light on the influence of trip-related factors on the guest experience and their perception of the servicescape.

The Concept of Experience

After products, services, and commodities, the idea of experience has become an important economic offering (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). Customer experience (CE) is increasingly being recognised by businesses as a key element in competitive differentiation (McLellan, 2014). A 2017 study by Harvard Corporate Review Analytic Services found that 93 percent of corporate leaders believe CE is essential to their overall performance. Because of this, businesses in all sectors are refocusing their efforts to give their clients memorable experiences rather than just services (Jani and Han, 2015; Kandampully, Bilgihan, & Amer, 2022).

In order to comprehend consumer behaviour and the whole experience of the consumer, Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) established the idea of experience in marketing. The evaluations made at various phases of the

service process and through numerous encounters and consumption are all included in the concept of customer experience (Baek, Choe, & Ok, 2019; Chan, Wan & Tam, 2021; Jeloudarlou et al., 2022). It is sometimes described as a location where social connections, pleasure, amusement, and enjoyment come together to produce an unforgettable experience. The interaction between the customer and the service process, the organisation, the physical facilities, the service workers, and other customers is defined as the service experience by Trans et al. (2020). Consumers perceive experience as a psychological state in the context of tourism.

According to Pizam and Tasci (2019), the term "experience" in the context of the service environment refers to each and every sense, emotion, and interaction that a client has. In order to fully capture the significance that the servicescape has for customers, an experiential technique, similar to the Gestalt method, is required. Customers' perceptions of the service environment are significantly influenced by a number of aspects, including core services, the physical environment, and social interaction (Ali and Omar, 2014; Kim and Choi, 2016). Prior research has emphasised the value of customer service in giving a business a competitive edge in the marketplace (Dedeoglu et al., 2018; Haobin et al., 2021; Kandampully et al., 2022; Tran et al., 2020). Therefore, the ability to deliver a positive client experience is crucial in today's harsh global market, especially within the hotel service industry.

Based on the conceptualization by Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999), the experience of consumers can be understood through four components. The first component is educational experience, which involves customers seeking to learn new things. This experience highlights the exchange of knowledge

and the acquisition of new experiences through the products and services offered by tourism organizations. Tourists often engage in tourism activities with the intention of gaining new knowledge and insights. The second component is escapism experience, where consumers actively engage and participate in a leisure context. This experience is characterized by a desire for relaxation and a break from the routines of everyday life. Tourism and travel experiences often emphasize this aspect, offering an escape from the ordinary and providing a sense of leisure and rejuvenation. The third component is entertainment experience, which occurs when performances or activities delight customers. Organizations strive to provide enjoyable and entertaining experiences that bring pleasure to consumers. This component focuses on creating memorable and enjoyable moments for customers, often through engaging performances, events, or activities. Lastly, aesthetic experience refers to the deeper meaning derived from the surrounding environment. This component acknowledges the influence that the physical environment has on consumers' overall experiences. It involves finding pleasure and deriving meaning from the environment and surroundings, which can significantly influence the overall experience of consumers. By understanding these four components of consumer experience, organizations can design their offerings and services to cater to customers' desires for educational, escapist, entertaining, and aesthetically pleasing experiences.

Servicescape and Guest Experience

The consumer behaviour literature has emphasized the significance of consumer characteristics, particularly in understanding consumer experience. Guest experience is defined as the overall evaluation of different service

stages and interactions throughout the guest's journey (Baek, Choe, & Ok, 2020). It encompasses the feelings, perceptions, and interactions with the people, products, and the hotel service environment (Chan, Wan, & Tam, 2021). The hotel setting has been acknowledged as an essential element of the guest experience (Cetina & Walls, 2016). Therefore, stakeholders in the hospitality business now place a high priority on providing guests with a memorable service experience. This is due to the crucial impact that customer experience plays in how engaged tourists are with tourism-related goods and services (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2015). In contrast, in the past, hotels primarily focused on enhancing sales by incorporating experiences around their traditional offerings (Choi & Kandampully, 2019).

Consumers now place importance on experiences in addition to particular products, claim Oh et al. (2019). Customers use a variety of products and services to seek out various experiences. This perspective emphasizes the intentional design and enhancement of offerings to create staged experiences that engage customers (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). For instance, luxury hotels like the Ritz Carlton no longer position themselves solely as hotels but as creators of experiences and memories. These hotels serve as venues where guests pursue meaningful experiences beyond accommodation, food, and drinks (Jani and Han, 2015). By delivering memorable experiences, hotels can generate positive word-of-mouth advertising and leave a lasting impression on customers (Kandampully & Solnet, 2015). Guests can describe their invitation experience, care experience, and pleasant experience in the hotel based on sensory, cognitive, emotional,

and behavioural reactions, claim Jeloudarlou et al. (2022) and Lockwood and Pyun. (2019).

Guest Response to Hotel Servicescape

Environmental psychologists specialise in examining the impact of environmental factors on particular behaviours, according to Avan et al. (2019). Research suggests that interactions between people and their surroundings, whether direct or indirect, affect how they behave. According to scholars Bitner (1992), Kotler (1973), and Mehrabian & Russell, these behaviours can be classified as either approach behaviours or avoidance behaviours (1974). To comprehend the relationship between different parts of the hotel environment and guests' behavioural responses, Lockwood and Pyun (2019) emphasise the importance of constructing a measurement method to evaluate the influence of the hotel servicescape on patron behaviour.

Individuals' knowledge and perception are referred to as cognition, while their emotional reactions, such as pleasure or arousal, are referred to as affective. Physiology refers to the behavioural reactions that individuals exhibit in response to environmental stimuli (Jeloudarlou et al., 2022). The servicescape of a hotel might be considered a type of non-verbal communication that impacts guests' perceptions. For instance, hotel furnishings and personnel uniforms can assist guests categorise the establishment and generate opinions about its setting, inhabitants, and goods (Bitner, 1992). Furthermore, Bitner (1992) asserted that contextual cues in the servicescape can affect a person's emotional state and how they perceive their surroundings. These different environmental setups and perspectives can also be used strategically to influence customer behaviour.

According to Mehrabian and Russell, an individual's emotional state forms the basis for how they react to their environment (1974). According to their theory, the elements of the built environment that directly affect our emotions are things like colour, design, and lighting. An environment with a high load that causes high levels of arousal, for instance, can make someone feel energised and attentive, whereas an environment with a low load encourages serenity and rest. Numerous studies have shown that someone's first emotional response to a situation can greatly affect their later behaviours (Ali et al., 2016; Avan et al., 2019; Lee & Chuang, 2021; Lockwood & Pyun, 2019). In earlier study, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) suggested a three-dimensional model that takes factors like satisfaction, arousal level, and dominance or resignation into account and explains how emotions and behaviours interact.

Lockwood and Pyun (2019) claim that the three emotional states of pleasure-displeasure, arousal-unarousal, and dominance-submissiveness make up Mehrabian and Russell's model of emotions in the environment. The term "pleasure-displeasure" describes the level of contentment, joy, or well-being felt by a guest in a setting. The degree of excitement, stimulation, attentiveness, or activity felt inside the facility is referred to as arousal or unarousal. The dominance-submissiveness dynamic illustrates how in control or free to act a guest feels while visiting a hotel. These emotional responses are temporary reactions that occur within individuals as a result of their interactions with the environment. The servicescape, as the subject matter, can evoke a range of emotional reactions in individuals, including joy, happiness, stress, peace, liveliness, comfort, or disgust.

Avan et al. (2019) found that the emotional states of individuals within a servicescape have a significant impact on their attitudes, behaviours, and judgments during service encounters. Line et al. (2018) also examined an expanded servicescape framework and discovered that the servicescape component positively affects emotions, which in turn influence behavioural responses. According to their research, servicescape is responsible for 84% of the shift in guest behavioural responses. Positive emotional states influenced 44 percent of the behavioural reactions when servicescape was taken into consideration, compared to 46.6 percent when positive emotional states were not. These results agree with similar research that have been done in the past. The impact of ambience on customer emotions, according to Sukhu (2019), is more pronounced in expensive hotels since guests there have higher expectations for a superior customer experience.

Individuals' behavioural responses in the context of the servicescape include approach and avoidance behaviours. Approach behaviour refers to individuals being positively influenced by their environment, engaging in activities, interacting with the surroundings, and forming a meaningful connection. As a result, the decision is made to return to the same setting in the future. Instead, those who engage in avoidance behaviour leave the area without planning to return because they are unsatisfied, anxious, or bored. The individual's encounter with and perception of the servicescape affects these behavioural responses (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Bitner, 1992; Avan et al., 2019; Choi and Kandampully, 2019; Lockwood and Pyun, 2019).

It is vital to recognise that the servicescape of these higher-rated restaurants may change dramatically from those in lower-rated hotels because

the majority of research studies, including Lockwood and Pyun (2019), have focused on upmarket hotels. Although previous study has demonstrated the influence of servicescape on consumers' emotional and behavioural responses, it is conceivable that these responses may change amongst various hotel kinds. Therefore, a fascinating extension of the current research would be to conduct additional experiments that particularly examine the impacts of servicescape on emotional and behavioural reactions in hotels with varied star ratings. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how servicescape influences guests' experiences in different hotel contexts.

Post-Experience Behavioural Intentions

A consumer's propensity to buy goods or services from the same supplier and recommend them to others is referred to as post-purchase behavioural intention (Morkunas & Rudiene, 2020). In the lodging industry, there is a well-established link between guest satisfaction and post-behavioural intentions since happy Customers are more likely to tell their friends and family about the company. (Sukhu et al, 2019). Positive and negative behavioural intents can be distinguished between these, with positive intentions including recommendation, revisiting, and willingness to pay a higher price, while negative intentions include complaints, avoidance or non-recommendation, and reduced time spent (Durna, Dedeoglu & Balikçioğlu, 2015). Customer experience management is recognised as a powerful tool that goes beyond traditional marketing methods and has a significant impact on purchase decisions and motives (Yoon & Lee, 2017). According to Kamau (2017), customers' actions are significantly influenced by their immediate surroundings, particularly when they utilise the service for hedonic reasons

and spend a lot of time there. Previous studies have frequently shown that contented customers are more satisfied, emotionally better off, and display a variety of positive behavioural responses like coming back to a firm and remaining devoted to their clients (Bitner, 1992; Cetina & Walls, 2016; Dedeoglu et al., 2018; Gilmore & Pine, 2002; Ibrahim, Sobaih, & El-Sayiad, 2018; Tran, Van Dang, & Tournois, 2020).

The research also shows that consumers' expectations about the quality of the services they receive and their post-purchase intentions are greatly influenced by these expectations (Hollebeek & Rather, 2019). Studies in the tourism sector have demonstrated that brand experience can influence brand recall, attachment, advocacy, and loyalty toward a place, along with other elements like value congruence and destination credibility (Rather et al., 2019b). Additionally, studies on hotel reception in Ghana have shown that good experiences encourage customer loyalty, good word-of-mouth, employee dedication, an improved corporate image, cost savings, greater business performance, and improved financial performance of hotels (Akubia, 2021). According to the reviewed research, a well-designed and implemented servicescape has a considerable impact on customer experience and satisfaction. However, customer experience itself serves as a crucial indicator or antecedent for satisfaction and post-purchase intentions. Therefore, further research attention is warranted in understanding and enhancing customer experiences, as positive behavioural intentions play a crucial part in the success of hotel businesses.

Theoretical Review

Some theoretical frameworks adopted for this study are the Servicescape model (Bitner, 1992) and Guest Experience model (Pijls, Schreiber, & van Marle, 2011). These models will provide the basis for understanding guests' perceptions of servicescape and experiences of hotels.

Servicescape Model (Bitner 1992)

An adaptation of the stimuli-organism-response (SOR) model created exclusively for the service industry is the servicescape model. It sees the behaviour of the personnel and clients inside that environment as the stimulus, and the physical environment as the response (Bitner 1992). The Stimulus - Organism - Response (SOR) hypothesis, first put forth by Mehrabian and Russell, is essentially expanded upon in Bitner's servicescape model (1992). (1974). Bitner (1992) expanded the application of the SOR theory to the physical world, whereas Mehrabian and Russell (1974) only considered emotional reactions. Bitner also included cognition and physiology under the SOR theory. According to Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2010), it is described as the physical setting or establishment where the service is produced, offered, and used. This environment has an effect on how customers perceive their interactions with service providers (Reimer & Kuehn, 2005).

Servicescape examines how the external environment affects customers' approach and avoidance decisions, bridging the gap between marketing and environmental psychology principles (Rosenbaum, 2005). According to Bitner (1992), customers and staff both react to servicescape cognitively, emotionally, and physiologically. Tangible cues (the physical environment dimensions) are thought to impact consumer views. These

reactions are what have an impact on behaviours, which can be manifested in one of two ways. While avoiding behaviour includes the opposite of positive activity, such as the urge to explore, remain, attach, or work, approach behaviour includes all positive behaviours. A willingness or desire to stay in the hotel and return there (approach) or, at the extreme, a desire to leave the hotel (avoidance), which at a lower level may present as feelings of discomfort; the extent to which the servicescape was improved (approach) or impeded (avoidance), and the satisfaction with the experience as a result; and thirdly, a desire to communicate (avoidance). The servicescape model's inclusion of social variables as moderators, such as the presence of staff and other customers, emphasises the influence that these components have on interactions between customers and employees. Bitner (1992) stressed that the servicescape, especially in interpersonal services like hotels, directly affects the type and quality of these interactions. An essential component of the customer service experience is how staff and consumers interact. Customer loyalty has been demonstrated to be correlated with the quality of these encounters (Choi & Kim, 2015). Furthermore, environmental elements including a guest's attitude, personality, and reason for visiting might have an impact on how they react to their surroundings. These elements may influence how people view and respond to the service landscape. One of the strengths of this model is it helps customers to create expectations and build an impression of that service as soon as, or even before, they enter the physical environment in which the service is taking place. It will be feasible to ascertain the impact of various servicescape aspects in influencing guests' overall experiences inside the hotel environment by applying the servicescape model in this study.

This will give important new perspectives on how the physical environment, social interactions, and environmental circumstances affect guests' experiences and behaviours in a hotel setting.

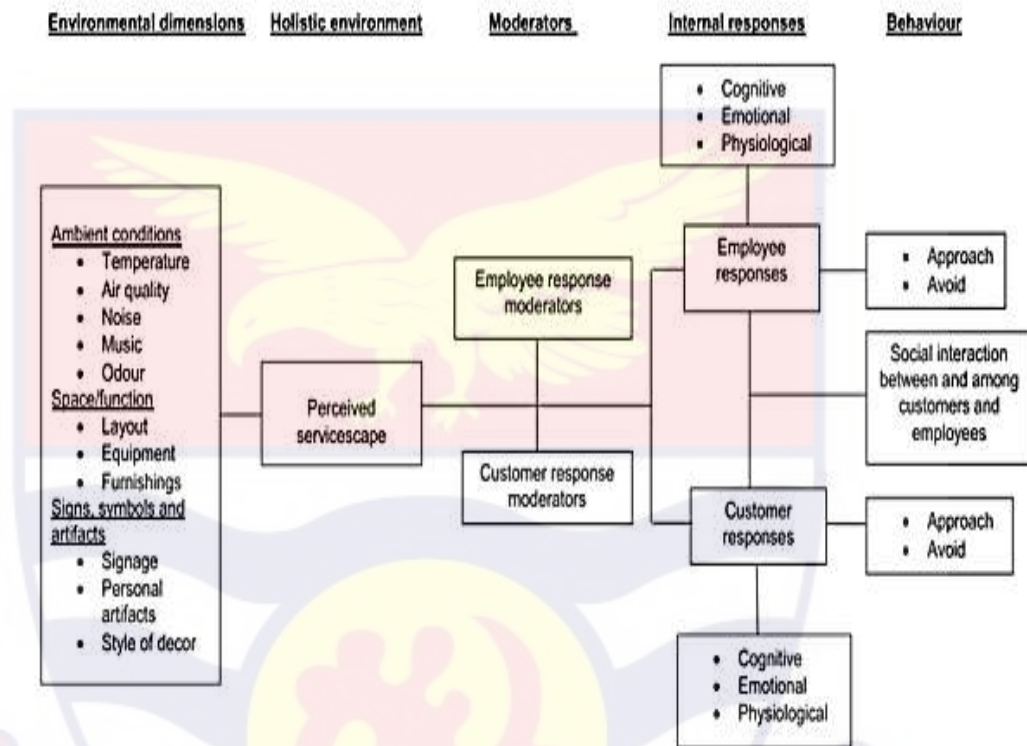


Figure 1: Servicescape model by Bitner (1992).

Guest Experience Process Model

Pijls, Schreiber, and van Marle (2011) developed a comprehensive model to examine the guest experience in its entirety, from pre-encounter expectations to post-experience evaluation and behaviour. This model integrates antecedent expectations, actual engagement in the service environment, internal responses to the environment, and subsequent appraisal and behaviour at various stages of the guest experience process. The guest experience begins with expectations about the service delivery. Customer expectations are formed as pre-trial beliefs about a product or service and serve as standards or reference points against which the actual performance is

evaluated (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1993). These expectations act as a filter during the participation phase of the experience, influencing which elements in the service environment are noticed and how guests behave. For instance, when a guest enters a hotel, they may have an expectation that someone will approach them to offer assistance. This expectation shapes their perception of the service environment and guides their behaviour during the stay. The model proposed by Pijls et al. (2011) recognizes the importance of expectations as a precursor to the actual experience and highlights their role in shaping customer perceptions and behaviours.

Pijls, Schreiber, and van Marle (2011) emphasize that the participation phase in the service environment is a crucial step in the actual experience. During this phase, guests perceive external stimuli through their senses, including sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste, and they engage in actions within the service environment based on these perceptions (Boswijk, Thijssen & Peelen, 2005). For instance, when a guest enters a hotel, they perceive the entrance environment by noticing the distinct scent of the hotel, observing the design, colours, and materials, and encountering other people in the hotel. They may also hear sounds of people walking and talking, as well as background music, and they can feel the temperature and the surface they walk on (such as a soft carpet or a hard stone floor). Based on these perceptual experiences, guests behave in certain ways, such as walking to the reception desk and interacting with the employee behind the desk. This example illustrates that forming an impression of the service environment involves perceiving numerous environmental cues. The second part of the experience phase, as defined in the model proposed by Pijls et al. (2011), involves

cognitive and affective responses to the interaction with the service environment. These responses include the guest's thoughts, beliefs, and emotions that arise during the experience. They may include feelings of comfort, excitement, or satisfaction, as well as cognitive assessments of the environment's quality, attractiveness, and appropriateness. The cognitive and affective responses shape the guest's overall experience and influence subsequent evaluations and behaviours.

The post-experience stage in the model proposed by Pijls, Schreiber, and van Marle (2011) encompasses the evaluation of value and subsequent behaviours. Value represents the perceived benefits and worth derived from the service experience, while behaviour refers to the actions taken by individuals based on their assessment of the value received (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). This stage is crucial as it influences whether individuals will approach or avoid further interactions with the service environment. One notable strength of this model is its emphasis on the various processes, particularly the pre-experience phase, that shape the overall experience. By considering the entire experience journey, the model provides a theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between the servicescape and the guest experience in the hotel context. It acknowledges the importance of pre-experience factors in shaping expectations and subsequent perceptions, as well as the influence of value assessment on future behaviours and decision-making.

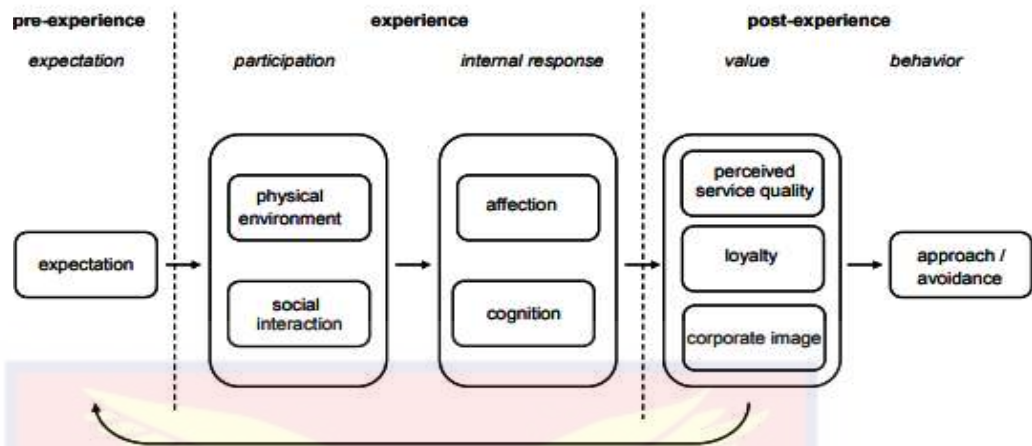


Figure 2: Guest Experience model
Source: Pijls, Schreiber, & van Marle (2011)

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is an adaptation of the Servicescape model by Bitner (1992). As indicated in figure 3, the framework has three main stages thus; input, process and outcome. The framework conceptualizes that the first stage called the input stage relates to the servicescape (physical environmental) dimensions of hotels which encompass dimensions including; ambience condition (temperature, air quality, noise, music and odour), spatial layout and functionality (layout, equipment and furnishings) and signs, symbols and artefacts (signage, personal artefacts and style of décor) and lastly social factors (employees and other customers). How a hotel guest perceives these dimensions is influenced by unique individual characteristics such as demographics, and situational factors which then also leads to three main internal responses; thus cognitive, affective and behavioural. These responses (experience) will lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction which then generates an after-use approach or avoidance behaviours (post-purchase behavioural intentions) such as revisit, recommendation or otherwise.

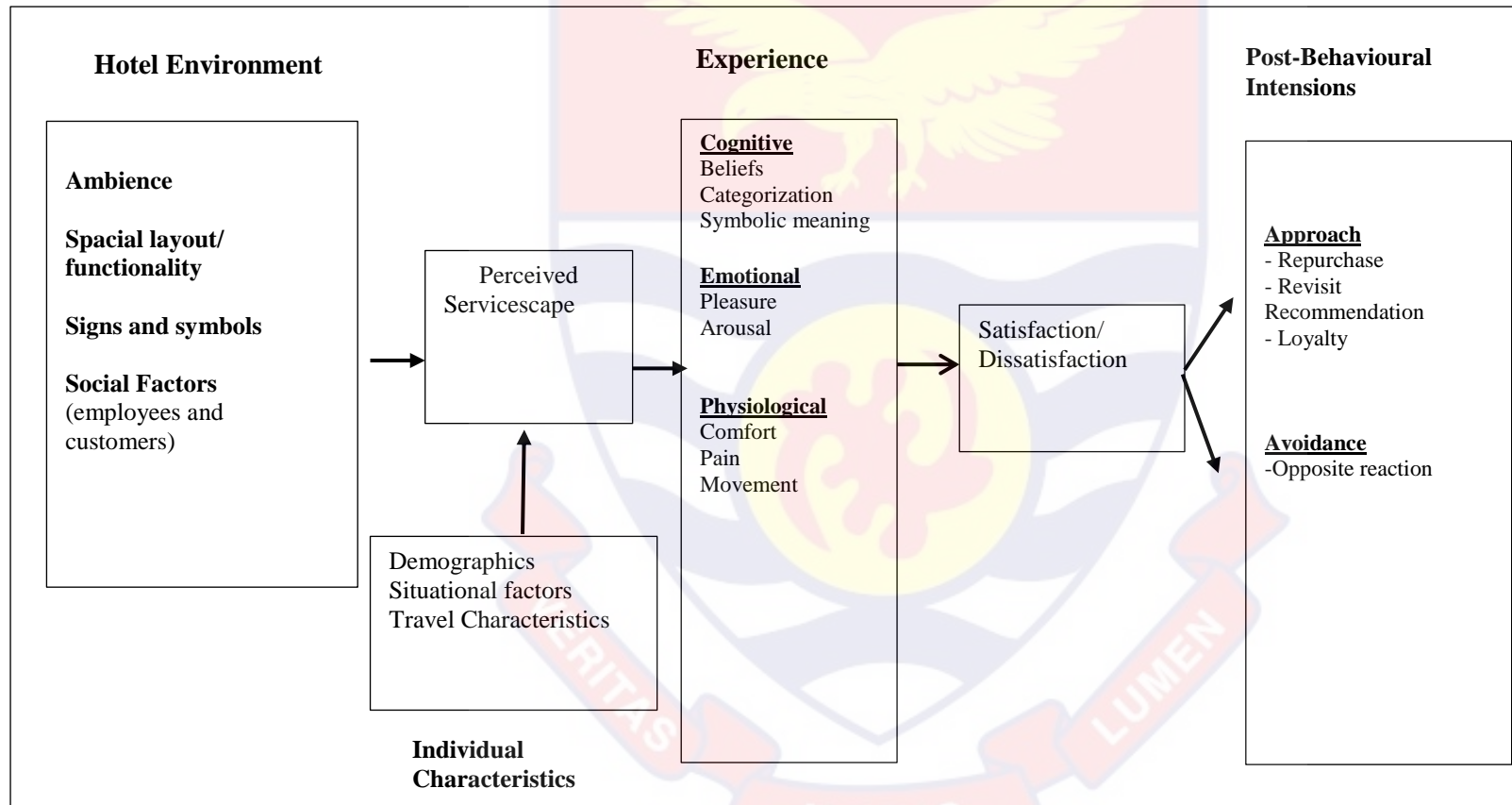


Figure 3: Conceptual framework
Source: Adapted from Bitner (1992).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research methods utilized in the study. It includes the description and rationale for selecting the study area, the research philosophy and design, as well as the sources of data. Additionally, it covers important aspects such as the target population and sample size, the sampling procedure employed, the research instruments utilized, the pre-testing of these instruments, the fieldwork process, the data collection procedure, ethical considerations, and the methods used for data analysis and presentation. These topics collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the research methodology adopted in the study.

Research Philosophy

A research philosophy is a set of principles that dictates how a certain discipline should conduct its research (Bryman 2004, p. 452). This research follows the positivist approach which is based on realization through experiences to give meaning to social life and has a long rich historical tradition suitable for social sciences. The positivist philosophy is a mixture of empiricism and rationalism that deals with a hypothesis in an objective manner (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Given the positivist orientation, the study's data collecting and analytic methods were quantitative. Its advantages include the provision of accurate outcomes that can be statistically constricting and help make meaningful statistical comparisons between various groups. It also helps researchers to generate their research findings when it has been replicated in various

populations and sub-groups (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). As a result, the study's data collection and analysis methods were both quantitative.

Research Design

A cross-sectional survey design was used in this study. This method entailed gathering information from a carefully chosen sample of people or groups at a certain moment in order to draw conclusions about the traits of the larger population (Creswell, 2012). The cross-sectional study contributes to the provision of an overall understanding of a phenomenon, situational problem, or issue by surveying a cross-section of the population at a specific point in time. It enables the researcher to evaluate the study participants' exposures and outcomes simultaneously. This design is advantageous as it is relatively efficient and straightforward, requiring data collection for all variables only once.

Due to the aforementioned and the following factors, this study's data collection method was cross-sectional: First of all, the study does not account for changes or developments in the relationship between the studied variables; instead, it just examines it at a particular point in time. A cross-sectional approach is also preferred because of the researcher's constrained time for data collecting.

Study Area

Considered the third most popular city in Ghana, after Accra and Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis was selected as the study area. As a port city, Sekondi-Takoradi is a fast-growing town in the Western Region; this rate of growth has been significantly accelerated by the oil discovery in commercial quantities and subsequent explorations in the region. This has

attracted many investors from within and outside Ghana. Due to the presence of major international companies and organizations in the area, there has been a substantial increase in the demand for services, leading to the establishment of more hotels and restaurants in the region. There are also several attraction sites in the region such as Takoradi Harbour, Monkey Hill, Ankasa Nature reserve, Wassa Dormama rock shrine and several Forts attraction sites that bring in tourists from over the world.

The Ghana Tourism Authority (2021) estimates that Sekondi-Takoradi, is the Metropolis with highest number of registered hotels with a total of thirty (30) in the Western Region. The city boasts several highly-rated hotels, including Best Western Plus Atlantic hotel, Raybow, Alliance Hotel by Eagles, and the Palms by Eagles, with ratings up to four stars. These hotels are strategically located throughout the city, catering to the needs of the growing number of guests. Additionally, there are ongoing construction projects for new hotels, and existing facilities are undergoing renovations to enhance their visual appeal. This makes Sekondi-Takoradi an ideal location for conducting this study, given its dynamic and attractive physical environment.

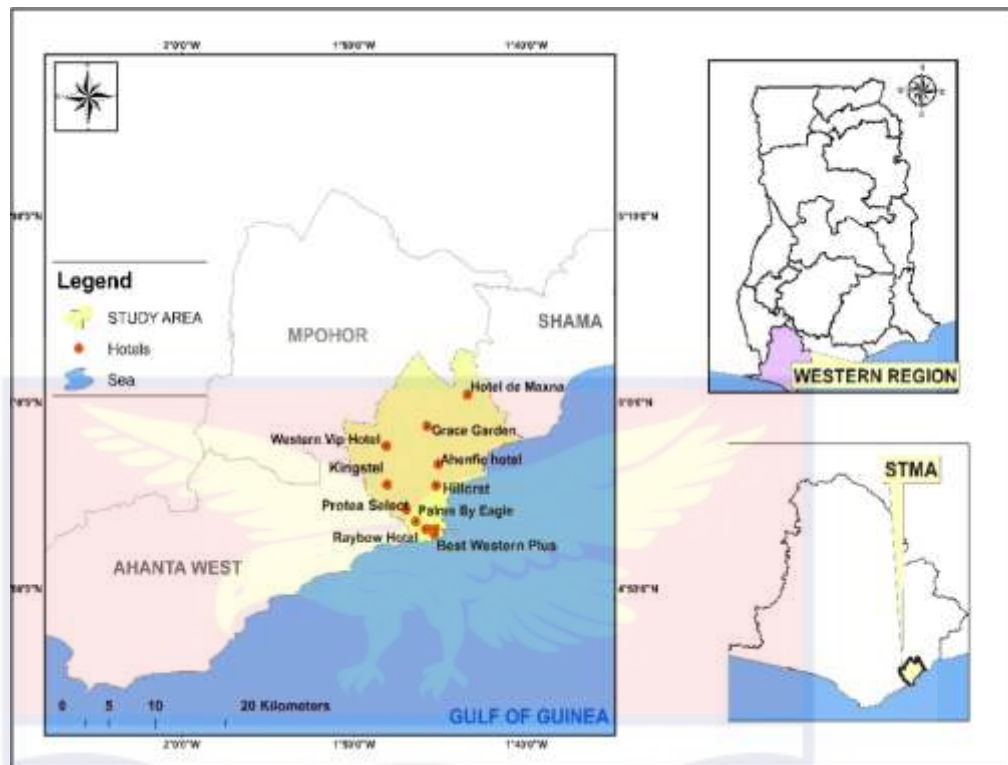


Figure 4: Map of the study area; Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.
Source: Cartography Unit, University of Cape Coast (2022).

Target Population

A target population refers to all the components, whether they be people, things, or substances that meet certain requirements to be included in a certain universe (Burns & Grove, 2005). It comprises individuals possessing particular characteristics that are of interest to the researcher, and these individuals must originate from the specific location where the researcher intends to draw conclusions or make generalizations (Chinomona, 2012). For this study, the target population comprised hotel patrons that were present in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis whether for business or leisure from 25th August to 26th September, 2022. Hotels classified as 4-star to budget with almost similar occupancy rates were selected for consistency in data collection.

Sampling Size Determination

The study utilized a sample size of 295 respondents, specifically hotel guests. Table 1 and 2 provide detailed information on the total number of hotels included in the study, their star ratings, the number of hotels selected from each star category, as well as the available and occupied rooms. Additionally, the average occupancy percentage and the sample size of guests are presented. In total, there were 509 rooms available across the 15 selected hotels. Out of these, 268 rooms were occupied, resulting in an average occupancy rate of 48.36%, as indicated in Table 2. The survey included 295 guests, which was determined based on the actual number of occupied rooms (268) out of the total available rooms (509) within the 15 selected hotels.

Table 1: Hotel ratings

Star rating	Total number	Number sampled
4	2	2
3	4	2
2	8	4
1	10	4
Budget	6	3
Total	30	15

Source: GTA licensed accommodation in Sekondi Takoradi Metropolis (2022)

Considering the number of occupied rooms, it was only proper to use the total number of occupied rooms (hotel guests) as the sample size for the study. To account for potential non-responses, 10 percent of the initially calculated sample size was added, resulting in a final sample size of 295. This approach was taken to ensure sufficient representation and minimize the impact of any non-responses on the study's findings. The selected sample size of 295 was deemed appropriate for this study. Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and

Black (2006) suggest, based on large sample distribution theory that reliable result estimates can be obtained from sample sizes ranging between 100 to 150 respondents. Therefore, a sample size exceeding 290 respondents was more likely to yield dependable results and enable meaningful conclusions to be drawn from this study.

Hence, sample size per hotel is:

$$N \text{ (sample size)} = \Sigma (n_1 + n_2 + n_3 + \dots + n_i + \dots + n_{15}) = 295$$

$$H \text{ (Occupied Rooms)} = \Sigma (h_1 + h_2 + h_3 + \dots + h_i + \dots + h_{15}) = 268 + 10\%$$

Thus 10

$$\text{-----} \times 268 = 27$$

100

$$268 + 27 = 295$$

Where R_i is the number of various occupied rooms per hotel

$$\text{Guest sample size/hotel} = \frac{\text{Total guest sample size (295)}}{\text{Total occupancy (509)}} \times \text{Individual hotel's occupancy}$$

$$\text{For example, Hotel 1} = \frac{295 \times 62}{509}$$

$$\frac{268}{509} = 68 \text{ guests}$$

Table 2: Sample Size of Hotels and Guests

Hotel	Star Rating	Available rooms	Occupied rooms	Average occupancy percentage	Guest sample size
1	4	112	62	55.4%	68
2	4	50	27	53%	30
3	3	44	24	55%	26
4	3	45	37	45%	41
5	2	61	23	37%	25
6	2	38	16	41%	17
7	2	30	19	63%	21
8	2	11	5	44%	6
9	1	35	19	55%	20
10	1	10	6	56%	7
11	1	12	6	48%	7
12	1	22	9	49%	10
13	Budget	9	3	38%	3
14	Budget	9	5	53%	6
15	Budget	21	7	33%	8
Total		509	268	48.36%	295

Source: GTA licensed hotels (2022); Hotel Managers in Sekondi Takoradi Metropolis (2022)

Sampling Procedure

In this study, quota sampling was employed to select a sample of fifteen (15) hotels from the pool of 30 registered and licensed hotels, ranging from 4-star to Budget, within the Sekondi-Takoradi area. The list of hotels was obtained from the Ghana Tourist Authority (GTA, 2021). The quota sampling method was used to ensure proportional representation of different classes of hotels based on their numbers. Regarding the selection of respondents (guests), accidental sampling procedures were utilized. The sampling frame for hotel guests was determined based on the number of rooms and the occupancy rate in the fifteen selected hotels within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. This information was obtained from the GTA, supplemented by some hotel managers due to incomplete data at the GTA.

Data Collection Instrument

For data collection, a structured questionnaire was utilized. A questionnaire is a standardized instrument consisting of identical worded questions administered to a larger sample size (Babbie, 2007). The decision to employ a questionnaire was based on Creswell's (2012) recommendation that it is an effective method for gathering quantitative data while ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of respondents. Furthermore, using a self-administered questionnaire offers advantages such as being faster and more cost-effective compared to other data collection methods. It also grants respondents the freedom to complete it at their own pace. Additionally, questionnaires provide a level of anonymity that encourages respondents to express their genuine feelings and attitudes (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

The questionnaire was structured into four modules (Module 1 - 4); module one looked at guests' perception of hotel servicescape, module two also looked at guests' experience to servicescape elements, three covered the post-experience behaviour of hotel guests, and module four was on at the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Majority of the items in each section consisted of close-ended and few open-ended questions. A five-point Likert scale (1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neither Agree or Disagree, 4= Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree) was used in measuring questions on perception of servicescape, experience and post-behavioural intentions. Items was drawn from (Ahmed et al, 2020; Choi & Kandampully 2019; Kamau 2017; Walls, 2009; Gossling 2003; Yoo & Gretzel 2011).

An introductory section that explained the purpose of the study, the estimated time involved in filling out a questionnaire, and the ethical considerations. This section also contained the consent form, which sought the

respondent's consent of participation or otherwise, and a filter question, to help deal with the issue of duplication of data.

Pre-testing

Pre-tests are small-scale evaluations of research instruments, such as questionnaires or interview schedules, to determine the effectiveness of the instrument (Sarantakos, 2005). The instrument was pre-tested in selected hotels in the Kumasi Metropolis from 12th to 19th August 2022. This metropolis was used because it shares some similar characteristics with that of Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis though not in terms of size but it can boast of hotels ranging from four (4) star to budget. The pre-testing was done in three different facilities specifically a 3-star and 2-star and 1-star hotels. These hotels are located within the city centre of Kumasi with occupancy rate similar to the area under study. Pretesting helped in knowing the appropriateness and suitability of the items in instrument.

To ensure validity and reliability, the responses provided by the units of analysis (guest) was analysed. To assess the internal consistency and reliability of each item used to measure the construct, Cronbach's alpha was conducted. To assess the internal consistency and reliability of each item used to measure the construct, Cronbach's alpha was conducted. The resulting Cronbach's alpha value was found to be 0.75 for guest perception on hotels' servicescape, 0.81 for guest experience and 0.78 for post-stay behavioural intentions, indicating acceptable internal consistency (Churchill, 2001). This suggests that the items used in the questionnaire were reliable in measuring the intended construct. This suggests that the items used in the questionnaire were reliable in measuring the intended construct. Furthermore, concerns raised by

the respondents such as repetitive questions, ambiguity and font size was also duly noted. This made it possible to make the necessary corrections, modification and changes prior to the actual fieldwork to be done in order to ensure better clarity of the instrument.

Data Collection Procedure

The actual fieldwork exercise was from 26th August to 25th September 2022. Prior to this, contacts were established purposively with managers of the selected hotels in person and some on phone to seek official permission and cooperation for the collection of data from the hotel guest. Some of managers requested for a sample for assessment and approval before administering it finally with the assistance of some front office staff. In order to ensure a better understanding and appreciation on their side, the aim of the research was explained to them as well. The criterion for the selection of resident guests was that they should have spent at least one night (24 hours) at the time of data collection and taken good observation of the physical surroundings of the hotel facility.

A total of 223 questionnaire were eventually retrieved from the field but only 206 were considered appropriate for analysis representing a response rate of 70%.

Challenges Encountered on the Field

Managers of two of the hotels which were part of the sample indicated that business had gone down drastically and rooms were virtually empty for weeks so they felt their respective facility cannot be used to collect data. By way of confirmation, the researcher, also through observation, realised those places were not busy at all. In order to make up for the sample slated for these places, other hotels where lesser sample had already been picked were

revisited to make up for it. This led to extension of the period for data collection.

Moreover, there were some reluctances on the part of some managers to allow the questionnaire to be administered to guests due to the increase in room rate as a result of the high dollar rate around the time of data collection which had received a lot of mixed reactions from guests. Through further engagement, some of them gave permission to do so. Lastly, some questionnaires were not completed and others were not retrieved as few guests took it away. This challenge was dealt with by the administration of new questionnaires.

Data Analysis

According to Patton (2002), analysis of any kind of data refers to a systematic review of the data to determine its components, their relationships, and their relationship to the whole. The main aim of data analysis, according to Blanche & Durrheim (2006), is to turn data into a meaningful form to address the original research questions. The analysis made use of both descriptive and inferential statistics. The data from the surveys were processed using IBM Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 25. The features of the subject were calculated, presented, and summarised using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. To give a general overview of the sample properties and the data distributions, descriptive statistics were used.

To explore the between several important socio-demographic factors of respondents, one-way analysis of variance, an independent sample t-test, and the chi-square (test of independence) were done with regard to inferential

statistics. A preliminary factor analysis was done to find out how much variance was altogether explained.

Ethical Considerations

Study ethics help to protect the interests of research subjects while also promoting the research's credibility (Israel & Hay, 2006). The following ethical issues were considered during the actual data collection; confidentiality, anonymity, right to free consent, right to informed consent, and privacy. In addition, an introductory letter was taken from the department to facilitate the data collection process and clearance from Institutional Review Board (IRB)-UCC with clearance ID (UCCIRB/CHLS/2022/129). The consent of the respondents was sought before the questionnaires were administered. Since it is impossible to contact the respondents before the fieldwork and the fact that accidental sampling technique was employed to select them, their consent was sought at the data collection point. They were approached and asked if they would be willing to participate in the survey. The purpose of the study was explained as well as their responsibilities. They were also made to understand that their participation is voluntary. Respondents' anonymity was duly ensured. To that effect, respondents were asked not to include their names and telephone numbers or any form of identification. Their identities were concealed to win their confidence in responding to the questionnaire items of which some required the declaration of important personal information. The issue of respondents' anonymity is considered important in the usage, storage, and sharing of data. Consequently, data gathered was used for the intended purpose (academic) only and firmly secured electronically for the study, future reference, and use by other researchers as secondary data.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results, in line with the objectives of the study. It discusses the socio-demographic characteristics, and travel characteristics, guests' perception, and experience of hotel servicescape. Lastly, the chapter discusses the guests' satisfaction attributes and post-experience behavioural intentions of hotel servicescape.

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section provides an overview of the socio-demographic characteristics of the hotel guests who participated in the study. The variables considered encompassed sex, age, nationality, religion, marital status, educational level, employment status, and income level. The sample of respondents exhibited a diverse range of background characteristics. The results indicate that a higher percentage of males (60.2%) participated in the study compared to females (39.8%). Moreover, previous studies found that more than half hotel guests are male representing about 60% - 64.5% while the remaining 35.5% accounted for female respondents (Lockwood & Pyun 2019; Sotiriadis & Sarmaniotis, 2016). Men also dominate most work force and majority of these guests stay were business related. Almost half of the respondents (45.6%), were between ages 25 and 34; those who were below age 25 constituted 31.6 percent followed by those between ages 35-44 (15.5%). Those who are more than 45 years were in the minority (7.3%). It is explainable that the respondents were relatively young people. About 90.8 percent of the respondents were Ghanaians, with just 9.2 percent being non-

Ghanaians, including people from the USA, Nigeria, Togo, and Ivory Coast. The highest number of Ghanaians in the data could be because of Ghanaians dominating the population within the study area; therefore, proportion of Ghanaians visiting hotels in such areas will definitely be more the proportion of non-Ghanaians. In addition, the issue of sampling cannot be ruled out in this instance. Concerning the marital status of the guests, majority of them are not married (64.1%), with the married constituting 35.9 percent. This is not surprising as majority of them falls within age 25-34, and people within this age bracket are largely unmarried. Ahmed (2018) concluded that people below age 35 are mostly unmarried; he cited economic difficulties as one of the factors accounting for that.

Table 3: Socio-demographic Characteristics (N=206)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	124	60.2
Female	82	39.8
Age		
Below 25	65	31.6
25-34	94	45.6
35-44	32	15.5
45 and above	15	7.3
Nationality		
Ghanaian	187	90.8
Non-Ghanaian	19	9.2
Religion		
Christianity	112	54.4
Islam	68	33.0
Atheist	26	12.6
Marital status		
Single	132	64.1
Married	74	35.9
Level of education		
Basic school	4	1.9
High school	30	14.6
University/college	151	73.3
Post-graduate	21	10.2

Table 3 cont'd

Employment status		
Employed	113	54.9
Self-employed	81	39.3
Student	12	5.8
Monthly income		
Less than \$500	40	19.4
\$500-\$900	52	25.2
\$1000-\$1400	73	35.5
\$1500 and above	41	19.9

Source: Field survey, Osman, (2022)

Majority (54.4%) of the guests who participated in the study professed Christianity, 33.0 percent of the respondents were Muslims with 12.6 percent being atheists. Perhaps the Christians dominance in the study is because Ghana is predominantly a Christian country as per the 2020 population and housing census, which indicates that about 70% of Ghanaians are Christians, hence the reason why Christians dominate this study and every general study. With reference to the educational level of respondents, it was noticed that those who had attained diploma or degree qualification were in the majority (73.3%). Those who had high school qualification were 14.6 percent of the respondents, followed by post-graduate qualification holders and basic school certificate (10.2% and 1.9% respectively). It was noticed that more than half (54.9%) of the respondents were employed, with 39.3 percent being self-employed, while 5.8 percent were students. Lastly, it was established that about 35.5 percent of the respondents earn between 1000-1400 dollars monthly. Those who earn between 500-900 dollars constituted 25.2 percent, while 19.9 percent and 19.4 percent of them earned 1500 dollars or more and less than 500 dollars respectively. This obviously had implications on the kind of physical environment each class of guests were exposed to depending on affordability and hence influenced the overall lodging experience. As reported

by Fraikue (2016), evidence of hotel guest with higher income selecting ambience and comfort levels as their determinant selection variables.

Travel characteristics

Aside the socio-demographic characteristics of the guest, there was the need to ascertain their travel characteristics. These included attraction to the hotel, hotel type, lodging frequency, purpose of visit, payment mode, travel party and length of stay. About 39.3 percent of the guests were attracted to the hotel by the service offered, followed by those who were attracted by the location of the hotel (21.8%), price (20.9%), design (11.2%) and hotel image emerged as the least (6.8%). In terms of hotel type, it was revealed that 34.5 percent of the guest stayed in 3-star hotels and 1-star hotels (24.8%). Those who stayed in 2-star hotels (16.0%) closely followed this and 4-star hotels (15.5%), with the least being budget hotels (9.2%). More than half (58.3%) of the respondents are repeat guests to their respective hotels, while 41.7 percent were first timers (Table 4). This indicates that majority of the guests revisit their hotels, and as known based on the servicescape model, revisit intentions are mostly based on experience, therefore, most of the guests revisited their respective hotels because they were satisfied with the experience.

It was noticed that about 41.3 percent of the guest visited the hotels for business purpose; this was followed by those who visited for leisure and vacation (30.1%), local events (10.7%). The least were those who visited because of research (0.9%). This is probably because majority of the guests were employed, therefore, might have come to the hotel for a business

meeting, since hotels have the facilities for business meetings, conferences and retreat.

Table 4: Guest Travel Characteristics

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Attraction to hotel		
Price	43	20.9
Design	23	11.2
Location	45	21.8
Hotel image	14	6.8
Service	81	39.3
Hotel type		
4-star hotels	32	15.5
3-star hotels	71	34.5
2-star hotels	33	16.0
1-star hotels	51	24.8
Budget hotels	19	9.2
First time of lodging		
Yes	86	41.7
No	120	58.3
Frequency		
Rarely	20	9.7
Sometimes	84	40.8
Often	73	35.4
Very often	29	14.1
Purpose of visit		
Business	85	41.3
Leisure/Vacation	62	30.1
Local event	22	10.7
Conference/Convention	15	7.3
VRF	20	9.7
Education/Research	2	0.9
Payment mode		
Self	134	65.0
Company/Institution	63	30.6
Complimentary/Reward	9	4.4
Travel party		
Business associates/Colleagues	57	27.7
Spouse/partner	54	26.2
Children	14	6.8
Family/friends	34	16.5
Alone	47	22.8
Length of stay		
1-10	193	93.7
11-20	5	2.4
21-30	6	2.9
30+	2	1.0

Source: Field survey, Osman (2022)

The majority (65.0%) of the guests who participated in the study paid their hotel bills themselves, those whose hotel bills were paid for by their company or institution constituted 30.6%, followed by complimentary (4.4%). As regards the travel party, it was observed that the respondents were at the hotel with their business associates and spouse (27.7% and 26.2% respectively). This result could be that most of the guest visited the hotels for business and leisure purposes, and obviously, business trips are mostly done with business associates, as well as, leisure trips are mostly undertaken with spouses or partners. Only 6.8 percent of the respondents went to the hotels with their children. About 93.7 percent had stayed in respective their hotels for 1-10 days, followed by those who had stayed for 21-30 days (2.9%), 11-20 days (2.4%) and 30 days or more (1.0%). This high percentage (93.7) of guest staying for not more than ten days may be due to most of them being in the hotel facility for business purposes which may be just a business meeting for a few days and then also they footing their bills can also account for the limited stay.

Guests' Perception of Hotel Servicescape

The term "servicescape" refers to the overall physical environment that customers perceive when interacting with a service. It includes various elements such as facilities, furniture, signage, temperature, noise, and social factors. The servicescape of a hotel plays a significant role in influencing guests' purchasing behaviour and also serves as a basis for market segmentation in the hotel industry (Artuger, 2020). In view of this, objective one of this study delved into the guests' perception of hotel servicescape in the Takoradi Metropolis. For the purpose of this study, perception was measured

with four dimensions, namely; ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, signs, symbols and artefacts, and social elements.

The result indicates the mean scores of both the individual items and the constructs. Hotel guests' perception of servicescape were measured with four dimensions on a five-point Likert scale (1-strongly agree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree). Respondents were required to indicate whether they agreed to each statement under the dimensions by choosing one option on the scale for an answer. Table 5 shows that hotel guest perceived ambient conditions (mean = 4.14) as the most important servicescape, this implies that ambient conditions are the features that are mostly considered by hotel guest whenever a decision is being made on the choice and or selection of a hotel. Overall, hotel guests agreed to all the individual items under ambient conditions. For instance, the guests perceived the exterior design and finishes of the hotels to be attractive (mean = 3.90), same as the interior design and colours schemes (mean = 4.02). The air quality within the hotel was refreshing (mean = 4.00) according to the guests, and the temperature was deemed right and comfortable (mean = 4.08).

The ambient conditions whether good or bad could influence the guests experience at the hotel, therefore, hotel operators must prioritise ambient conditions of their hotels in order to create positive and a lasting memory in the minds of their clients. This result may have occurred because majority of the guests were found at midscale and upscale hotels (i.e., 2 to 4-star hotels), therefore may have quality and adequate facility which will make guests comfortable and enjoy their stay. The findings of this study align with the research conducted by Abdelhady & Abdien (2020) and Ahmed et al. (2020),

which discovered that various factors such as pleasant scent, pleasing music, comfortable temperature, and adequate lighting, when integrated harmoniously with other elements in a hotel, contribute to customers developing more favourable perceptions of the establishment and evaluating their experiences in a more positive manner. These findings are presented in Table 5 of the study.

Social elements (mean = 3.96) emerged as one of the important servicescape features that influence their decision-making. According to the guest who participated in the study the hotel employees are attractively dressed and professional, courteous and friendly, prompt and efficient service delivery. The result also established that the nature and level of interaction between respondents and employees and other guests were acceptable. This is an indication that some of the hotels and or the employees are beginning to understand that the industry is people's industry, thus people serving people, therefore, employees must do everything possible to satisfy their guests. This finding could be that, most of the guest who participated in the study indicated to have lodged in mid-scale or up-scale hotels, and might have received good social interaction from the frontline staff as well as the calibre of guests present. The study is consistent with that of Kloosterman (2017), who concluded that guests are more interested in the social elements (people and service) of the hotel's servicescape. He further argued that these elements could lead to either positive or negative beliefs about the hotel.

Table 5: Guests' Perception of Hotel Servicescape

Statement	Mean	SD
<i>Ambient conditions</i>	4.14	0.92
The exterior design and finishes are attractive	3.90	0.88
The hotel interior design and colours schemes are attractive	4.02	0.86
Wall, floor and ceiling decor is appealing and comfortable	4.01	0.92
Lighting is adequate and appropriate in their respective areas	3.95	0.95
Noise levels are acceptable	3.81	1.06
The air quality within the hotel is refreshing	4.00	0.92
The temperature is just right and comfortable	4.08	0.95
The overall ambience is relaxing	4.08	0.79
<i>Spatial Layout and functionality</i>	3.92	0.97
The layout of this hotel is logical and easily accessible	3.82	0.97
The interior environment is spacious	3.90	1.00
The furniture used by the hotel is of high quality and appropriate	3.85	1.05
The furniture and seating arrangement is comfortable	3.96	0.90
The guestroom layout is comfortable and attractive	4.01	0.88
The guestroom is well-cleaned and properly supplied with amenities.	4.00	0.86
<i>Signs, Symbols and Artefacts</i>	3.81	0.97
There are sufficient visible directional signs (e.g., entrance, exit)	3.72	1.00
It is easy to understand and follow directional signs	3.89	0.93
Informational signs are also available with easy interpretations	3.74	0.91
Ornaments, statues, vases, accessories of the facility are attractive	3.71	1.04
Artefacts such as paintings in their respective areas are appropriate and pleasant	3.79	1.00
Photo frames are also attractive and well positioned	3.82	1.02
The name and logo of this hotel is attractive	3.91	0.95
The style of decor is attractive	3.88	0.94
<i>Social Elements</i>	3.96	0.87
The hotel employees are attractively dressed and professional	3.95	0.98
The employees are courteous and friendly	4.02	0.89
Prompt and efficient service delivery	3.92	0.94
Other guests encountered are well-composed and mannered	3.85	0.95
The type and level of crowd (another guest) is suitable	3.87	0.87
The nature and level of interaction with employees are acceptable	4.04	0.83
The nature and level of interaction with other guests are acceptable	3.95	0.79
The employees make me feel valued in this hotel	4.10	0.74

Source: Field survey, Osman, (2022). Scale: 1-1.49 = strongly disagreed, 1.50-2.49 = disagreed, 2.50-3.49 = neutral, 3.50-4.49 = agreed, 4.50-5.0 = strongly agreed.

Spatial layout and functionality (mean = 3.92) and signs, symbols and artefacts (mean = 3.81) were other features of the hotels' servicescape that were used to measure guests' perception of hotel's servicescape. The results indicate that spatial layout and functionality, and signage are perceived among the factors that can influence their hotel choice, experience and re-visit intentions. Generally, based on the outcome of the data, there is an indication that guest have very good impressions about hotels in the Takoradi Metropolis as far as their servicescape is concern. The results affirm studies conducted by previous researchers (Bitner, 1992; Pizam & Tasci, 2019; Kandampully Bilgihan and Amer, 2022) that these four dimensions of servicescape are capable of enhancing guests' perception.

Exploratory Factor Analysis on Guests' Perception of Hotel Servicescape

Again, it was necessary to further delve into the major underlying components of guests' perception of servicescape. This analysis was required in order to ascertain how specific servicescape put together interrelate to influence perception of hotels and to determine the percentage of variance explained by the dimensions, hence the need for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to be carried out. The EFA was consequently performed on thirty-five (35) variables and the output is presented in Table 6.

The Bartlett's test of sphericity was found to be very significant ($p=0.00$) while the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) index of 0.941 confirmed the suitability of the data for Factor Analysis (FA). The table also contains the eigenvalues and the factor loadings. A recommendation is made for the inspection of a correlation matrix of 0.3 or more while factors or components with eigenvalue of 1.0 or more are retained for further investigation (Pallant,

2005). In addition, the Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of the scale used and the extent to which the variables contributed in explaining a factor. Pallant (2005) suggests that in order to determine the degree to which all items under the construct effectively measure it, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient should be examined. She recommends that for appropriateness, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient should be more than 0.7.

Moreover, for an easier interpretation of the results, the factors were subjected to a 'rotation' in order to be presented with components represented by a number of strongly loaded variables. Therefore, the Principal Component Analysis (PCA), specifically, the varimax rotation, reduced the thirty-six (36) variables to four (4) main underlying dimensions. No variable was dropped, since all the variables had a factor loading more the threshold (0.30). The four uncorrelated factor-solutions together explained 59.4% of the total variances. This output suggests that 40.6% of other factors might have influenced their perception of hotel servicescape (Table 6). The factors, however, contributed differently to the explanation of the total variance, which was as follows:

Table 6 : Structure of Guest Perception of Hotel Servicescape

Factor and observed variables	Factor loadings	Eigen-value	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach's alpha
I <i>Social elements</i>		9.53	33.09	0.94
The nature and level of interaction with another guest are acceptable	0.75			
The nature and level of interaction with employees are acceptable	0.71			
The employees make me feel valued in this hotel	0.69			
Other guests encountered are well-composed and mannered	0.66			
The employees are courteous and friendly	0.64			
The type and level of crowd (other guests) is suitable	0.61			
Prompt and efficient service delivery	0.56			
The hotel employees are attractively dressed and professional	0.50			
II <i>Functionality</i>		7.54	15.67	0.93
Photo frames are also attractive and well positioned	0.65			
The style of decor is attractive.	0.58			
The equipment and furnishing in the facility are modern looking and efficient.	0.57			
Prompt and efficient service delivery	0.56			
The name and logo of this hotel is attractive	0.56			
The exterior design and finishes are attractive	0.56			
The guestroom is well cleaned and properly supplied with amenities.	0.55			
The guestroom layout is comfortable and attractive	0.53			
III <i>Signs and symbols</i>		2.23	6.38	0.92
It is easy to understand and follow directional signs.	0.79			

Table 6: cont'd

Informational signs are also available with easy interpretations	0.77		
There are sufficient visible directional signs (e.g., entrance, exit)	0.74		
The hotel has adequate parking space	0.70		
The interior environment is spacious	0.70		
Ornaments, statues, vases, accessories of the facility are attractive.	0.65		
Artefacts such as paintings in their respective areas are appropriate and pleasant.	0.64		
The hotel layout makes moving around easy	0.61		
Background music/sound is pleasant and enjoyable.	0.54		
The furniture and seating arrangement are comfortable	0.52		
IV <i>Ambience</i>		4.26	0.91
		1.49	
The temperature is just right and comfortable	0.68		
Noise levels are acceptable	0.67		
The surroundings are well-kept and clean	0.66		
The air quality within the hotel is refreshing	0.60		
The overall ambience is relaxing	0.59		
The hotel interior design and colours schemes are attractive	0.59		
Wall, floor and ceiling decor is appealing and comfortable	0.56		
The furniture use by the hotel is of high quality and appropriate	0.54		
Lighting is adequate and appropriate in their respective areas	0.50		
The layout of this hotel is logical and easily accessible	0.47		
Total		59.40	

Source: Field survey, Osman, (2022). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx. Chi-square) = 5850.186, p-value=0.00. Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.941

Factor one (1) labelled as social elements consisted of eight variables, together explained 9.53 (33.09%) of the total variance in perception of servicescape. They included the nature and level of interaction with other guest are acceptable, the nature and level of interaction with employees are

acceptable, the employees make me feel valued in this hotel, and other guests encountered are well-composed and mannered. This means that social elements are responsible for 33.09 percent of guests' perception of hotels' servicescape. This is an indication that social elements are deemed important to hotels guests, therefore, must be treated as such by the management and employees of the various hotels. This supports the assertion made by Kloosterman (2017) that the people and the service are as importance at the product.

Spatial layout and functionality emerged as the second factor. This included eight individual items, such as photo frames are also attractive and well positioned, the style of decor is attractive, the equipment and furnishing in the facility are modern looking and efficient, prompt and efficient service delivery. In all, this factor explained 7.54 (15.67%) of the total variances in guests' perception on servicescape. Factor three, which was labelled as signs, symbols and artefacts also explained 2.23 (6.38%) of the total variance in guests' perception of hotel's servicescape. This factor was made up of ten variables including easy to understand and follow directional signs and informational signs are also available with easy interpretations.

The fourth and last factor that emerged from the EFA was labelled as ambience, and this comprised of ten variables. Some of these items are the temperature is just right and comfortable, noise levels are acceptable, the surroundings are well-kept and clean, the air quality within the hotel is refreshing, the overall ambience is relaxing, the hotel interior design and colours schemes are attractive This factor explained 1.70 (4.62%) of the total variance on guests' perception on servicescape. This means that ambience

accounted for only 4.62 percent of the total variance explained in perception of guests on servicescape.

The factor analysis conducted suggest that all the four dimensions, (namely; social elements, functionality, signs and symbols, and ambient conditions) that were used to measure guest's perception of servicescape could be regarded as major factors of their perception of servicescape among hotels in the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis. Since these four dimensions accounted for 59.40 percent of the total, variance explained in guest's perception of servicescape. The findings of the EFA affirms tenets of the servicescape model, of which Bitner (1992) also proposed these four dimensions as the determinants of guests' perception on servicescape.

Difference in Perception of Hotel Servicescape across Respondents' Socio-demographics

How hotel guests perceive the servicescape may vary according to socioeconomic status and socio-demographics of the guests. Bitner (1992) posits that a consumer's response to an environment depends, at least in part, on situational factors such as the mood of the personality and the purpose of visit. Moreover, since the conceptual framework that underpinned the study have a linkage, between the socio-demographics of respondents and the perception of servicescape; it becomes necessary to find out if perception of servicescape vary among socio-demographic characteristics. With a confidence level of 95% ($\text{sig} \leq 0.05$) and a margin of error of 5%, the independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance were used to test for the differences among perception and socio-demographic characteristics. In addition, the Tukey HSD method, one of the post-hoc or *posteriori* (Pallant,

2005) was carried out to identify where differences exist among the various groups.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the perception scores for males and females. It was revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between males and females on social element ($p=0.71$, $t=0.38$), functionality ($p=0.21$, $t=0.69$), signs, symbols and artefacts ($p=0.08$, $t=1.73$) and ambient conditions ($p=0.38$, $t=0.88$). The results indicate that both males and females had similar perception about the social elements, functionality, signs and ambient conditions of the servicescape of the hotels (Table 7). This could be because of the fact all the hotels had good environment or atmosphere, therefore, creating a very good perception in the mind of the guests on servicescape. The study contradicts the findings of Ganesan-Lim, Russel-Bennet & Dagger (2008), which found a significant difference between sex and perceptions on physical environment.

Marital status did not influence respondents' perception of hotels' servicescape (Table 7). The independent samples t-test shows no statistically significant difference among singles and married in social elements ($p=0.09$; $t=1.73$). Similarly, there were no difference between married and unmarried hotel guests when it comes to signs, symbols and artefacts ($p=0.46$; $t=0.74$), and ambient conditions ($p=0.06$; $t=1.89$). The mean scores also revealed that both males and females reported that the hotel had adequate parking scape, comfortable arrangement, and spacious environment. Again, guests, regardless their marital status, admitted that the employees of the hotels were attractively dressed, prompt and efficient and above all felt valued at the hotels.

Table 7: Guests' Perception of Servicescape by their Socio-demographics

Socio-demographics	Social Element	Functionality	Signs and symbols	Ambience
Sex				
Male	2.52	2.54	2.65	2.44
Female	2.50	2.57	2.53	2.39
	$p=0.71$ $t=0.38$	$p=0.21$ $t=0.69$	$p=0.08$ $t=1.73$	$p=0.38$ $t=0.88$
Marital status				
Single	2.55	2.51	2.62	2.46
Married	2.45	2.47	2.57	2.35
	$p=0.09$ $t=1.73$	$p=0.10$ $t=1.21$	$p=0.46$ $t=0.74$	$p=0.06$ $t=1.89$
Nationality				
Ghanaian	2.51	2.61	2.62	2.42
Non-Ghanaian	2.52	2.54	2.45	2.42
	$p=0.89$ $t=-0.14$	$p=0.74$ $t=0.37$	$p=0.13$ $t=1.52$	$p=0.97$ $t=-0.04$
Age				
Below 25	2.52	2.22	2.50	2.42
25-34	2.53	2.31	2.67	2.44
35-44	2.50	2.21	2.61	2.42
Above 45	2.51	2.44	2.62	2.32
	$p=0.73$ $F=0.44$	$p=0.81$ $F=0.41$	$p=0.20$ $F=1.56$	$p=0.78$ $F=0.36$
Religion				
Christianity	2.53	2.33	2.63	2.43
Islam	2.51	2.23	2.57	2.43
Atheist	2.45	2.38	2.55	2.36
	$p=0.69$ $F=0.37$	$p=0.61$ $F=0.32$	$p=0.58$ $F=0.55$	$p=0.75$ $F=0.29$
Level of Education				
Basic	2.49	2.37	2.63*	2.37*
High school	2.31*	2.31	2.40	2.27
College/University	2.55	2.40	2.67	2.50*
Post-graduate	2.52*	2.14	2.46*	2.27
	$p=0.02^*$ $F=3.29$	$p=0.62$ $F=0.84$	$p=0.02^*$ $F=3.34$	$p=0.01^*$ $F=3.77$
Income level				
< \$500	2.38	2.25	2.48	2.35
\$500-\$900	2.52	2.31	2.64	2.41
\$1000-\$1400	2.54	2.46	2.63	2.47
\$1500 and above	2.57	2.44	2.65	2.41
	$p=0.12$ $F=1.95$	$p=0.64$ $F=0.88$	$p=0.34$ $F=1.13$	$p=0.44$ $F=0.91$

Source: Field survey, Osman (2022). Post-hoc *

Scale 1-1.49 = Disagree, 1.50-2.49 = Neutral, 2.50-3 = Agree, Sig. level at ≤ 0.05 .

Same as marital status, nationality had no influence on respondents' perception of servicescape. The independent samples t-test established there were no statistically significant difference between Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian hotel guests with respect to social elements ($p=0.89$; $t=-0.14$), functionality ($p=0.74$, $t=0.37$) signs, symbols and artefacts ($p=0.13$; $t=1.52$), and ambient conditions ($p=0.97$; $t=-0.04$). This establishes that there is no statistically significant variation between guests' perception of hotels' servicescape across their country of origin. This implies that what and how guests think about the servicescape of hotels is not dependent on their nationality.

A one-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to examine difference between respondents' age and perception of servicescape. Respondents were divided into four (4) groups according to their age (below 25, 25-34, 35-44, 45 and more). There was no statistically significant difference among the four age groups on social element ($p=0.73$; $F=0.44$), functionality ($p=0.81$, $F=0.41$), signs and symbols ($p=0.20$; $F=1.56$) and ambience ($p=0.78$; $F=0.36$). All the age groups reported to have had a positive perception on the social elements, signs, symbols, of the hotels' servicescape but were not certain about their feelings on the ambience and the functionality of the hotels. This suggest that guests' who participated in this study are homogenous with respect to their perception of servicescape based on their age groupings. Similarly, guests' religion (Christianity, Islam, and Atheist) had no statistically significant difference with their perception of hotels' servicescape. Respondents' religion had no influence on how they perceived social elements and functionality ($p=0.69$; $F=0.37$), signs and symbols

($p=0.58$; $F=0.55$) and ambience ($p=0.75$; $F=0.29$). This is an indication that guests do not vary in terms of the perception of servicescape by their religious affiliation.

Contrary, there was a statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level in social elements across guests' level of education [$F(3, 206) = 3.29$, $p=0.02$], signs and symbols [$F(4, 206) = 3.34$, $p=0.02$] and ambience [$F(4, 206) = 3.77$, $p=0.01$]. Respondents' qualification was basic school, high school, college/university and post-graduate. The Tukey HSD post-hoc test for social elements shows that the mean scores for respondent with high school qualification ($M=2.31$, $SD=0.58$) was significantly different from those with post-graduate certificates ($M= 2.52$, $SD=0.46$). However, guests with basic school qualifications ($M=2.49$, $SD=0.62$), and college and university graduates ($M=2.55$, $SD=0.58$) did not show any significant difference. For signs and symbols, the post-hoc test indicates that Group 1 ($M=2.63$, $SD=0.44$) was significantly different from Group 4 ($M= 2.46$, $SD=0.61$). In addition, the turkey post-hoc analysis on ambience reveals that the means of basic school certificate holders ($M=2.37$, $SD=0.45$) was significantly different from those with university degrees ($M= 2.50$, $SD=0.37$). This is explainable that guests, based on their level of education, differ on perception of servicescape, therefore, can be said that the guests are heterogeneous, contradicting the findings of other studies, as stated by Erdem, Atadil, and Nasoz, (2019). Further, the study suggest that guests' socio-demographic characteristics have influence on guests' perception of servicescape as educational level was observed to be a significant determinant of perception. This confirms the

assertion by Fraikue, (2016) that socio-demographics may influence perception, experience and satisfaction.

Difference in Perception of Hotel Servicescape across Respondents' Travel Characteristics

In furtherance, the travel characteristics of respondents were linked to the perception of servicescape per the study's conceptual framework because the travel characteristics could have influence on the guests' perception of servicescape. Therefore, there was the need to assess the difference between guests' travel characteristics and perception. With a confidence level of 95% ($\text{sig} \leq 0.05$) and a margin of error of 5%, the independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance were used to test for the differences among perception and socio-demographic characteristics. Moreover, the Tukey HSD method, one of the post-hoc or *posteriori* (Pallant, 2005) was carried out to identify where differences exist among the various groups.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the perception scores for first timers and repeat guests. It was revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between first timers and repeat guests on social element ($p=0.28$; $t=-1.08$), functionality ($p=0.34$, $t=-1.23$) signs, symbols and artefacts ($p=0.23$; $t=-1.21$) and ambience ($p=0.42$; $t=-0.80$). There was a total agreement on social elements and functionality, and signs, symbols and artefacts, meanwhile guests were uncertain on ambience. This implies that guests had a very good perception about the social elements, functionality and the signs and symbols as dimensions of the hotels' servicescape but were somewhat not comfortable with the fourth dimension (the ambience). This finding is in a direct contrast to what was report by

Kamau (2017), who indicated that situation-specific factors, particularly past experience (first-timers versus repeaters) could moderate the effect of customer' perceptions about the quality of the physical environment.

A one-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to assess the difference between attraction to the hotel and perception of servicescape. Respondents were divided into five (5) groups according to their attraction to the hotel (price, design, location, hotel image, service). There was a statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level in ambience for attraction to the hotel [$F(3, 206) = 3.33, p = 0.01$]. The turkey HSD post-hoc comparison using Tukey HSD test indicates that the mean scores for design ($M = 2.23, SD = 0.41$) was significantly different from service ($M = 2.52, SD = 0.54$). While those who are attracted to the hotel by service were comfortable with the ambient conditions of the hotels, those who are attracted by design were somewhat not comfortable. The price of the hotels ($M = 2.35, SD = 0.47$), location ($M = 2.39, SD = 0.62$) and hotel image ($M = 2.48, SD = 0.43$) did not show any significant difference (Table 8). This is an indication that what motivated (pull factors) the guests to the hotels had an impact on their perception of servicescape. Thus, there is a significant difference between attraction to the hotel (what attracted the guests to the hotels) and their perception of servicescape, what then it means is that, how those who were attracted to the hotel perceived servicescape was different from those who got attracted by hotels' image. This is because pull factors as motivation are one of the determinants of perception, experience and satisfaction, therefore, it is only perfect to have established a significant difference in perception among guests' motivation.

Table 8: Guests' Perception of Servicescape by Travel Characteristics

Guests' Travel Characteristics	Social Element	Functionality	Signs and symbols	Ambience
Attraction to the hotel				
Price	2.41	2.31	2.54	2.35
Design	2.41	2.23	2.65	2.23*
Location	2.51	2.44	2.49	2.39
Hotel image	2.55	2.39	2.53	2.48
Service	2.59	2.49	2.71	2.52*
	$p=0.12$	$p=0.31$	$p=0.11$	$p=0.01^*$
	$F=1.87$	$F=1.91$	$F=1.90$	$F=3.33$
Hotel type				
4-star hotels	2.64*	2.54	2.81*	2.49
3-star hotels	2.65	2.55	2.72*	2.54*
2-star hotels	2.51	2.56	2.55	2.43
1-star hotels	2.33	2.43	2.47*	2.25
Budget hotels	2.28*	2.17	2.29	2.26*
	$p=0.00^*$	$p=0.02^*$	$p=0.00^*$	$p=0.00^*$
	$F=8.14$	$F=5.87$	$F=5.90$	$F=5.55$
First time of lodging				
First timers	2.57	2.64	2.56	2.39
Repeat guests	2.54	2.53	2.64	2.44
	$p=0.28$	$p=0.34$	$p=0.23$	$p=0.42$
	$t=-1.08$	$t=-1.23$	$t=-1.21$	$t=-0.80$
Purpose of visit				
Business	2.61	2.57	2.71*	2.53*
Leisure/Vacation	2.51	2.62	2.64	2.47
Local event	2.32*	2.19*	2.33	2.20
Conference/Convention	2.32	2.25	2.33*	2.16
VRF	2.44	2.33	2.55	2.28
Education/Research	2.73*	2.68*	2.80*	2.40*
	$p=0.01^*$	$p=0.01^*$	$p=0.00^*$	$p=0.00^*$
	$F=3.22$	$F=3.67$	$F=3.58$	$F=5.19$
Payment mode				
Self	2.48	2.36	2.57	2.38
Company/Institution	2.59	2.65	2.69	2.50
Complimentary/Reward	2.49	2.39	2.58	2.44
	$p=0.20$	$p=0.32$	$p=0.28$	$p=0.17$
	$F=1.62$	$F=1.21$	$F=1.29$	$F=1.77$
Travelling party				
Business				
associates/Colleagues	2.69	2.57	2.78	2.58
Spouse/partner	2.49	2.38	2.60	2.43
Children	2.50	2.52	2.64	2.40
Family/friends	2.25	2.31	2.32	2.15
Alone	2.52	2.57	2.60	2.43
	$p=0.00^*$	$p=0.00^*$	$p=0.00^*$	$p=0.00^*$
	$F=7.15$	$F=6.34$	$F=5.01$	$F=7.15$

Source: Field survey, Osman (2022). Scale 1-1.49 = Disagree, 1.50-2.49 = Neutral, 2.50-3 = Agree, Sig. level at ≤ 0.05 , Post-hoc *

Again, there was a statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level in social elements for hotel types [$F(2, 206) = 8.14, p = 0.00$], functionality [$F(3, 206) = 5.87, p = 0.02$], signs and symbols [$F(2, 206) = 5.90, p = 0.00$] and ambience [$F(3, 206) = 2.72, p = 0.03$]. The Tukey HSD post-hoc test for social elements and functionality shows that the mean scores for four-star hotels ($M = 2.64, SD = 0.48$) was significantly different from Group budget hotels ($M = 2.28, SD = 0.45$). This means that guests who stayed at 4-star hotels were happy with the social elements and functionality while their counterparts who stayed in budget hotels were not certain. This is probably because 4-star hotels are mostly more appealing and per their nature attract a certain class of people. However, three-star hotels ($M = 2.65, SD = 0.72$), two-star hotels ($M = 2.51, SD = 0.58$) and one-star hotels ($M = 2.33, SD = 0.54$) did not show any significant difference.

The Tukey post-hoc results for signs, symbols and artefacts suggest that the mean values for one-star hotels ($M = 2.47, SD = 0.54$) was significantly different from four-star hotels ($M = 2.81, SD = 0.34$) and three-star hotels ($M = 2.72, SD = 0.62$). While guests in 1-star hotels were indifferent, those in 3 and 4-star hotels agreed to signs, symbols and artefacts. Again. The post-hoc analysis for ambient conditions shows that the mean scores of three-star hotels ($M = 2.54, SD = 0.55$) were significantly different from budget hotels ($M = 2.26, SD = 0.44$). These results could be because 3 and 4-star hotels dominated the data and these kinds of hotels are sumptuous, have all the necessary facilities and offer excellent service environment as opposed to 1-star and budget hotels.

As regards purpose of visit, (Business, Leisure, Local event, Conference, VRF and Research), it was established that there was a statistically significant difference between respondents' purpose of visit and perception. There was a statistically significance at $p \leq 0.05$ level in social elements [$F(3, 206) = 3.22, p=0.01$], functionality [$F(3, 206) = 3.67, p=0.01$], signs and symbols [$F(2, 206) = 3.58, p=0.00$] and ambience [$F(3, 206) = 5.19, p=0.00$]. The post-hoc test for social elements and functionality shows that the mean scores for guest who visited for local events ($M=2.32, SD=0.38$) were significantly different from researchers ($M= 2.73, SD=0.65$). This suggests that whiles guests who visited because of research admitted to be impressed with the social element part of the servicescape, those who visited because of local event did not indicate so.

In addition, the Tukey post-hoc results for signs and symbols indicate that the mean values for business travelers ($M=2.71, SD=0.35$) and researchers ($M=2.80, SD=0.52$) were significantly different from guests who visited because of local events ($M=2.33, SD=0.44$). This is an indication that guests who visited because of research and business enjoyed the atmosphere and were very pleased with the social elements, but those who visited purposely for a local event were not. However, guests who visited because of leisure ($M=2.64, SD=0.36$) and VRF ($M=2.55, SD=0.44$) did not show any significant difference. Again, the post-hoc test for ambient conditions revealed that the mean score for business travelers ($M=2.53, SD=0.56$) was significantly different from that of researchers ($M=2.40, SD=0.45$). The test also shows that guests whose reasons were for leisure ($M=2.47, SD=0.47$), local events

($M=2.20$, $SD=0.56$), conference ($M=2.33$, $SD=0.44$) and VRF ($M=2.28$, $SD=0.47$) had no significant difference among them.

In contrast, the test indicates that hotel guests did not differ by payment mode (Self, Company/Institution and Complimentary/Reward) with respect to social elements ($p=0.20$; $F=3.22$), functionality ($p=0.32$, $F=1.21$) signs and symbols ($p=0.28$; $F=1.29$) and ambience ($p=0.17$; $F=1.77$). A review of the results revealed that guests, irrespective of their mode of payment were impressed and pleased with the social elements, functionality, and signs and symbols, but were somewhat comfortable with the ambience. For travelling party, guests were grouped into four (Business associates, Spouse/Partner, Children, Family/Friends and Alone) sub-groups. The ANOVA statistic indicates that there was a statistically significance at $p\leq 0.05$ level in social elements [$F(3, 206) = 7.15$, $p=0.00$], signs, symbols and artefacts [$F(2, 206) = 5.01$, $p = 0.00$] and ambient conditions [$F(3, 206) = 7.15$, $p=0.00$].

Guests' Experiences of Hotel Servicescape

Objective two of this study aimed to investigate guests' experiences of the hotel servicescape. The hotel guest experience encompasses the overall evaluation made by guests at various stages of service, involving different interactions and consumption. It is a multifaceted concept that encompasses emotional, cognitive, and physiological responses to hospitality services during a hotel stay (Alwanas & Hemsley-Brown, 2019; Baek et al., 2020). In today's business landscape, organizations emphasize the importance of providing customers with memorable and meaningful experiences, going beyond the mere provision of services (Jani & Han, 2015; Kandampully,

Bilgihan, & Amer, 2022). For this study, guests' experience was measured based on three dimensions: cognitive reactions, emotional reactions and physiological reactions. Table 9 explains the description of the mean scores of both the individual indicator items and the dimensions.

Guests' experiences of servicescape were captured under the various constructs on a five-point Likert scale (1-highly dissatisfied, 2-dissatisfied, 3-indifferent, 4-satisfied, and 5-highly satisfied). Respondents were required to indicate whether they agreed with each statement under the constructs by choosing one option on the scale for an answer. Overall, emotional reactions (mean = 4.00) emerged the highest in terms of guests' experience. Here, guests wholly indicated that the experience in the hotel is pleasurable (mean = 3.93), they are satisfied about the environment (mean = 4.08), they feel at ease and relaxed at the hotel (mean = 4.01) and they admitted to be satisfied with the overall feelings from the hotel environment and admitted that it them in good mood (mean = 3.98). This study is in line with previous studies. In a similar study, Kamau (2017) observed that ambiance influences customers' emotional well-being. According to Kotler (2012), 75% of emotions (sadness, monotony) or comforting effect (happiness, contentment, pleasure) during the day are influenced by smell. Emotional reaction was followed by cognitive reaction (mean = 3.93) and physiological reaction (mean = 3.84).

Table 9: Guests' Experience of Hotel Servicescape

Statement	Mean	SD
<i>Cognitive Reactions</i>	3.93	0.97
Enjoyed staying in this hotel	4.02	0.97
Have a positive impression about this hotel	3.99	0.97
Comparatively, this is one of the best hotels I have stayed in	3.79	0.97
<i>Emotional Reactions</i>	4.00	0.89
The experience in the hotel is pleasurable	3.93	0.93
Happy about the environment	4.08	0.86
Feel at ease and relaxed in this hotel	4.01	0.86
The overall feeling, I get from this hotel environment put me in a good mood.	3.98	0.92
<i>Physiological Reactions</i>	3.84	0.93
The servicescape (physical environment) is comfortable	3.84	0.92
Would like to stay as long as possible	3.77	0.98
The overall service setting is enjoyable	3.90	0.90

Source: Field survey, Osman, (2022).

Scale: 1-1.49 = highly dissatisfied, 1.50-2.49 = dissatisfied, 2.50-3.49 = indifferent, 3.50-4.49 = satisfied, 4.50-5.0 = highly satisfied.

As regards, cognitive reactions, respondents claimed they enjoyed staying at the hotels (mean = 4.02), had a positive impression about the hotel (mean = 3.99) and comparatively, thinks that the hotels one of the best they have stayed in (mean = 3.79). Same as emotional and cognitive reactions, the guest admitted to have had physiological reaction towards hotels servicescape, therefore, satisfied with all the individual items that measured physiological experience. For instance, respondents admitted to be satisfied with the comfortability of the servicescape of the hotels (mean = 3.84), would like to stay as long as possible (mean = 3.77) and feels that the service setting is enjoyable (mean = 3.90). Apparently, the results suggest that guests were satisfied with the servicescape of the various hotels that were included in the study, hence, having emotional, cognitive and physiological reactions towards the servicescape. The implication of this is that, hotels must consider and or focus on the servicescape of their hotels, since it plays significant role in guest

experience, satisfaction and post-purchase behaviour Erdem, Atadil, and Nasoz, (2019).

Guests' Experiences by Hotel Type

The study further examined the nuances in guest's experience or response to the servicescape vis-a-vis the hotel types using cross tabulation.

Thus, how guest experience or response to the servicescape differ based on the hotel type. Response to servicescape was measured in three dimensions namely; cognitive, emotional and physiological. In terms of the cognitive dimension, majority (87.5%) of the guests who stayed in 4-star hotels were highly satisfied with the servicescape compared with that of 3-star (86.3%), 2-star (68.8%) and 1-star (55.1%). Relatively, budget hotels had the least (50%) reaction (Table 10). In other words, guests were not satisfied with the servicescape of budgets hotels.

With the emotional dimension, almost all the guests had pleasurable experience with the servicescape of 4-star hotels (93.8%) and 3-star hotels (93.1%) respectively as compared to 2-star hotels (81.2%), 1-star hotels (59.2%) and budget hotels (50%). This suggests that many of the guests enjoy the servicescape of 4-star and 3-star hotels more than they did with the lower rated hotels. Under the physiological dimension, majority (80.8%) of the guests disclosed 3-star hotels have comfortable servicescape different from that of 4-star hotels (75%), 2-star hotels (65.6%) and 1-star hotels (59.2%). Budgets hotels were reported to have the less comfortable servicescape. Overall, majority of the guests were satisfied with the servicescape of 3-star hotels (89%) and 4-star hotels (84.4%) respectively compared to that of 2-star hotels (75%), 1-star hotels (59.2%) and budget hotels (55%).

Table 10: Hotel type by Servicescape Experience

Hotel type	Cognitive			Emotional			Physiological		
	NS (%)	I (%)	S (%)	NS (%)	I (%)	S (%)	NS (%)	I (%)	S (%)
4-star	0.0	12.5	87.5	3.1	3.1	93.8	0.0	25.0	75.0
3-star	4.1	9.6	86.3	1.4	5.5	93.1	4.1	15.1	80.8
2-star	12.5	18.7	68.8	0.0	18.8	81.2	6.2	28.1	65.6
1-star	18.4	26.5	55.1	12.2	28.6	59.2	10.2	30.6	59.2
Budget	15.0	35.0	50.0	5.0	45.0	50.0	20.0	45.0	35.0

Source: Fieldwork, Osman, 2022. NB: NS = Not Satisfied; I = Indifferent; S = Satisfied.

Guests experience by Socio-demographic characteristics

This section of the study aimed at establishing whether guests' experiences differ across the various socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. The five-point Likert scale was again collapsed into a three-point Likert scale (dissatisfied, indifferent, and satisfied). Thus, "highly dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" were recoded as dissatisfied and "highly satisfied" and "satisfied" were also recoded as satisfied. The collapse of the scale into three was important because such re-categorisation will enhance and facilitate clearer and easier interpretations of the averages generated. Amuquandoh, (2010); Adam & Amuquandoh, (2013) are notable researchers who collapsed five-point Likert scale into three-point Likert scale without any loss in the data quality. At a significant value of $p \leq 0.05$, two statistical tools were used to establish the variation of guests' experiences across the various socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. These are the independent samples t-test and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). To determine where differences exist among the various groups, the Tukey procedure, one of the post-hoc or posteriori (Pallant, 2005) was used.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the experience scores for males and females. With respect to the cognitive reaction ($p=0.40$; $t=0.84$), emotional reaction ($p=0.25$; $t=1.17$) and physiological reaction ($p=0.40$; $t=0.84$), there were no statistically significant differences between male and female hotel guests. Both males and females were satisfied with their cognitive reaction, emotional reaction and physiological reaction in relation to the servicescape of the hotels. This is explainable that both male and female guest were happy, felt comfortable, had

a positive impression about the hotels and would like to stay as long as possible. This is because the guests, irrespective of their sex, were satisfied about the servicescape of the hotels. The finding contradicts the conclusion by Salle et. al., (2016). They concluded that there is difference in experience and satisfaction among males and females, with females reporting greater dissatisfaction, however, this study established that both males and females had a positive experience, hence satisfied with the servicescape.

Similarly, the independent samples t-test indicates there were no statistically significant differences in the cognitive reaction ($p=0.42$; $t=0.80$), emotional reaction ($p=0.16$; $t=1.40$) and physiological reaction ($p=0.29$; $t=1.07$) between singles and married guests (Table 11). A review of the mean scores shows that both singles and married expressed satisfaction on all the three experience dimensions. This could be that the hotels' servicescape was perfect and could not differentiate guests based on their marital status. Same as the marital status, nationality did not influence respondents' experience of servicescape. The independent samples t-test established that there was no statistically significant difference between Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians on cognitive reaction ($p=0.40$; $t=0.85$), emotional reaction ($p=0.58$; $t=0.55$) and physiological reaction ($p=0.98$; $t=-0.03$). This is an indication that hotel guests, no matter their country of origin and marital status, felt emotionally good, had positive cognitive and physiological reaction with respect to the servicescape of the hotels. The result does not affirm the findings of Erdem, Atadil, & Nasoz, (2019). They claim that marital status and country of origin or nationality among other characteristics have a moderating effect on guests' experience and responses.

Table 11: Guests' Experience of Hotel Servicescape by Socio-demographics

Socio-demographics	Cognitive	Emotional	Physiological
Sex			
Male	2.68	2.75	2.64
Female	2.62	2.66	2.62
	$p=0.40$	$p=0.25$	$p=0.72$
	$t=0.84$	$t=1.17$	$t=0.37$
Marital status			
Single	2.68	2.75	2.66
Married	2.61	2.65	2.58
	$p=0.42$	$p=0.16$	$p=0.29$
	$t=0.80$	$t=1.40$	$t=1.07$
Nationality			
Ghanaian	2.67	2.71	2.63
Non-Ghanaian	2.56	2.77	2.63
	$p=0.40$	$p=0.58$	$p=0.98$
	$t=0.85$	$t=-0.55$	$t=-0.03$
Age			
Below 25	2.64	2.70	2.59
25-34	2.68	2.74	2.69
35-44	2.68	2.70	2.61
Above 45	2.51	2.67	2.49
	$p=0.73$	$p=0.93$	$p=0.43$
	$F=0.44$	$F=0.15$	$F=0.93$
Religion			
Christianity	2.67	2.73	2.64
Islam	2.63	2.70	2.63
Atheist	2.64	2.70	2.58
	$p=0.85$	$p=0.91$	$p=0.89$
	$F=0.16$	$F=0.10$	$F=0.11$
Level of Education			
Basic	2.56	2.83	2.89
High school	2.29*	2.53	2.43
College/University	2.73*	2.76	2.68
Post-graduate	2.67	2.67	2.54
	$p=0.01^*$	$p=0.14$	$p=0.78$
	$F=5.49$	$F=1.86$	$F=2.30$
Income level			
< \$500	2.55	2.56	2.51
\$500-\$900	2.63	2.74	2.68
\$1000-\$1400	2.70	2.72	2.68
\$1500 and above	2.82	2.83	2.71
	$p=1.02$	$p=0.11$	$p=0.13$
	$F=0.98$	$F=2.03$	$F=1.97$

Source: Field survey, Osman, (2022). Scale 1-1.49 = Disagree, 1.50-2.49 = Neutral, 2.50-3 = Agree, Sig. level at ≤ 0.05 .

Post-hoc test *

A one-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of age on the guests experience dimensions. Subjects were divided into four (4) groups according to their age (Group 1: Below 25; Group 2: 25-34; Group 3: 35-44; Group 4: Above 45). There was no statistically significant difference in cognitive reaction for the four age groups ($p=0.73$; $F=0.44$), same for emotional reaction ($p=0.93$; $F=0.15$) and physiological reaction ($p=0.89$; $F=0.93$). It is explainable that guests' experience on hotels' servicescape did not differ by their age groups, as respondents, irrespective their age; the guests enjoyed their stay at the hotels, felt comfortable and pleasant. Sotiriadis & Sarmaniotis, (2016) argue that different age could affect guests' experience on hotel's servicescape, meanwhile, this study found the opposite.

The level of education attained by guests had impact on their experience of servicescape. Respondents were divided into four (4) groups according to their educational qualifications i.e., Basic school, High school, College/University, Post-graduate). There was a statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level in cognitive reaction [$F(3, 206) = 5.49, p=0.01$]. The post-hoc comparison using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean scores for Group 2 ($M=2.29, SD=0.38$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M=2.73, SD=0.49$). Thus, respondents who had post-graduate were satisfied with the servicescape based on their cognitive reaction whiles their colleagues who had high school qualification could not choose between either satisfied or dissatisfied. This means that, guests who had post-graduate degree are different from those who had high school qualification. What it means then is, whiles post-graduate holders enjoyed their stay and had a positive impression

about the hotels, high school graduates were not certain on their cognitive experience or reaction on servicescape. Group 1 ($M=2.56$, $SD=0.55$) and Group 4 ($M=2.67$, $SD=0.50$) did not show any significant differences, since both groups were satisfied with their cognitive reaction. However, there was no statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level in emotional reaction ($p=0.14$, $F=1.86$) and physiological reaction ($p=0.78$, $F=2.30$). The mean scores (Table 11) indicate that respondents across the all the levels of education were impressed with the environment and would want to stay as long as possible.

Moreover, the religious affiliation subjects were grouped into three, namely; Christianity, Islam, and Atheist. It was established that, there was no statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level in cognitive reaction ($p=0.85$, $F=0.16$), emotional reaction ($p=0.91$, $F=0.10$) and physiological reaction ($p=0.89$, $F=0.11$). Guests' experience did not vary by their religious affiliation. With respect to income level, the respondents were grouped in to four, these are $< \$500$, $\$500-\900 , $\$1000-\1400 , and $\$1500$ and above. It was observed that level of income of respondents did not in any way had impact on their experience of hotels' servicescape. The study refutes the assertion by Zhang & Peng, (2014). They reported that income level moderates the experience of accommodation. According to them, it is expected that high income earners will be able to afford high star rated or luxury accommodation that has more attractive servicescape, therefore, could influence the experience of such guest. Howbeit, the current study observed no difference between the guests across their income level.

Relationship between Servicescape Dimensions and Guests' Experience

According to the servicescape model by Bitner (1992), the tangible environment of services (the servicescape) influences the cognitive, emotional and physiological reactions (experience). In view of that, this part of the study explored the relationship between dimensions of servicescape and guests' experience using chi-square test of independence. The results indicate there is statistically significant relationship between servicescape and experience (Table 12). In other words, servicescape significantly shape guest experience of hotels. This affirms the Bitner's (model), which indicates a relationship between servicescape and experience of hotel guests. Again, the findings of this study support the claims by Ahmed, Abdelhady and Abdien (2020) and Ahmed et al (2020). Both studies reported that, servicescape features such as pleasant scent; pleasing music, comfortable temperature, low noise, and adequate lighting shape the experience of hotel guests.

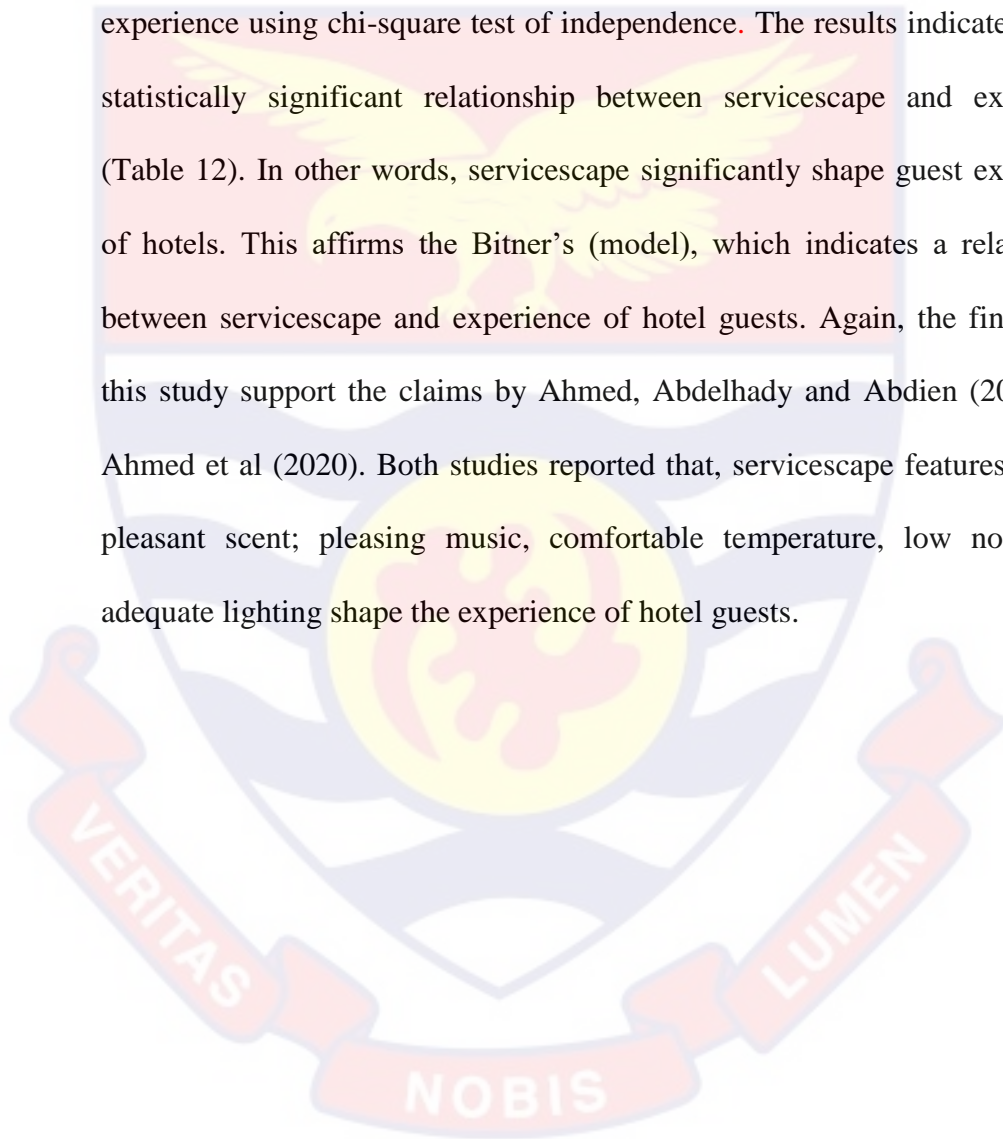


Table 12: Respondents' Perception of Servicescape by Experience

Servicescape Dimensions	Cognitive reaction				Emotional reaction				Physiological reaction			
	DS	I	S	X ² (sig)	DS	I	S	X ² (sig)	DS	I	S	X ² (sig)
Social element				73.92(0.00)				71.32(0.00)				91.48(0.00)
Disagree	81.5	10.0	8.5		85.0	9.0	6.0		87.0	6.4	6.6	
Neutral	27.3	31.8	40.9		13.6	22.7	63.6		13.6	50.0	36.4	
Agree	8.6	9.3	82.0		7.1%	8.3	84.6		6.1	10.5	83.4	
Functionality				77.13(0.00)				103.6(0.00)				97.88(0.00)
Disagree	50.0	35.4	14.6		47.0	35.4	17.6		47.6	30.2	22.2	
Neutral	27.8	38.9	33.3		16.7	50.0	33.3		11.1	66.7	22.2	
Agree	4.6	7.7	86.7		5.5	5.5	90.0		7.1	9.3	83.6	
Signs, symbols and artefacts				100.9(0.00)				78.88(0.00)				59.08(0.00)
Disagree	80.0	12.3	7.7		40.0	50.0	10.0		35.0	50.0	15.0	
Neutral	23.3	33.3	43.3		13.3	36.7	50.0		13.3	36.7	50.0	
Agree	5.0	6.6	88.4		5.6	4.7	89.7		8.6	10.5	80.9	
Ambient conditions				57.13(0.00)				61.10(0.00)				60.60(0.00)
Disagree	82.0	9.0	9.0		65.5	18.0	17.0		70.0	10.5	19.5	
Neutral	22.7	40.9	36.4		22.7	27.3	50.0		18.2	40.9	40.9	
Agree	2.7	8.2	89.1		5.5	8.7	85.7		6.1	7.6	86.3	

Source: Fieldwork, Osman 2022

The individual servicescape dimensions (i.e., social elements, functionality, signs, symbols and artefacts, and ambient conditions) were run against respondents, experience or reactions (cognitive, emotional and physiological reaction). The results established that there was statistically significant relationship between all the servicescape dimensions and guests' experience. This explains that servicescape dimensions related with guests' experiences, which means the reactions of the guests were based on the dimensions. For instance, there was a statistically significant relationship between ambient conditions and guests' cognitive reaction ($X^2(4, 206) = 57.13, 0.00$). This indicates that the proportion (89.1%) of guests that agreed to hotels having appealing environment were mostly satisfied with their cognitive reaction as opposed to the proportion of guests (9.0%) that disagreed to the hotels appealing environment. This suggest that servicescape had an impact on their experience at the hotels. In other words, shaped their cognitive, emotional and physiological reactions. This is because those who agree that hotels' servicescape are appealing were highly satisfied.

Guests' Satisfaction with Hotel Servicescape

Guests' satisfaction is the measurement of how happy and satisfied guests are with products and service. This part of the study dwelt on the guests' satisfaction on hotels servicescape. For this study, guests' satisfaction was measured with four individual variables, on a Five-point Likert scale (1-strongly agree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree). Generally, guests were satisfied with the servicescape features at their respective hotels (mean = 3.94). Specifically, guests agreed to my choice of this hotel was a good one (mean = 3.92), this hotel satisfy my expectation

(mean = 3.95), had value for money using this facility (mean = 3.92) and satisfied with the decision to use this facility (mean = 3.98). This suggest that the respondents were largely satisfied with the hotels’ servicescape, because they had a very good experience at the hotel (Table 13).

Table 13: Guests’ Satisfaction of Servicescape

Statement	Mean	SD
Satisfaction attributes	3.94	0.89
Choice of this hotel was a good one	3.92	0.86
This hotel satisfies my expectation	3.95	0.90
Had value for money using this facility	3.92	0.90
Satisfied with the decision to use this facility	3.98	0.88

Source: Field survey, Osman (2022).

Scale: 1-1.49 = strongly disagreed, 1.50-2.49 = disagreed, 2.50-3.49 = neutral, 3.50-4.49 = agreed, 4.50-5.0 = strongly agreed.

Guests’ Satisfaction with Servicescape by Socio-demographic Characteristics

Guests’ satisfaction, irrespective of its level, may vary by socio-demographics, travel characteristic and socio-economics. Again, as illustrated in the conceptual framework of this study, there is a link between socio-demographics and guests’ satisfaction. To establish this linkage an independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance was employed to test for difference in guests’ satisfaction across respondents’ socio-demographic characteristics. However, it was established that guests’ socio-demographics had no impact on the satisfaction of servicescape.

The independent samples t-test indicates that there was no statistically significant difference between males (mean = 2.72) and females (mean = 2.66) in satisfaction ($p=0.45$, $t=0.76$). Again, no statistically significant difference was observed between marital status and guests’ satisfaction ($p=0.33$, $t=0.97$).

The means scores show that both singles (mean = 2.72) and married (mean = 2.65) were satisfied with the hotels' servicescape. Also, both Ghanaians (mean = 2.69) and non-Ghanaians (mean = 2.74) were indifferent on satisfaction, both were satisfied.

Additionally, the one-way analysis of variance established that there was no statistically significant difference between the four age groupings (Group 1: Below 25; Group 2: 25-34; Group 3: 35-44 and Group 4: 45 and above) on satisfaction ($p=0.83$, $F=0.29$). Hotel guests', irrespective of the age, were satisfied with the physical environment of the hotels. Religion (Group 1: Christianity; Group 2: Islam and Group 3: Atheist) had no impact on guests' satisfaction. The ANOVA test indicates that there was no significant difference between guests' religious affiliation and their satisfaction ($p=0.34$, $F=1.09$). The mean scores suggest that guests who professed Christianity, Islam and those who are Atheist were satisfied with the hotels they lodged. Table 14, shows that there was no significant difference between level of education and guests' satisfaction ($p=0.17$, $F=1.64$), same as income level and guests' satisfaction ($p=0.08$, $F=1.97$).

The outcome of this study indicates that guests' socio-demographics does not have any impact on the satisfaction. In other words, sex, age, level of education, religion among others does not vary with respect to guests' satisfaction. Perhaps, this is contingent on the wholesome agreement on satisfaction by guests; therefore, there will not be any variations.

Table 14: Guests’ Satisfaction with Servicescape by Socio-demographics

Socio-demographics	Mean	F/t-value	p-value
Sex		0.76	0.45
Male	2.72		
Female	2.66		
Marital status		0.97	0.33
Single	2.72		
Married	2.65		
Nationality		-0.38	0.70
Ghanaian	2.69		
Non-Ghanaian	2.74		
Age		0.29	0.83
Below 25	2.67		
25-34	2.73		
35-44	2.68		
Religion		1.09	0.34
Christianity	2.74		
Islam	2.62		
Atheist	2.69		
Level of Education		1.64	0.17
Basic	2.75		
High school	2.52		
College/University	2.74		
Post-graduate	2.64		
Income level		1.97	0.08
< \$500	2.52		
\$500-\$900	2.74		
\$1000-\$1400	2.70		
\$1500 and above	2.81		

Source: Field survey, Osman (2022).

Scale 1-1.49 = Disagree, 1.50-2.49 = Neutral, 2.50-3 = Agree, Sig. level at ≤ 0.05 ,

Difference in Guests’ Satisfaction with Servicescape across Travel Characteristics

As indicated earlier, guests’ satisfaction may differ across the travel characteristics of respondents. On this background, an independent samples t-test and ANOVA were performed to ascertain the difference. Again, Turkey

HSD post-hoc analysis was conducted to compare the differences in between the groupings.

The t-test indicated that number of times of lodging had no impact on guests' satisfaction ($p=0.06$, $t=-1.92$). Implying that guests, whether first timers (mean = 2.62) or repeat guests (mean = 2.76), were indifferent, both groups were satisfied with the hotels' servicescape (Table 15). It is explainable that satisfaction is not based on the type of guests (first timer and repeat guest). Satisfaction has no boundaries, hence, no variations between first timers and repeat guests.

Meanwhile, the ANOVA established that there was statistically significant difference at $p\leq 0.05$ level between hotel types (Group 1: 4-star hotels; Group 2: 3-star hotels; Group 3: 2-star hotels; Group 4: 1-star hotels; Group 5: Budget hotels) and guests' satisfaction ($p=0.00$, $F=5.72$). This is explainable that guests' satisfaction on servicescape differed by the type of hotel they lodged. Perhaps, hotels, based on the types does not have the same servicescape and to large extent does not offer same product and services, inevitably will result in different satisfaction levels.

Table 15: Guests’ Satisfaction with Servicescape by Travel Characteristics

Guests’ Travel Characteristics	Mean	F/t-value	p-value
Attraction		0.95	0.44
Price	2.62		
Design	2.64		
Location	2.65		
Hotel image	2.71		
Service	2.78		
Hotel type		5.72	0.00*
4-star hotels	2.81*		
3-star hotels	2.84*		
2-star hotels	2.71		
1-star hotels	2.54		
Budget hotels	2.35*		
Times of lodging		-1.92	0.06
First timers	2.62		
Repeat guests	2.76		
Purpose of visit		6.86	0.00*
Business	2.82*		
Leisure/Vacation	2.81*		
Local event	2.34		
Conference/Convention	2.30		
VRF	2.58		
Education/Research	2.38*		
Payment mode		1.21	0.11
Self	2.65		
Company/Institution	2.83		
Complimentary/Reward	2.54		
Travel party		1.70	0.21
Business associates/Colleagues	2.84		
Spouse/partner	2.78		
Children	2.52		
Family/friends	2.54		
Alone	2.63		

Source: Field survey, Osman, (2022)

Scale 1-1.49 = Disagree, 1.50-2.49 = Neutral, 2.50-3 = Agree, Sig. level at ≤ 0.05 , Post-hoc test *

The post-hoc comparison observed that the average of Group 1 (M=2.81, SD=0.33) and Group 2 (M=2.84, SD=0.64) was significantly different from Group 5 (M=2.35, SD=0.52). This is indication that whiles guests who lodged in 4 and 3-star hotels were satisfied with the hotels’ servicescape, those who lodged in budget hotels were uncertain. As indicated earlier, this could be because upscale hotels have conducive environment

relative to budget hotels, therefore, they are more likely to be satisfied as compare to those who lodged at the budget hotels. Group 3 ($M=2.71$, $SD=0.45$) and Group 4 ($M=2.54$, $SD=0.61$) did not show any significant differences.

Again, purpose of visit (Group 1: Business; Group 2: Leisure/Vacation; Group 3: Local Event; Group 4: Conference/Convention; Group 5: VRF; Group 6: Education/Research) also had impact on guests' satisfaction. The test revealed that there was statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level between in guests' satisfaction across their travel characteristics ($p=0.00$, $F=6.86$). The post-hoc test established that the mean score for Group 1 ($M=2.82$, $SD=0.43$) and Group 2 ($M=2.81$, $SD=0.54$) was significantly different from Group 6 ($M=2.38$, $SD=0.52$). This implies that those who visited purposely for business, leisure or vacation were satisfied, while those who visited for research were doubtful.

However, no statistically significant difference was observed between guests' satisfaction and attraction ($p=0.44$, $F=0.95$). All guests', irrespective of what attracted them to the hotel, were satisfied with the hotel's servicescape. Similarly, there was not statistically significant difference in satisfaction across guests' mode of payment ($p=0.11$, $F=1.21$) and travelling party ($p=0.21$, $F=1.70$). The results established that guests, regardless of their mode of payment and travel party were satisfied with hotel's servicescape.

Guests' Post-Experience Behavioural Intentions of Hotel Servicescape

Post-experience behavioural intention is the tendency that a consumer will purchase the goods or services at the same place again and deliver their user experiences to others (Morkunas & Rudiene, 2020). After examining the

guests' satisfaction on servicescape, it became necessary for the researcher to assess the post-purchase behavioural intentions of guests. Guests' post-behavioural intention on servicescape was measured with four different variables on a Five-point Likert scale (1-strongly agree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree). Table 16 shows the post-purchase behavioural intentions of hotel guests in the Takoradi metropolis.

Table 16: Guests' Post-Experience Behavioural Intentions of Hotel Servicescape

Statement	Mean	SD
<i>Post-purchase behavioural intention</i>	3.91	1.00
I would like to return to this hotel on my next visit	3.89	1.02
This facility would be my first choice the next in future	3.77	1.04
I would give positive comments about this hotel	4.01	0.94
I would recommend this hotel to others based on my experience	3.96	1.00

Source: Field survey, Osman, (2022).

Scale: 1-1.49 = strongly disagreed, 1.50-2.49 = disagreed, 2.50-3.49 = neutral, 3.50-4.49 = agreed, 4.50-5.0 = strongly agreed.

Overall, it was revealed that guests who participated in the study have positive post-experience behavioural intentions on servicescape (mean = 3.91). On the individual variables, guests wholly agreed to return to the hotels on their next visit to the area (mean = 3.89), they also agreed that the facility would be their first choice in the future (mean = 3.77). Again, the respondents said they will give positive comments about the hotels (mean = 4.01), and agreed to recommend the hotel to others (mean = 3.96). The results suggest that guests who participated in the study would like to make a repeat visit to the hotels and recommend the hotels to their friends and families. In short, there seem to be a positive-word-of-mouth on the hotels in the Takoradi metropolis, in respect to their servicescape by the guests.

Difference in Post-experience Behavioural Intentions across Socio-demographic characteristics of Hotel Guests

The linkage between post-experience behavioural intentions and guests' socio-demographic characteristics based on the study's conceptual framework necessitated the analysis to examine the difference between post-purchase behavioural intentions among the guests' socio-demographics. At a significant level of $p \leq 0.05$, the independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance were used to test for the difference (Table 17). In addition, the Tukey HSD post-hoc analysis was conducted to ascertain where differences existed between the groups.

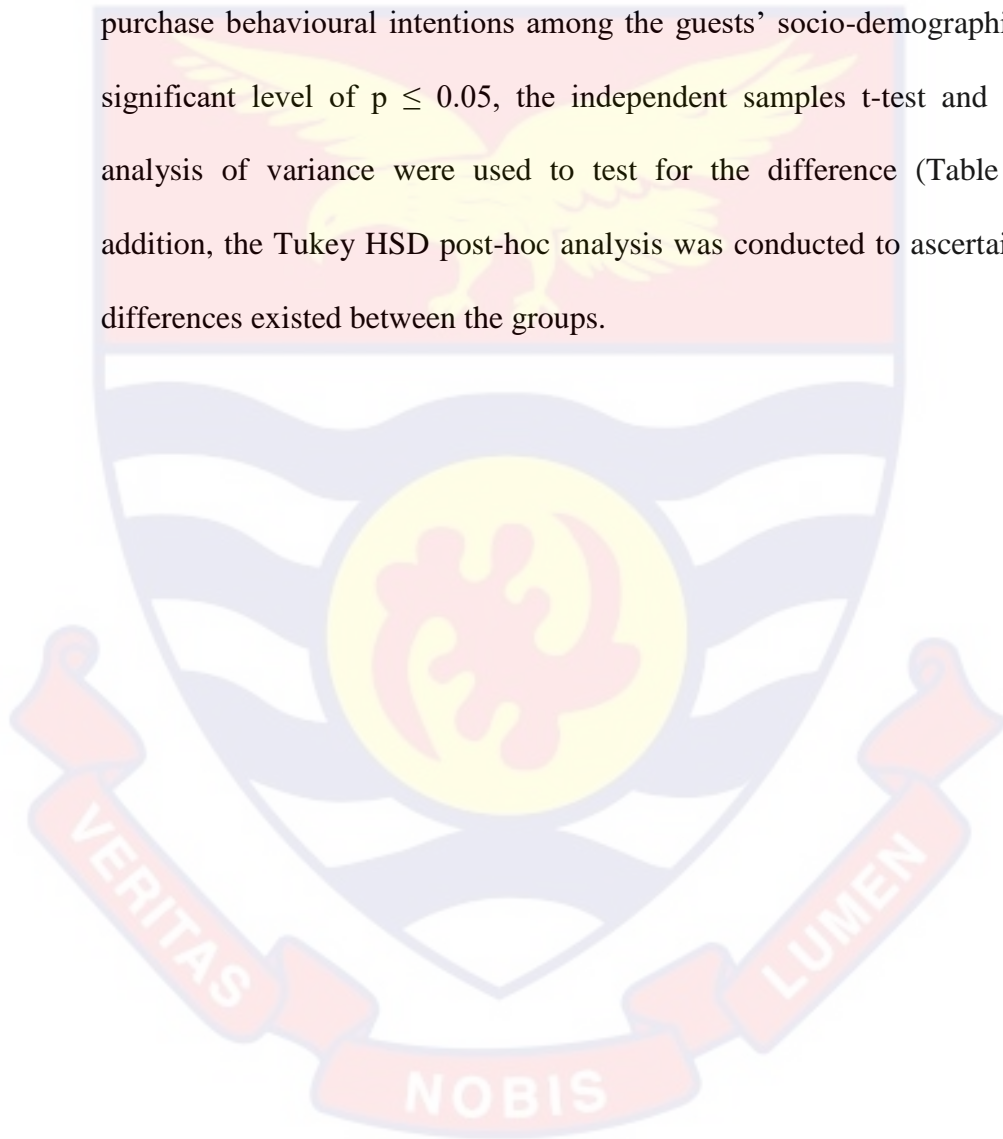


Table 17: Guests’ Post-experience Intentions of Hotel Servicescape by Socio-demographics

Socio-demographics	Mean	F/t-value	p-value
Sex		1.10	0.28
Male	2.67		
Female	2.58		
Marital status		0.82	0.42
Single	2.66		
Married	2.59		
Nationality		-0.18	0.86
Ghanaian	2.63		
Non-Ghanaian	2.65		
Age		0.58	0.63
Below 25	2.56		
25-34	2.68		
35-44	2.64		
Above 45	2.63		
Religion		1.63	0.20
Christianity	2.68		
Islam	2.53		
Atheist	2.67		
Level of Education		3.12	0.03*
Basic	2.83*		
High school	2.42*		
College/University	2.70		
Post-graduate	2.56		
Income level		1.97	0.12
< \$500	2.50		
\$500-\$900	2.63		
\$1000-\$1400	2.66		
\$1500 and above	2.76		

Source: Field survey, Osman (2022).

Scale 1-1.49 = Disagree, 1.50-2.49 = Neutral, 2.50-3 = Agree, Sig. level at ≤ 0.05, Post-hoc test *

The independent samples t-test conducted revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between males and females on post-experience behavioural intentions ($p=0.01$, $t=1.10$). Similarly, no significant difference was established between marital status ($p=0.42$, $t=0.82$) and guests’ nationality ($p=0.86$, $t=-0.18$). This is an indication that guests’ post-experience behavioural intentions do not vary in any way by their sex, marital status and nationality. What then it means is that, guests, irrespective of their sex, marital

status and nationality are willing to do repeat visit and further recommend the hotels to others.

Again, the one-way analysis of variance conducted shows that there was a statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level in post-experience behavioural intentions for educational level [$F(2, 206) = 3.12, p = 0.03$].

Respondents were divided into four (4) groups according to their educational level (Group 1: Basic school; Group 2: High school; Group 3: College/University; Group 4: Post-graduate). The post-hoc comparison using Tukey HSD test indicates that the mean scores for Group 1 ($M = 2.83, SD = 0.43$) was significantly different from Group 2 ($M = 2.42, SD = 0.53$). Whiles those with basic school qualification agreed to post-experience behavioural intentions, those with high school qualification were not certain. Group 3 ($M = 2.70, SD = 0.57$) and Group 4 ($M = 2.56, SD = 0.63$) did not show any significant difference. This means that guests' post-experience behavioural intentions differ by their level of education. Personal traits are among the key determinants influencing consumers' decision-making and subsequent behaviours, according to research on consumer behaviour (Hagan 2015). It follows logically that customers with various individual traits will behave in various ways for various reasons.

However, no statistically significant difference was observed between guests' post-experience behavioural intentions and respondents' age ($p = 0.63, F = 0.58$), religious affiliation ($p = 0.20, F = 1.63$), and income level ($p = 1.97, F = 0.12$). A critical review of the mean scores of the various groups under these socio-demographics suggest that guests had intentions to return to the hotels next time they are within the metropolis.

Difference in Post-experience Behavioural Intentions across Travel characteristics of Hotel Guests

In furtherance, the travel characteristics also had an indirect linkage or relationship with satisfaction of servicescape, for this reason, it became imperative to test the relationship between the two variables, in doing so, the independent samples t-test and ANOVA were employed to examine the variations in guests' satisfaction across their travel characteristics.

A t-test was performed on post-experience behavioural intentions and first time of lodging, and it was observed that first timers (mean = 2.52) did not differ from repeat guests (mean = 2.71) in respect to their post-experience behavioural intentions ($p=0.06$, $t=-1.79$). The mean scores shows that both groups have positive post-experience behavioural intentions, to that effect are willing to visit the hotels again and recommend them to others.

Again, ANOVA was conducted on post-experience behavioural intentions and attraction. Respondents were divided into five groups based on what attracted them to the hotels (Group 1: Price; Group 2: Design; Group 3: Location; Group 4: Hotel image; Group 4: Service). The results indicate that there was no statistically significant difference between post-experience intentions and attractions ($p=0.10$, $F=1.95$). Table 18 revealed that all the five groups agreed to revisit the facilities and recommend as well, meaning what attracted the respondents to the hotel does not influence the post-experience intentions of the guests. This could be because respondents within each of the groups had their own measurement scale to measure the hotels; therefore, the respective pull factor could not be a determinant of their post-experience behavioural intentions.

Hotel type (Group 1: 4-star hotel; Group 2: 3-star hotel; Group 3: 2-star hotel; Group 4: 1-star hotel; Group 4: 1-star hotel; Group 5: Budget hotel) had an impact on guests' post-experience behavioural intentions. It was observed that there was statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level in post-experience behavioural intentions ($p=0.00$, $F=6.18$). The post-hoc test shows that the mean scores for Group 1 ($M=2.73$, $SD=0.68$) and Group 2 ($M=2.81$, $SD=0.56$) was significantly different from Group 5 ($M= 2.24$, $SD=0.38$). Group 3 ($M=2.64$, $SD=0.52$) and Group 4 ($M=2.46$, $SD=0.58$) did not show any significant difference. The results show that while those who stayed in 4 and 3-star hotels agreed to revisit the hotels, their colleagues who stayed in budget hotels were uncertain. Perhaps, those who stayed in 4 and 3-star hotels had better services, which resulted in good experience, therefore, would want to visit the hotels again next time and even recommend to others. Meanwhile their counterparts who stayed in budget hotels were doubtful because the products and services they experienced were bad to the extent that they would not want to do a repeat visit neither are they ready to recommend the hotels to their friends and family.

Table 18: Guests’ Post-Experience Behavioural Intentions by Travel Characteristics

Guests’ Travel characteristics	Mean	F/t-value	p-value
Attraction		1.95	0.10
Price	2.51		
Design	2.54		
Location	2.63		
Hotel image	2.48		
Service	2.76		
Hotel type		6.18	0.00*
4-star hotels	2.73*		
3-star hotels	2.81*		
2-star hotels	2.64		
1-star hotels	2.46		
Budget hotels	2.24*		
First time of lodging		-1.79	0.06
First timers	2.52		
Repeat guests	2.71		
Purpose of visit		4.29	0.00*
Business	2.77*		
Leisure/Vacation	2.68*		
Local event	2.37*		
Conference/Convention	2.22		
VRF	2.51		
Education/Research	2.75		
Payment mode		2.02	0.09
Self	2.58		
Company/Institution	2.78		
Complimentary/Reward	2.54		
Travel party		5.17	0.00*
Business associates/Colleagues	2.35*		
Spouse/partner	2.64		
Children	2.55		
Family/friends	2.35		
Alone	2.57*		

Source: Field survey, Osman (2022). Post-hoc test *

Scale 1-1.49 = Disagree, 1.50-2.49 = Neutral, 2.50-3 = Agree, Sig. level at ≤ 0.05 ,

Again, purpose of visit (Group 1: Business; Group 2: Leisure/Vacation; Group 3: Local Event; Group 4: Conference/Convention; Group 5: VRF; Group 6: Education/Research) had impact on guests’ post-experience behavioural intentions. There were significant disparities across respondents’ purpose of visit with respect to their post-experience behavioural intentions ($p=0.00$; $F=4.29$). The post-hoc analysis indicates that the averages

for Group 1 ($M=2.77$, $SD=0.58$) and Group 2 ($M=2.68$, $SD=0.56$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M= 2.37$, $SD=0.38$). Group 5 ($M=2.51$, $SD=0.42$) and Group 6 ($M=2.75$, $SD=0.38$) did not show any significant difference. The outcome is an indication that while those who visited the hotels purposely for business, leisure or vacation have positive post-experience behavioural intentions, those who visited because of local events were thinking otherwise. This could be that people who travel for business or leisure are well-to-do people, therefore, lodged in upscale hotels, which comes with better experience.

Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference in post-experience behavioural intentions across guests' travel party ($p=0.00$; $F=5.17$). Subjects were grouped into five based on their travel party (Group 1: Business Associates; Group 2: Partner; Group 3: Children; Group 4: Family and friends; Group 5: Alone). What this means is that guests' travel party had an impact on their post-experience behavioural intentions. The post-hoc comparisons using Turkey HSD, revealed that the mean scores for Group 1 ($M=2.35$, $SD=0.46$) was significantly different from Group 5 ($M= 2.57$, $SD=0.38$). Group 2 ($M=2.64$, $SD=0.53$) and Group 3 ($M=2.55$, $SD=0.48$) did not show any significant difference. However, no statistically significant difference was established between guests' mode of payment and post-experience behavioural intentions ($p=0.09$, $F=2.02$), as guests', irrespective of the mode of payment, agreed to visit the hotels again and recommend to others.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations for the study. It comprises the summary of the thesis as well as the major findings, with conclusions drawn based on the results. Recommendations are also made on how to improve the hotel guests' servicescape experience.

Summary

The general objective of this study was to assess guests' perceptions of servicescape and experiences of hotels in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Explore guests' perceptions of servicescape in different hotel categories in Sekondi-Takoradi.
2. Analyze guests' response to servicescape elements of hotels in Sekondi-Takoradi.
3. Examine the post-experience behaviour of hotel guests in Sekondi-Takoradi.

The Servicescape model (Bitner, 1992) and Guest Experience model (Pijls, Schreiber, & van Marle, 2011) were used to guide this study. The conceptual framework identified three main constructs; the hotel environment (perception of servicescape dimensions), experience and post-behavioural intentions. The framework also established the linkages between the three dimensions.

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design and a quantitative method of data collection and analysis. Data was conveniently collected from 206 respondents using self-administered questionnaires. Descriptive statistical

presentations included frequency tables, means, and standard deviations. The data was as well analysed using Exploratory Factor Analysis, ANOVA and independent sample t-test as well as chi-square test of independence to give an understanding of the relationship that exists between certain key variables among respondents' socio-demographics.

Main findings

A majority (54.7%) of the respondents were male and unmarried. It was also evident that a majority were between 25 and 34 years (45.6%). 3-star hotels (34.5%) emerged as the most stayed hotel category among the guests. The majority (41.3%) of the guests visited their respective hotels for business purposes, this was closely followed those who visited for leisure purposes (30.1%). This study revealed that guests' perception on servicescape dimensions shape their experience and/or reaction.

The first objective thus perceptions of servicescape was measured under four (4) main dimensions; ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, signs and symbols, and social elements. The study found that ambient conditions accounted for the highest variance (mean = 4.14), implying the guests were comfortable with external and internal features, colour, lighting, noise levels etc. Furthermore, a statistically significant relationship was established between hotel type and servicescape.

Guests' experience was measured under three dimensions. The emotional response had the highest variance (mean = 4.00) explained, thus guests indicated that the experience in the hotel was pleasurable. Further, a statistically significant relationship was observed between hotel type and guests' experience. Moreover, there were differences in guests' experience

across respondents' backgrounds and travel characteristics. In furtherance, a statistically significant relationship was established between guests' perception of servicescape and experience ($p=0.00$).

As regards post-purchase behavioural intention, it was observed that guests were satisfied with their respective hotel's servicescape, therefore, had positive or strong post-purchase behavioural intentions (mean = 3.91). Again, there was a statistically significant difference between post-purchase behavioural intentions.

Conclusions

Based on the objectives of the study and the ensuing findings presented, the following conclusions are drawn:

It can be concluded that elements of servicescape play a pivotal role in determining guest experience and overall satisfaction of the hotel environment. More importantly, it can be said that respondents mostly consider the ambient conditions of the hotels in their decision making.

Moreover, there is sufficient evidence to draw a conclusion that respondents' reaction to elements of hotel's servicescape are predominantly emotional. In addition, it can be concluded that respondents' perception on these elements shape their experience and/or reactions. By way of conclusion, it is evident that hotel guests intend to revisit the hotels some other time.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are given in light of the primary findings and conclusions reached;

It is therefore imperative for hoteliers, managers as well as frontline staff to take the issue of servicescape seriously, because this is the first thing

that guest experience and creates a first impression that tells the standard of the hotel and what kind of service to expect.

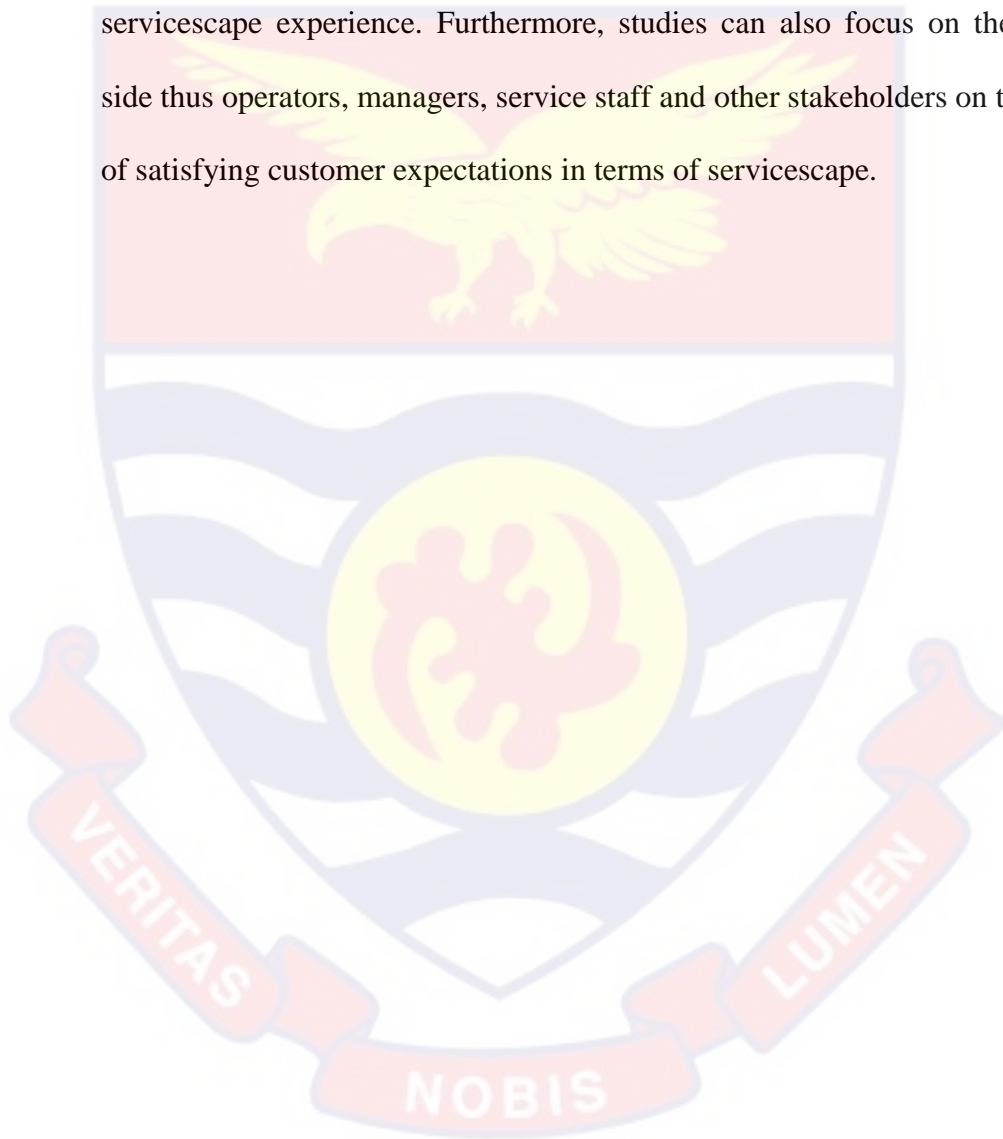
Given the relevance of servicescape to guest stay, operators and managers should emphasize more on creating memorable experiences which will enhance overall guest experience. This is most required in the lower star rated hotels as respondents had issues with the dimensions of the servicescape and hence should be improved upon.

Furthermore, more emphasis should be laid on promoting the cognitive, emotional as well as physiological benefits that guest tends to derive as part of marketing and not focus solely on promoting the hotel brand, their facilities and equipment and the services they provide as usual. This requires appealing to guests' status and lifestyle and providing tailor-made experiences, which all have the potential to address and to trigger the inner desires of current and potential guests. Thus, it should go beyond service offers to a total memorable experience. Moreover, as staff-customer interaction represents an important aspect, indicating the importance of possessing demanding and conceptual skills from every employee that focus essentially on making the most out of each guest transaction. This will enhance positive post-experience behavioural intentions, which is the bedrock of hospitality business success.

Finally, hotel operators should solicit ideas from guest especially on how to enhance their servicescape. The measurement scale for this study can be adopted to gather information on expectation and experience in relation to servicescape. These feedbacks can significantly help generate pool of ideas on interesting ways to improve the physical environment of these facilities.

Suggestions for Further Studies

The study's method of data gathering and analysis was quantitative. A mixed method technique, which combines qualitative and quantitative methods of data collecting and analysis for a more in-depth information from respondents, can be used to produce a more insightful study on the guest servicescape experience. Furthermore, studies can also focus on the supply side thus operators, managers, service staff and other stakeholders on their role of satisfying customer expectations in terms of servicescape.



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APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Survey on Guests' perceptions and experiences of hotel servicescape in

Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis

Questionnaire for Hotel Guests

Dear Sir/Madam,

The aim of this research is to assess guests' perceptions and experiences of hotel servicescape in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. This is solely an academic exercise; your anonymity and confidentiality of your participation and responses are highly assured. Your responses to the under-listed questions are essential for the successful outcome of the study. I would therefore be most grateful if you could take part in this study. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please for any enquiry, kindly contact phone number 0244186897 or barbara.osman@ttu.edu.gh.

Informed Consent

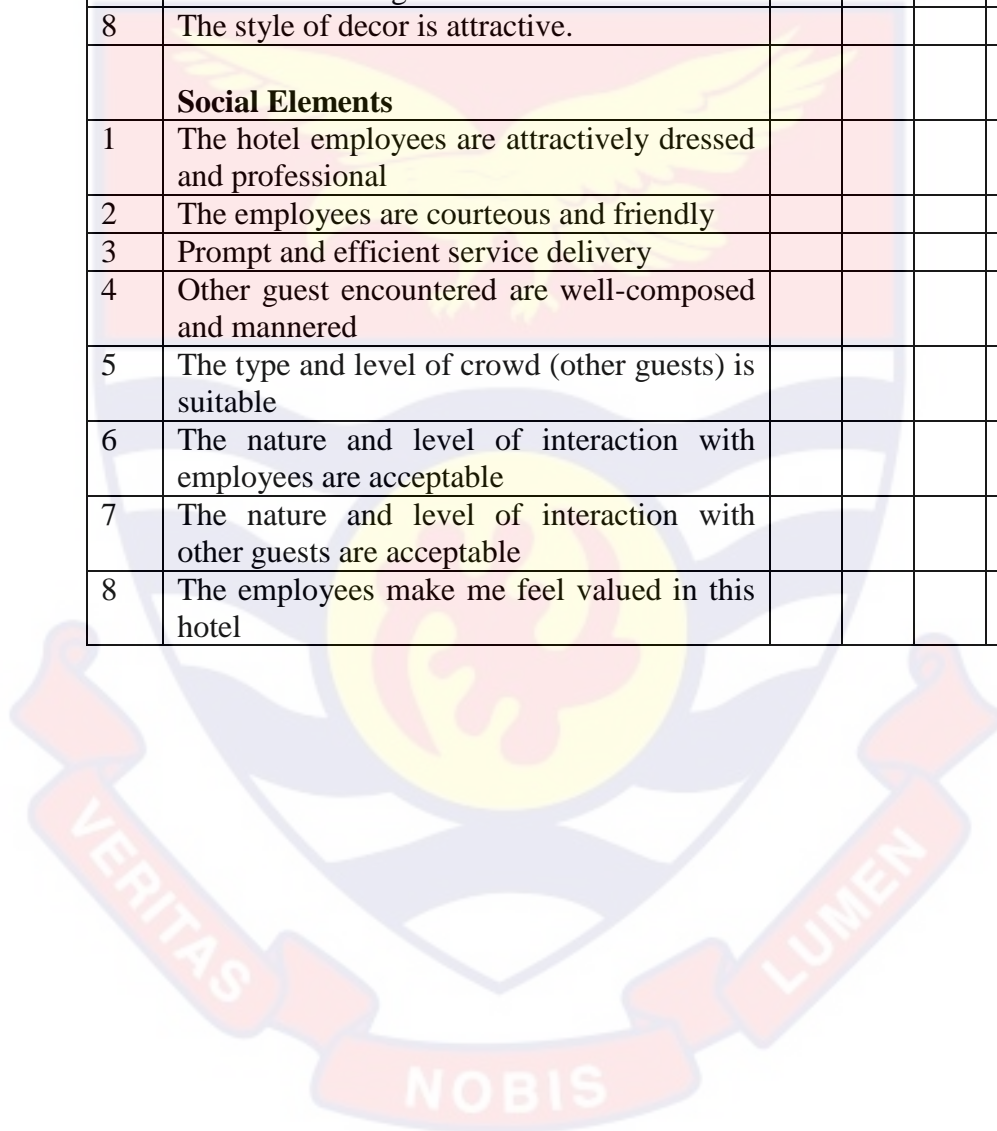
I have read the above introduction to the questionnaire and agree to complete it under the stated conditions. Please tick, if you agree to participate in the study [].

Module I: Guest Perception of the Servicescape (Physical Environment)

Kindly rate your perception of the hotel servicescape. For each statement, please use the following scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree or disagree, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.

No.	Ambient conditions	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The exterior design and finishes are attractive					
2	The hotel interior design and colours schemes are attractive					
3	Wall, floor and ceiling decor is appealing and comfortable					
4	Lighting is adequate and appropriate in their respective areas					
5	Background music/sound is pleasant and enjoyable.					
6	Noise levels are acceptable					
7	The air quality within the hotel is refreshing					
8	The temperature is just right and comfortable					
9	The surroundings are well-kept and clean					
10	The overall ambience is relaxing					
	Spatial Layout and functionality					
1	The layout of this hotel is logical and easily accesible					
2	The hotel has adequate parking space					
3	The interior environment is spacious					
4	The hotel layout makes moving around easy					
5	The furniture use by the hotel is of high quality and appropraite					
6	The furniture and seating arrangement are comfortable					
7	The guestroom layout is comfortable and attractive					
8	The guestroom is well-cleaned and properly supplied with amenities.					
9	The equipment and furnishing in the facilty are modern looking and efficient.					
	Signs, Symbols and Artefacts					
1	There are sufficient visible directional signs (e,g entrance, exit)					
2	It is easy to understand and follow directional signs.					

3	Informational signs are also available with easy interpretations					
4	Ornaments, statues, vases, accessories of the facility are attractive.					
5	Artefacts such as paintings in their respective areas are appropriate and pleasant.					
6	Photoframes are also attractive and well positioned.					
7	The name and logo of this hotel is attractive					
8	The style of decor is attractive.					
	Social Elements					
1	The hotel employees are attractively dressed and professional					
2	The employees are courteous and friendly					
3	Prompt and efficient service delivery					
4	Other guest encountered are well-composed and mannered					
5	The type and level of crowd (other guests) is suitable					
6	The nature and level of interaction with employees are acceptable					
7	The nature and level of interaction with other guests are acceptable					
8	The employees make me feel valued in this hotel					



Module II- Experience/ Response and satisfaction

Kindly rate your experience /response of the hotel servicescape. For each statement, please use the following scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.

No.	Experience	SD	D	N	A	SA
	<i>Cognitive Reactions</i>					
1	I think I enjoyed staying in this hotel					
2	I have a positive impression about this hotel					
3	Comparatively, this is one of the best hotels I have stayed in					
	<i>Emotional Reactions</i>					
4	The experience in the hotel is pleasurable					
5	I am happy about the environment					
6	I feel at ease and relaxed in this hotel					
7	The overall feeling I get from this hotel environment put me in a good mood.					
	<i>Physiological Reactions</i>					
8	The servicescape (physical environment) is comfortable					
9	I would like to stay as long as possible					
10	The overall service setting is enjoyable					
	Satisfaction attributes					
1	My choice of this hotel was a good one					
2	This hotel satisfy my expectation					
3	I had value for money using this facility					
4	I am satisfied with the decision to use this facility					

8. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the servicescape experience.
- a.) Very Satisfied [] b.) Satisfied [] c.) Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied []
- d.) Dissatisfied [] e.) Very Dissatisfied []

Module III: Post-stay Behaviour Intentions

Kindly rate your afteruse (experience) intentions. For each statement, please use the following scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 =Neither agree or disagree 4 = Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.

No.	Post-Purchase Behavioural Intentions	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I would like to return to this hotel on my next visit					
2	This facility would be my first choice the next in future					
3	I would give positive comments about this hotel					
4	I would recommend this hotel to others based on my experience					

10. Please use the space provided to express any other comment, concerns or suggestion related to your experience in this hotel physical environment.

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Module IV: Socio-demographics and travel characteristics of respondents

Please tick [] and provide details where appropriate:

11. Nationality
12. Sex a. Male [] b. Female []
13. Age a. Below 25years [] b. 25-34years [] c. 35-44 years []
d. 45years and above []
14. Religion a. Christian [] b. Muslim [] c. Atheism []
d. Any other (Specify).....
15. Marital Status
a. Single [] b. Married [] c. Divorced []
d. Widowed []
Any other (Specify).....
16. Level of Education
a. Primary/basic [] b. High school/ secondary []
c. College/ University []
d. Post graduate [] e. Any other (Please specify).....
17. Main profession/Occupation.....
18. Monthly income: a. Less than \$500 [] b. \$500-900 []
c. \$1000-1400 [] d. Above \$ 1500 []

TRAVEL CHARACTERISTICS

1. What do you value most in a hotel that makes you choose this over other?
a. Price [] b. Architectural design [] c. location [] d. hotel
image [] e. service []
2. Current hotel type?
a. 4 star [] b. 3 star [] c. 2star [] d. 1 star []

- d. budget [] f. Guest house []
3. Is this the first time lodging in this particular hotel?
a. Yes [] b. No []
4. If “No” how often do you lodge in this hotel?
a. Rarely [] b. sometimes [] c. often []
d. very often []
5. Purpose of visit
a.) Business [] b.) Leisure/Vacation [] c.) Local event
d) conference/convention []
d.) Visiting relatives/friends [] e.) Education/research []
6. This hotel stay is paid by
a. Self [] b. Company /Instituion []
c. Complimentary/ Reward []
d. Any other, please specify.....
7. Who is in your travel party? (tick as many as apply)
a.) Business associates/colleagues [] b.) Spouse/Partner []
b.) Children [] c.) Family/friends [] d.) Alone [] e.)
Others []
9. Number of nights staying in this hotel.....