

**EFFECT OF DINING EXPERIENCE ON REVISIT INTENTION TO EXCLUSIVE BARS: MEDIATING ROLE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

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**Abstract**

The study investigated the effect of factors influencing dining experience on customers' revisit intention to bars in the hospitality industry with customer satisfaction as a mediator in the garden city of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. A well structured questionnaire containing 18 items, was used to elicit data from 100 customers who patronise exclusive bars in the high brow Government Reserve Area (GRA) of Port Harcourt. The data gathered was utilised to validate the model developed for the study empirically through statistical tests with the help of SPSS. The inferential statistical analysis revealed that revisit intention to the bars is driven by bar environment, food quality and service quality. The mediating role of customer satisfaction also exists significantly between dining experience and revisit intention. The authors recommend that investors operating bars in the hospitality industry should concentrate on developing cosy bar environment, food quality and service quality. This will enhance customer satisfaction which is capable of promoting customers' revisit intentions, and improve the overall firm performance for the exclusive bars.

**Keywords:** Bar Environment, Food Quality, Service Quality, Revisit Intention

**1. Introduction**

The essential feature of the tourism industry is "intensive competitiveness among tourism destinations at the global level" (Ekeke & Olori, 2020, p.182) and among the tourism service providers offering the same services at the destinations. This high degree of competitiveness engenders the battle for the mind of the customers, for which the marketing response of the tourism service organizations is the quest for service differentiation, adoption of positioning strategies and other competitive strategies.

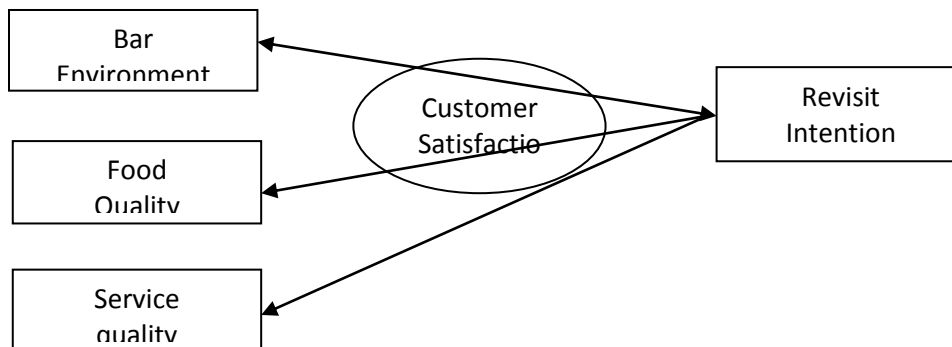
The crafting of marketing strategies by tourism and hospitality service organisations depends on the nature of tourism and hospitality service organisations and the market segment being targeted. For example, fast food restaurants such as exclusive bars where

tourists and visitors have their meals and drinks at destinations are expected to provide their customers with memorable dining experiences in order to enhance the level of customer satisfaction and other customer behavioural intentions such as revisit intention (Ali, & Amin, 2014; Nwaokah & Nne, 2018; Benerjeen & Singania, 2018, Diab, Mohammed, Mansour & Saad, 2016).

It is therefore the marketing task of owners/managers of exclusive bars to understand factors capable of enhancing the dining experience of its target markets with a view to providing same in order to build its brand positioning strategies and deliver memorable experiential value. It is on the basis of this understanding that, Goyal and Singh (2007) categorized fast food restaurants' attributes into six major attribute groups that would affect the intention to revisit fast food restaurant. It includes the variety of food, food taste and quality, ambiance and hygiene, service speed, price and location provided by the restaurant.

Stevens, Knutson, and Patton, (1995) proposed the DINESERV factors as the attributes of fast food restaurants that are capable of enhancing customers' behavioural intentions. The factors include food quality, atmospherics, service quality, convenience, and price and value. The factors capable of influencing consumers dining experience and how they affect consumer behavioural intentions have been studied in various contexts (Brady & Cronin 2001; Chebat and Michon, 2003; Inocencioa, Madambab, Mojicac, & Zapata, Jr 2016)). This current study attempts to investigate the effect of factors influencing dining experience on customers' revisit intention, with customer satisfaction serving as the mediating variable in the context of exclusive bars in Port Harcourt, River State, Nigeria.

### Conceptual Review and Research Model



**Figure 1: Dining Experiential Value Factors and Customers' Revisit Intention Model**

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The research model demonstrates that bar environment, food quality and service quality are the three dimensions used in investigating the effect of dining experience factors on revisit intention of exclusive bars in Port Harcourt. In the empirical study, customer satisfaction is acting as the mediating variable.

### **Dining Experience Factors**

The DINESERV factors including food quality, atmosphere, service quality, convenience, and price and value (Stevens, Knutson, et al, 1995) have been confirmed in several empirical studies to affect customer satisfaction in dining facilities across the world. The factors have been found to influence customer satisfaction, return intention and word-of-mouth endorsement positively. This current study investigates the effect of three of the factors (bar environment, food quality and service quality) on customer patronage in exclusive bars in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Bar Environment:** Physical environment is described by Bitner (1992, p.45) as “servicecapes” where service is delivered and refers to “... all of the objective physical factors that can be controlled by the firm to enhance (or con-strain) employee and customer actions”. The effects of the physical environment on customers in a service context is considered very critical as an antecedent of consumer satisfaction and other consumer behavioural intentions. Bitner (1992 p.58) defined “servicescape” as a man-made environment, while Amould, Price and Tierney (1998 p. 90) describe a physical environment as a conscious design of a place. In the context of a restaurant, Ryu and Jang (2008) used "Dinescape" for the physical environment of upscale restaurants. Dinescape has six dimensions: facility aesthetics (decor, architectural design or interior design. Interior design includes colour, furniture, wall decoration, painting, table, flower and design, (Ryu & Jang, 2008a, p.15), ambiance(music, odour and temperature, (Ryu & Jang, 2008b, p.66), lighting(), layout (placement of machinery, materials and furniture in an environment, (Ryu and Jang, 2008a)., table setting (table design) and staff (appearance, number, costume of the employees (Ryu & Jang, 2008b, p. 1156). The foregoing explain the need for restaurant and bar owners/managers to make deliberate effort at providing an environment that is inviting and suitable for the dining experience of their target market.

**Food Quality:** Jeong and Seo, (2013) describes food as one of the most important elements that defines quality life. Due to its importance it is used as a yardstick to measure or ascertain a restaurant’s quality. There seems to be no consensus on the attributes of food quality which makes it possible for all food attributes to be lumped together in one variable that is described as food quality (Sulek & Hensley, 2004). In extant literature, the following is seen as attributes of food quality: presentation of food in attractive packaging or informative labelling; if the

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ingredients are in a complete mixture of necessary raw materials; contains fresh ingredients; meals with consistent tastes, consistent portions, and is delivered at consistent temperatures. Food quality is noted in extant literature as a core attribute that customers consider when deciding on a restaurant (Sulet & Hensley, 2004; Namkung & Jang, 2007).

**Service Quality:** Stephens and Juran, (2004) views quality as fitness for use, while Zeithaml and Bitner, (1996) defined service quality as the delivery of excellent or superior service relative to customer expectation. However, it is important to note that due to the intangible nature of services, both service providers and consumers find it difficult to measure service quality. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) developed SERVQUAL as a model for measuring service quality. Researchers continue to use the model for empirical studies despite criticisms. It is based on high level of criticisms that Stevens, et al, (1995) developed a 29–item scale named Dineserv. The Dineserv model was conceptualized as a dedicated model to measure service quality in restaurants. Dineserv is made up of five dimensions as that of Servqual. Perhaps, it is the absence of restaurant services in the conceptualisation of Parasuraman, et al (1998) that defines one of the shortcomings of SERVQUAL. Studies such as, Vanniarajan, (2009) Kim, Joung, Yuan, Wu, & Chen, (2009) and Kim, McCahon, & Miller, (2003) have used Dineserv model to measure service quality.

#### **Revisit Intentions**

Young, Clark, and McIntyre (2007, p.92) defined return patronage intention as “the likelihood that a current customer of a restaurant expects to return in the future for a dining experience”. It is crucial for bars to ensure that customers are satisfied at all times because it is only satisfied customers that may be willing to go back to a service brand for patronage. It is important that restaurant managers and their owners enhance the level of customer satisfaction of their customers in order to ensure a return visit (Darley, Luethge, & Thatte, 2008).

Extant literatures suggest that customers who return for patronage are truly satisfied customers who tend to spend more, spread positive word of mouth, and remain loyal instead of switching to a competitor (Mohsan, Nawaz, Khan, Shaukat, & Aslam, 2011). However, Fowler (2003) argues that it is possible for organisations to compromise customers’ return behaviour which is difficult to restore if lost. Previous empirical studies (Otengei, Changha, Kasekende, & Ntayi, 2014; Josiam, 2014; Ali, & Amin, 2014; Kim, Ng, & Kim, 2009) have revealed that dining factors which enhance customer satisfaction and return patronage intentions include physical environment, service quality, and food quality .

### **Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is defined by Tse and Wilton (1988, p. 204) as “consumer’s response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectation and the actual performance of the product as perceived after its consumption”. Cronin and Taylor (1992) defined the concept as a judgment which is made by consumers on the basis of a specific service encounter. As noted by Bitner and Hubbert (1994), two ways of perceiving customer satisfaction are service-encounter and overall satisfaction. Service-encounter satisfaction occurs when consumers are satisfied with a specific service encounter while overall satisfaction is an evaluation based on multiple encounters.

Satisfaction connotes customers’ attitudes that occur after comparing the quality of service that they received with their expectations. The implication is that consumers’ level of satisfaction depends on the magnitude of the difference between the experienced satisfaction and the expected one. Service quality, food quality and bar environment has been food to enhance the level of customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry(Ladhari, 2009; Hui, Dube, & Chebat., 1997; Stevens, et al, 1995; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994, Brady and Cronin, 2001)

### **Empirical Review and Hypotheses Development**

#### **Bar environment and revisit intention**

In the context of the full service restaurants in Uganda, Otengei, et al, (2014) examined the key determinants brand loyalty. The findings of the quantitative research showed that dining experience (physical restaurant environment, food quality, service quality)and restaurant image were significant predictors of brand loyalty in full service restaurants in Uganda, while customer satisfaction was not a significant predictor of guest loyalty. Several other empirical studies (Ali, & Amin, 2014; Namkung & Jang, 2008; Soriano, 2002; Chow, Lau, Lo, Sha, & Yun, 2007;) in different market contexts confirmed the fact that bar or restaurant environment had significant positive effect on customers’ behavioural intentions such as customer satisfaction and revisit intention. We can thus hypothesize that;

**H1: Bar environment significantly affects customers’ revisit intention to exclusive bars in Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

#### **Food quality and revisit intention**

Understanding what constitute food quality for a particular type of food in hospitality marketing is very important because it is critical to satisfying bar customers and the possibility of their returning to the same bar for re-patronage. Several empirical studies

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in different market contexts tends to confirm the fact that, food quality has positive effect on consumer behavioural intentions.

In Nigeria, Nwaokah and Nne (2018) investigated the effect of food quality on patronage in the context of Quick-Service Restaurants in Port -Harcourt. The findings of the analysis showed that a significant relationship exist between food quality and patronage. In South Kolkata, Banerjeen and Singhania(2018) examined the effect of food quality, service quality, pricing, restaurant environment on customer satisfaction and how customer satisfaction influences revisit intentions and word of mouth. All the hypotheses were supported.

Based on the foregoing, we can hypothesize that;

**H2: Food quality significantly affects customers’ revisit intention to exclusive bars in Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

**Service quality and revisit intention**

In the United States of America (USA), Josiam (2014) investigated the effect of restaurant attributes in a student run restaurant. The finding showed that six restaurant attributes that influence repeat purchase by customers include; food quality, ambience, cleanliness, consistency, menu variety and an effective price-value relationship. The authors are of the view that when entrepreneurs/managers of restaurants are able to enhance these attributes, the level of customer loyalty and retention will be raised.

Diab, Mohammed, Mansour, Saad, (2016) adapted the Dineserv model to investigate key dimensions of service quality and its effect on consumers’ satisfaction and loyalty within the context of restaurant business in Sudan. The findings revealed that empathy, assurance, tangibility, and reliability were the most significant of the dimensions that had positive influence on customer satisfaction. On the other hand, assurance, empathy, and tangibility were the dimensions with the most significant and positive influence on customers’ loyalty.

Other previous studies that investigated the effect of service quality on customers’ behavioural intentions in various market contexts and locations in the hospitality sector are many. Few examples include: service quality on customer loyalty in restaurant chains at Jaipur, Rajasthan (Vijayvargy, 2014)

Service quality in restaurant customers in New Delhi (Tripathi & Dave (2014).

Chou, Wu, and Huang (as cited in Diab, Mohammed, Mansour, & Saad, 2016, p.156) suggest “that service quality is perceived as the most important factor and managers of

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restaurants should further understand customer behaviour to improve service quality in order to create value and satisfy customers”.

From the foregoing, we therefore hypothesize that;

**H3: Service quality significantly affects customers’ revisit intention to exclusive bars in Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

**Mediating role of Customer Satisfaction**

Within the context of the highly competitive sector of the restaurant sector of the hospitality industry in the Philippines, Inocencio, et al (2016) investigated the antecedents of customer satisfaction. Utilizing resto-bars as the organisational scope, this study focused on evaluating the level of customer satisfaction with a view to determining which dining attributes affect customer satisfaction. The findings showed that, customer satisfaction ratings were highest for variety of menu , food presentation and freshness and temperature of food items. For food and beverage offerings, the attributes that were found to be significant determinants of customer satisfaction were; value for money and service while location and ambience were found to affect customer satisfaction significantly. On the other hand, customer satisfaction ratings were quite low for other factors such as coldness of beverages, food palatability, waiting time, appropriateness of price of food and beverage offerings and promotional discounts.

Stevens, et al, (1995) argues that in spite of the fact that there is no guarantee that satisfied customers will revisit the restaurant, yet experience proved that 90 per cent of the dissatisfied customers will not revisit the restaurant. It is therefore very crucial for service brands to ensure that their customers are satisfied at all times. In services marketing, customer satisfaction is of great interest because satisfaction links purchase/consumption to post-purchase behaviours such as attitude change, repeat purchase, positive word-of-mouth, and loyalty (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996; Stevens, et al, 1995); Oliver, 1994; Oliver, 1997)..

From the discussion so far, we can hypothesize that;

**H4: Customer Satisfaction mediates the causal effect of dining experience factors on customers’ revisit intention significantly. Research Methodology**

**Research design:** This empirical study adopted descriptive research design. The choice of the survey method is due to the fact that the research requires collection of data that deal with attitude, preference, behaviour and perception of customers of exclusive bars with a focus on the dining factors that influence revisit intention to the bars for continuous patronage. The fact that the research design allows the researcher to hypothesise several variables in measurable relationships also gives credence to its choice.



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**Sample and data collection:** The target population for study were current customers of the exclusive bars who were found dining at the exclusive bars during the period of questionnaire administration. Since the total population was unknown, Freund and William's formula for sample size determination from unknown population was used to determine the sample size. This resulted in a sample size of 150. A well-structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from the respondents. The sampling method adopted was the judgmental sampling technique. Out of a total of 150 questionnaires distributed, 100 were retrieved and they all proved useable and were subjected to data analysis.

**Demographic Profile of Respondents:** The profile analysis of the respondents showed that 62 respondents (62%) were male while 38 respondents (38%) were female. Regarding age brackets, 10 respondents (10%), were less than 20 years, 42 respondents (42%) were within 20–29 years, 35 respondents (35%) were within 30–39 years while 13 respondents (13%) were greater than 40 years. This information shows that majority of the respondents were within the ages of 20 – 29 years.

Data on the respondents' level of education showed that there was one customer without formal education, while only one customer (1%) had the first school leaving certificate (FSLC); those with senior secondary school certificate (SSCE/GCE) were 22 (22%). The rest were represented as follows: Higher National Diploma and Bachelor degree (HND/B.SC) 48 (48%), MA/MSC/MBA (23) (23%) and Ph.D (6) (6%). From the information it shows that respondents with HND/B.SC are of the majority.

The analysis of the occupational status of respondents revealed the following: 36 respondents (36%) were workers, 46(46%) were businessmen/women while 18 respondents (18%) were Students. This information implies that majority of the respondents were businessmen/women.

### **Measurement Instrument and Questionnaire design**

The major instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. Extant literature provided the sources of items used. However, they were readjusted in order to conform with the current study's research purpose and context. The two dimensions of factors determining dining experience of exclusive customers of bars were measured using items adapted from sources as follows; bar environment (Ryu , Lee & Kim, 2012; Han & Ryu (2009 ) food quality (Ryu, Lee & Kim 2012; Namkung & Jang, 2007) and service quality (Ryu , Lee & Kim, 2012, Liu and Jang (2009 ). The three items used for customer satisfaction were adapted from Ryu , Lee and Kim, 2012 and Lim (2010), while items for revisit intention were adapted from Ryu , Lee and Kim, (2012), Lim (2010) and Namkung and Jung (2007). All the measurement items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored by: Strongly Disagree [SD](1). Disagree [D](2),



Agree [A](3), Agree fairly strongly(4) and Strongly Agree [SA](5) to express the degree of agreement with the items or otherwise.

## Research Results

### Reliability Analysis

**Table 1 Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.989	.991	18

The reliability of the 14-item research instrument was ascertained with Cronbach Alpha. The value of the Cronbach Alpha is .991 as shown in Table 1. This value is above the threshold value of .7 as suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). This shows that the measuring instrument is internally consistent and therefore helpful and applicable in measuring opinions of customers of exclusive bars in the context of the determinant of the experiential value of customers and how it affects their intention to revisit the bars.

### Discriminant Validity

**Table 2 Correlation Matrix**

	BAE	FOQ	SRQ	CUS	RVI
BAE	<b>1.000</b>	.923	.859	.895	.908
FOQ	.923	<b>1.000</b>	.852	.869	.891
SRQ	.859	.852	<b>1.000</b>	.802	.834
CUS	.895	.869	.802	<b>1.000</b>	.951
RVI	.908	.891	.834	.951	<b>1.000</b>

The correlation matrix shown in Table 2 above was used to determine the discriminant validity of the study instrument. Hair Jr, Black, Babin, and Anderson, (2010, p.126) defined discriminant validity as the “the degree to which two conceptually similar concepts are distinct”. Fornell and Larcker (1981) is of the view that the discriminant

validity occurs if the diagonal elements are higher than all the off-diagonal elements in their columns and rows. This requirement is ascertained in Table 2, thus confirming the discriminant validity.

### Sampling Adequacy

**Table 3 KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.847
Approx. Chi-Square		665.455
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) performed on 18 exploratory items of determinants of dining experience and revisit intention as specified in the conceptual model in Figure 1 for the conduct of the KMO and Bartlett's Test is shown in Table 3. Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant at  $p<.000$  and KMO measure of sampling adequacy is .847 which is far greater than 0.5 that has been suggested as a minimum level by Kasser (as cited in Wong & Musa 2010, p. 3417).

### Data Analyses

To ascertain the effect of the study dimensions on exclusive bar customers' revisit intention, the hypothesized relationships were subjected to statistical analysis using Multiple regression analysis.

Table 4 Multiple Regression analysis showing the effect of bar environment, food quality and service quality on customers' revisit intention.

**Table 4 Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.897 <sup>a</sup>	.804	.798	.23438

a. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality, Bar Environment, Food Quality

**Table 5 ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.407	3	7.136	129.897	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	5.219	95	.055		

Total	26.626	98			
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a. Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality, Bar Environment, Food Quality

**Table 6 Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.860	.287		2.995	.004
1 Bar Environment	.365	.081	.318	4.503	.000
1 Food Quality	.312	.061	.486	5.126	.000
1 Service Quality	.145	.071	.166	2.044	.044

a. Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention

### Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5 and 6 shows the multiple regression analysis which shows that un-standardized beta ( $\beta$ ) of bar environment, food quality and service quality are: ( $\beta = 0.365$ ), ( $\beta = 0.312$ ) and ( $\beta = 0.145$ ) respectively, while value of R square = 0.804,  $F = 128.897$  &  $p = .000 < 0.05$ . This specifies that bar environment, food quality and service quality explains 80.4% variation in revisit intention to exclusive bars, at the GRA in the Garden City of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

The result of the regression analysis shows that the three marketing attributes of the exclusive bars in influencing their customers' behavioural intentions made significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable (see Table 5 and 6). The three significant factors are: bar environment, ( $\beta = 0.365$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) food quality ( $\beta = 0.312$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) and service quality ( $\beta = 0.145$ ,  $p = 0.044 < 0.05$ ) considering their respective degree of contribution.

This implies that all the variables made significant unique contribution to the equation.

Therefore the model can be written as:

$$\text{Customers Revisit Intention} = 0.365(\text{BE}) + 0.312(\text{FQ}) + .145(\text{SQ}) - .350$$

The model suggest that by associating any of the three marketing attributes of an exclusive bar brand, the empirical model can increase the level of customers' intention to revisit the bar when other things remain constant. Accordingly therefore, changes in bar environment of each exclusive bar brand can have the biggest influence on level of customers intention to revisit the bar for patronage as its beta co-efficient ( $\beta = 0.365$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ) is the highest and significant, followed by food quality ( $\beta = 0.312$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ) and service quality  $\beta = (0.145$ ,  $p=0.044 < 0.05)$ .

### Testing of hypotheses 1, 2 and 3

#### Decision Rule

If  $PV < 0.05$  = Hypothesis is supported

$PV > 0.05$  = Hypothesis is not supported

**Hypothesis one:** The outcome of analysis show that bar environment had significant effect on customers' revisit intentions to the bars ( $\beta = 0.365$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ).

**Hypothesis two:** The result of analysis show that food quality had significant effect on customers' revisit intentions to the bars ( $\beta = 0.312$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ).

**Hypothesis three:** The result of analysis show that service quality had significant effect on customers' revisit intentions to the bars ( $\beta = 0.145$ ,  $p=0.044 < 0.05$ ).

#### Hypothesis four

The results showed that the three hypotheses were all supported.

**Table 7 Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.860	.243		3.541	.001

Bar Environment	.056	.069	.044	.814	.418
Food Quality	.400	.051	.565	7.771	.000
Service Quality	.368	.060	.381	6.129	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

**Table 8 Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.470	.284		1.656	.101
1 Bar Environment	.340	.076	.296	4.499	.000
Food Quality	.130	.072	.203	1.805	.074
Service Quality	-.022	.078	-.025	-.282	.779
Customer Satisfaction	.454	.113	.500	4.030	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention

From table 7, the regression coefficient  $a = .86$  (under the column labelled “B”), while the standard error for the regression coefficient  $s_a = .24$ . From Table 8, the second regression coefficient table,  $b = .45$  while  $s_b = .11$ . The substitution of these values into the table to conduct the Sobel test for mediation, leads to the result as presented in Table 9. As shown in Table 9, the test statistic for the Sobel test is 2.695 with an associated  $p$ -value = 0.007. The fact that the  $p$ -value is  $< 0.05$  is an indication that the association between the independent variables (dinning factors) and the dependent variable (revisit intention) is reduced significantly by the inclusion of the mediating variable (customer satisfaction) in the model. This shows that there is a clear evidence of mediation. Accordingly, we conclude that hypothesis 3 is supported

From the foregoing, all the hypotheses (H1, H2, H3 and H4) were supported.

### Discussion of Results

The results shown in Table 6, provide support for the three hypotheses (H1, H2 & H3) conceived for the study. **Hypothesis 1** showed a significant effect of bar environment on customers’ revisit intentions to the bars ( $\beta = 0.365$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, H1 is supported. This finding is consistent with the findings of Chen and Hsieh (2011).

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**Hypothesis 2** posited a significant effect of food quality on customers' revisit intentions to the bars. With  $\beta = 0.312$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ , the effect is significant. This result is consistent with the prediction of H2 and is therefore supported. Thus, a higher level of food quality provided by bars is associated with a high propensity by customers to revisit the bars for patronage.

This finding is consistent with the finding of Nwaokah and Nne (2018) and Mattila (2001).

**Hypothesis 3** posited a significant effect of service quality on customers' revisit intentions to the bars. With  $\beta = 0.145$ ,  $p=0.044 < 0.05$ , the effect is significant. This result is consistent with the prediction of H3 and is therefore supported. Thus, a higher level of service quality provided by bars is associated with a high propensity by customers to revisit the bars for patronage. This finding is consistent with the finding of Josiam (2004), Vijayvargy (2014); Tripathi and Dave (2014) and Ramseook-Munhurrin (2012).

**Hypothesis 4:** The result of the Sobel test shows that the test statistic is 2.695 while the  $p$ -value is  $0.007 < 0.05$  which means that the association between bar environment, food quality and service quality is reduced significantly because the observed  $p$ -value falls below the established alpha value of .05. The findings of this study show that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between dining experience determinants and customers' revisit intention to bars indirectly through the mechanism and framework of customer satisfaction. This finding is inconsistent with Rather and Sharma (2017)

## Conclusion

The empirical study examined the effect of factors shaping the dining experience of customers at exclusive bars in the hospitality segment of the tourism market in the Garden City of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria with customer satisfaction mediating the outcome of the intervention. To test the hypotheses, data were collected from current customers of the exclusive bars who were patronising the bars at the time of questionnaire administration at the new Government Reserved Area in the Garden City of Port Harcourt. The empirical results supported all the posited research hypotheses significantly.

An important finding of the study is the fact that bar environment has stronger effect on customers' intention to revisit the exclusive bars ( $\beta = 0.365$ ) than food quality ( $\beta = 0.312$ ) and service quality ( $\beta = 0.145$ ). The reason is not far-fetched. This is because for an exclusive bar operating in a GRA, customers expect a more relaxed and well conducive bar atmosphere to enhance their dining experience.

In conclusion therefore, the outcome of the research indicates that bar environment, food quality and service quality constitute important determinants of customers' behavioural intentions such as revisiting the exclusive bars in an exclusive area of the city. It is very important for entrepreneurs desiring to operate in the hospitality industry to among other things first determine the factors that appear attractive to their identified target market and ensure they are provided. The findings of this empirical study have purposeful and fruitful implications to both academicians and entrepreneurs(the practitioners).

### **Study Implications**

The effect of the principal factors determining revisit intention in the bar sector of the hospitality industry is a novel contribution in the context of Nigeria. Entrepreneurs operating bars in the hospitality industry should utilise their scarce resources on developing capabilities on cosy bar environment, food quality and service quality. This will enhance customer satisfaction which is capable of promoting customers' revisit intentions. Efforts made in promoting these bar brand attributes will engender competitive advantage and improve the overall firm performance for the exclusive bars.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The fact that the sample unit for this study was limited to Nigerians who dined out at the exclusive bars may hinder the quest to generalize the research findings. Further research should involve tourists who visit Rivers State from foreign countries.

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Appendix

Table 9 Sobel test

Input:		Test statistic:	Std. Error:	<i>p</i> -value:
<i>a</i>	.86	Sobel test: 2.695	0.143	0.007
<i>b</i>	.45	Aroian test: 2.651	0.146	0.008
<i>s<sub>a</sub></i>	.24	Goodman test: 2.742	0.141	0.006
<i>s<sub>b</sub></i>	.11			