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To Establish the Determinants of the Types of Restaurants Found within Eldoret Town

By

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**TO ESTABLISH THE DETERMINANTS OF THE TYPES OF RESTAURANTS
FOUND WITHIN ELDORET TOWN**

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BHM/26/09

A Senior Project Research presented to Moi University, School of Tourism, Hospitality and Events Management, Department of Hotel and Hospitality Management in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Hotel and Hospitality Management.

March, 2013

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project is my original work and has, to the best of my knowledge, never been submitted for examination in any other university or institution. All borrowed pieces of work from other authors to back up my work have been recognized in the references.

Signature.....

Date.....

Lorna Aberi
BHM/26/09

Declaration by Supervisor

I hereby certify that this senior project report has been submitted for review with my approval as university supervisor.

Signature.....

Date.....

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DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to my family members and my supervisor for the tireless support all through this period. Thank you for your support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study would not have been through without the guidance of the almighty God and I would like to thank Him for His grace. My special thanks goes to Dr. I. C. Mapelu and the department of Hotel and Hospitality Management, Moi University. My gratitude also goes to the employees of the selected restaurants within Eldoret town for their assistance in the collection of data. Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed in one way or another in enabling me to carry out and write this research project.

ABSTRACT

This research project looks to establish the determinants of the types of restaurants found within Eldoret town. Customers evaluate various restaurant attributes like theme & décor, types of menus and atmosphere before making their decisions. In this regard, the attributes are used to classify restaurants into various categories including fast foods, casual dining, pubs, ethnic restaurants, fine dining, hotel restaurants, coffee houses and specialty restaurants. The study traces the determinants of the types of restaurants through studying the relevant literature and by gauging opinions of management personnel in selected restaurants. Based on the introductory presentation of the relationship between attributes of restaurant and classifications into restaurant types, the aspects involved are conceptualized in the conceptual framework. Research extracts information from both primary and secondary data. Primary Data was collected using questionnaires that were administered to restaurant managers, their assistants, supervisors and other employees. Secondary data was obtained from the World Wide Web and hospitality related books. The survey adopted random sampling in the selection of hotels and purposive sampling in the distribution of questionnaires. 70 questionnaires were used to carry out the study. Results of the study were expected to reveal that restaurant attributes, regardless of the extent of use, are correlated to determining the types of restaurants. A total of 60 questionnaires were duly filled and returned. Data was analyzed by use of Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and presented in form of charts and tables. In chapter five, results from this research are discussed in depth and conclusions drawn. In conclusion, restaurant attributes determine the types of restaurants found within Eldoret town for customers ranging from young people, tourists and sports persons to families. Finally, suggestions are put forward on how hospitality operators can use the restaurant attributes to identify the types of restaurants and thus attract suitable customers. On the other hand, customers acquire insight on factors that enhance their choice of a restaurant.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

A **restaurant** is an establishment that prepares and serves food and drinks to customers in return for money. The meals are generally served are eaten at the premises or taken away for later consumption

Determinants are influencing factors, circumstances or elements. In this study it refers to factors that influence the types of restaurants.

Establish: In the context of our research, to establish is to prove the validity or truth behind the determinants of the type of restaurants within Eldoret town.

ET Eldoret town

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 OVERVIEW

This chapter gives an introduction on the topic of research, it looks at the statement of the problem, the objectives which the research wants to achieve and justifies why the research is important.

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Historically, a restaurant referred only to places that provided tables where one sat down to eat the meal, typically served by a waiter. In British English, the term restaurant almost always means an eating establishment with table service (Wikipedia, 2010).

As the number of meals eaten outside the home continues to increase, the restaurant industry is one of the fast-growing service industries. With growing competitiveness in the restaurant industry and the similarity of products or services offered by restaurants, it has become increasingly important that restaurants determine and understand how customers choose between restaurants. Although a variety of restaurant choice criteria were identified, previous studies have not considered how the selection criteria differ according to the restaurant types Jang and Namkung (2009).

Restaurant type may have significant impact on customers' pre-purchase beliefs and attitude as well as post-purchase evaluations. Since customers hold different expectations and perceptions of their different dining experiences in a different restaurant type (Kim & Moon, 2009), they may also have different selection criteria when they decide where to dine-out according to the restaurant type.

Restaurant attributes form the basis for categorization into the different types of restaurants established. Restaurant patrons often rely on tangible clues such as restaurant facilities, décor, and atmosphere to guide them in forming expectations about the restaurants (Bitner, 1990; Wall & Berry, 2007). According to Monteiro (2000), understanding the process of consumers' purchase behavior helps restaurant managers identify the factors that contribute to their behavior in each stage.

According to Steadman (1991), people do not go to restaurants just to be fed; they can order take out or have food delivered, if they do not want to cook. Restaurant customers measure value by considering what they will gain and what they will sacrifice by patronizing a given restaurant (Oh, 2000). Therefore, the aspect of choice pushes service providers in hotels to determine how this choice is made. Lewis (1981) investigated on consumers' restaurant selection behavior and concluded that determinant factors differed by the type of restaurant.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Hotel customers frequently use many factors such menu offered, price of services, location and the type of service of the restaurant to decide restaurant to dine from. Other researchers have investigated on the various types of restaurants globally but there are still many questions that are unanswered.

What are the types of restaurants available in Eldoret? Does restaurants type determine the type of clientele they attract in Eldoret? In our view restaurant type have an impact on the nature of client they attract. We therefore realize the need investigate, know and document of there is a truly mutual relationship between the restaurant type and the nature of client they attract.

From this research Managers and clients can know the types of restaurants in Eldoret and their impact on the nature of clients attracted. Also new clients in Eldoret can know which restaurant suits them most.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Based on the problem stated, the purpose of this study is to provide hotel managers and practitioners with insight of how to restaurant type affects customers' purchase decisions.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Main objective

To establish the choice determinants of the type of restaurants found within Eldoret town

1.4.2 Specific objectives

- (i) To explore restaurant attributes used to differentiate the type of restaurants in ET
- (ii) To find out the type of clientele in selected restaurants in ET
- (iii) To determine the factors that influence customers choice of restaurant type in ET

(iv) To determine the seat coverage of the selected restaurants in ET

1.4.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- (i) What are the attributes used to differentiate the type of restaurants in Eldoret town?
- (ii) What are the types of clientele in selected restaurants in Eldoret town?
- (iii) What are the factors that influence customers' choice of restaurant type in Eldoret town?
- (iv) What is the seat coverage of the selected restaurants in Eldoret town?

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Knowledge of the restaurant types available in Eldoret and their impact on the nature of clients they attract can be very vital information to both restaurant managers and restaurant clients. This information can help managers to be distinct in their services they offer and know what the clients use to decide on the restaurant type. This information can also help clients to know which restaurant suits their needs most and to know on the available restaurants in Eldoret. The findings of this research will help in clearly indicating the types of restaurants available in Eldoret and their impacts on the nature of client they attract.

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

The study will be based on the assumption that respondents will give honest responses on the subject. The study will also assume that the sample under study is the true representation of the entire population and that the type of restaurant has an impact on the customers who visit them.

HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1 (H1) Consumer's choice of trade-off between quality and price in their restaurant choice decision is determined by the level of the disposable income of the consumers.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) When there is no discrimination in the perceived quality of products and in the services offered by restaurants, consumers prefer low-priced restaurants.

Hypothesis 3 (H3) Given that there exists parity in price for products or services offered by restaurants, consumers prefer restaurants of better quality of products and services.

Hypothesis 4 (H4) Restaurants that offer foods at low price are preferred over those that do not offer food at low price if customers are not prompted consider other attributes of restaurants

Hypothesis 5 (H5) Restaurants having friendly restaurant personnel/staff are preferred by consumers than those restaurants whose staff are not friendly

Hypothesis 6 (H6) Restaurants that provide various range of or type of foods and services are preferred over those restaurants that do not provide variety ranges of products and services

Hypothesis 7 (H7) Restaurants that provide quick table service are preferred by customers over those restaurants that do not provide quick table services

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research is intended to be carried out in Eldoret town to establish the determinants of types of restaurants found within the town.

Since Eldoret is a cosmopolitan town, it serves as an administrative and agricultural center in Uasin Gishu district. Since the region has several hotels and accommodation facilities that receive several guests especially corporate and business people, it will serve well as a research region.

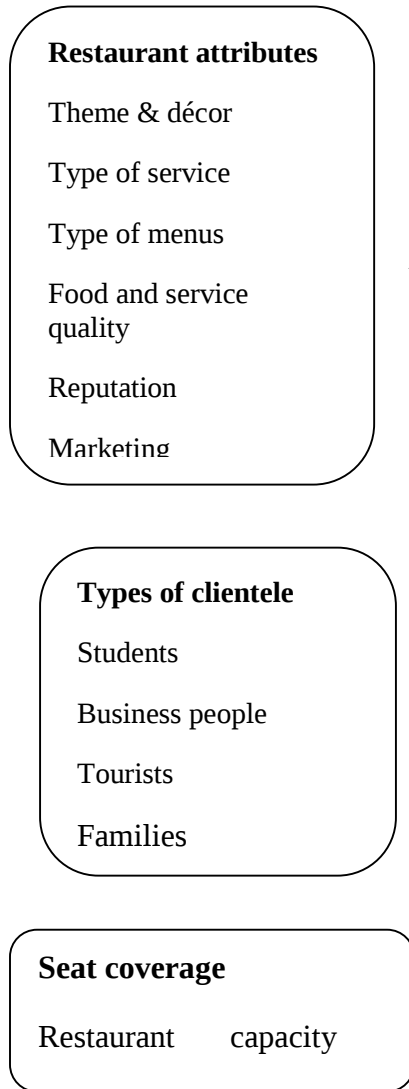
1.8 LIMITATIONS

Our major limitation is the time factor since we have a limited time frame to carry out our research and present the findings considering the number and types of restaurants in Eldoret.

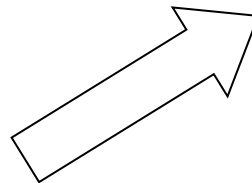
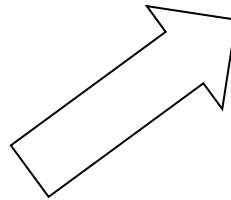
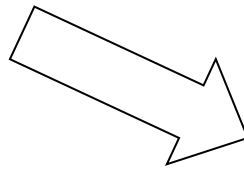
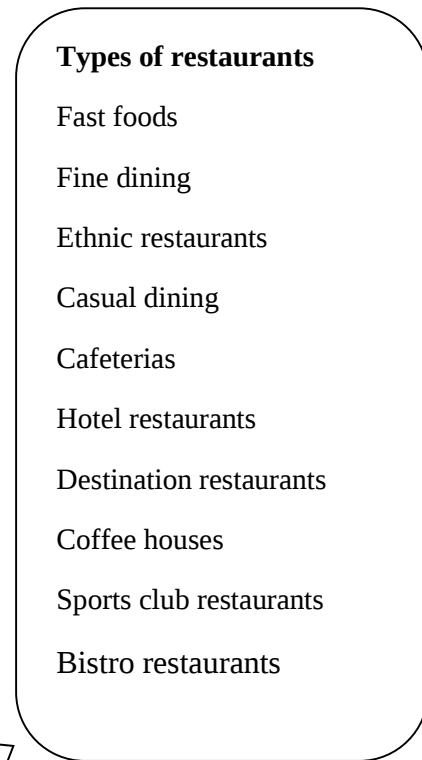
We shall therefore come up with an effective work plan that will put into consideration the available time and resources

1.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Independent variable



Dependent variable



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 OVERVIEW

As the number of meals eaten outside the home continues to increase, the restaurant industry is one of the fast-growing service industries. With growing competitiveness in the restaurant industry and the similarity of products or services offered by restaurants, it has become increasingly important that restaurants identify the factors that determine the basis upon which customers choose between restaurants. The issue of how customers select restaurants has been given considerable attention by both researchers and practitioners. It is also important to note that customers with different characteristics tend to use different criteria in choosing restaurants. Exploring such information will help restaurants to identify the appropriate marketing strategies in order to attract new customers and retain existing customers.

2.1 RESTAURANT ATTRIBUTES

Restaurant selection criteria are what customers use in deciding where to dine-out. Customers may apply diverse criteria in evaluating the importance of attribute affecting their restaurant choice. There is a wide range of literature concerning the selection of restaurants. For instance, Lewis (1981) considered five factors: food quality, menu variety and price, atmosphere, and convenience factors. Jang and Namkung (2009) suggested three factors: service quality, product quality, and atmospherics as main restaurant attributes affecting perceived quality of restaurant experiences. The total dining experience in a restaurant is comprised of not only food itself, but also the atmosphere (physical aspects) and the service provided.

Studies have identified some of the factors that influence customer's satisfaction of dining experience, including wait time, quality of service, responsiveness of front-line employees, menu variety, food prices, food quality, food consistency, ambience of the facilities, and convenience (Sulek and Hensley, 2004.) The décor, or ambience, of a restaurant works simultaneously with the quality of service and the quality of food; both of these variables have received attention in research studies (Okada and Hoch 2004).

One key challenge for service marketers is to identify critical variables that determine customer loyalty. Oh (1999) commented that only limited studies have focused on the causal relationships between critical variables (e.g., service quality, customer value, and customer satisfaction) and customer loyalty (e.g., repurchase and word-of-mouth recommendation), particularly in the hospitality industry setting.

Several published studies have investigated the key criteria used by consumers in selecting a restaurant and have presented a number of different choice factors. The factors that have been found to influence restaurant decisions are as follows:

2.1.1 Food Quality

Food quality is rated as the most important attribute influencing restaurant decisions in many studies on consumers' restaurant selection behavior (Auty, 1992; Lewis, 1981; Soriano, 2002; Sulek & Hensley, 2004). The elements that constitute food quality proposed in this study are unique tastes and ingredients, menu variety, appearance and presentation, healthy food options, and familiar food.

2.1.1.1 Unique Tastes and Ingredients

Tastes and ingredients play an important role for consumers when selecting a restaurant. Food taste is regarded as the most important element of food attributes in several restaurant studies (Josiam&Monteiro, 2004; Tunzi, 2000). Unique food tastes and ingredients are particularly important in the case of ethnic restaurant dining as Bannerman (1998, as cited in Robinson, 2007, p. 80) noted, "the obvious attraction of ethnic restaurants was getting food you couldn't cook at home". The results of a study by Sukalakamala and Boyce (2007) indicated that consumers of Thai restaurants considered unique tastes and authentic ingredients as the most important components of their authentic dining experience.

2.1.1.2 Menu Variety

Restaurateurs frequently develop new menus and offer a selection of different menu items to attract customers (Namkung& Jang, 2007). Kivela, et al., (2000) identified menu variety as a significant attribute of food quality in determining customer satisfaction in theme/atmosphere restaurants.

2.1.1.3 Appearance and Presentation

Appearance and presentation refer to the way food is decorated (Namkung& Jang, 2007). Namkung and Jang (2007) found that presentation was the most important contributor among food quality attributes in determining customer satisfaction in restaurants.

2.1.1.4 Healthy Food Options

Nowadays, consumers are more concerned with their health and are therefore driving a growing demand for healthy food choices (Sulek& Hensley, 2004). The National Restaurant Association (USA) reported that a large number of restaurants are adding items and adjusting their menus to accommodate and attract consumers who are concerned about health and nutritional value of a meal (as cited in Mill, 2007). Previous studies have found evidence of consumers' beliefs that particular foods are healthy. For example, Bailey and Tian (2002) reported that consumers of Indian restaurant in the United States of America viewed Indian food as much healthier than American food. Similarly, health was the most important value of eating Indian food for English consumers in the United Kingdom (White &Kokotsaki, 2004).

2.1.2 Service Quality

Service quality is found to be a salient attribute of restaurant in numerous studies. Previous studies have presented inconsistent sets and number of choice attributes of service quality in the restaurant (Tucci&Talaga, 2000). The dimensions of service quality proposed in this study are physical environment and service staff behaviour.

2.1.2.1 Physical Environment

The marketing literature has provided evidence of how the physical environment influences consumer behaviour (e.g., Bitner, 1992; Wall & Berry, 2007). The physical environment of the restaurant such as restaurant's atmosphere, ambience, décor, furniture, and other facilities can have a great impact on the dining experience (Sloan, 2004) and behavioural intentions (Ryu& Jang, 2007). Previous studies demonstrated that, because of the unique nature of the restaurant service, physical environments could guide consumers in evaluating a restaurant experience (Wall & Berry, 2007).

2.1.2.2 Service Staff Behaviour

The importance of service staff to the service operators is widely recognised in the service marketing literature (Cowell, 1989). Wall and Berry (2007) indicated that service staff behaviour was particularly important when the other mechanic clues such as restaurant atmosphere were perceived negatively. In this situation, humanic clues such as impressive employee behaviour could help level up consumers' perception of dining experience. Consumers generally expect restaurant service employees to be attentive, courteous and possess a good knowledge of the menu (Heung et al., 2000; Pratten, 2003; Sulek& Hensley, 2004).

2.1.3 Reputation (Word of Mouth)

Word-of-mouth is a critical source of information for a restaurant service if uncertainty and risk are perceived to be high (Sweeney et al., 1992). A recommendation from a friend can greatly contribute to a decision to try a restaurant. Unlike advertising, a suggestion from a friend is not usually based on any gain or profit. Thus, consumers place more trust on their friends' recommendation when making a restaurant choice (Mill, 2007). Besides, consumers can find out about restaurant experience qualities, which are usually difficult to judge through the other non-personal sources, from their friends' personal experience (Zeithaml&Bitner, 2003).

According to Mangold et al., (1999), satisfied customers tell an average of five people, while dissatisfied customers share their bad experiences with nine other people.

2.1.4 Marketing Communications

Services operators use marketing communications as the way to inform, persuade, and remind customers (Lovelock et al., 1998). The marketing communications employed by restaurateurs are advertising, sales promotion, and publicity (Mill, 2007).

2.1.4.1 Advertising

Advertising includes "any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor" (Mill, 2007, p. 83). Advertising may come in the form of television, newspaper, radio, magazines, yellow pages, and internet (Mill, 2007).

Pedraja and Yague (2001) argued that customers used information from advertising, and the information provided at the restaurant when searching for external sources of information. The information from the advertising was used as a source to reduce perceived risk and uncertainty (Pedraja&Yague, 2001).

2.1.4.2 Sales Promotion

Sales promotions, such as special offers and discounts, can act as short-term incentives motivating consumers to choose a particular service provider (Mill, 2007). According to Jackson, Titz, and DeFranco (2004), high-price restaurants benefited from coupon promotions to a greater extent than lower price restaurants.

2.1.4.3 Publicity

Publicity refers to non-paid communications such as a press release and press conference (Mill, 2007). Publicity provides more credibility for consumers as the restaurant does not usually have control over critics like it does with paid advertising (Burnett & Moriarty, 1998). Therefore, publicity has the advantage of being able to reach consumers who are particularly cynical about advertising (Kotler et al., 1998). Positive media relations can create a positive image for a restaurant and thus may be used as another effective marketing communications tool (J. Miller, 1993).

2.2 RESTAURANT TYPE AND RESTAURANT CHOICE

Restaurants can be broadly divided into two categories: fast-service and full-service restaurants. Restaurant type has a significant impact on customers' pre-purchase beliefs and attitude as well as post-purchase evaluations. Since customers hold different expectations and perceptions of their different dining experiences in a different restaurant type, they may also have different selection criteria when they decide where to dine-out according to the restaurant type. A particular reason to select one type of restaurant may be different from one to select another type of restaurant. Overall, full-service restaurants are more likely to attract hedonic customers who pay more attention to restaurant environments, whereas fast-service restaurants tend to appeal utilitarian customers who value functional benefits, (Kim & Moon, 2009).

For instance, Lewis (1981) identified three distinct restaurant types (family/popular, atmosphere, and gourmet restaurants) and compared the underlying restaurant choice attributes. Quality of food was found to be the most important factor in intention to go any of the restaurants. While the price was the second important factor in family and atmosphere restaurants, menu variety appeared to be significant in gourmet restaurant.

2.2.1 Types of Restaurants

There are different types of restaurants like middle-class restaurants which cater to the typical working class of people who come in for a quick grab, with simple food and simple ambience. People can be very casual and non-formal out here. Then there are the expensive or formal restaurants which primarily cater to the elite and *lah-di-dah* crowd. People are generally very formally dressed in such places (Ursula & Shirley, 2004)

According to (Ursula & Shirley, 2004), the states the following types of restaurants:

Luxury restaurants: Is located in large city centers providing food and drinks to an exceptionally high standards, they appeal to the rich and famous for their expertly produced menus, quiet atmosphere, polite and efficient services.

Hotel restaurants: They are set within hotels and offer meals to the residents and non-residents. Their services vary according to the size and type of the hotels but most offer high standard of food.

Ethnic restaurants: They are usually set in town and city centers. They offer many styles of cuisine eg vegetarian, Indian, Chinese, Italian, Greek etc For example, Italian and Greek create an atmosphere by offering entertainment food and drinks. The prices in all ethnic restaurants are usually good value for money, service friendly, polite and efficient.

Fast foods: A quick service restaurant or QSR is also known as fast food restaurant usually serve food which is pre-cooked but heated on order. The customers usually pay before eating. They have seating arrangements and also take away counters. They are usually found in town and city areas, leisure centres, and university campuses. They offer efficient services when time is limited, good value for money. Popular dishes include French fries, pizzas, hamburgers, fried chicken, kebabs. Foods are produced to order, crockery and cutlery maybe disposables or cleaned by service staff. Fast food service attracts customers for its speed and convenience. They are usually franchise restaurants or part of food chains where food is supplied to them from central locations

Sport clubs: It has table covers in lavish sites overlooking the sport arena or in luxurious private rooms. The meals are booked in advance.

Cafeteria: A cafeteria is a restaurant serving ready-cooked food arranged behind a food-serving counter. There is little or no table service. Typically, a patron takes a tray and pushes it along a track in front of the counter. Depending on the establishment, servings may be ordered from attendants, selected as ready-made portions already on plates, or self-serve their own portions. Cafeterias are common in hospitals, corporations and educational institutions.

Coffeeshouse: These are casual restaurants providing informal atmosphere where guests can sit and relax a while enjoying a snack and beverage. Typically a limited selection of cold foods such as pastries and perhaps sandwiches are offered as well. Their distinguishing feature is that they allow patrons to relax and socialize on their premises for long periods of time without pressure to leave promptly after eating, and are thus frequently chosen as sites for meetings. They are occasionally set with a retail baker's shop. Coffee shops are usually situated in sight of passers-by in busy streets, shopping malls, and along pavements.

Destination restaurant: A destination restaurant is one that has a strong enough appeal to draw customers from beyond its community. The idea of a destination restaurant originated in France which rated restaurants as to whether they were worth a special trip or a detour while one traveled by car in France.

Fast Casual Dining: This is one of the biggest trends right now. Fast casual is slightly more upscale than fast food. Fast casual restaurants offer disposable dishes and flatware, but their food tends to be presented as more upscale, such as gourmet breads and organic ingredients. Open kitchens are popular with fast casual chains, where customers can see their food being prepared. Boston Market is classified as fast casual.

Café: A café is a restaurant that does not offer table service. Customers order their food from a counter and serve themselves. A café menu traditionally offers things such as coffee, espresso, pastries and sandwiches. Cafes originated in Europe and are strongly associated with France. They are known for their casual, unhurried atmosphere. Outdoor seating is another trademark of a café. The term bistro is sometimes interchanged with café.

Pub: Short for Public House, pubs date back hundreds of years to Europe, especially Great Britain. Pubs have a timeless appeal, for their laid back atmosphere. Brewpubs offer beer made in house,

as well as a wide selection of other beers and ales. Pubs can offer full menus, as well as appetizers. Many casual style restaurants have a separate pub side to their establishment.

Casual Style Dining/ family style restaurants: Casual style restaurants offer moderately priced entrees. Casual style dining can be any number of themes, from Italian (Olive Garden) to seafood (Red Lobster) to Mexican (Chilis). Casual style restaurants offer table side service, non-disposable dishes, while still keeping the menu moderately priced.

Fine dining: Just as the name implies, fine dining is used to describe a much more upscale restaurant, one that offers diners an elegant and formal atmosphere with high quality service. The chefs in fine dining restaurants are usually professionally trained from the best culinary schools, and the food is fairly expensive, but worth it is served on the best cutlery very artistically.

Brasserie or Bristo Restaurants: A brasserie is a French word for a café cum restaurant which has a very informal seating arrangement and no time limit for serving food. Bristo Restaurants contains a single dish or other meals which is served throughout the day and on all days. They have printed menus and professional service unlike a Bristo which is a small eating joint with no professional service or printed menu and which serves easy on the pocket menu.

Cafeterias: Cafeterias Restaurant is no formal dining experience or someone to serve upon. Cafeterias Restaurant is more like a self-service joint where the customer walks up to the counter and orders and picks his food.

2.3 CUSTOMER CHARACTERISTICS AND RESTAURANT CHOICE

2.3.1 CUSTOMER FACTORS

The question of how socio-demographic variables influence consumer behavior is an important issue that has to be studied with respect to the consumer's purchasing decision. Indeed, in consumer behavior literature, personal characteristics are one of the major factors determining consumer decision-making and subsequent behaviors. For example, Knutson and Patton (1993) found that older customers are more concerned about their health and the quality of food was identified as important. In a more recent study, Soriano (2002) found that food quality did not

stand out as the most important reason for young customers; however, customers over 60 years of age indicated food quality is the most important attribute determining their satisfaction. Differences across gender are also studied. The primary characteristics that compared to female consumers, male consumers sought when choosing a product or brand are usually more utilitarian. Customers with higher income have selected ambience and comfort level as their determinant selection variables (Kivela, 1997). Therefore, it is logically assumed that customers with different individual characteristics have different reasons to choose a restaurant.

2.3.1.1 Image and Social Status

Finkelstein (1989) claimed that restaurant dining helped to satisfy diners' deeper emotional desires for social status, image, and belongingness. Some restaurants were regarded as higher in status than others, which was reflected through images the restaurateurs try to communicate with their consumers (Finkelstein, 1989). For example, Cheng (2006) investigated the differences in consumer behaviours of diners from different classes of restaurants in Taiwan. Restaurants were classed as "fancy restaurant" and "ordinary restaurant" mainly based on their price level. The findings showed that a fancy restaurant attracted more diners with stable jobs such as government employees and teachers, and an ordinary restaurant's main consumers were students (Cheng, 2006). Additionally, Peters (2005) studied the reason and motivation of going to fine restaurants in Sao Paulo, Brazil using face-to-face interviews and found that fine restaurant patrons were of high rank and income whose motives included needs of a social and self-esteem nature. The diners generally felt superior in the fine dining environment as they were well looked after, and they claimed that the ambience and style suited their esteem need (Peters, 2005).

2.3.1.2 Demographic Characteristics

Demographic variations are used in numerous studies to differentiate the market segments of consumers. The findings of past research demonstrate how different demographic characteristics affect restaurant clientele behaviours. For example, Olsen et al. (2000) reported evidence of niche markets for restaurants mainly based on education level, age, and income. The authors stated that the likelihood of attending restaurants decreased with age (Olsen et al., 2000). Moreover, the restaurant selection behaviour was found to vary according to gender (Mohsin, 2005); age groups (Auty, 1992; Kivela, 1997; Mohsin, 2005); occupation (Kivela, 1997); income (Auty, 1992); and

benefit seeking behaviour (Yüksel&Yüksel, 2002). The common demographic groups that were found to relate to clientele behaviour were the well-educated and high income groups (Turgeon &Pastinelli, 2002). Based on the review of the literature on the foodservice industry, this study examines if the following demographic characteristics: gender, age, ethnicity, qualification, occupation, household composition, and household income affect restaurant choice.

2.3.1.3 Value for Money

Value for money is another factor restaurant guests take into account when selecting a restaurant. If they perceive that the value received is less than the price paid, they are likely to evaluate the dining experience negatively (Mill, 2007). Muller and Woods (1994) asserted that restaurant consumers use price as a measure for the quality of the restaurant, assuming that an expensive restaurant serves better food and offers better quality. Similarly, Sweeny et al. (1992) commented that a low price may increase the probability of choosing a particular restaurant, while a low price may also decrease consumer perceptions of restaurant quality.

2.3.1.4 Different Experience

Novelty has specific appeal, and consumers are known to be curious for novelties including experiencing a new food and the new ambience of a restaurant (Peters, 2005). A new experience emerges as a determinant influencing some consumers to dine at a particular restaurant, as they consider such variety of experiences a value in itself (Martens &Warde, 1998). Customers often seek an authentic experience that is different from their everyday meals at home (Turgeon &Pastinelli, 2002).

2.3.2 TYPES OF CUSTOMERS

Customers in the hotel industry are broadly split into Corporate and Leisure guests. The location of the hotel and facilities tend to attract differing percentages of each type. Corporate travelers tend to stay midweek and outside of the school holidays, whereas leisure guests tend to stay more at weekends and in holiday periods. Leisure guests are often more price sensitive.

In the restaurant industry, it seems as though restaurant owners are constantly faced with the issue of trying to find new customers. Most of them are obsessed with making sure their advertising, displays, and pricing all “scream out” to attract new customers. This focus on pursuing new customers is certainly prudent and necessary. You probably already know what kinds of customers you want in your restaurant, but it is important to tailor your promotions to these specific consumer groups. Different market segments or groups of customers with similar characteristics and needs – will respond to different types of marketing strategies, so you should make sure to gear your promotional techniques toward the segments you want (Patti, 2004).

The types of restaurant clientele include;

2.3.2.1 Young people

These young people eat out and drink alcohol outside the home more often than other age groups. In particular, young adults tend to enjoy quick-service or casual full-service restaurants. So, if you are running a quick-service restaurant or have a hip, fun concept, you should make sure to take this demographic into account. (Stephenson, 2007)

2.3.2.2. Families and Kids

Families love to eat out, and they typically account for about 56% of food service sales getting families to eat at your restaurant involves a tricky balance between providing children with what they want and making their parents happy at the same time. While at first pleasing the parents may seem more important, in fact kids’ opinions have a strong influence on their parents’ decision-making. According to a recent study, more than 75% of parents consider their children’s preference as an important factor when selecting a restaurant. That puts a lot of market influence in the hands of children, who helped decide how to spend more than \$110 billion of their parents’ money at restaurants in 2001(Dando, 2004).

2.3.2.3. Business persons

When in business it is sometimes required that you travel to strange cities. They are almost the most important market for many city hotels and this is the reason why the hotels who target this market have designed specific products and services to cover their needs such as a quiet environment. Most of business people do not like to stay in hotels because after a hard day they prefer to stay in a quiet place to rest and to relax rather than a noisy room in a hotel. Another thing that they worry about is their messages and how well the hotel can handle this. Hotels have to offer them facilities such as: meeting space, computer services, internet access etc. Business people are usually not very price sensitive and often utilize hotel's food (especially room service), beverage and recreational facilities. They are considered desirable and profitable market and are an important segment because of their steady level of demand at high room rates (Patti, 2004).

2.3.2.4. Vegetarians they are people who abstain from consumption of meat red meat, poultry, sea food, by-products of animal slaughter such as animal-derived rennet and gelatin.

2.3.2.5. Tourists are people who travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. They travel for sightseeing, recreation, visiting and non-business activities. They usually want to learn about the customs, the history and the language of every place they visit. They usually travel in groups. Hotels have to provide them with any information that may need about the area, the transportation, any local events that may take place in the surround area etc. and to make them feel at home. Most tourists are interested in recreational facilities, food and beverage services and interior design and such guests are usually very price sensitive. (Walker, 2008).

2.3.2.6 Traveler a person who is continually travelling without a home or job person who travels from place to place with no fixed home

2.3.2.7. Sportsperson is a trained person to compete in a sport involving physical strength, speed or endurance. Sportspeople may be professionals or amateurs.

2.4 CONCEPT OF SEAT COVERAGE

Restaurants are required by law to list their maximum seating capacity on a sign in the front lobby. This ensures that all of the customers can safely evacuate the premises in case of a fire or other emergency. Of course, the actual seating capacity of the restaurant will depend on the layout of the tables and chairs. A large or unusually-shaped table might make it impossible to fit in enough chairs to accommodate the maximum number of people allowed by law.

When designing your new restaurant, one of the most important aspects to consider is your restaurant layout. Choosing the correct table size and design (circle, square, or rectangle) can determine your restaurant holding capacity. For example, circle tables are more efficient as you can get more people seated at one, but the flexibility of a square or rectangle table allows you to join tables together so large parties are easily accommodated. The flow of the restaurant is important so when host/hostesses walk customers to their tables they are not weaving in and out disturbing eating customers. Another aspect to consider is the type of food you will serve. A coffee/dessert shop may only need to utilize a table which could seat 4 people. However, if the restaurant is serving full course meals with serving dishes, this size table will be too small for 4 people and best to only have 2 people seated.

In 2005 The Center for Hospitality Research (CHR) at Cornell University released the Restaurant Table Mix Optimizer (or RTMO). This tool identifies the best mix of tables for a restaurant, based on a variety of inputs. The tool itself is web-based, with the CHR storing users' data anonymously in a database. As of mid-March 2007, a total of 1,543 people had registered to use the RTMO. With unusable scenarios eliminated, the final study analyzed the table mixes of 68 restaurants. While eight of the restaurants had the actual optimum table mix for peak operating times, the other 60 restaurants were leaving some money on the table. That is, most restaurants could improve their table mix. On average, the restaurants in this sample could increase their peak revenue by almost 15 percent by implementing a more effective table mix. Almost one-fifth of the restaurants in this sample could improve revenue by more than 20 percent just by having the appropriate mix of right-size tables. (Gary, 2005)

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 OVERVIEW

This chapter described the procedures that were used in conducting the study. It started with a description of the study area, research design and the target population, sampling design, data collection procedures and instruments, validity and reliability of the research instruments and data analysis procedures.

3.1 STUDY AREA

History and climatic condition

Eldoret is a town in western Kenya and the administrative centre of Uasin Gishu District of Rift Valley Province. The name "Eldoret" is based on the Maasai word "eldore" meaning "stony river" because the bed of the nearby Sosiani River is very stony. A "t" was added to make it sound like a Nandi word. At start of the colonial era, the area was occupied by the Nandi, before that by the Maasai and before that the Sirikwa communities (Open Data. 2011).

The area is a highland and therefore enjoys the tropical climatic conditions. The climate is generally warm and wet and receives an annual rainfall of about 1500ml. The highland location makes the region to be very cold at night especially in the rainy seasons with temperatures as low as 10 degrees centigrade. The days can be generally warm in the dry season with temperatures of up to 28 degrees centigrade. The rainy seasons are in the months of February to April and second rains begin in July to September. The driest Months are December and January with November and December being the windiest of all Months in a year. However, in the recent past years the climatic conditions have been fluctuating and this is associated with the effects of Global warming and Climate change (Municipal Council of Eldoret, 2011).

The town is now a home for a large market for both horticultural and agricultural products and it is also an educational center with many school, colleges and universities established within the town. The area has many hotels, restaurants and other food outlets and is therefore an ideal area to undertake this study (Open Data. 2011).

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Mugenda (1999), research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions.

Based on the research problem and the research questions formulated for the study, the research design adopted in this study was descriptive design. This method involves describing the state of affairs hence the findings are to be used explain facts and formulation of important principles of knowledge and solutions to significant problems (Mugenda, 1994). It encompasses collection of information by interviewing or administering questionnaire to a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2003). This method is appropriate for obtaining information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits and any of the variety of education or social issues (Orodho & Kombo, 2002).

3.3 TARGET POPULATION

This refers to a group defined by a researcher's specific interests or the entire set of individuals who are accessible and who have the characteristics required by the researcher (Mugenda, 2003).

The study targeted the selected restaurants within the town whose major business is selling food and drinks; both carry out (take away) or sit in service. It targeted the management personnel of the restaurants and employees of the same restaurants.

3.4 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

In this research, both probability and non-probability sampling was used. Simple random sampling was used to select restaurants within Eldoret Town and purposive sampling was used to identify/select the individuals holding management positions who were given the questionnaires in the selected restaurants. Simple random sampling was used because it provided an equal opportunity for each of the restaurants to be selected. On the other hand, purposive sampling was ideal for managers/supervisors in the restaurants as they are the service providers.

The sample size in regard to the restaurants was 10% of the total number of restaurants and 70 questionnaires in regard to the respondents participating in the data collection process.

3.5 DATA SOURCES

3.5.1 Primary data sources

This is raw data gathered directly from the respondents in the field, using questionnaires, interview schedules, observation, experimental studies or focus group discussions (Mugenda, 1994). In this study, self-administered questionnaires were used to collect the primary data from the sampled restaurants within Eldoret.

3.5.2 Secondary data sources

This is the second-hand information that has already been collected by someone else (Tuchman, 1987). This involves the collection and analysis of both published and unpublished materials such as books, documents and journals research papers and internet sources (Orodho & Kombo, 2002). Literature in this research study was obtained from former researchers and writers concerning the determinants of the types of restaurants found within Eldoret. It enhanced gathering preliminary information that helped in problem definition and also provided a very significant insight and guide to the study.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

3.6.1 Research instrument

The research instruments that were used for this study were questionnaires with both closed ended and open-ended questions. Questionnaires were used because they were the most appropriate instrument that suited our objectives and also the time available for the research. The closed and open-ended questions were used because of the type of data and objectives of the study.

3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS.

3.7.1 Validity

This is the degree at which the results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study, that is, the extent to which an instrument measures what it ought to measure (Mugenda, O. M. & Mugenda, G. ,2003). The development of research instruments was done by examining the objectives of the study, questionnaires, consulting research experts and lecturers from the Hospitality department for the purpose of framing of items and critical examination of variables.

The study employed content, construct and criteria validity for the purpose of obtaining meaningful instrumental measures. (Kathuri, J. & Pals, A. 1993)

3.7.2 Reliability

Veal (1997) defines reliability as the extent to which findings could be the same if the research could be repeated with a different sample subject and at a later period. The questionnaires were pretested in one of the restaurants which was not among the sampled ones. This helped in testing the consistency of the responses. The questions with varied responses were reconstructed to give responses that are acceptable. This was done to ensure reliability of the questionnaires as a measurement tool for the study.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

This was carried out on the collected raw data to help uncover underlying structures, extract important variables, detect any errors and test any underlying assumption(s), if any. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the raw data that was collected. The Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS), a computer-based statistical package was therefore used to generate descriptive statistics comprising of frequency tables and cross tabulations. SPSS was advantageous because it was an effective tool in analysis of large data groups and was efficient in analysis of variance and correlation coefficients

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter shows the data obtained and analyzed from the study using selected techniques and the recording of findings. Data obtained include demographic information of respondents such as age, length of time worked, and position of the respondent, employee gender. The data collected by the questionnaire were gathered from the management personnel of selected restaurants in Eldoret town. Analysis of the management personnel's responses will show the nature of the restaurant, special features/attributes of the restaurant, types of customers, and seat coverage. This chapter presents the results of the analysis in accordance to the objectives of the study which were:

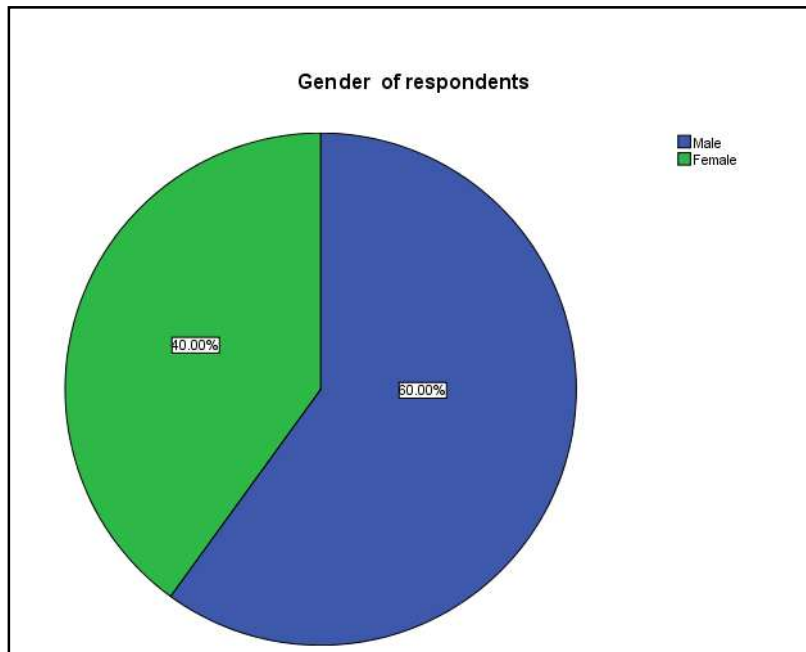
- (i) To explore restaurant attributes used to differentiate the type of restaurants in ET
- (ii) To find out the type of clientele in selected restaurants in ET
- (iii) To determine the factors that influence customers choice of restaurant type in ET
- (iv) To determine the seat coverage of the selected restaurants in ET

4.1 Background of respondents

4.1.1 Gender of respondents

The first part of the questionnaire was to get demographic data of the respondents. A total of 60 restaurant employees were involved in the study most of whom were male 60% and while female composed 40% of respondents (Figure 4.1.1).

Figure 4.1.1 Gender of respondents



4.1.2 Position of respondents

The study also found out that most of the respondents were non-supervisory level employees at 45%, 30% were supervisors and 25% were managerial staff (Table 4.1.2)

Table 4.1.2 Position of respondents

Position of respondents					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Worker	27	45.0	45.0	45.0
	Supervisor	18	30.0	30.0	75.0
	Manager	15	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.3 Age of respondents

The respondents' age as part of demographic data was also collected. Out of the 60 respondents 28% were below 25 years, while those between 26-35 years were 33%. The elderly (above 60years) in the management personnel were less than 5%. This is represented in table 4.1.3

Age of respondents					
	Age of bracket	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 - 25 years	17	28.3	28.3	28.3
	26 - 35 years	20	33.3	33.3	61.7
	36 - 45 years	10	16.7	16.7	78.3
	46 - 60 years	10	16.7	16.7	95.0
	Over 60 years	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2 Types of restaurants

The second part of the questionnaire captured data concerning how long the establishment has been in operation, the nature and attributes of the restaurant, facilities present at the restaurant and whether the facility satisfies guests.

Table 4.2.1: How long has the establishment been in operation?

Duration of operation					
	Time	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 5 years	15	25.0	25.0	25.0
	5 - 10 years	18	30.0	30.0	55.0
	11 - 15 years	12	20.0	20.0	75.0
	16 - 20 years	9	15.0	15.0	90.0
	Over 20 years	6	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

The results from the findings indicated that more than 30% of the restaurants in Eldoret have been operation for less than 10years while restaurants in operation between 11-15years were 20%. Restaurants that are in operation in Eldoret for more than 20years was 10% indicated in table 4.2.1

4.2.2 The Nature of the Restaurant

Table 4.2.2: The nature of the restaurant

Nature of restaurants					
	Nature	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fast food	3	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Casual dining	9	15.0	15.0	20.0
	Pub	9	15.0	15.0	35.0
	Ethnic restaurant	11	18.3	18.3	53.3
	Fine dining	8	13.3	13.3	66.7
	Hotel restaurant	12	20.0	20.0	86.7
	Coffee house	3	5.0	5.0	91.7
	Specialty restaurant	5	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

From the findings we realized that the hotel restaurants indicated by 20% and ethnic restaurants indicated by 18% were higher than the rest which were below 15% of the total number of restaurants in Eldoret (table 4.2.2)

The results above show that people do not go to restaurants just to be fed, they can order take away or deliver, if they do not want to cook. Customers at fine dining restaurants want to be made to feel special. Service quality is a critical component of customers' value perceptions that, in turn, become a determinant of customer satisfaction; therefore, customers perceive greater value for their money when they experience a high level of quality (Oh, 2000).

4.2.3 Special Features/facilities that Attract Customers to the Restaurant

Respondents were asked to state any facilities or features of their restaurant that help attract guests. The answers given by most respondents were varied and included: ample parking space at 10%, Dstv indicated by 40%, traditional architecture which was 8.3%, high quality food and food service, excellent recreational facilities of 15% and the brand image (18.4%) of reliable public

relations between restaurant staff and customers. Some restaurants at 8.3% offered free WiFi at their establishments.

Table 4.2.3: Special features/facilities that attract customers to the restaurant

Special features that that attract customers					
	Special features	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Ample parking	6	10.0%	10.0	10.0
	Dstv	24	40.0%	40.0	50.0
	Traditional architecture	5	8.3%	8.3	58.3
	Recreational facilities	9	15.0%	15.0	73.3
	Free Wi-Fi	5	8.3%	8.3	81.6
	Brand Image	11	18.4%	18.4	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

These results are important and especially because restaurants can separate themselves from competitors through their unique features or facilities of service. Services are deeds, processes, performances or acts that a service operations system provides to customers (Berry, 1980; Lovelock, 1992; Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996; Hope & Muhlemann, 1997). Golcalves (1998) treated services as special offerings. When a customer purchases a service it is proposed that he or she is purchasing an experience created by the service operations of a service organization (Bateson, 1995; Tseng et al., 1999). Today a majority of consumers have largely exhausted the things they need to purchase and are focusing instead on what they want to buy. Customers are looking for opportunities and experiences that make their lives happier, richer and more rewarding (Lewis, 1998).

4.2.4 Reason for Client Satisfaction

When asked whether they think that their restaurant satisfies their clients, all respondents answered in the affirmative: whereby all the respondents (100%) agreed that they fully satisfy their guest needs and expectations. (Table 4.2.4)

Table 4.2.4: Client Satisfaction

Satisfaction of clients					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	60	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.2.5: Why do you think your guests are satisfied?

Reasons for guest satisfaction					
	Signs of guest satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
valid	Repeat visits	51	85.0%	85.0	85.0
	Verbal confessions by guests	9	15.0%	15.0	100.0
	TOTAL	60	100%	100.0	

When asked why they thought that their clients are satisfied, the respondents generally said that their guests are repeat customers indicated by 85% and that they come back because they are happy with the services at the restaurant. Some respondents: 15% affirmed that their guest satisfaction was vivid when they verbally confessed to the hoteliers. Quality food items, impeccable service, low prices, and well-planned menus may all contribute to satisfaction, but it has not been effective unless the customer returns. According to Lewis and Chamberland (1989), making a sale or getting a customer is easier than keeping a customer. If customers are not satisfied, they can usually find another restaurant that will meet their needs (Spears, 1991).

4.3 Restaurant Attributes

The third section of the questionnaire captured data regarding overall restaurant attributes that customers consider when choosing the restaurant to patronize. Respondents were to give their opinion basing on a likert scale, to what extend the given restaurant attributes are taken into consideration by their clients when they come to their restaurant. The results were as follows:

Table 4.3.1: Restaurant Attributes

Attributes	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Theme and décor	80.0%	10.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Type of menu	60.0%	30%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Type of service	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	10.0%
Food quality	90.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Service quality	60.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Physical environment	30.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	10.0%
Atmosphere	20.0%	5.0%	20.0%	5.0%	50.0%
Restaurant facilities	50.0%	20.%	0.0%	20.0%	10.0%

The results above indicate that respondents strongly agreed that food quality, theme & décor are the major determinants of restaurants types, with percentage being 90% and 80% respectively. On the other hand, respondents also strongly agreed that physical environment and atmosphere were the attributes that are least considered whereby percentages were 30% and 20% respectively.

Food quality and food type are frequently cited variables for restaurant selection (Kivela, 1999). However, the results in the table above show that ambience or atmosphere, location, and cost of food are nevertheless critical in the final selection or rejection process. According to results, food quality was the most important choice variable in the fine dining category. With food quality as the number one reason why customers visit a restaurant, the data suggests that those restaurants that put emphasis on their food will differentiate themselves from the crowd but they cannot overlook all the other pertinent attributes.

4.4 Customer type

The data collected in the fourth section of the questionnaire was about type of customers.

Table 4.4.1: Does the type of customers affect the type of restaurant to be established?

Effect of target market					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	56	93.3	93.3	93.3
	No	4	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

It is evident that most of the respondents (93%) believe that the type of customers dictates the nature of a restaurant an investor intends to put up.

4.4.2 What type of customers frequent your establishment?

Respondents identified customers that frequent their establishments are mostly sport persons indicated by 20% and business people indicated by 18%. The rest such as tourists, families, young people and the elderly were 15% and below.

Table 4.4.2: Types of Customers who Frequent the Establishment

Types of customers					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Young people	9	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Tourists	3	5.0	5.0	20.0
	Families	9	15.0	15.0	35.0
	Business people	11	18.3	18.3	53.3
	The elderly	8	13.3	13.3	66.7
	Sports person	12	20.0	20.0	86.7
	Middle aged individual	5	8.3	8.3	95.0
	Other	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Once target market(s) have been identified, a marketing mix consisting of the 4 P's-product, price, place, and promotion-needs to be developed to satisfy these people. The product is a set of features and advantages that have the capacity to satisfy customer needs and wants, thus delivering valued benefits. Marketing a good or service involves facilitating exchange relationships between an organization and a customer (Spears, 1991). In fact, Lewis and Chamber (1989) stated that the three components: goods, services, and environment are concerns of customers when they purchase the hospitality product. The results above show that the Management of a prospective has direct or almost direct control over goods which are mostly physical factors and usually tangible. Service includes nonphysical, intangible attributes that management should control. For example, the personal element provided by employees such as friendliness, speed, attitude and responsiveness are all important components of service.

4.4.3 Attributes of Customers that Determine Customer's Choice of Restaurant

Respondents identified customers that frequent their establishment varied widely since 45% admitted that the customer's social status determines his/her choice for a restaurant. Based on the management personnel, 30% held the view that age factor of guests influenced them on their choice of a particular type of restaurant while 5% said it's all about the gender (table 4.4.3)

Table 4.4.3 Attributes of Customers

Duration of operation					
	Customer type	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Age	18	30.0%	30.0	30.0
	Income	9	15.0%	15.0	45.0
	Social status	27	45.0%	45.0	90.0
	Gender	3	5.0%	5.0	95.0
	Other	3	5.0%	5.0	100.0
	TOTAL	60	100	100.0	

The results above indicate that determinants in restaurant selection vary across age groups, income levels, social status and gender. Social status factors seem to be the important determining choice variable for the youth. Respondents who are the management personnel of the selected restaurants in Eldoret thought that this might be because these groups tend to look for ambience or atmosphere type restaurants because they provide a more suitable social environment for their social involvement. Apparently, respondents did not choose gender as an attribute that affects client choice of restaurants. The top four choice variables for the fine dining/gourmet restaurant type are ranked in order of importance as prestige, friendliness of waiting staff, quality of food, and ambience factors (Kivela, 1999).

4.5 Seat Coverage

The fifth and last section of the questionnaire collected data on seat coverage in the selected restaurants.

Table 4.5.1: What is the Average Seating Capacity of your Restaurant?

Average sitting capacity					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20 to 40	9	15.0	15.0	15.0
	41 to 60	3	5.0	5.0	20.0
	61 to 80	9	15.0	15.0	35.0
	81 to 100	11	18.3	18.3	53.3
	101 to 120	8	13.3	13.3	66.7
	121 to 140	6	10.0	10.0	76.7
	141 to 160	5	8.3	8.3	85.0
	161 to 180	3	5.0	5.0	90.0
	181 to 200	4	6.7	6.7	96.7
	Over 200	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

The results above indicate that the average seating capacity of selected restaurants was varied. The highest seating capacity was between 121-140 and 181- 200 with each 20%. Restaurants with seating capacity of more than 200 seats were fewer recording a percentage of 9% of the total restaurants (table 4.5.1).

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 OVERVIEW

This section gives a summary and conclusion of the findings of the research as concerning the factors affecting restaurant choice within Eldoret town. It also gives recommendations and suggests areas that need further research to complement this study.

5.1 DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

5.1.1 Personal Information

The study resulted in a total of 40 usable questionnaires out of 45. The gender distribution of respondents showed more males than females. Concerning the age distribution, a majority of the respondents fell between the ages of 26 and 35 years. The respondents held various positions in the restaurants; the majority of them being workers followed by supervisors and then managers.

5.1.2 Determinants of Restaurant Choice

According to respondents, there exists considerable income inequality among the restaurant users. The variation is very significant for consumers classified as high-income people in this study followed by the middle-income group. Further respondents said that the average price that consumers are willing to pay for a meal service with low perceived quality is Ksh 100 and the average maximum price that consumers are willing to pay for a meal service with very high perceived quality is Ksh. 300.

Consumers are sensitive to how long their food order takes to be brought to the table. The variables considered as measures of restaurant quality (theme & decor, food quality, restaurant sanitation and hygiene, truthfulness to menu, restaurant reputation) had significant implications on quality of restaurants from customers' perspectives. Of all the attributes, food safety and quality scored the maximum rating followed by sanitation and hygiene practices of the restaurants. The attributes above used for measurement of restaurant quality are significant considerations by customers.

Studies in restaurant choice revealed that clean tables make all the difference (*Harris 2004, Sandelman & Associates 1999*).

According to table 4.4.3, the findings reveal that social status is one of the major determining factors of restaurant choice. It is an important outcome for restaurant owners and supervisors who are curious about cost quality relationship as a base of competition. This finding suggests that restaurateur can differentiate their products and services quality based on quality argued by *R. David (1997)*. Literatures in rational consumer choice theory argued that consumers with low income purchase low priced products with trade off of quality than do the high-income class people. Hence, this finding is consistent with *Yurko Anna (2008)* when income inequality is very high, the top quality producer chooses to serve only the rich segment of the market, and the low price elasticity of demand of these consumers allows him to charge a higher price, *Broda and J.Romalis (2008)*.

Respondents also held that consumers prefer low priced restaurants when they believe that the products and services offered by the low-priced restaurants are of quality. It underscores that consumers are economically rational in their choice of restaurants and are not willing to pay high price for the same perceived quality if they do have the opportunity to enjoy the service with lower price. *Monroe, (1989)* argued that the price of the items on the menu can also greatly influence customers because price has the capability of attracting or repelling them, while *Lewis and Shoemaker, (1997)* concluded price functions as an indicator of quality (Table 4.3.1).

As suggested in the hypothesized fact consumers choice of restaurants is in favor of those with high perceived quality provided that the restaurants charge the same prices for similar types of products and services. This finding is consistent with *Yurko Anna (2008)* argued the consumers are perfectly informed of the products' characteristics and have the same ranking over the products, preferring higher quality products to inferior ones. Thus, if prices were the same, the consumers would all choose to buy the top quality good. *Jaksa Jack Kivela (1997)* also supported this argument concluding that image and atmosphere were found to be the most critical factors in the final choice between restaurants which were similar and food quality and theme & decor were the most important variables of restaurant choice. This finding implies that restaurant users if not

prompted to consider other attributes of the restaurants generally tends to prefer low priced restaurants.

The result suggests that the restaurateurs did not consider warm ambience and atmosphere by employing friendly staff for restaurant services are preferred by customers' dinning at restaurants (Table 4.3.1). Literatures in consumer restaurant choice behavior concluded that customers need smile service and ambience or atmosphere created by the restaurants, *Green State* and *Penn State* (1997) Service with a smile is more than a catch phrase. *Finkelstein* (1989) argues that the restaurateur has long accepted atmosphere as a feature of dining out, equal in importance and sometimes more important than the food itself [and that] the ambience of the restaurant has little to do with the consumption of foods but a great deal to do with the preparation of the diner's expectations and experiences and his/her subsequent responsiveness to the transactions of dining out. This argument is also strongly supported by *Bitner's* (1992).

Arguably from the results here above it can be concluded that quality, quick table service and friendliness of restaurant staff are prominent attributes over price and menu variety for consumers' restaurant choice decisions.

Quality practice of restaurants and décor seems to be the most determinant factors with the maximum number of responses. However, the other attributes: hygiene practices, good atmosphere & ambience, service quality and safety of food, type of menu and restaurant facilities as well as type of food offered are also important considerations. Ecumenically speaking, these findings suggest that restaurateurs should design their marketing strategy integrating all the above attributes so that their products and services can satisfy customers need and wants. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of *Lewis (1981)* and *Auty (1992)*. *Lewis* (1981) considered five factors determining restaurant choice: food quality; menu variety; price; atmosphere; and convenience factors.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Upon conducting this research, the objectives of were achieved. The research managed to establish the determinants of the types of restaurants found within Eldoret town. This study was meant to explore the determinants of the type of restaurants found within Eldoret town.

From the findings from customer responses, it can be concluded that customer's choice of restaurants depends on the attributes of different types of restaurants and the seat coverage.

Theme & décor of the restaurants, Food & Beverage quality, hygiene practices, and good atmosphere & ambiance, service quality and safety of food, type of menu and restaurant facilities are important determinants of consumer choice for restaurants.

It seems that holistically consumers' choice of restaurant's products and services are sensitive to a host of factors including ambience quality, quality service, price and quality of food offered appears to be the key determinant of the restaurant choice set. Restaurants that offer quality food, exercises good quality practices, provide quick table service and hire friendly restaurant personnel are preferred by customers.

Quality, quick table service and friendliness of restaurant staff are found to be important discriminatory attributes for selection or rejection of restaurants other than price and food quality. The finding pin points that these variables are prominent in restaurant choice decisions. Perceived restaurant quality is the most important variables for most customers surveyed for this study.

While restaurant quality appeared to be the most important variable for restaurant selection, price/cost of meal service, quick table service, friendliness of restaurant staff, and range or type of food offered are seen as equally important considerations.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From this research and the findings, we recommend that restaurants in Eldoret should not only compete on basis of food quality, theme and décor but also on other attributes like atmosphere

and physical environment so as to attract other types of customers apart from business people and athletics.

In pricing of menu items, restaurateurs should be more price-sensitive in order to cater for the families and young people since price influence their choice of restaurant.

Restaurants in Eldoret should invest more in increasing their seat coverage so as to accommodate the growing population of Eldoret as it is rapidly growing

Restaurateurs and owners of the businesses should focus on designing marketing strategy that integrates all the above attributes so that their products and services can satisfy customers' needs and wants. Differentiation strategy is also possible because the attributes used in this study are plausibly significant to suggest differentiation strategy.

Over all, these findings suggest restaurants that provide quality products and services quickly with their table-based services with the use of smart marketers/attendants at fair price shall be competent businesses.

In conclusion, restaurateurs' marketing strategies in Eldoret town hospitality industry should hand appropriate emphasis to those restaurant attributes that has sound effect up on consumers' choice decision, being as an important determinant.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research in the area of the correlation between income level and price quality trade of is suggested by the research. The correlation was found to be insignificant in this study. The researchers are skeptic whether this is the actual consumers' behavior or attributable to under

reported personal income by the respondents. The outcome deviates from rational economic choice theory. To this end, a comprehensive study with large number of sample and a different approach for measurement of personal income can be explored to augment this outcome or disprove it in scientific way with scientific approach of enquiry. Personal income can measure with the use of total monthly expenditures so as to reduce the behavioral matters for involved in disclosure of accurate personal income. More number of restaurant attributes can be considered as determinants of consumer restaurant choices.

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APPENDIX: RESEARCH QUESTINNAIRE

TOPIC: TO ESTABLISH THE DETERMININANTS OF THE TYPES OF RESTAURANTS FOUND WITHIN ELDORET TOWN

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

We are students from Moi University in the Department of Hotel and Hospitality Management. This research is based on establishing the determinants of the types of restaurants within Eldoret town.

Research ethics: Response from you will only be used for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Kindly answer the following questions and tick where appropriate. Please be objective - all comments will be taken into account.

Section I: Personal Details

1. Gender (i) Male ☐

(ii) Female ☐

2. Age in years (i) 18-25 ☐

(ii) 26-35 ☐

(iii) 36-45 ☐

(iv) 46-60 ☐

(v) Over 60 ☐

3. What position do you hold in this establishment?

(i) Restaurant manager ☐

(iii) Restaurant chef ☐

(ii) Assistant manager ☐

(iv) Other (specify) ☐

4. How long have you worked in the establishment? Less than 5 years ☐

6 to 10 years ☐

11 to 15 years ☐

Over 16 years ☐

Section II : Types Of Restaurants

5. For how long has the establishment been in operation.....

6. What is the nature of this restaurant? (Please tick where appropriate)

- i. Fast food ☐
- ii. Casual dining ☐
- iii. Pub ☐
- iv. Ethnic restaurant ☐
- v. Fine dining ☐
- vi. Hotel restaurant ☐
- vii. Coffee house ☐
- viii. Speciality ☐

If other, specify.....

7. What are the special features/facilities that attract customers to this restaurant?.....

.....

8. Do you think the restaurant satisfies the needs of your customers?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, explain

.....

.....

.....

Section III: Restaurant Attributes

9. To what extent do you believe the following attributes are considered when determining restaurant type? (Please tick all applicable answers)

Attributes	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Theme and décor					
Type of menu					
Type of service					
Food quality					

Service quality					
Physical environment					
Atmosphere					
Restaurant facilities					

Section IV: Types Of Customers

10. Do you agree that the type of target market also affects the type of restaurant to establish?

Yes ☐ No ☐

11. What type of customers frequent your establishment?

- i. Young people ☐
- ii. Tourists ☐
- iii. Families ☐
- iv. Business people ☐
- v. The elderly ☐
- vi. Sports persons ☐
- vii. Middle aged individuals ☐
- viii. If other, specify.....

12. To what extent do the following attributes of your target market affect customers' choice of restaurant?

Attributes	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Age					
social status					
Gender					
Income levels					
Beliefs/ expectations					

Section V: Seat Coverage

13. What is the average seating capacity of your establishment?

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| (i) 20 to 40 | ☐ | (vi) 121 to 140 | ☐ |
| (ii) 41 to 60 | ☐ | (vii) 141 to 160 | ☐ |
| (iii) 61 to 80 | ☐ | (viii) 161 to 180 | ☐ |
| (iv) 81 to 100 | ☐ | (ix) 181 to 200 | ☐ |
| (v) 101 to 120 | ☐ | (x) above 200 | ☐ |

14. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Whereby SA means strongly agree, A; agree, N; neutral, D; disagree, SD; strongly disagree)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
Seat coverage differs depending on the type of restaurant					
Capacity and revenue management in restaurants are dependent of seat coverage					
Table size affects seating capacity					
The type of food served has no effect on seat coverage					
Customers do not consider seat coverage in restaurant choice					
Shape of tables affects the seating capacity					

15. Please use the space below for any additional comment

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for taking your time to fill this questionnaire.